

ST. PETER'S ABBNEY

newsletter



Vol. 13, No. 3 Spring 1990



Abbot Jerome's activities

I was invited to conduct a workshop during the annual meeting of CAPE, the Canadian Association for Pastoral Education, held in Saskatoon, Jan. 25-26. It was very encouraging to see hundreds of men and women from various parts of Canada who are involved in the pastoral care of those suffering in hospitals and senior citizens homes. Part of the program was to examine the role of humor and joy in dealing with those who are suffering.

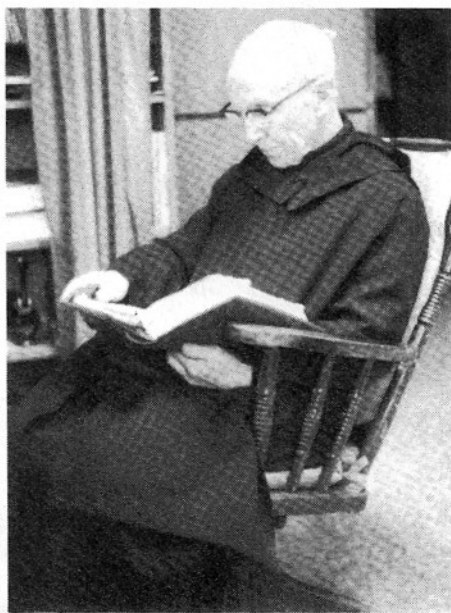
From Feb. 1 - 4 I was in Vancouver to be present at the ordination of Fr. Peter Mallon as bishop of Nelson. During this time I was able to enjoy the hospitality of Abbot Eugene and the monks of Westminster Abbey, Mission, B.C., and also visit the Ursulines of Bruno who teach in Delta.

During the week I spent in Edmonton I directed a retreat for the Sisters of St. Joseph, Feb. 18 - 23, and Feb. 23-25 attended the annual meeting of the Catholic Bishops of Western Canada. At this meeting we drew up a statement which was pro-life and opposed to abortion.

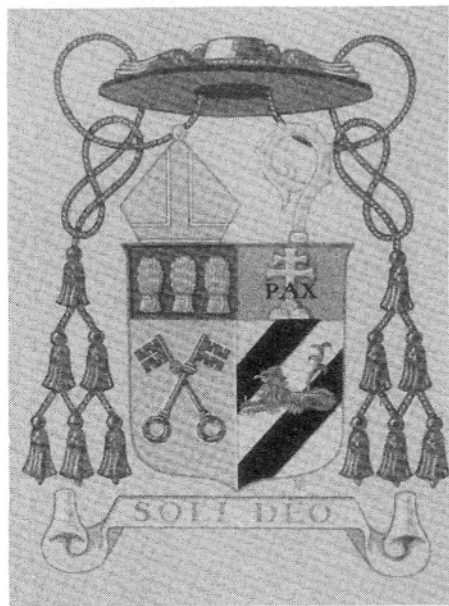
Fr. Morrissey of Ottawa conducted

a workshop for the CRC-West, March 19 - 21, which dealt with health issues and religious communities. I had to miss the last day so that I could celebrate the feast of St. Benedict with the community here at St. Peter's.

I was in Saskatoon again on March 28 for a meeting of the Roman Catholic bishops of Saskatchewan, and on March 29 for a meeting with them and with the Anglican bishops of Saskatchewan. Common concerns discussed in the latter meeting were the situation of agriculture in Saskatchewan, and the native peoples of our province.



Abbot Jerome Weber



Abbot Jerome's coat of arms and motto: 'Soli Deo' — for God alone.

ST. PETER'S ABBEY NEWSLETTER

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Logo designed by Kurt Van Kuren, OSB.

Farm manager's report

By Br. Bernard Lange

The outlook appears somewhat brighter weather-wise than the past few years. We planted a variety of crops this year — wheat, oats, barley, canola and, for the first time, some Lentils. We also seeded 86 acres of fall rye, which is coming up nicely.

We planted 680 acres of wheat compared to 840 acres last year; 345 acres of barley compared to 375 last year; and 76 acres of oats, the same as last year. The 210 acres of canola is the most we ever planted — last year it was only 100 acres.

This is the first year we have ever planted Lentils — we planted about 40 acres. Lentils are supposed to be great nitrogen fixers; they are only good for animal feed. They grow up to two feet in height and don't require special equipment to harvest.

After this seeding we will be left with about 420 acres of summer fallow.

The garden is again south of the monastery where the potatoes were last year. About the same amount were planted and if the yield is as good or better than last year we will be selling more of the produce. Many charitable institutions are the beneficiaries of our bountiful harvests. Potatoes and corn will again be our major garden vegetables for 1990. In spite of the poor germination last year the sweet corn was still very popular and sold well.

Our beef herd includes 46 cows. We sell most of the animals not needed for our own use. Hog prices remained fairly steady for the last six years. The chicks ordered for this year are 250 laying hens and 200 for eating.

Except for an unknown number of cats and kittens and grazing horses, these are the only remaining livestock cared for on the College farm for the past few years.

College Report

By Deborah Sarauer

On Sunday morning, April 22, 1990, St. Peter's College held a farewell student mass and awards luncheon. The celebrant for the mass was Fr. James Gray, OSB. The readings were read by Madeline Murphy and Reg Gaetz.

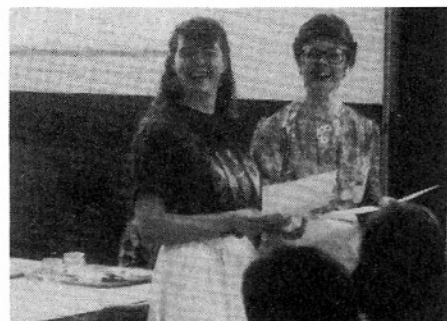
Music for the celebration was led by Bro. Gerald Moran and Vanessa Gzenia. Vanessa has been a flutist for all of our student masses this year.

The mass was attended by about 70 people — students, their families and College staff. This is the first time St. Peter's has held an end-of-the-year celebration and we were well satisfied with the results.

After mass we retired to the dining room and enjoyed a chicken dinner. Tony Saretsky, College director, summed up the university year and encouraged students to now consider themselves St. Peter's College Alums. He said that we would like to have a reunion of the alums in the next year

or so.

Tony also told guests that we will be hosting an "Appreciation Day" for retired professors. He mentioned that Fr. Florian Renneberg had just completed his teaching career after more than 40 years at St. Peter's College. He also mentioned several other monks who had contributed their teaching skills to St. Peter's students for many years.



College student Madeline Murphy of Calgary and student activities co-ordinator Debbie Sarauer.

There were presentations made to students and a special presentation to Tony by the student association.

Laurie Schmit was presented with a SPC jacket for all of the extra work that he does for St. Peter's even though he works for the Office Education Program and not the College.

The farewell dinner ended with tongue-in-cheek awards to several students for their various contributions during the year to the spirit of St. Peter's College.

It is hoped that farewell masses and award dinners will become an annual event for St. Peter's College.



Lynette Sawatsky receives award from College Director Tony Saretsky.

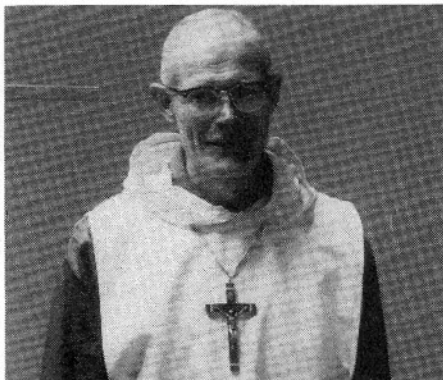
New name for a familiar face

On the Feast of St. Anthony, Jan. 17, Fr. Francis Gannon officially became a hermit. After being incardinated into the Territorial Abbey of St. Peter's, he made a public profession of the three evangelical counsels (vows) and promised to live his life as a hermit under the guidance of the abbot-ordinary of this diocese. To mark the special occasion Fr. Francis reverted back to his baptismal name "Robert."

Fr. Robert came to St. Peter's in 1972 to live as a hermit on a trial basis. At the time he was still a member of the Camaldolese Benedictines at Big Sur, Calif. The recently revised Code of Canon Law states that the church recognizes the life of hermits or authorities in which they withdraw further from the world and devote their lives to God through silence, solitude, constant prayer and penance (Code #609). Fr. Robert Gannon received the permission of the Congregation for Religious to become such a hermit.

The underlying reason or purpose for desiring such a lifestyle is to give greater honor, praise and glory to God and for the salvation of the world.

By his presence, his prayers and devotion, Fr. Robert will bring many of God's blessings to our monastic community and to the entire abbacy.



Fr. Robert Gannon makes profession as a hermit on the Feast of St. Antony of the Desert, Jan. 17, 1990.

Br. John Brodner: a model monk dies

A very obliging member of our community, Br. John died of cancer at the age of 83. Br. John was in his 57th year as a monk of St. Peter's Abbey and was known for his gentleness and willingness to help others.

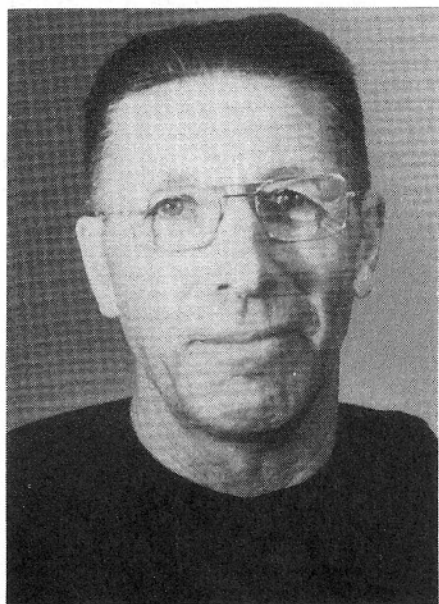
Born in Dysart, Sask., into a large family, John Brodner learned of St. Peter's from his three brothers who had contact with the College and Abbey. Frank (now Br. Gregory) had just entered the community and their two younger brothers, George and Martin, had been College students. Eventually, St. Peter's ended up with four Brodnors in the community; George and Martin entered at a later date and were ordained in the '40s. A fifth member of the Brodner family is a member of the St. Elizabeth Convent in Humboldt, Sr. Walburga, OSE.

The list of jobs which Br. John was involved seems almost endless: he began his monastic work on the College farm and, as on most farms, it was necessary to do a variety of tasks. Next came a period as heating engineer, a position which could be very demanding in those early years.

Other responsibilities which Br. John happily undertook were horticulture, which included caring for an orchard and transplanting numerous evergreens, beekeeping, maintenance, barbering and for many years he was guestmaster. He cut hair for students and monks for almost 40 years until his eyesight began to fail. But his interest in the community never waned because of poor health. Even after he became ill with cancer he continued to distribute the maintenance supplies with his usual eagerness and Brodner smile; Br. John enjoyed being useful.

While Br. John enjoyed relating his encounters with doctors, tests and hospitals, he was never heard to complain about any of his illnesses — blindness, heart trouble, not even the liver cancer which took his life on April 29, just four days before his 83rd birthday.

The following poem, written by a family member and monk, paid tribute to Br. John on his Golden Jubilee of Profession in 1983.



Br. John Brodner, OSB — retreat picture taken in 1987.



Br. John bringing up ashes from the basement in the early years.

A tribute of Brother John: Aug. 1, 1983

JOHN is a monk, as you'll easily guess,
Who finds it a privilege to say, "Oh
yes."

He arrived at the Abbey in '31
Where his manifold tasks soon were
begun.

Tasks to the Lord were the first in the
race;
These he never put in second place:

Rosaries and masses, Divine Office
too —
Serving at mass — mostly one —
often two.

Master of Ceremonies at Pontifical
Mass,
Never a slip did he ever let pass.

He barely arrived (1931) and got his
bed warm
When two days later he was put on
the farm.

And then he said, YES, to boiler room
chore,
Shovelling ashes and coal . . . as never
before.

YES, to his brothers: to cutting their
hair;
YES, to spraying the weeds: not so
rare.

YES: barber and beekeeper,
guestmaster too,
Washing the windows so that we could
see thru,



Br. John busy at one of his many duties, taken in 1955.

Waxing the floor and painting the
wall . . .
Pausing to answer another "hair-cut
call."

He fillets the fish and prepares a best
dish;
Provides the lunch to feed the whole
bunch;

Picks raspberries, strawberries,
juneberries too
Why, he never runs out of "things to
do."

It's not work that'll kill you, but worry
sure will;
And that's why Br. John is with us still.

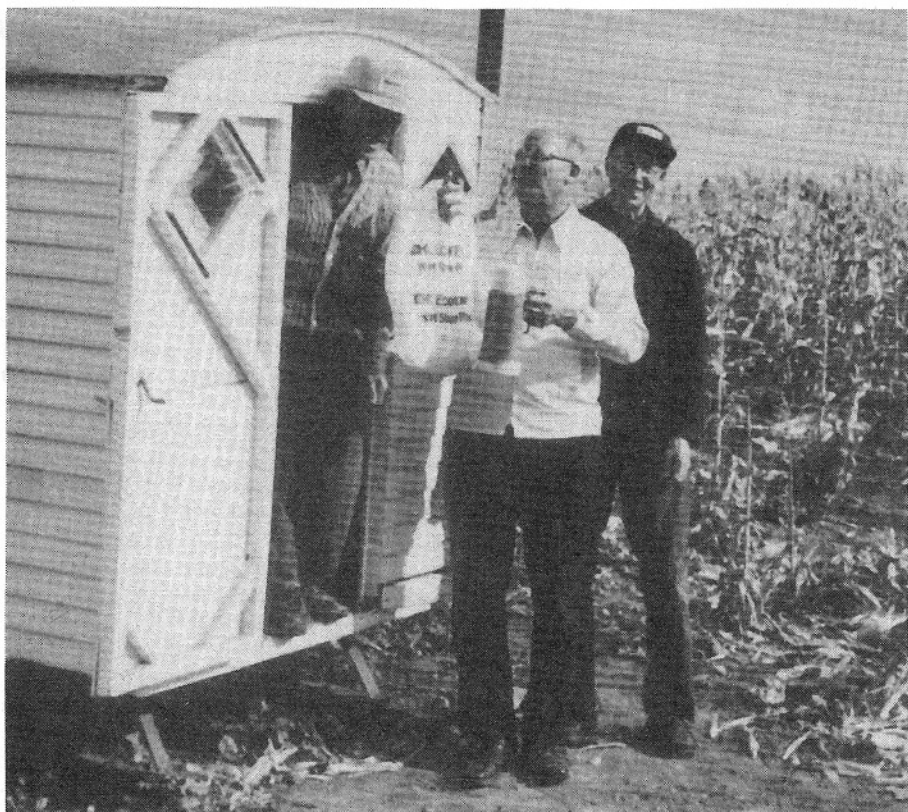
His hair is still dark — as well can
be seen
Without using Grecian Formula 16!



The Abbey Newsletter editor following in the steps of Br. John who cut college students' hair for many years.



Br. John, second from right, though blind, always attended the Divine Office.



Br. John always took part in any way he could, even when blind, by just being present. Br. Gregory, Fr. Martin and Br. John take time for a coffee break while selling corn.

Rest in peace

In your prayers please remember our deceased confreres, relatives, Oblates and staff:

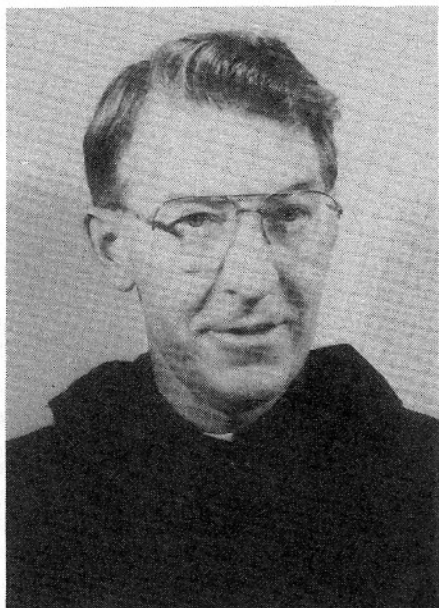
Albertina Muyres, mother of Father Daniel Muyres, died April 5.

Brother John Brodner, OSB, died April 29.

Father Maurice R. Weber, OSB, died May 27.

Fr. Maurice Raymond Weber:

Shortly after the cut-off date for this newsletter had passed, our confrere, Fr. Maurice died in Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon, on May 27. Although he had been quite ill with liver cancer (see last issue) his death came unexpectedly. We will publish a detailed account of his life and work in the next issue of the Abbey Newsletter. May he rest in peace.



Fr. Maurice Raymond Weber, OSB

St. Peter's first native-born abbot retires

Ferdinand Weber, eldest son of Peter and Cecilia Weber, was born on Sept. 14, 1915, in Muenster, Sask.

His elementary schooling was taught by the Ursulines of Bruno and he attended St. Peter's College and Campion College in Regina. He was very active in all sports, excelling mainly on the ice in hockey.

In 1936 Ferdinand Weber entered St. Peter's Abbey as a novice, received the name Jerome, and was sent off to St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minn., to join other St. Peter's monks.

At St. John's, Frater Jerome quickly gained a reputation as a scholar as well as a sportsman; he developed a strong appreciation of Sacred Scripture, especially the Psalms.

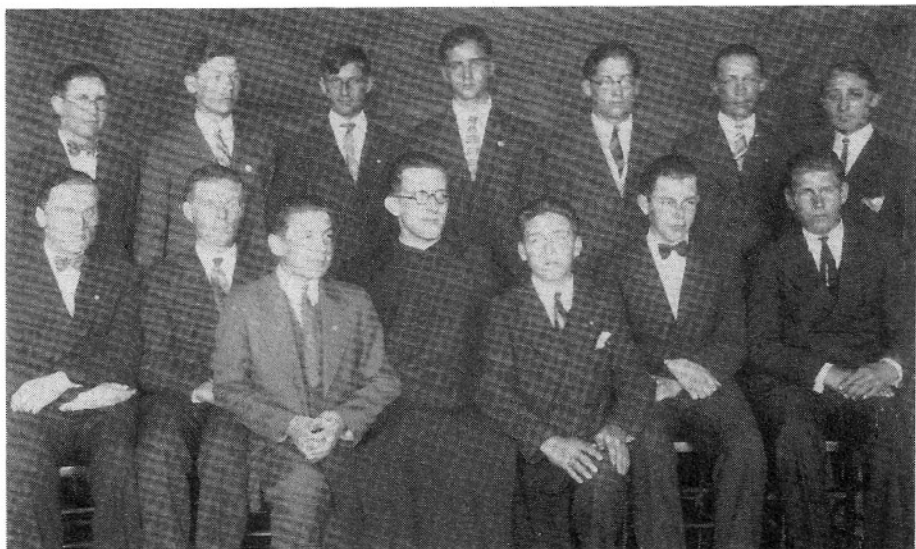
He made his final profession of vows on Feb. 22, 1940, and was ordained priest by Bishop Joseph Busch of St. Cloud on June 8, 1941.

From the years 1941-58, except during the two years at the University of Saskatchewan where he specialized in history, Father Jerome was prefect of students and coached outstanding hockey teams for St. Peter's.

Father Jerome was appointed prior of St. Peter's Abbey in December of 1958, by Abbot Severin Gertken, and became administrator at the time of Abbot Severin's death in 1960.

The remainder of the account of St. Peter's first native-born abbot is recalled by Abbey Necrologist, Father Francis Lohmer. Fr. Francis who will be 88 in September is still an active pastor, living in Humboldt, and serves the senior citizens along with his duties as pastor. — Ed.

Abbot Jerome was elected abbot by the monks on April 6, 1960, and with his retirement on June 15 this year, his 30 years as spiritual head of the abbey and the abbacy comes to an end. The gradual change from the somewhat stern rule of Abbot Severin to the more open rule of the new abbot was soon experienced by the monks. One of the first tasks of the newly elected abbot ordinary, and not ordinary abbot, was to attend the four sessions of Vatican Council II. After each session Abbot Jerome informed his monks of the deliberations and pronouncements of the Council, and through the pastors to in-



St. Peter's College speaking contest in spring of 1930 was taken very seriously. Back row: Fritz Weber (Abbot Jerome), Martin Brodner, Ray Schwartz, George Ott, Anthony Bauer, Francis Schwinghammer, Andre Florentine. Front row: Paul Hiebert, Frank Seidel, George Brodner, Fr. Paul Kuehne, OSB, Philip Engele, Walter Revering, Arnold Beissel.

form the laity most particularly of the changes in the liturgy.

At home vast changes approved by the abbot were made in the Divine Office. Again and again we hear favorable comments by visiting clergy and laity about the way the *Opus Dei* is recited and sung by the monks today. Another noticeable change was that of our high school-arts boarding school for boys becoming a co-ed institution. During Abbot Jerome's term of office we also saw the expansion of printing work as well as a considerable increase in the circulation of the *Prairie Messenger*. The erection of a new St. Peter's Press building was something the abbot seemed to enjoy "showing off" to visitors. Another promotion of the abbey that one might call the abbot's "pet project" was the sending of priests and sisters to do missionary work in Brazil.

In spite of our small population, Abbot Jerome strongly urged the formation of parish councils in every parish

of the abbacy and a pastoral council for the diocese. And for his priests, especially those doing pastoral work, he formed the presbyterate council. And since Vatican Council II urged the support of the ecumenical movement the abbot recommended its support wherever feasible.

Abbot Jerome was always greatly interested in adult education, more definitely religious education. To this end the abbey held at one time the annual Christian Faith Conferences. And in our parishes the so-called SPARS programs that consisted of lectures by clergy, sisters and laypeople speaking on religious or social problems of the day. Scripture classes and pastoral care courses were given regularly in the Abbacy Centre. Here also two sisters provide various catechetical helps for our religion teachers.

Usually, if not always, the abbot himself not only encouraged but participated in children's confirmation classes. No doubt the abbot was deep-



Abbot Jerome administering the sacrament of confirmation.

ly concerned with the vocational crisis in the abbacy. Hence, vocations were a constant subject of his sermons and talks, in particular when speaking to CWL and K of C and Oblate gathering and always when he addressed the large assembly gathered yearly on Mount Carmel.

Naturally Abbot Jerome was tried and pained at priests and brothers leaving the community. Losses also to deaths, 26 in 30 years he tells us. Then there is the growing age of his monks to be reckoned with. Still there is a slow though steady growth in the community. Through so-named "Live-ins," and through proper monastic formation that is being given to postulants, novices and juniors, the abbey may be said to be flourishing. By word and example Abbot Jerome shows what true Benedictine life is like.

The abbot's reputation as a retreat master is known far and wide, both through private and public retreats. The Bible, the liturgy of the Eucharist

and the holy rule undoubtedly are the abbot's chief sources of his spiritual directions. Outsiders frequently remark about his charity and kindness. And his faithful attendance at Divine Office is an inspiring example to the entire community.

Often too he would substitute for priests absent from either their parish



Fr. Abbot drying dishes with Sr. Muriel Gallagher of Edmonton.



Loretta Dauk is presented with a "going-away" gift by Br. Conrad Abs. Abbot Jerome and press manager, Fr. Peter Novocosky, share the humor.

or chaplaincy. Pastors of the abbacy when coming to the abbey to see the abbot often as not when not finding him in his office would be told: "You'll probably find him in coveralls cutting grass," or on a winter's day to find him shovelling snow or perhaps exercising his hockey legs in the area, and on any day after the evening meal locate him in the kitchen drying dishes. Or possibly today find him looking out of an east-side abbey window noting the progress in the building of our new abbey church.

Abbot Jerome through his work and travels, is a familiar figure to Benedictines and bishops all over the world. The depth of his biblical learning and the wide knowledge of church and secular history, as well as his keen interest in the present-day agriculture crisis, has made Abbot Jerome a highly respected member of the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Western and Saskatchewan Conferences of Bishops. He will be greatly missed by clergy and laity alike after



Abbot Jerome's daily work schedule, even at age 74, is shovelling snow in winter and mowing the lawn in summer.



Abbot Jerome and Leo Collin continue the long-time St. Peter's custom of transplanting evergreens. All the Spruce, Scotch Pine, Colorado Spruce, Elm and Ash have been planted by the monks.

he retires June 15.

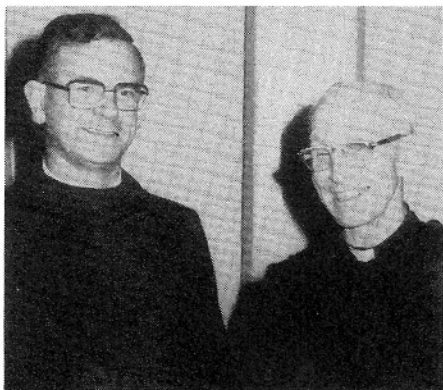
How better can I conclude this brief appreciation than to quote two excerpts from the Holy Rule which I believe fairly well summarize Abbot Jerome's 30 years as a Benedictine abbot: "The abbot must give an account of his stewardship; and let him be convinced that it becometh him better to serve than to rule." And also "Let him so adjust and adapt himself to everyone — to the one by gentleness of speech, to another by reproach, and to still another by entreaties, to each according to his bent and understanding — that he must suffer no loss in his flock, but may rejoice

in their virtuous increase."

And our Benedictine motto: "That in all things God may be glorified (UIOGD)" as well as his abbatial motto, *Soli Deo* (For God alone), both summarize the spirit, the heart and the life of Jerome Ferdinand Weber as abbot-ordinary of St. Peter's.



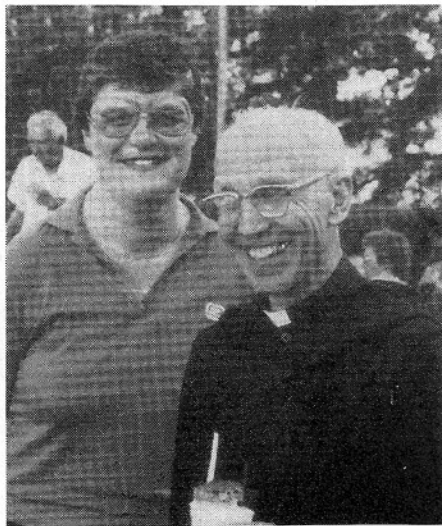
John Thompson and Abbot Jerome taught in St. Peter's College at the same time. John was honored at an outdoor supper at the end of his last school year. Abbot Jerome was history professor until three years ago.



In June of 1982, Benedictine Abbot Primate Victor Dammertz, with headquarters in Rome, visited with Abbot Jerome. It was the first time an abbot primate had visited St. Peter's.



Every five years the bishops of Saskatchewan are required to report to the pope. As ordinary of the abbacy, Abbot Jerome travelled to Rome for the "ad limina" visit in 1988.



An Oblate Day outdoor supper with ice cream; Marikay Falby and Abbot Jerome, July 1983.

Tributes to Abbot Jerome Weber, OSB

Abbot Jerome has been a great influence in my life. It began with him being my prefect in high school. He also was one of the teachers who helped me very much. As abbot we again worked very closely both when I was involved in St. Peter's Press and later in parishes. Abbot Jerome led us by example and gave us freedom to do our best.

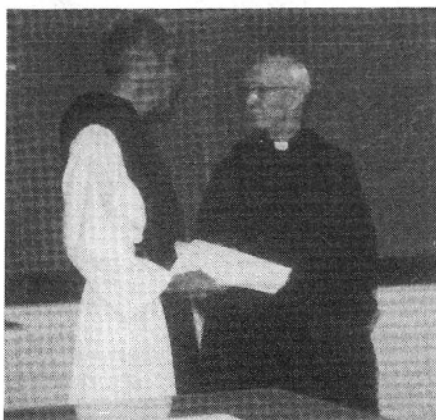
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One could hardly say it more bluntly and more accurately than Fr. Goldrick, a missionary, did after hearing Abbot Jerome in his early years give an address: "He's a damn humble man!" Quietly, unassumingly, humbly going about his daily work, not having a difficulty for every solution but the other way round, sums up Father Abbot's lifestyle, both in the monastery and around the abbacy.

* * *

"If anyone does the will of my father, who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister and mother" (Mt 12:50).

* * *



A visiting abbot is a good excuse for a celebration. Cistercian Abbot John Eudes Bamberger, OCSO, of Genesee Abbey, New York State, was the principal speaker at the Benedictine Formation Director's workshop held at St. Peter's in 1987.

Abbot Jerome admirably "filled the bill" of St. Benedict: "... He ought to govern his disciples ... by his deeds rather than his words. ... He must be learned in the Law of God. ... In all his commands, whether concerning spiritual or temporal matters, let him be prudent and considerate. ... Even in his corrections, let him act with prudence, and not go too far, lest while he seeketh too eagerly to scrape off the rust, the vessel be broken" (RB 2:64).

* * *

A friend and guide, a person to lead, Thoughtful and courteous when in need;

A person willing to help you strive for a goal.

Willing to attain your blessing of community as a whole.

No written book could hold it all; Under his guidance I accepted my call.

* * *

Abbot Jerome was always an abbot after the heart of St. Benedict. He was always fair in his dealing with those under him. He always showed a great concern for the needs and welfare of the community. He was always an example for his subjects. He showed himself as Christ in his dealing with subjects. He was an example for all of us.

* * *

If we look for Abbot Jerome's guidelines to his monastic life, we find there two important ones: A) *Solvitur ambulando* — "We may not see the way clearly today, but as we ambulate (walk on), light often falls upon our way." B) *Spiritus tuus bonus deducet me in viam rectam* — "May your good spirit lead me along the right way" (Ps 142).

* * *

I can always recognize Fr. Abbot coming down the abbey's dimly-lit corridors, not by his size, but by the quiet dignity of his erect carriage and the peaceful, yet purposeful, gait of his walk. Then, as we pass by each other in the corridor, he never fails to smile warmly.

* * *

1. The departure of several monks after Vatican II marked the early years of Abbot Jerome's rule, but the current generally good relationships with them speak well of his enduring friendliness to all. Though traditional in his own views, he did not reject experimentation. The abbacy is probably as advanced as most dioceses in implementing Vatican II policies. As a "man of God," dedicated to prayer, Abbot Jerome accepted the presence of solitaries on the monastic property. His fidelity to prayer, Scripture reading and the Eucharist has been an anchor for the community's spiritual life and a daily reminder of the monastic call to contemplation.

* * *

2. Monks, retreatants and visitors at the abbey enjoy the peace and beauty of nature as they walk along the various paths through the woods south of the abbey. Over the years, Abbot Jerome has built up these pathways and continues to keep them well mowed throughout the summer. For years to come the dozen of spruce and scotch pine he has transplanted in the woods



Archbishop Charles Halpin and Abbot Jerome with the 25th anniversary cake.

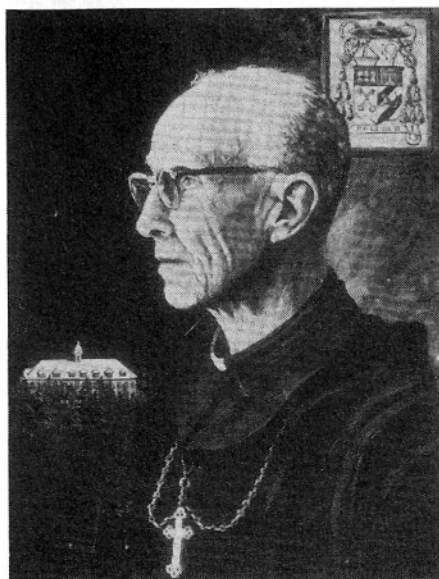


Saskatchewan bishops concelebrated with Abbot Jerome on his 25th anniversary as abbot-ordinary. L to R: Bishop Mahoney, Archbishop Halpin, Bishop Morand, Bishop Basil Filevich, Bishop Noel Delaquis and Fr. Rudolph Novacosky in wheelchair.

will be a tribute to his appreciation of God's glory in nature. I very much wish to thank Father Abbot Jerome for all the spiritually good things he sent my way during the past 50 years.

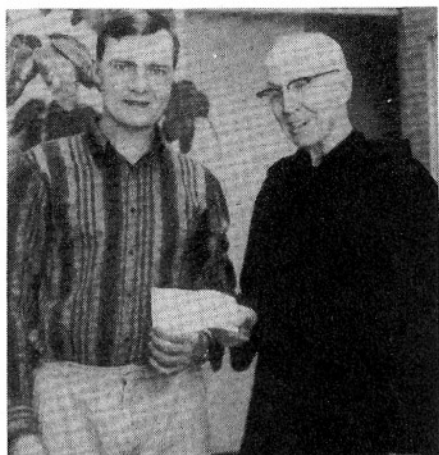
Abbot Jerome was a gentle man. In high school he could achieve complete compliance among the most recalcitrant without so much as raising his voice. There was never a hint of any violence in him. Though he was sparing in affirmation, you knew that he meant the few words he said. As a young man I was most impressed when he used to don overalls and get involved as part of the threshing crew. His smooth mastery of the puck on the ice even while skating with a Benedictine habit sums up his life as abbot — he cruised through it without noise and fanfare, quietly and gracefully.

Abbot Jerome has guided the community through some difficult and challenging times: Vatican II, the closing of the high school, new apostolates



A painting of Abbot Jerome by Dr. Zig. Kondzielewski of Humboldt on the 25th anniversary as abbot-ordinary in 1985.

in Brazil and in the abbacy. He has been a centre of calm and peace during these times. This has given a good anchor to the community, holding it steady, even when the waters have been a bit rough.



James Gerspacher presents Abbot Jerome with a cheque for the Abbey Church building fund on behalf of the Watson Council of the Knights of Columbus.



the Feast of St. Benedict.

Abbot Jerome gave generously of himself during his 30 years as abbot. He handed on to us his love for Sacred Scripture and his concern for Catholic education not just for youth but also of the adults of the abbacy.

* * *

Abbot Jerome has always been kind and understanding to me, especially when I was going through difficult times in my life. He gave me the opportunity to grow and mature. The laity have a very favorable opinion of Abbot Jerome as the ideal monk.

* * *

Abbot Jerome has an ear for everyone; he is just as willing to listen as to speak. No matter what he's doing he is willing to lend a hand. When snow needs shovelling he is there to do it. No task is too menial. He is an example for us all.

* * *

"Anyone who receives the name of Abbot is to lead his disciples by a twofold teaching: he must point out to them all that is good and holy, *more by example than by words . . .*" (RB 2:11-12). I believe Abbot Jerome has lived these words during his 30 years as abbot.

* * *

Thank you Fr. Abbot for sharing with us — by your teaching and your way of life — the fruit you gleaned from your constant and faithful meditation and prayer over the Sacred Scriptures.

* * *

The saying "Quiet waters run deep" well epitomizes the life and work of Abbot Jerome. His term as abbot was one of systematic and well-organized work and prayer. In spite of all the problems

that came his way, he was able to keep his quiet composure and work on, always knowing that God would be there to be his help in time of need. All this was the fruit of a deep prayer life based on his faith and love of God. To use the words so often used in Scripture "He was a good man." That says it all.

* * *

Abbot Jerome Weber, fourth abbot of St. Peter's Abbey, and the third abbot of the Territorial Abbey of St. Peter's, was elected on April 6, 1960, and resigned on June 15, 1990. The monks of the abbey and the members of the abbacy commend him for his efforts to impress on all he met the primacy of the Word of God, and the wisdom of the Rule of St. Benedict. Thirty years as abbot have left their mark on all of us. His resignation comes about because of the stipulation in Canon Law, the law governing the church, that all bishops, ordinaries and pastors, must submit their resignation when they reach the age of 75. We ask God to bless Fr. Abbot for many years to come.



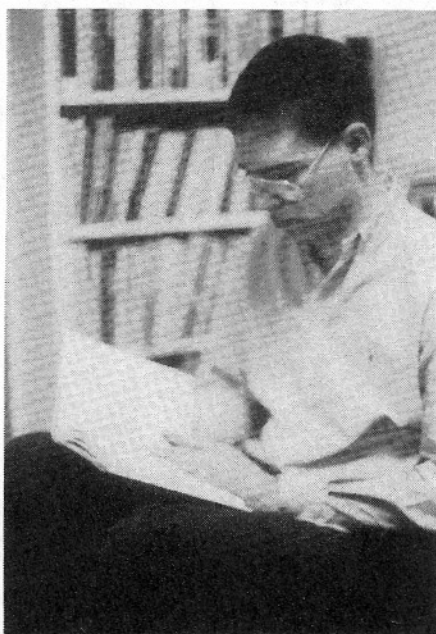
Bishop James Mahoney of Saskatoon is a frequent visitor to his alma mater.



Having lived one year as a candidate, George and Hilda Bernard made their final oblation as Oblates of St. Benedict on March 24. The role of Oblates in the church is not that of a priest or monk or nun, but to live in the world, to become holy in the world, to do what they can to bring the world to God by being witnesses of Christ to the world by word and example. Oblates of St. Benedict are affiliated with a monastery or convent without actually living with the community. They share in the daily prayers and good works of the monks and nuns. In their turn they pray some part of the Liturgy of the Hours each day, as they find time.



On April 18, Koby bricklayers began work on the Abbey church; they display a combination of speed and efficiency for 12 hours a day.



New postulant, Lucius Allison of Calgary, arrived on April 10 to join Anthony Nguyen of Saskatoon, who is already in the formation program.

Stained-glass window project

By Fr. Alfred Engele, OSB

What do you do when you're not tired enough to retire? Make up stained-glass windows for our new abbey church. A year ago I knew nothing about stained glass except that it exists. So it was a surprise when Fr. Andrew dropped in, three months before my retirement as pastor of Watson, and asked how I'd like to get involved in the project. I was overjoyed at the prospect. Exactly what the doctor ordered for premature retirement.

How do you go about a herculean job of incorporating in glass "the waters of a river that give joy to God's city" (Ps. 45)? or that beautiful picture of Ezekiel: "I saw water flowing out from beneath the threshold of the temple . . . down upon the Arabah. Along the bank of the river I saw many trees on both sides. Wherever this water

comes, the sea shall be made fresh. Fruit trees of every kind shall grow; every month they shall bear fresh fruit, for they shall be watered by the flow from the sanctuary. Their fruit shall serve for food, and their leaves for medicine?"

Architect Etienne Gaboury, I think, succeeded marvellously in capturing this broad concept in a continuous flowing river around the church. It will be a daily reminder to us monks and to all who come to worship, that we are to be the living water that gives joy to God's city and bring nourishment and healing to the people we live with and to those we serve.

But, to the task! Abbot Jerome and confreres gave me several books on stained glass. I read them, studied them, concentrating on sections deal-



ing with the technique. This, together with apprenticeship under Sister Saleisia Zunti, OSE, who has done a number of windows for various churches and chapels, helped to put theory into practice — especially the dread of cutting glass.

We waited patiently for the glass to arrive from Winnipeg. Meantime half the area of our Library B was undergoing transformation: two 4- by 8-foot tables, raised to prevent getting hump-backed, and a large light box for tracing were installed; tools of the trade purchased: cutter, grozing and running pliers, nippers, glass grinder, electrical outlets, soldering iron, etc. Library B became "Old Man River S.G. Enterprises."

Next, the letter-size drawings by the architect needed blowing up to full-scale, working drawings. We did one by hand with homemade compass and ruler. We decided there had to be an easier, more efficient way. We contacted Desk & Disk in Humboldt. After a number of trial-and-error runs on their computer, they succeeded getting the machine to come up with exact, full-scale copies. These were delivered to the architect, marked for the various

colors of glass and size of lead came and returned.

Besides the 7½-foot round window above the entrance and a number of other colored ones, there will be 26 panels, 3½ by 7½ feet going just under the roof line from the northeast all around the church to the northwest corner, about 676 sq. feet of glass.

Panel No. 1 went on the table at the beginning of May. After cutting 300-plus pieces of glass, placing it, leading it in and soldering and cementing it in for waterproofing and cleaning it, the panel will be ready for installation.

As one gets more proficient the job can be done more quickly. We estimate doing a panel in three to four weeks. If all goes well, the glass should be in place in a year and a half to two years. I may be a little more tired by that time, but very happy that the job is done.

Fr. Damian remembered

By Frank Smith, a friend

You left us so suddenly.
There was no time for adieus.
Pain and sorrow filled our hearts
When we heard the tragic news.

Healer time tries to mend our broken hearts.
Tears still trickle gently down our cheeks
When we recall with love the friendship
that you gave.

So until we meet again on that eternal shore
We'll cherish the memory of the beautiful gift of person you were.
Praying that Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and his mother Mary too,
Are holding you tenderly in the palms of their hands.

We miss you, Damian.

(May 11 was the first anniversary of Damian Yaskowich's death. — Ed.)

The rune of hospitality

St. Benedict reminds his monks that Christ is in the guest, the sick and the abbot. He based this on St. Matthew's Gospel, Ch. 25:35ff. This past winter two young guests in Severin Hall, Laurie and Kelly, presented the following ancient poem to the guestmaster.

I saw a stranger yestereen;
I put food in the eating place,
 Drink in the drinking place,
 Music in the listening place;
And in the sacred names of the Triune
He blessed me and my house,
 my cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark said in her song:
 Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise;
 Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.

Rejuvenate yourself

For spiritual growth and enrichment in the peace and quiet of a monastery, phone the guestmaster at St. Peter's Abbey, 682-2581, for reservations. Room and board \$25.00 per day. Available to men and women, Monday to Friday only.

St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter
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