



"Ut In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus."
"That in all things may God be glorified."
 (1 Peter 4:11)

St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter

Vol. 36 No. 1 Spring and Summer 2015



"Ora et Labora"
"Prayer and Work"
 (Benedictine Motto)

Fr. Cosmas ordained to priesthood at St. Augustine

"God takes the initiative, provides what is needed to get things done and is the one who chooses, not us. For a priest, to 'get oneself out of the way', so to speak, and let Christ use us as his instruments, in a mysterious way – it is then that we find ourselves," Bishop Donald Bolen said, July 16, while addressing Fr. Cosmas Epifano, OSB at his Ordination Mass.

"We may not know how God touches people through our ministry. But we needn't always know. We just need to be receptive and make ourselves totally available to Him," Bishop Donald remarked in his homily at St. Augustine Church, Humboldt.

Being receptive to God and making oneself open to God's will means embracing a way of living centred in obedience, he remarked. Obedience is about opening oneself to something bigger and to loving one's vocation. Live in such a way that you are moving forward and your dreams and visions are being fulfilled, Bishop Bolen said. The dreams ground a person with what is really going on here on earth while being able to live in unison with the larger picture, the meta-narrative. The freedom through obedience is not about us and does not need to be about us, but it is about allowing God to draw us in.

There is another aspect to obedience and it is the responsibility of embracing your superior, the abbot, Bishop Bolen commented. This obedience is interconnected with the larger obedience of the incarnation and the many ways in which God likes to work divine plans into the specifics, the details of things, he remarked.

Commenting on the readings, Bishop Donald said a priest has a relationship with God and that relationship is proclaimed in the Word of God which is a



ORDINATION – Bishop Donald Bolen, left, and Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB congratulate Fr. Cosmas Epifano, OSB on his ordination to the priesthood, July 16, at St. Augustine Church, Humboldt.

part of our lives. The first reading from Jeremiah (Jer 1:4-9) reminds us how God called Jeremiah to speak to his people. God promised Jeremiah that God would put His word into the prophet's mouth. God told Jeremiah that God knew him even before he was born. God consecrated Jeremiah even before the prophet was born. Jeremiah was reluctant to answer his vocation, lamenting that he was "only a boy" and no prophet. God promised Jeremiah that He would be with him. The reading, Bishop Bolen said, speaks of the mystery of creation, especially the mystery of being. We can try to explain what something is, but mystery is something we cannot fathom. The idea of the Trinitarian God working in creation is a mystery that only faith can struggle to grapple with.

St. Paul, in the second reading (2 Cor. 4:1-2, 5-7) spoke of how we do not pro-

claim ourselves, but proclaim Jesus Christ, Bolen remarked. The Word who is Christ is living and active. St. Paul cautioned the Christians to persevere and not lose heart. It is a treasure to hold and be able to speak God's word. Priests speak God's word as clay jars molded by God. The community will love you and sometimes puff you up a little, and that's OK too, he said. However, always remember your vocation as clay jars and not earthen vessels. God is the one taking the lead here.

Referring to the Gospel (Jn 12:24-26) which highlighted of the necessity for the grain of wheat to fall and die before producing fruit, Bolen encouraged Fr. Cosmas to be generous with his gifts.

Expressing his gratitude for the contributions of St. Peter's Abbey, Bolen

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Abbot Peter honored on 25th anniversary

"A lot of things have changed in the last 25 years since becoming abbot in 1990," Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB said to more than 200 who came to honor him, June 6, at his 25th anniversary celebration.

St. Peter's Abbey was the centre of an abbacy (diocese) and staffed about 20 parishes with Benedictine pastors, he commented. There were 34 monks, twice the number that is in the community today. The abbacy sponsored a mission team in Brazil. The abbey guest wing was just developing. The rural population was dwindling and farms were growing larger in size. The older generation was being replaced by younger adults with fewer children. Many of the industries in our area were thriving.

"A couple of weeks ago, I came across some documents in a file from 1990. Our community was preparing for the election of an abbot, after Abbot Jerome resigned at age 75. There was a meeting here of lay leaders in our parishes at that time. They were asked what qualities the new abbot should have. Close to the top of the list was a request that the abbot should be more visible in the wider community," Abbot Peter commented.

"This creates a bit of tension with the Rule of Benedict that says monks should stay at home in their monastery. Well, some people thought I interpreted that request by buying shares in Air Canada,"

he joked. Abbot Peter said he is a member of a number of committees which hold meetings away from the abbey. He is a member of the Canadian Bishops Conference, and sits on several committees of the conference. Abbot Peter is a member of the Canadian Religious Conference, which is a gathering of religious superiors across Canada. He is involved with the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus and other organizations. He is the former national director of the CWL.

"I guess people think I like going to meetings, or that I like travelling," he joked. "The fact is that we are called to serve, not only at the local level, but also at a wider level. And one of the perks of serving at that level is that you get to meet a lot of good people; people who are dedicated, who are busy in many ways, but people who are ready to serve their community and church on a wider level. I have learned a lot from them, for example."

Abbot Peter expressed appreciation to his monastic community of the past and



ADDRESSES CROWD – Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB addresses a crowd of more than 200, June 6, at his 25th anniversary celebration. Next to him is his portrait, painted by Dr. Zygmunt Kondzielewski of Humboldt.

present for support in building and maintaining the Benedictine community. He thanked his parents and family for all they have done for him.

"I ask that you pray for me and for our monastic community. Our relationship has been one of mutual support for one another, and cooperation. And I hope it continues that way. May God bless us all and fill us with gratitude for all the gifts of health, mind and body that we have received," he remarked.

Congratulations were given to Abbot Peter by Prior Rudolph Novecosky, OSB on behalf of the monastic community of St. Peter's Abbey. Jordan Bergermann of Muenster gave congratulations on behalf of the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus, and Nap Boutin of Humboldt presented a 25th anniversary book of the Abbot Severin 4th Degree Council. Arnie Novecosky, brother, congratulated Abbot Peter on behalf of his family. Dr. Z. Kondzielewski of Humboldt unveiled a portrait of Abbot Peter that was commissioned to him by St. Peter's Abbey. The emcee for the occasion was Lawrence Novecosky, nephew and godchild. The six siblings of Abbot Peter were in attendance: Arnie (Pat) Novecosky of Saskatoon; Edith (Peter) Knaus of Tisdale; Emma Zubot of Burr; Freda (Ardel) Paproski of Hudson Bay; Agnes (Walter) Tropic of Ladner, B.C. Two siblings are deceased: Leonard and Irene.



25TH ANNIVERSARY – Abbot Peter prepares to cut the cake, June 6, at the celebration marking his 25th anniversary as abbot of St. Peter's Abbey. With him are his siblings: from left, Arnie Novecosky of Saskatoon; Freda Paproski of Hudson Bay; Emma Zubot of Burr; Edith Knaus of Tisdale; and Agnes Tropic of Delta, B.C. Two of his siblings are deceased: Irene Knaus and Leonard Novecosky.

Fr. Daniel Muyres serves many roles as Benedictine

The grounds of St. Peter's Abbey and St. Peter's College have taken on a neater, more pleasant appearance in the past few years. Fr. Daniel Muyres, OSB has been trimming trees and clearing brush with the chainsaw and tractor. Muyres, 80, enjoys doing outdoor work in the summer months. The Benedictine, who grew up on a farm, finds laborious work relaxing and is comfortable around machinery. He spends many hours every summer trimming the lawns which cover several acres. Muyres helps cultivate the abbey potato and corn crops, and maintain the roads in summer and winter. He has serviced the farm equipment with the help of his brother Richard and his brother-in-law Frank Steier, an Oblate of St. Peter's Abbey.

The public is most familiar with the pastoral work of Muyres who has served as a priest in the Muenster district for 54 years, and 12 years as a chaplain in the Humboldt hospital. This year is a milestone for the Benedictine who will be retiring from the diocese as a pastor and celebrating 60 years of profession as a Benedictine monk.

The Muenster district is home to Muyres who was born in 1935 on a family farm near St. Gregor, 11 kilometres east of Muenster. He attended St. Gregor School, a one-room school, from 1941 to 1951 where he was taught by Henry Murphy for 10 years. Grades 11 and 12 were completed at St. Peter's High School (located at St. Peter's College), followed by one year of university at St. Peter's College.

High school and university at St. Peter's College were an easy adjustment for Muyres who appreciated the daily routine of classes and prayer. He thrived at sports and was always eager to join in on the sports activities. In 1954 he entered the novitiate at St. Peter's Abbey and then attended seminary from 1955 to 1961 at St. John's College. The seminary opened up a new world of learning, research and many new possibilities, he said. There was excitement, too, at St. Peter's Abbey in the 1950s and 60s when a building program expanded present structures and erected new ones. The opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962 was a definite highlight, he commented.

St. John's Abbey was the perfect setting for Muyres whose descendents were from



OUTDOOR WORK – Fr. Daniel Muyres, OSB drives a tractor at St. Peter's Abbey that he uses for garden and yard work. Muyres, 80, retired at the end of June as a pastor in the Diocese of Saskatoon. He was ordained in 1961 by Bishop Francis Klein at St. Peter's Church, the final parish he served before his retirement. Muyres will continue as chaplain in the hospital at Humboldt.

the area. His great-grandparents, John and Agnes, lived at Holdingford, Minnesota, about 30 miles west of St. John's. Many of his relatives continue to reside there. Close to Holdingford in Krain Township is the small farm of his grandparents, William and Anna Muyres. His father, Frank, was born there in 1905. William and Anna Muyres, in 1909, moved from Minnesota to St. Gregor. While attending seminary, Muyres visited a number of his relatives in Minnesota. Several of them visited him at St. John's Abbey.

Bishop Francis Klein ordained Muyres to the priesthood at St. Peter's Cathedral, Muenster on June 10, 1961. The parish is the final pastoral assignment for Muyres who has been serving there for 11 years.

"I never thought very much about what I was going to do in the future. I just wanted to finish high school and then make a decision when that time came," Muyres said while reflecting on his past. "The thought of being a monk or a priest never really entered my mind. The pastor was very highly respected in our family and in our parish, but my parents and grandparents never spoke to me directly of becoming a monk or a priest. They were pleased when I finally did make up my mind to join St. Peter's

Abbey."

Frank and Albertina Muyres raised six children on their family farm, two of whom became religious. Daniel joined the Benedictines and Jane joined the Ursuline Sisters in Bruno. As a young man, Muyres was kept busy helping his parents and five siblings on their farm. He remembers travelling to and from school by horse and caboose in winter through deep snow drifts. In the spring and summer he either walked to school or travelled by horse and buggy. Sports were a favourite activity at school, especially soccer in winter and softball in summer.

"It was always interesting to watch the huge trains steam by on the railroad that had to be crossed on the way to and from school," he recalled.

Church was important to the Muyres family who were members of St. Gregory Parish in St. Gregor. Visiting was an important part of family and church life, especially on Sundays. Relatives would get together for Sunday meals.

"You always knew the name of everybody you met at school, at church, in the store or on the street and everyone knew you. You were never a stranger. There was a real sense of closeness and of security in growing up in the community of St. Gregor," he recalled.

Following ordination in 1961, Muyres has served in many roles at St. Peter's Abbey. He taught English, Latin and science to high school students at St. Peter's College and helped with sports activities. He was an assistant in the business office at St. Peter's Abbey and held the position of business manager overseeing the accounts of St. Peter's Abbey, College, Press and Farm. He was the business manager and later financial manager for the Diocese of Muenster.

In 1974-75, Muyres attended Saint Paul University, Ottawa, completing a

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Br. Wolfgang, 91, active in monastic life

Several rows of sunflowers added some colour and charm to one of the abbey gardens during the summer. The sunflowers, which occupied a plot south of the abbey, were planted and maintained by Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB. Br. Wolfgang, 91, has a green thumb and loves spending some of his time doing garden work. His fellow Benedictines recall the large pumpkins he used to harvest and the many pumpkin pies that they enjoyed. Br. Wolfgang especially enjoys growing large, red tomatoes in the abbey greenhouse. The tomatoes have made him famous among visitors who often comment on their quality.

Br. Wolfgang's love of gardening is emblematic of his enthusiasm for monastic life where he has carried out many roles, from serving as a carpenter and mason to gardener and cantor at office. Some of his other hobbies are reading, and listening to international news which he likes to discuss with his confreres, and cross-country skiing in the winter. He made a noteworthy decision in 2013, on his 40th anniversary to monastic profession, to take piano lessons from Br. Benedict van Ginkel, one of the novices.

The Rule of St. Benedict stresses the importance of living a life of moderation, both in prayer and work. Br. Wolfgang

has exemplified this teaching well as a Benedictine monk where he is known for being pleasant and cool as a cucumber. He does everything at a leisurely pace, whether in his walking and talking or his work and recreational activities. He is faithful to attending monastic office where he was often assigned the role of a cantor or reader.

Blessed with good health and a sense of humor, Br. Wolfgang likes to demonstrate, especially to younger monks, his strength by improvising a punch or karate kick in their direction. He often tells them he is "mean and lean." The good health and sharp mind of Br. Wolfgang were especially noticeable six years ago during renovations to the college building of Michael Hall and St. Peter's monastery. He helped with renovations on the top floor of Michael Hall in 2009 and was a major contributor to renovations to the upper and lower floors of St. Peter's monastery between 2010 and 2012.

Br. Wolfgang was born in 1924 in Schwab Gmund, south central Germany, in a predominantly Catholic area. The Second World War was devastating Europe when he graduated from high school. Students in his school were taught German and two foreign languages, so he used the opportunity to learn some French and English. At the age of 18 he was drafted into the German military. At the end of the war, Br. Wolfgang was taken prisoner by the Americans on Christmas Eve in 1945. He had served two-and-a-half years in the military and was to spend another three and-a-half years as a Prisoner of War.

Following the war, Br. Wolfgang came to Canada where he joined a secular institute founded by an Oblate priest in Trois Rivières, Quebec, and helped build residences and a chapel for the women of the secular institute. He worked in brick-laying in the summertime, and in the winter he did inside carpenter work. He travelled to Haiti where he helped construct buildings for the sec-



HOES GARDEN – Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB hoes the garden where he planted sunflowers. Br. Wolfgang, 91, enjoys gardening and is famous for the tomatoes he grows in the abbey greenhouse.

ular institute.

Br. Wolfgang spent a few months in a Trappist monastery and read the *Prairie Messenger*, the most-worldly newspaper allowed there. He decided, in the summer of 1971, to visit St. Peter's Abbey. He had helped the Trappists with haying and found himself doing the same work at the abbey. Br. Wolfgang entered the novitiate of St. Peter's Abbey and made his profession as a brother in March of 1973.

Fr. Daniel Muyres serves many roles

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Master's Degree in Pastoral Studies-Counseling. In 1977, Muyres and Fr. Werner Renneberg, OSB went on a 23-day tour entitled 'In the Footsteps of St. Paul'. They traced the missionary routes of St. Paul and visited holy sites in Israel and Athens.

Muyres has served the parishes of: St. Augustine, Humboldt; St. Bruno, Bruno; St. Scholastica, Burr; Holy Rosary, Leroy; Sacred Heart, Watson; Holy Guardian Angels, Englefeld; Holy Trinity, Pilger; Canadian Martyrs, Middle Lake; St. Joseph's, Fulda; and St. Peter's Parish, Muenster. In 2004 he began to reside full-time at St. Peter's Abbey. He had spent many years living in a rectory while serving parishes.



ENJOYS OUTDOORS – Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB is an outdoor enthusiast. The Benedictine, 91, often braves the cold of winter to go cross-country skiing.

Bishop Bolen expresses gratitude to abbey

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said the abbey and the diocese have a good working relationship. Monks have a vocation to seek God in community and God is at the centre of the monastic witness. The world does not have the answers to the many difficult questions of life and the monks remind us that a life centred on seeking God is all that is needed. Bolen said he became fascinated with monastic life after reading a book by Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk. At the age of 20, Bolen came to a Come and See weekend at St. Peter's Abbey. He spoke with some of the priests there and was very impressed with the welcome of the community. Bolen went on a retreat at the abbey before ordination to the priesthood in 1991.

"I have a deep gratitude for St. Peter's Abbey, a gratitude which is shared by the community gathered here this evening. Tonight we ponder how that some monks, living their monastic vocation, are also called to priesthood."

The Ordination Mass began with the hymn, O God Beyond All Praising. Michael MacMullin, brother-in-law of Fr. Cosmas, proclaimed the first reading. Sr. Miriam Spenrath, OSU proclaimed the second reading, and Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB read the Gospel. The Rite

of Ordination began with Fr. Ephraim Mensah, pastor of St. Augustine Parish, calling forth the candidate. Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB presented the candidate to the community. Next was the homily by Bolen, followed by the: Examination of the Candidate, Promise of Obedience, Invitation to Prayer and Litany of the Saints, the Laying on of Hands and Prayer of Consecration. The Investiture of the Stole and Chasuble was done by Fr. Joseph Ackerman, OSB 90, eldest priest of St. Peter's Abbey and Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, 52, youngest.

Others taking part in the ceremony were: Fr. Darryl Millette, master of ceremonies; Br. Basil Schaan, OSB, Br. Dominic Leo, OSB, and seminarian Ed Gibney, ministers of the altar; and servers from St. Augustine Parish.

Music ministry was provided: by St. Augustine Choir, directed by Loretta



OFFERS BLESSING — Fr. Cosmas Epifano, OSB blesses Sr. Delphine Berschiminsky, OSE, following his ordination to the priesthood.

Schugmann; Br. Benedict van Ginkel, OSB, piano; Dolores Hinz, organ; Sarah Novocosky, flute; Emily Engele, violin; Thelma Pearce, trumpet; and Br. Kurt van Kuren, OSB, cantor.

Fr. Cosmas recently completed four years of seminary studies in Rome. In 2014, he was ordained a deacon at his home parish of Holy Redeemer in Sydney, Nova Scotia. He served as a deacon at St. Augustine's Parish in Humboldt for the summer before returning to Rome for his final year of theology.

Fr. Cosmas, 55, was born and raised in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Following high school he attended Nova Scotia Teachers College in Truro, Nova Scotia for one and a half years. He later earned a three-year bachelor of arts Concentration in Theology degree. Fr. Cosmas joined Scarboro Missions as a lay missionary and served overseas in China for four years. Upon returning to Canada, he joined an eremitical community, The Association of Hermits, in his home diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and remained with them for five years. He served as a caregiver for his parents for seven years. Fr. Cosmas entered St. Peter's Abbey where he was professed as a monk in 2011. He made his solemn vows in 2014. Both his parents are deceased. Fr. Cosmas has three sisters who live in Nova Scotia.



FAMILY — The sisters and brothers-in-law of Fr. Cosmas Epifano, OSB who attended his ordination were: from left, Dan and Nancy (front left) Smith of Hammonds Plains; Penny MacNeil of Sydney; Nadine and Mike MacMullin of Truro. All the family members live in Nova Scotia.

People and events around the abbey

2014

July 22 to 30 – Four Sisters with the Missionary Apostles of Christ in the Eucharist (MACE) held a retreat at St. Peter's Abbey. They included: Sr. Maybelle dela Cruz of Humboldt; Mother Angelita Marave (founder of MACE) of the Philippians; Sr. Marlene Anne Aquino of Saskatoon; and Sr. Therma Ajoc of Brandon, Manitoba. Mother Angelita resided at MACE Motherhouse in Sydney, Australia and gave formation and religious education training to catechists in the Diocese of Wagga-Wagga; conducted spiritual retreats to groups and individuals and Catholic seminars to sisters, groups and individuals upon request.

July 30 – L'Arche community of Saskatoon spent the day at the abbey where it joined the monks for noon hour prayer, lunch, vespers and supper. The 32 visitors celebrated the theme of freedom during the day. L'Arche celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014.

July 30 – Br. Cosmas Epifano, OSB was ordained deacon in his home parish at Sydney, NS. Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB accompanied him.

July 30 to Aug. 1 – Ardel and Freda



SASKATOON HARVEST – Ardel and Freda Paproski of Hudson Bay hold pails of saskatoons they picked at St. Peter's Abbey in July. The Paproskis helped the monks pick 140 gallons of saskatoons for 2015. Ardel and Freda are the parents of Fr. Paul, OSB.

Paproski of Hudson Bay enjoyed picking saskatoons for the monks at St. Peter's Abbey Orchard. The orchard yielded 30 gallons for 2014.

Aug. 3 – Work began on a new roof over the outside northeast entrance of the library at Stanley Park. The arched roof replaced the flat roof that had leakage problems.

Aug. 4-7 – Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB attended the KC supreme convention in Orlando, FL.

Aug. 12 to 14 – Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB drove Br. Dominic Leo, OSB to St. John's Abbey, MN where Br. Dominic was studying theology. They stayed overnight, Aug. 12, at Assumption Abbey in Richardton, ND.

Aug. 16 – Some relatives of the late Roderick Butalid, a former candidate of St. Peter's Abbey, visited the abbey. Roderick was a candidate in 1997. He left and returned to the Philippians where he developed health problems and died.

Aug. 16 – Several monks participated in the Rock the Mount celebration for youth at Mount Carmel.

Aug. 21 – Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB finished his final extraction of honey from two hives. He extracted 280 lbs. of honey for the 2014 season.

Aug. 22 – More than 250 parishioners and visitors celebrated the 110th anniversary of St. Bruno Parish, Bruno, and the 90th birthday of Fr. Joseph Ackerman, OSB, pastor. The celebration included a festive Mass and potluck supper. Abbot Peter was in attendance, representing all the Benedictine pastors who have served the parish for the past 110 years.

Aug. 27 – St. Peter's College will be included in the Humboldt Deanery pledges for the annual Bishops Appeal of the Diocese of Saskatoon, a meeting at St. Peter's Abbey was told. The deanery must raise at least 70 per cent of its designated pledges before funds can go towards the college. If the deanery meets its fundraising goals each year, the deanery will commit the next \$50,000 per year for five years towards college fundraising. Bishop Donald Bolen was among the guest speakers at the meeting.

Aug. 30 to Sept. 3 – Br. Wolfgang



GERMAN RELATIVES – Some Germans visited their cousin, Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB at St. Peter's Abbey. They included: Gisbert Thiem, 45, right, and his children Maximilian, 13 and Jasmin, 11, left. The Thiems are from Tellbach (near Stuttgart), Germany. The Thiems toured Canada for 30 days in 2014. They stopped at St. Peter's Abbey for three days.

Thiem, OSB was visited by a cousin Gisbert Thiem, 45, and his children Maximilian, 13, and Jasmin, 11. The Thiems toured Canada for more than three weeks before stopping at St. Peter's Abbey. They planned to stay in Canada for a total of 30 days before returning to their home at Tellbach (near Stuttgart), Germany.

Sept. 2 – Students were welcomed to their first day of classes at St. Peter's College with an orientation session, tours and a lunch sponsored by the monks. Fr. Demetrius led one of the tours.

Sept. 10 – Some beautiful works of art, recently donated by the Ursulines of Bruno, were hung in the walkway south of Sts. Peter and Paul Church. The Ursulines, who had retired in Humboldt, were preparing to move to Trinity Manor in Saskatoon.

Sept. 14-22 – Abbot Peter participated in the annual meeting of Canadian bishops in Quebec, followed by a meeting of the Canadian Religious Council in Montreal.

Sept. 29 – Br. Pierre Rouillard, OSB attended the funeral of his mother, Lorette Rouillard, at Canadian Martyrs Parish in St. Boniface, MB. Br. Pierre was on holidays in Winnipeg when his mother died.

Oct. 1 – St. Peter's College hosted Opportunities Edge in the college gymnasium. The event featured displays from 40 exhibitors. It was attended by 400 high school students from schools in the local school division.

Oct. 1 – Eight leaders of Roman



SERVICE LAWNMOWER – Br. Basil Schaan, OSB services one of the abbey lawnmowers that has been kept busy during the spring and summer months. Br. Basil is in charge of grounds maintenance.



ANNIVERSARY – Rita (Alex) Wasylyniuk, sister-in-law of Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB was among the 25 people who joined the Benedictines for vespers and supper, October 8, in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Fr. Demetrius to monastic life. The celebration was held on his name day, the feast of St. Demetrius.

Catholic religious communities in Saskatchewan gathered at St. Peter's Abbey to share ideas and socialize.

Oct. 7 – Br. Cosmas left for his final year of theology studies in Rome.

Oct. 8 – Twenty-five friends of Fr. Demetrius joined the monks for vespers and supper in celebration of his 25th anniversary to monastic life. The celebration was held on his name day, the Feast of St. Demetrius.

Oct. 12 – Peter Froess, 92, Oblate and long-time friend of the abbey, died in Bethany Home in Middle Lake. He often visited the abbey and enjoyed operating the tractor in the garden and farm.

Oct. 19 – A diocesan celebration of 50 years in Brazil featured interviews with several monks who worked or visited there with the abbey team.

Oct. 28 – Br. Stephen (Linden) Predy was granted dispensation from temporary vows that he received on April 12. He returned to Saskatoon.

Oct. 30 – The abbey held its annual monastic chapter meeting.

Nov. 4 – Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB gave a PowerPoint to students and staff of St. Peter's College on the history of the

college. The noon hour presentation, Lunch with Benedict, was sponsored by St. Peter's College Campus Ministry.

Nov. 8 – The Oblates of St. Peter's Abbey gathered for Oblate Day. Eight people made their First Oblation at Mass, presided by Abbot Peter. Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, Oblate director, gave a PowerPoint to the Oblates in the Jerome Assembly Room, on the theme, *Lectio Divina* (Sacred Reading).

Nov. 12 – Fr. Paul led a presentation, Signs of a Healthy Spirituality, at St. Michael's RC Parish in Cudworth. The presentation was offered through the Saskatoon Diocese Grounded in Faith Program.

Dec. 3 – Abbot Peter spoke about St. Benedict and the Rule of St. Benedict to students and staff of St. Peter's College at a noon hour luncheon. The luncheon was sponsored by campus ministry.

Dec. 8 – Abbot Peter, Fr. Demetrius, Fr. Paul and Fr. Lawrence DeMong, OSB attended the funeral of Sr. Loretta Konlup, OSU at St. Augustine Parish, Humboldt. Sr. Loretta was a pastoral associate at the parish for 28 years. Sr. Loretta was cremated, the first religious in the former Abbey of St. Peter's, to be cremated. The Rite of Committal was scheduled for a later date at Bruno where she will be buried with her twin sister, Kathleen.

Dec. 12 – Br. Anthony Nguyen, OSB attended the ordination of Deacon Joseph Thuy Nguyen to the priesthood through the imposition of hands by Archbishop Daniel Bohan. The ordination was at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Regina.

Dec. 18 – A Christmas gathering for monks and staff was held during the afternoon coffee break.

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People and events around the abbey

2015

Jan. – Four paintings of monks were placed on the wall overlooking the main entrance to Sts. Peter and Paul Church. The paintings were donated to the abbey by Renee deMoissac of St. Benedict. She is an organ teacher and has been teaching Br. Benedict van Ginkel, OSB organ lessons. The paintings are the work of a refugee from Algeria who was given shelter in the French monastery of St. Pierre Quverre.

Feb. 3 – Abbot Peter visited Br. Dominic Leo, OSB, a student at St. Vincent Archabbey Seminary, PA on his way to the abbots workshop in Cullman, AL.

Feb. 4-11 – Sr. Pauline Michaniuk of the Sisters of Precious Blood, Regina came to the abbey for a retreat. Fr. Paul directed her retreat.



MEDIEVAL BANQUET – Br. Kurt van Kuren, OSB and Maury Wrubleski of St. Peter's College student services, perform on voice and guitar at the annual St. Peter's College Medieval Banquet. The banquet, held in February, was sponsored by campus ministry.

Feb. 10 – Students and staff of St. Peter's College (SPC) and the monks celebrated the annual Medieval Feast, sponsored by SPC Campus Ministry. The feast was held in the Jerome Assembly Room.

Feb. 22 – Br. Anthony Nguyen, OSB attended Chinese New Year's celebrations in Saskatoon.

Feb. 25 – Fr. Paul gave a presentation, Traits of a Healthy Spirituality, at

Columbian Manor, Saskatoon. The presentation was offered through the Saskatoon Diocese Grounded in Faith Program. One of the listeners was his former Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Edna Weninger. Mrs. Weninger taught Fr. Paul Kindergarten during 1968-69 in Lanigan.

March 4 – Fr. Paul gave a presentation, 12 Steps to Prayer, at St. Michael's RC Parish in Cudworth. The presentation was through the Saskatoon Diocese Grounded in Faith Program.

March 13-15 – Fr. Demetrius and Fr. Paul helped facilitate an Engaged Encounter weekend at St. Peter's Abbey.

March 21 – Thirty Oblates and guests attended Oblate Day at St. Peter's Abbey. Fr. Paul, Oblate director, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Psalms. Oblate Judy Zwart spoke about a meeting concerning Oblates that she attended in Saskatoon.

April 10 – The abbey-guest wing elevator was repaired for regular use. It had been out of commission since November of 2014.

April 16 – Abbot Peter attended the 75th anniversary celebration of Westminster Abbey in Mission, BC.

April 21-May 5 – The 78th Annual

Humboldt and District Music Festival was held at the abbey in the Jerome Assembly Room.

May 1-3 – Fr. Paul was a facilitator at an Engagement Encounter for the Archdiocese of Regina in Lumsden. Fifteen couples attended.

May 12 – Br. Dominic

returned home from his studies in St. Vincent Archabbey Seminary, PA.

May 18-22 – Abbot Peter directed the annual retreat of St. Martin's Abbey, WA.

May 23 – Fr. Paul celebrated the funeral of his sister, Gwen Dyck, 50, in Hudson Bay. Gwen died in Hudson Bay Union Hospital on May 19 after losing a five-year battle to cancer. Gwen and her husband, Jeff, have two children, Joel, 22, and Jana, 18. Fr. Demetrius, Br. Dominic, Br. Benedict and Fr. Ephraim Mensah of St. Augustine Parish in Humboldt attended.

May 24 – Work was beginning on a new roof for the Prairie Messenger and St. Peter's Press building. The work finished in June, costing \$132,700.

June 6 – Abbot Peter was honored by more than 200 on his 25th anniversary as abbot of St. Peter's Abbey. Among those attending the celebrations in the college gymnasium were his five siblings. Two of his siblings are deceased. His Aunt Veronica Saretsky, 96, was in attendance. A painting of Abbot Peter was unveiled. The painting, by Dr. Zygmunt Kondzielewski, was commissioned by the abbey.

June 9-12 – Fr. Gregory Hrynkiw of Saskatoon led the annual retreat of the Eparchy of Saskatoon, held at St. Peter's Abbey. Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR and



EPARCHY RETREAT – Fr. Gregory Hrynkiw of Saskatoon, left, was the retreat master for the annual Saskatoon Eparchy retreat in June held at St. Peter's Abbey. With him are Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, and Fr. Demetrius, OSB, guest master of St. Peter's Abbey.

the clergy celebrated vespers with the monks, June 11, and the monks joined them for Divine Liturgy on the final day of the retreat.

June 10 – Br. Dominic left to visit his sister in Muscat, Oman and then went to visit his family in India. He returned on July 13.

June 13-27 – Br. Benedict attended the 2015 Benedictine Junior Institute at St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, KS.

June 18 – Bernie and Shirley Karstad moved into the abbey farm house and will be there until their new condo in Saskatoon is completed. They expect to reside in the farm house until November.

June 21 – A farewell barbecue was held by St. Peter's Parish, Muenster for Fr. Daniel Muyres, 80, on his retirement from the parish following 11 years of service.



RETREAT MASTER – Fr. Walter Vogels of Ottawa led the annual retreat in June of St. Peter's Abbey. Vogels is an author and professor emeritus of theology at the University of St. Paul, Ottawa.

June 21-25 – Fr. Walter Vogels of Ottawa led the annual retreat of St. Peter's Abbey. Fr. Walter is an author and professor emeritus of theology at the University of St. Paul, Ottawa.

June 23 – A French film crew interviewed Jim Ternier, a professional gardener, at St. Peter's Abbey. Ternier grows vegetables and flowers and sells their seeds.

June 28 – Much of the province was covered by smoke from northern Saskatchewan fires. Outdoor activities in

the district became difficult for the next two weeks.

July 1 – Fr. Paul began his new role as pastor of St. Peter's Parish, Muenster. He previously served for one year as assistant pastor in Humboldt. Fr. Richard Meidl, OSB is the new pastor of St. Anne in Watrous and also serves the parishes of St. Pius X, Imperial; St. Anthony, Liberty; and St. Patrick, Young. Fr. Richard had served as pastor of St. Anthony, Lake Lenore; St. Ann, Anaheim; and St. George, Naicam. Fr. Lawrence DeMong, OSB is the new pastor of Little Flower Parish, Leader; Sacred Heart, Lancer; and St. Francis Xavier, Prelate. He previously served at St. Anne, Saskatoon.

July 11 – Oblate Day was attended by 40 Oblates and guests. Br. Cosmas gave a presentation on the priesthood and his experiences during his four years of studies in Rome. Oblate Craig Larson of Swan River, Manitoba gave a presentation on The Parkland Worker, a farm centred in the Benedictine tradition and the Catholic Worker movement. Kyla Brietta of Saskatoon and Pat Lyster of Abernethy made their Final Oblations. Carol Larson of Swan River, Manitoba made her First Oblation.

July 12 – The monks and guests enjoyed a barbecue prepared by Bernie and Shirley Karstad at the farm house on the grounds of St. Peter's Abbey.

July 13-17 – Ardel and Freda Paproski of Hudson Bay helped the monks pick saskatoons from the abbey Saskatoon orchard. The yield, this year, set a new record of 140 gallons. The previous record of 117 gallons was set in 2011.

July 16 – Fr. Cosmas was ordained to the priesthood by Saskatoon Bishop



OFFERS BLESSING – Fr. Cosmas Epifano, OSB blesses pilgrims following Mass at the 93rd Mount Carmel Pilgrimage, July 19. Bishop Donald Bolen, celebrant, and Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB also blessed pilgrims following Mass. Approximately 450 attended the annual event.



BLESSES DISTRICT – Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen blesses the district with the Blessed Sacrament at Mass, July 19, during the 93rd Annual Mount Carmel Pilgrimage.

Donald Bolen at St. Augustine Church, Humboldt. Among those in attendance were: Abbot Peter, the monks of St. Peter's Abbey, and the three sisters and two brothers-in-law of Fr. Cosmas. The ordination was the first for St. Augustine Church that was built in 1989. Fr. Cosmas celebrated his first Mass, a Mass of Thanksgiving, the following morning at St. Peter's Abbey.

July 19 – The 93rd Annual Mount Carmel Pilgrimage was attended by approximately 450. Bishop Donald Bolen was the celebrant and Fr. Cosmas was the homilist.

Continued on next page

People and events around the abbey

July 20-21 – The 5th Annual Clergy Sports Days at St. Peter's Abbey was attended by 55 priests and seminarians from the three dioceses of Saskatchewan. The event was sponsored by the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus. Priests took part in events ranging from board games and cards to ladder golf, soccer and basketball. Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen, Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR of the Eparchy of Saskatoon and Abbot Peter were in attendance.

July 28 – The local district received more than 5 inches of rain, one of the heaviest rainfalls on record. The rain was accompanied by strong winds, which blew down some branches and set back crops. Water seeped onto the floors of the abbey church and refectory.

July 29 – Thirty-two members of L'Arche community of Saskatoon spent the day at the abbey. They joined the monks for vespers.

Aug. 6 – Br. Dominic became a Canadian citizen at a ceremony in Saskatoon. Br. Dominic was born in India and moved to Canada in 2005. He passed his citizenship exam on June 9, 2015. He was among 146 people from 34 countries.



PRAYERS IN CEMETERY – The Benedictines of St. Peter's Abbey celebrated vespers in the cemetery during their annual retreat in June.



HASKAP JAM – Fr. Demetrius, OSB and kitchen staff member, Linda Demmans of Muenster, make haskap jam. The jam is used by the abbey monks and guests and is sold in the abbey gift shop. Haskap, a nutritious fruit, is grown at the abbey.



FEEDS CHICKADEES – The chickadees are a popular attraction of guests and visitors to St. Peter's Abbey who enjoy feeding them peanuts. Oblate Celine Wolsfeld, 92, of Muenster enjoys feeding the chickadees.



REPAIR ROOF – Employees with Miners Construction repair the roof of the Prairie Messenger and St. Peter's Press. The repairs during May and June cost \$132,700.

Oblates follow Rule of Benedict in the world

By Paul Paproski, OSB

This year marks a milestone for me as Oblate director of St. Peter's Abbey. I have been Oblate director for five years which, of course, is not a long time in Benedictine circles. Benedictine monastic life has been around for some 1,500 years, and Oblates have been a part of Benedictine monastic life for about a millennium.

Since becoming Oblate director in 2010, 16 new Oblates have been welcomed by our monastic community. There are presently 75 Benedictine Oblates of St. Peter's Abbey who live primarily in Saskatchewan. The remainder reside in communities across Canada. There is one Oblate of St. Peter's Abbey who lives in the United States.

Oblates are invited to meet three times a year at the abbey on Oblate Day which is held on a Saturday. The gatherings give the Oblates the opportunity to celebrate Lauds (morning praise), Mass and Vespers (evening prayer) with the Benedictines and socialize with them at noon hour dinner. Meetings are held Saturday afternoon where everyone is invited to listen to one or two guest speakers. The speakers usually address an aspect of the Rule of St. Benedict.

Newsletters are sent to the Oblates informing them of upcoming Oblate Days and they usually have information presented at previous Oblate gatherings.

Oblates are invited to attend special liturgies at St. Peter's Abbey on the feasts of St. Benedict (March 21 and July 11) and other special occasions. Many Oblates are not able to participate in Oblate gatherings at St. Peter's Abbey. Oblates are always welcome to become involved in monastic life, indirectly, through their apostolic witness at home and work.

Oblates of Saint Benedict are Christian men and women who associate themselves with a Benedictine religious community to strengthen their baptism and enrich their Christian way of life. Oblates do not take vows or live in a monastery. They make promises to live the Rule of St. Benedict which immerses them in the Gospel. People of all Christian backgrounds may become Oblates.



ENTERTAIN OBLATES – Craig Larson of Swan River, Manitoba, right, Brian Paul and Connie Henry of St. Claire Roman Catholic Church in San Clara, Manitoba lead the Oblates of St. Peter's Abbey in hymns at the March 21, 2015 Oblate Day. Larson, Paul and Henry all belong to the St. Claire parish. Oblates gather three times a year to pray and celebrate Mass together, and listen to a guest speaker.

The word "Oblate" comes from the Latin *offerro* (to offer). Families once offered their sons to monasteries for religious education and vocational training. These children were called Oblates. They lived in Benedictine monasteries and followed daily schedules of prayer and work. Adults eventually expressed the desire to live the spirituality of the Rule of St. Benedict outside monasteries. They, too, became Oblates as adults in their own homes and communities.

Oblates of St. Benedict make promises to follow the Rule of St. Benedict "in the world". Each Oblate is spiritually affiliated with a particular abbey and its ministries. An Oblate may support a monastic community through public witness, prayer, volunteer work or financial contributions.

Oblates, like Benedictine monks, seek a balance of prayer and work in their lives. They strive to live by the Benedictine motto: *Ora et Labora* – Prayer and Work. They follow the Benedictine motto: *Ut In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus* – That in all things may God be glorified. (1 Peter 4:11)

The international congress of Benedictine abbots, in 1984, declared

that Oblates are persons who have responded to a vocation, a call. Oblates are reciprocal blessings to monastic communities. They carry monastic values into the world in their daily witness.

The Rule of St. Benedict was written 1,500 years ago "to establish a school for the Lord's service" where "nothing would be preferred to the love of Christ." The Rule is designed to enable monks to spend their lives seeking God in an atmosphere of mutual respect, obedience, love and service for one another. Monks take vows of stability, obedience and conversion of life to enable them to become fully alive in Christ so they may grow into the image that God intends them to be.

Some famous Oblates are: St. Bede (637-735), St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), St. Gertrude the Great of Helfta (1256-1302) and St. Thomas More (1478-1535). St. Frances of Rome (1384-1440) and Holy Roman Emperor St. Henry II (973-1024) are honoured as universal patrons of all Oblates. Oblates of recent fame are Dorothy Day (1897-1980) and spiritual author Kathleen Norris.

Humboldt Music Festival is held at abbey

The 78th Annual Humboldt and District Music Festival was held at a new location for 2015. Musicians competed, for the first time, at St. Peter's Abbey, during the 10-day festival held during April and May.

"The abbey was chosen because it is a great facility. It has a grand piano and the location is somewhat central with lots of participants from Muenster, St. Brieux, Englefeld, Naicam, LeRoy, Humboldt and surrounding towns," Tanya Schuler, co-ordinator said. Schuler, who organized the event with Guenette Bautz, said the festival was held in the Jerome Assembly Room which has very good acoustics. There were many young singers and their voices did well in that room, she commented.

"The Jerome Assembly Room (JAR) created a nice peaceful feeling for the performers and audience. The room was the perfect size for both the smaller crowds during the day and larger crowds in the evenings," she commented. The windows in the JAR were an extra bonus for the festival which is often held in facilities with no view of the outside.

The grounds of the abbey, lined with trees, well kept grounds and beautiful buildings, promoted a sense of peace, Schuler said. The monks at the abbey were wonderful to work with, she added. Appreciating the arts, the monks welcomed the festival with open arms. Their kindness was greatly appreciated, she commented.

Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB guest-master at St. Peter's Abbey, said the Yamaha grand piano used by the festival is of excellent quality. The grand piano is seven feet wide and was assembled in 1962. The piano works well in the JAR which is excellent for instrumental and voice, he remarked. The JAR is beside the church where the monks pray each day. The monks heard the musicians on a few occasions as the



MUSIC FESTIVAL – Tanya Schuler of Humboldt and Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB pose beside the grand piano used at the 78th Annual Humboldt and District Music Festival. Schuler was the co-ordinator of the music festival, held at St. Peter's Abbey. Fr. Demetrius, guest master at St. Peter's Abbey, worked with the music festival organizers.

monks prayed office, he commented. Fr. Demetrius added that the event organizers and participants were very respectful of the abbey facilities.

There were 480 entries total in the 78th annual festival which sponsored four days of piano; four days of vocal,

choral and speech arts. Two days of band, strings and guitar were held at St. Augustine School in Humboldt.

The music festival organizers plan to hold the vocal and piano portions of the festival at the abbey for the next two years.

Donations and Bequests

We seek to provide prophetic witness through a monastic lifestyle of prayer and work that gives priority to the praise of God. We embrace service to God's People through hospitality to guests, involvement in parish ministry, education, the press and sustainable agriculture.

Please remember the monks of St. Peter's Abbey when considering making donations to charities or bequests.

Donations will help, in particular, towards helping us finance needed improvements to our infrastructure, promoting vocations and providing for the needs of our elderly.

Donations can be sent to: St. Peter's Abbey, Box 10, Muenster, SK, S0K-2Y0.

Tax receipts will be issued for donations.

For credit card donations please visit either:

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Or www.stpetersabbey.ca and click on the Donate Now button on the right hand side of the page.

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