

ST. PETER'S
ABB EY

newsletter

Vol. 10, No. 3

Winter

1986 - 87



Brother Conrad Abs who turned 80 on Nov. 29 is seen addressing the Prairie Messenger. See story on page 5.

Abbot Jerome's activities

The Carlton Trail Pro-Life held their annual banquet at Humboldt, on Nov. 3. It was most encouraging to see so many there and listen to the talk by Linda Lucyk who reported on her many contacts with the youth of the district.

On Nov. 4, I offered Holy Mass at the fall mini-convention of the CWL at Holy Trinity Church in Pilger.

I was at Banff Nov. 9 - 14 for the first ever joint meeting of the Western bishops, directors of religious education, of liturgy and social justice. Over 250 people attended to discuss how they could better work together for the

church of Western Canada. I drove there and back with Fr. Andrew Britz, Sisters Yvonne Billesberger and Celine Graf of our Abbey religious education office.

The Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (ECL) met at Ottawa Nov. 22 - 24. Because of the snow storm in Toronto and Ottawa, I arrived in Ottawa well after midnight, more than four hours late. I was not able to go at that time to Kingston, where I planned to spend a day, but spent the remainder of the night at the home of Bernard Daly, a friend of mine, who was on the same plane.

The day after the meeting in Ottawa, I attended the meeting of the Saskatchewan bishops and the major religious superiors of our province in Saskatoon. We discussed mainly how to relate better to our youth and how their energies can be used for the benefit of the church in Saskatchewan.

On Jan. 23 - 24 there was another meeting of the ECL. It was held at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto, this time with the instructors of liturgy and homiletics in seminaries, to discuss common concerns. In order to receive an excursion fare, I stayed another day, and used the occasion for a visit to my brother, Peter, at Lefroy, about an hour's drive north of Toronto.



Father Matthew Michel cuts his 90th birthday cake, Dec. 7.

ST. PETER'S ABBEY NEWSLETTER

Published by the Benedictine community of St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, Sask. four times a year: January, April, July and October.

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cover & back, pp. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 (left), 10, 11,

— Damian Yaskowich, OSB

p. 2 — Richard Meidl, OSB

p. 9 (right) — Peter Novecosky, OSB



Preparing for Christmas means decorating trees. Here Fr. Maurice Weber and Bro. David Gauthier decorate the tree in the monastic common room on Christmas Eve.

Abbey chronicle

Father Maurice Weber was guest speaker at the fall CWL Mini-convention held at Pilger on Nov. 4. He spoke on prayer.

Father Rudolph Novecosky underwent surgery on his back in Regina Nov. 13. The sensory nerves along his spine were severed eliminating most of the pain he had been experiencing in his legs since a hunting accident in November 1977. He returned Dec. 5.

A group of monks led by Father Peter Novecosky, sang at a Remembrance Day service held in Third Avenue United Church, Saskatoon. The service was sponsored by the Saskatoon Council of Christians and Jews.

Nine couples made an engaged encounter here Nov. 14 - 16. Father Leo Hinz directed it.

Brother David Gauthier returned from Saskatoon to spend the Christmas

break at the abbey, Dec. 11. Except for being back to write an exam on Dec. 15, he was home until Jan. 3.

Brother Basil Schaan, who is in pre-theology at Mount Angel Abbey, St. Benedict, Oregon, arrived home for the Christmas holidays on Dec. 19. He returned Jan. 13.

Brother Kurt Van Kuren also returned for Christmas, Dec. 20. He is completing his BA degree at St. John's University, Collegeville, MN. He returned Jan. 3.

Our Sisters of St. Elizabeth hosted a social for their sisters from Humboldt and all the monks on Dec. 26.

Our annual Christmas Family Day was held the afternoon of Dec. 26 for any relatives of community members able to attend. The afternoon consisted of games, skating, cards, visiting and lunch.

Father Edward Benning returned to the Abbey on Jan. 6. Prior to this he had been in St. Michael's Hospital, Cudworth.

Father Francis Lohmer hosted a come-and-go tea at his residence in Humboldt for all community members able to attend on Jan. 8. Father Francis serves as chaplain to St. Mary's Villa and is pastor of St. Scholastica Parish, Burr.

The community held a "welcome home" social for **Father Edward Benning** on Jan. 11. Many pastors were able to attend.

Novice **Thomas Ward** replaced Brother Gerald Moran as infirmarian in early January.

Father Peter Novecosky and Brothers Francis Fortney and Patrick Genois attended the Wake Prayer Service for Franz Henn at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Saskatoon, on Jan. 28. Franz was an oblate of St. Benedict and has on numerous visits to the Abbey assisted in electrical work. The following day, Jan. 29, Fathers Lawrence DeMong and Francis Lohmer

and Brothers Gregory Brodner and Wolfgang Thiem attended the funeral of Franz in Saskatoon.

Pastoral Care

Brothers Gerald Moran and Nicodemus Van Amelsvoort completed the Pastoral Care training course offered this fall. The course, instructed by John Kelly, began Tuesday, Oct. 7 and ran for seven Tuesdays until Nov. 25. The purpose of the course is to develop participants as pastoral care ministers.

In past years, Brothers Francis Fortney and Michael McAllister also took this training course.

Upcoming anniversaries

Father Matthew Michel, 70th anniversary of profession (July 11, 1917)

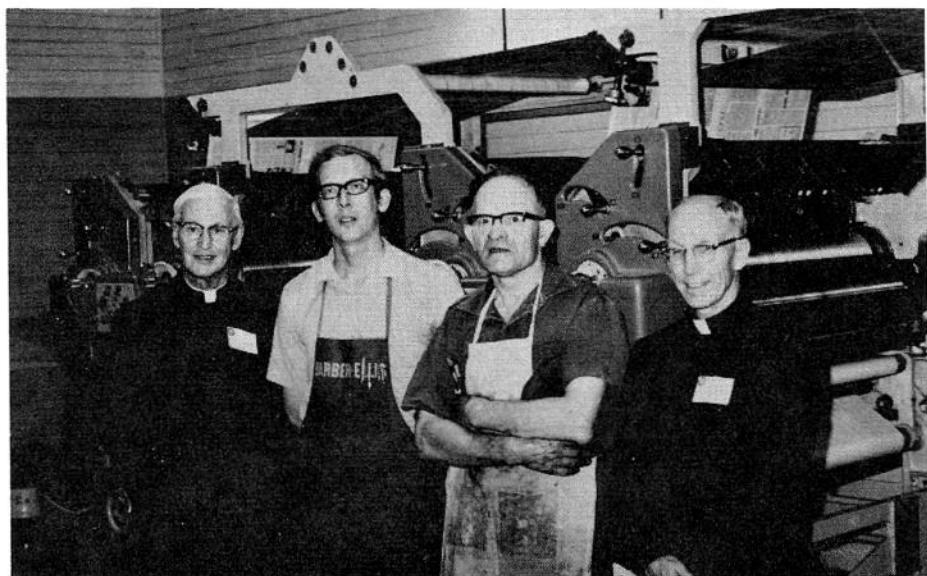
Father Francis Lohmer, 65th anniversary of profession (July 16, 1922)

Abbot Jerome Weber, 50th anniversary of profession (July 11, 1937)

Father Rudolph Novecosky, 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood (June 9, 1962)



Starting the postulancy program at St. Peter's Jan. 15, are from left: Alex Picco, Calgary; Rene Boulanger, Montreal; Randy Senecal, Rosetown.



From left, the late Archbishop Michael O'Neill, Brothers Stanley Vindevoghel, Conrad Abs and Abbot Jerome Weber beside the newly installed 2-unit web off-set press in 1972. The first issue of the *Prairie Messenger* printed on this press was the Easter, 1972 issue.

No stopping even at 80!

A year ago, the newsletter featured a cover story on our six octogenarians. On Nov. 29, Brother Conrad Abs joined that select group.

Brother Conrad was born in Marktlustena, Wuerttemberg, Germany, on Nov. 29, 1906. He spent his first 24 years in Germany working for some time as a shepherd. In 1930 he immigrated to Canada and worked as a farm laborer for eight years in the Lake Lenore area. He joined our community on Dec. 15, 1938 and made his profession of vows on Aug. 3, 1940.

Brother Conrad spend his first six months helping on the farm. The need for someone at our press who could speak German led him to work with St. Peter's Bote, the German weekly printed from 1904 to the late 1940s. He has been with the press ever since.

He still works in the circulation department, addressing the *Prairie Messenger* and keeping up the subscription lists. Brother is also able to

run the web offset press which prints the *Prairie Messenger*. He takes pride in the cleaning, upkeep and maintenance of the printing equipment. He has seen the transition from a single-sheet-fed press to the present three-unit offset press.

Brother Conrad loves travelling to learn the history of our province. He has kept, as a hobby, pictorial photo albums of the places of historical interest in the province.

Over the years, he has been an ardent supporter of CBC radio. His hope is for many more years of health so he can continue doing the work he loves for the community.

Address

Abbacy Mission Team
C. P. 161
Maceio, Alagoas
57,000 Brazil

CHRISTMAS IS SHARING

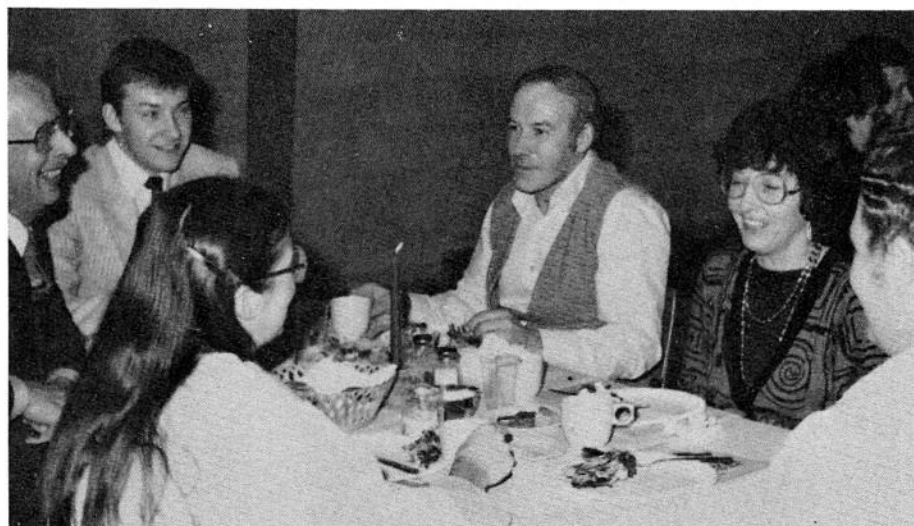


CHRIST
SHARES



WE
SHARE

This year's chapel nativity scene, made by Novices Richard Meidl and Thomas Ward, featured the theme, "Christmas is Sharing." The left panel carried a charcoal drawing of an original Nativity scene by Jacynthe de Margerie Rivard and the right panel featured photos of community members engaged in various roles of service.



Students, parents and faculty enjoyed the College Christmas supper, Dec. 12.

Addresses

Brother William Thurmeier
 Abbazia S. Anselmo
 Piazza Cavalieri Di Malta, 5
 00153 Roma, Italia

Brother Basil Schaan
 Mount Angel Abbey
 St. Benedict, Oregon
 97373 USA

Brother Kurt Van Kuren
 St. John's Abbey
 Collegeville, Minn.
 56321 USA

Brother David Gauthier
 St. Thomas More College
 1437 College Drive
 Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W6

Brother Gerald Moran new guestmaster

A new monk, whose dream has always been to operate a quiet place for reflection, prayer and discernment, was named guestmaster shortly after the New Year.

Brother Gerald Moran, formerly of the Plato-Eston district in Saskatchewan, had several years experience in Saskatoon and Vancouver hotels before being named Night Manager in a Calgary hotel, where he served for 11 years.

He has been assisting Fr. Peter Novecosky, the former guestmaster since making profession last July.

During the 30 years in the hotel industry, Brother Gerald's motto was "service to everyone"; he strove to provide equal assistance to all his hotel guests.

It has been his dream of many years to operate a retreat house where people could come for periods of contemplation, work, prayer and silence. Brother Gerald hopes to maintain the spirit of hospitality mentioned in the Rule of Benedict: that everyone be welcomed as Christ. He intends to continue the Benedictine hospitality of St. Peter's Abbey by making himself available to the guests at all times of the day and night.

Guest news

During the last quarter a number of individuals came to spend days of quiet in Severin Hall guest-wing. Some represented organizations such as the Writer's Guild of Saskatchewan, a group which has stayed at the abbey for the past two summers. Other guests were retreatants and those interested in having a look at the monastic life.

THANK YOU. Father Rudolph Novecosky thanks everyone who so generously sent him stamps.

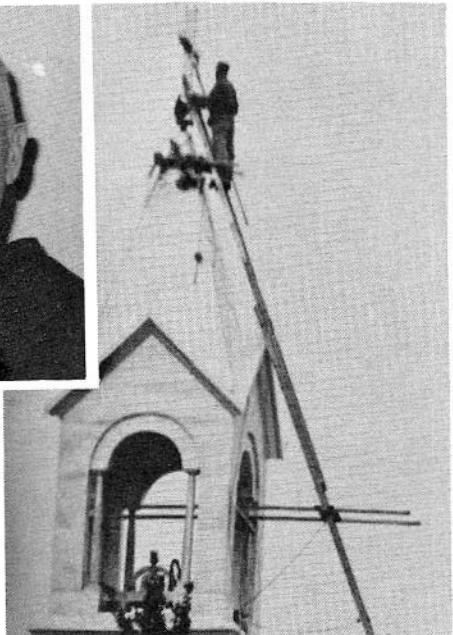
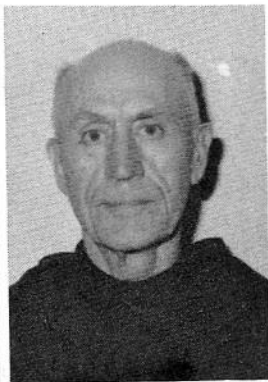
By far the organization to use our facilities the longest has been the native people of Saskatchewan who are attending workshops and classes sponsored by the University of Regina.

In November the Oblates of St. Benedict attached to St. Peter's spent a day of reflection and renewed their commitment as an Oblate. The Nov. 15 weekend saw the Engaged Couples Encounter and a workshop on Loneliness, directed by Fr. Ron Rollheiser, OMI was held on Nov. 22.

Most weekends for the next six months have already been booked, however, there are still some weekdays available for both groups and individuals.



An added attraction to our woods this winter was this bird feeder. Throughout January the Humboldt Wildlife Committee studied the various birds native to this area, the most common being chickadees, blue jays and nut-hatches.



Brother Oswald King on the hand and foot bicycle he built in 1971, and repairing the cross on the bell tower in 1982.

Multi-talented, inventive monk dies

Brother Oswald (John) King died Jan. 15 at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Humboldt, after almost a year-long battle with cancer.

Brother Oswald was born Oct. 21, 1914 at Kenaston. He received his primary education at St. Bridgit's School, Detroit, Michigan, where his father worked in an automobile plant.

Later his family returned to Canada and lived at Prince Albert. From there Brother Oswald travelled by bicycle to St. Peter's where he applied for membership in our community in the summer of 1939. He made his profession of vows on Jan. 29, 1941.

Brother Oswald worked as carpenter, plumber, welder, electrician and beekeeper. For many years he served as meteorologist (daily recording the weather for the federal records).

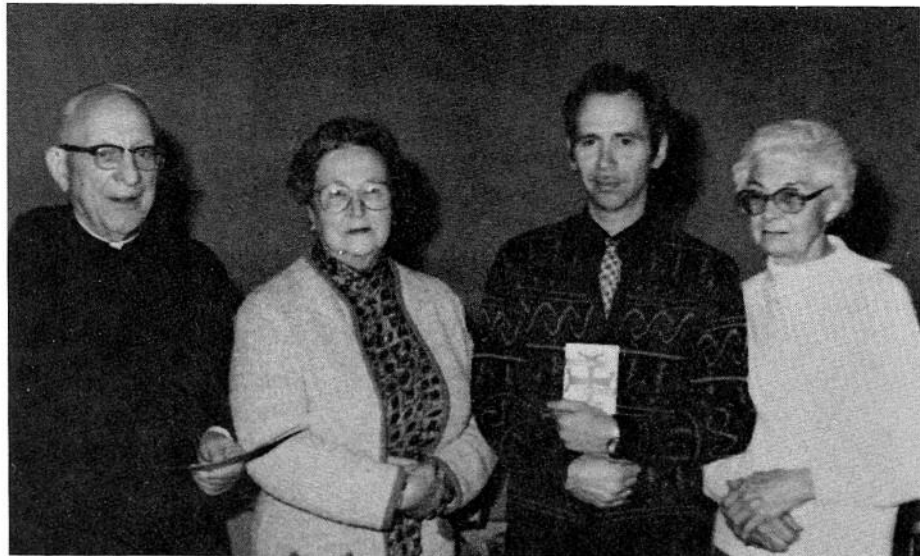
Brother was extremely inventive and very gifted as a designer and builder of numerous items of equipment for the farm, school and abbey.

Bicycles had been one of his special interests and he designed and built many different models, including one which could be operated both by foot and hand.

Another service he offered the community was his frequent repairing and repainting of the roof on the college building. His seeming lack of fear of heights saw him atop the bell tower repairing and later replacing the 6-foot cross which caps the tower.

Early last year, Brother Oswald began having difficulty in sleeping at nights and experienced loss of appetite. In March, the doctors diagnosed inoperable lung cancer. Patiently he bore this infirmity as his health declined. Brother Oswald was always interested and very knowledgeable in herbs and vitamin diets. He relied on magnetic therapy to relieve some of the pain caused by the cancer.

Until the last few weeks of his life, he remained at home where he was an inspiration of patient endurance to all.



From left, seen with Father Francis Lohmer, oblate director, are our newly enrolled oblate candidates: Veronica Bergerman, Muenster, Tom Sharp, Camrose, Alta.; and Laura Bunz, Muenster.

Oblate news

As announced at our November Oblates Day meeting, our spring gathering will take place at the abbey on St. Benedict's Feast Day, March 21. Father Abbot thought it would be most appropriate to have the Oblates of our abbey join with the community in celebrating this great feast.

The schedule for the day's events has not been worked out, but unless informed otherwise we shall begin with the Community Mass at 11:00 as in the past. As far as I know there will be no oblations in March. Kindly take note of the photo of the three who made their first oblation last November.

More information about the day in March if available will be included with the letter from your Director accompanying this newsletter.

Just as I was to end this notice I received word that Franz Henn of Saskatoon died on Jan. 27. He was one of our oldest and most faithful of Oblates. May his soul rest in peace! — FL

New address

Father Albert Ruetz is part of a group of students spending the spring semester (January through May) in the Holy Land. The program, sponsored by the School of Theology, St. John's University, Collegeville, MN is called Jerusalem Studies, and offers Scripture study in the land where the events took place. The program features academic classes integrated with field trips to selected sites including Samaria, Qumran, Bethlehem, Galilee, The Sinai and Jerusalem.

Father Albert spent from October to January in Rome studying spirituality as part of his sabbatical year.

His address is now:
Father Albert Ruetz
Terra Sancta Lodge
Box 1730
Ein Karim
Jerusalem, Israel

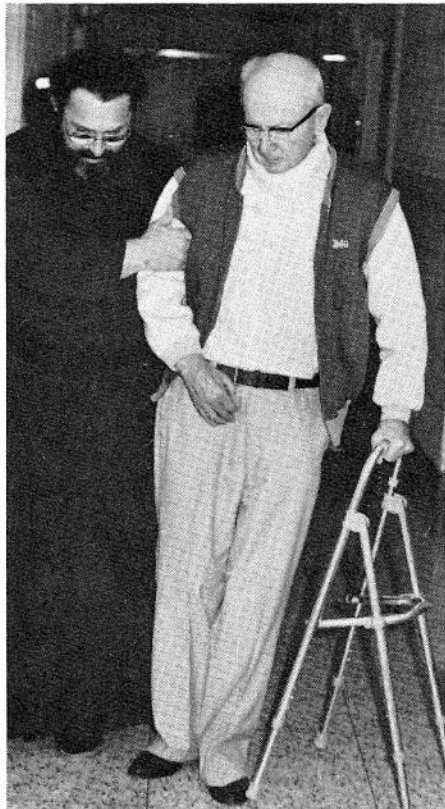
Update

Father Edward Benning returned to the Abbey on Jan. 6 from St. Michael's Hospital, Cudworth. He now occupies one of the rooms in a newly renovated special care section of the abbey's first floor.

Father Edward continues regular therapy to help regain more use from his left side which was paralyzed as a result of stroke suffered almost a year ago. He is confined to a wheelchair, but takes daily walking exercises.

Father Edward is able to be present at meals, and attends daily Vespers with the community. He concelebrates daily eucharist with Father Matthew Michel.

Father Rudolph Novecosky, who underwent surgery last Nov. 13 to have the sensory nerves in his back severed, reports that most of the pain he had been experiencing is gone. He still experiences some pain in the muscle of his right leg in the calf area so his physician-specialist recommended more surgery. He will be returning to Regina March 2 for this additional operation.



Father Edward takes his regular walking therapy assisted by newly appointed infirmarian Brother Thomas Ward.

Rest in peace

In your prayers please remember our deceased confreres and relatives:

Father Alcuin Hemmen, 76, St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas, died on Oct. 14.

Father Aloysius Dressman, 87, St. Leo's Abbey, Saint Leo, Florida, died on Oct. 27.

Father Clement Burns, 71, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, died on Nov. 3.

Father Damian Glenn, 79, Saint Martin's Abbey, Lacey, Washington, died on Nov. 5.


Father Mark Waltz, 48, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Illinois, died on Dec. 21.

Father Quentin Schaut, 86, Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, died on Dec. 23.

Brother Gabriel Bieniek, 70, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, died on Jan. 2.

Fatehr Loe Vancura, 77, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Illinois, died on Jan. 9.

Franz Henn, 80, Saskatoon, oblate of St. Benedict, died on Jan. 26.



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