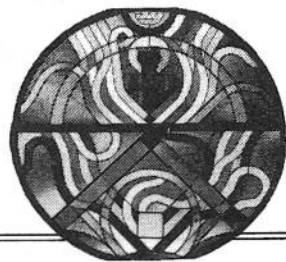




St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter

Vol. 17 No. 1 Autumn 1994



Br. Anthony makes solemn vows



Br. Anthony Nguyen

A new chapter in the history of St. Peter's Abbey was begun Sept. 8 when Br. Anthony Nguyen became the first monk of Asian ancestry to join the community. Up to this point community members have come either from North America or Europe.

Br. Anthony was born in Hanoi, Vietnam. He came to Canada in 1980 and settled in Saskatoon. He first came to St. Peter's Abbey in 1989.

Br. Anthony chose Sept. 8 as his day of solemn profession because of his intense devotion to Mary. Further evidence of this is seen in the collection of statues and devotionals in his room and in his devotion to the rosary.

The profession celebration took on an Asian coloring at the dinner following the liturgy. The Vietnamese cuisine was prepared by the family of Br. Anthony and was served in the gym. For many of the guests it was their first taste of a Vietnamese meal.

Family members of Br. Anthony who were able to be present included his aunt, one sister, a brother-in-law, two cousins and several nieces and nephews. In addition, a good number of staff, oblates and friends from the area

were able to celebrate with us in the abbey church. Among these friends were the Ursuline sisters who became good friends of Br. Anthony when they gave him English lessons when he was a candidate.

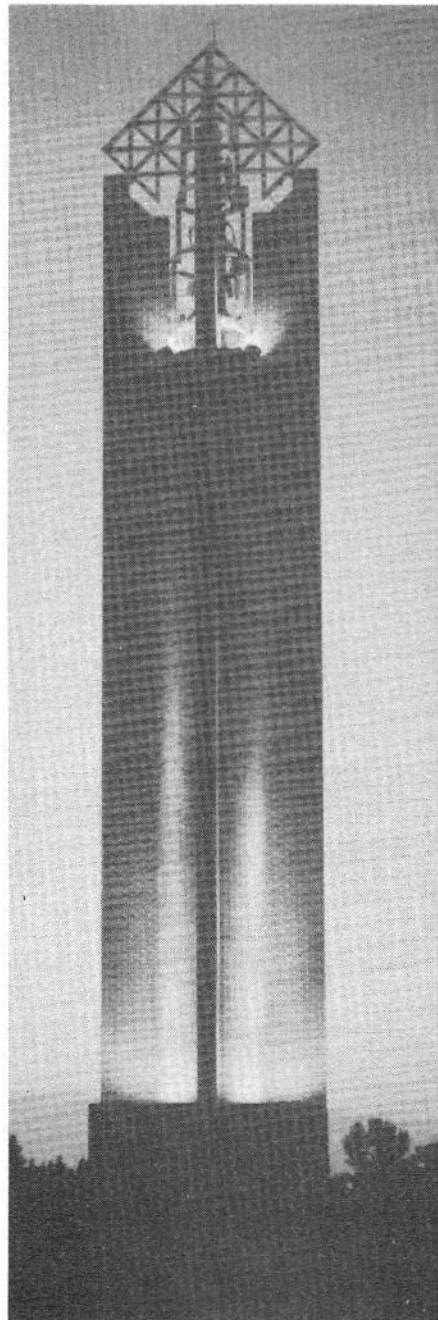
Br. Anthony's parents both died in Vietnam, his mother in 1973 and his father in 1980. His only brother, Anthony, died in Saskatoon in 1993.

This past year we have tried some new experiments with people who want to be associated somehow with our community. We have two long-term guests. They live here for a year to work on their own projects. However, they work half time for their room and board. As the same time we encourage them to join us for our prayers.

Another development we tried this fall was a pre-candidate program, for those who are thinking of joining the community but who haven't had a chance to experience our life much because of the distance they live from us. Thus we give them the opportunity to join in our work, prayer and community life, so we can become better acquainted with each other.

This September we received Philip McPherson of Sault Ste Marie as a pre-candidate. He worked in the library. We also received Richard Vrabec of Peace River, Alta., and Neil Pitzel of Regina as candidates. Richard and Philip decided to leave after about a month here. Neil was accepted as a candidate on Sept. 19.

A concern to our community is the lack of vocations from our own area. It's been 30 years since someone from the abbacy made solemn vows. We invited families to join us for Vespers, supper and visiting during the Sundays of October. This coincided with the Bishops Synod on Consecrated Life in Rome.



Lighted tower.

Activities and goings-on around the abbey

By Martin Brodner, O.S.B.

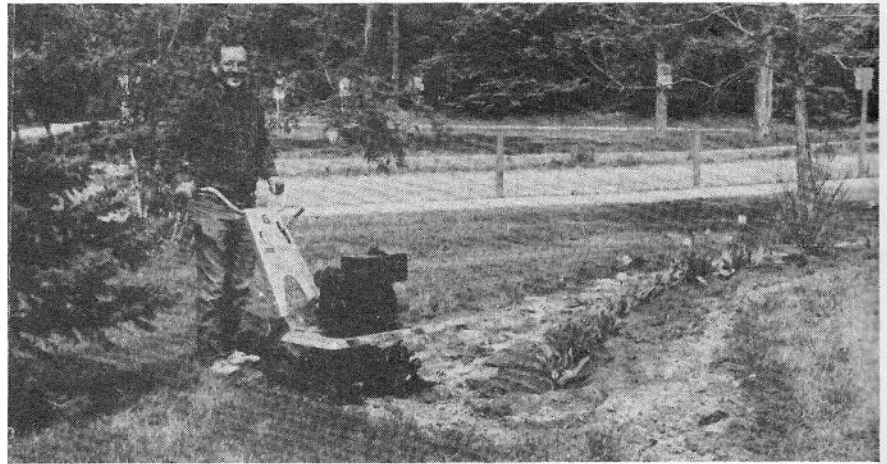
Since the last Newsletter (Pentecost), we've had four months of the most beautiful summer weather: early abundant rains, followed by about two months of warm, bright growing and ripening weather. The result? An abundance of crops and garden produce, as well as an uncontrollable growth of weeds! Our many photos show the great amount of healthy activity that was packed into this time.

BELL TOWER: The abbey chapter voted for its construction on Dec. 29, 1993. Pilings and foundation were poured March 21 and 25. Brickwork by Koby Construction, Saskatoon, both speedy and excellent, extended from April 11 to June 9. The four bells arrived on site June 17, were blessed June 22 and hoisted onto the tower June 30. And the bells rang out jubilantly for the first time for Vespers, Friday, July 1! Come and 'hear dem bells.'

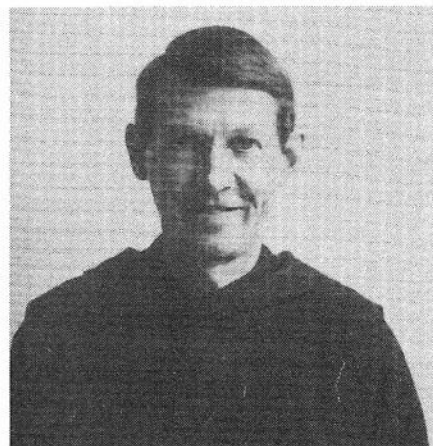
RETREAT: Abbot Jerome Kodell, O.S.B., of New Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas preached the monks' retreat from June 12 to 16. He joins a long list of abbots in the United States and Canada with the name Jerome. Some have been made bishops, but only one, Jerome Weber, was an abbot-ordinary.



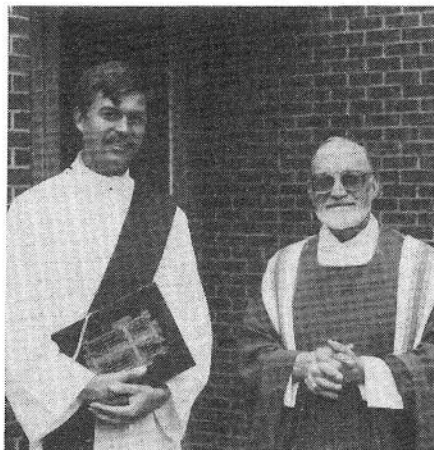
Vanessa Gzenda, Daniel Aspel and Adam Shaw 'saving' the young garden.



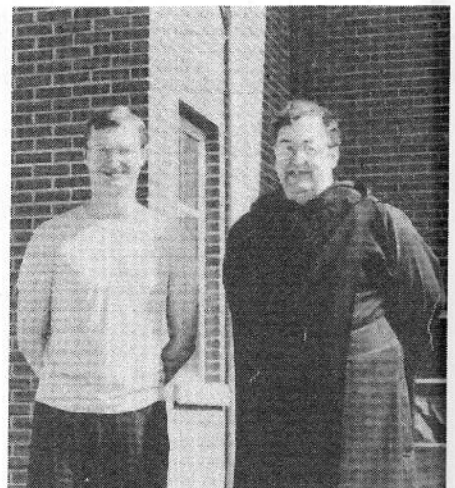
Ken Janzen was responsible for the many beautiful flower plots.



Abbey retreat director for 1994 was Abbot Jerome Kodell, O.S.B., of New Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas.



The 'James Boys' - Deacon Jim Kaptein and Fr. James Gray, O.S.B. Jim was ordained priest by Bishop Blaise Morand, Prince Albert, on June 24, 1994.



Neil Pitzel was received as a candidate Sept. 19.

Activities and goings-on around the abbey

VISITATION: Abbot Matthew Leavy, O.S.B., of St. Anselm's Abbey, Manchester, N.H., and Fr. Daniel Ward, O.S.B. (St. John's Abbey, Collegeville), at present administrator of St. Gregory's Abbey, Okla., were the two visitors of the Abbey community from July 27 to Aug. 2. We called it the "Raspberry Visitation," because this fruit was at its best during these days, and our guest visitors delighted in frequently visiting this patch.

JUBILARIANS: Frs. Alfred Engele and Florian Renneberg, ordained June 4, 1944, by Bishop Reginald Duprat, O.P., of Prince Albert, celebrated their golden jubilee on the Solemnity of St. Benedict, July 11. Fr. Alfred, retired at

the abbey, is most active in cutting colored glass windows and panels. Fr. Florian continues his pastoral work in the parishes of Lake Lenore and St. James.

Frs. Leo Hinz and Albert Ruetz made their profession of vows June 4, 1944. The community celebrated their golden jubilee of profession with them on Aug. 2 at a gathering at the abbey for the closing of the Visitation. Fr. Leo continues his pastoral work at Bruno, and Fr. Albert still teaches mathematics at the college and is in charge of Carmel and Peterson parishes.

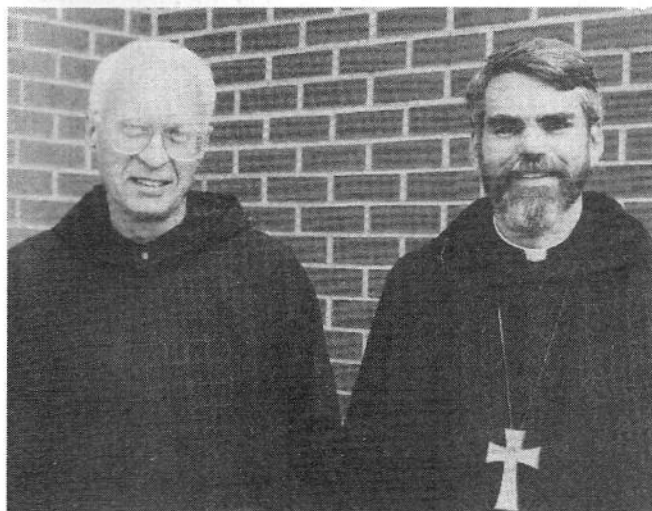
APPOINTMENTS: At our annual chapter Abbot Peter announced the following monastic appointments: Fr.

Roman Schneider, new prior; Br. Kurt van Kuren, new subprior. The abbot's plan is to rotate these positions every five years.

+Abbot Peter attended the national CWL convention in Vancouver, B.C., Aug. 10-18, as well as the annual meeting of the Canadian bishops in Ottawa, from Aug. 25-30.

+Br. Demetrius Wasylyniuk returned to Mt. Angel Abbey for his third year theology on Aug. 20. On June 29 he received the minor order of Acolyte, a first step toward the priesthood, hopefully, in two years hence.

+Br. Thomas Ward left on Sept. 9 for a four-month spiritual renewal with the Paraclete Fathers in St. Louis, Mo.



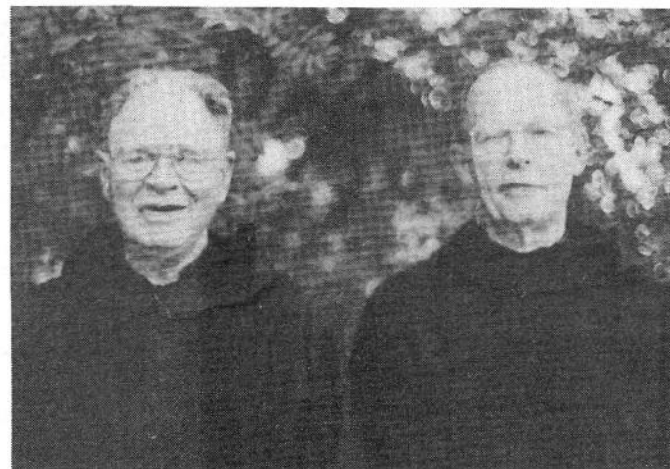
1994 Abbey visitors were Fr. Dan Ward and Abbot Matthew Leavy.



Making their final Oblation on June 25, 1994, were: Rev. Don Bolen, Robert and Pauline Langen, Olga and Richard Reineke. Fr. Albert, Oblate Director, and Abbot Peter are also shown above.



Frs. Alfred Engele and Florian Renneberg, 50 years of priesthood.

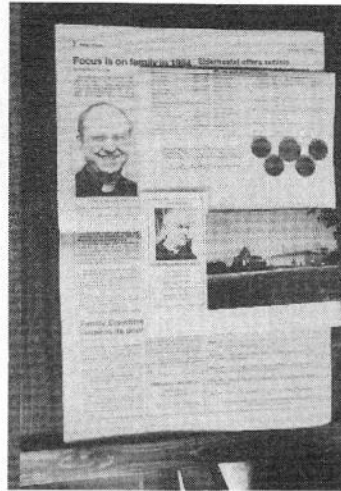


Frs. Albert Ruetz and Leo Hinz, 50 years as monks.

Chronicle of building the bell tower



Mike Serby of Koby Construction places the time capsule in position.



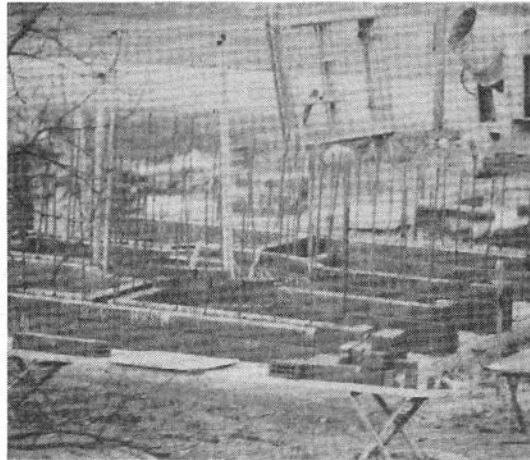
Time Capsule contents included a medal of St. Benedict, Abbot Peter's signature, and the names (and phone numbers) of all living monks to July 1.



Mrs. Frances Britz with the Anton Britz memorial bell.



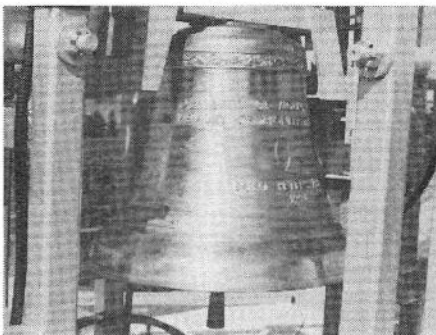
The first three bricks were named Lloyd, Danny and Mike, after the main three bricklayers, above.



The brick tower is reinforced with iron rods and cement.



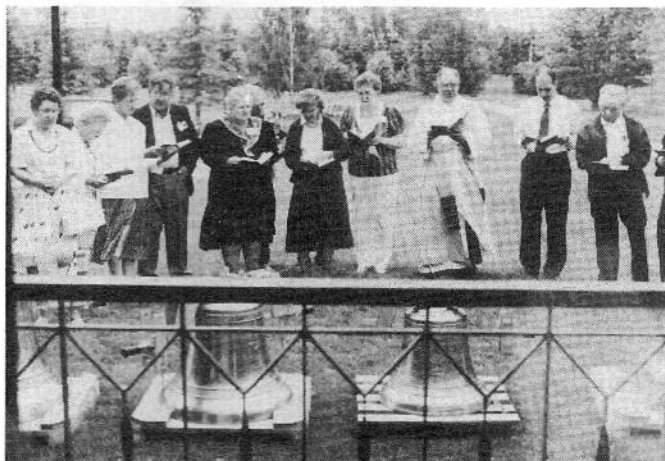
Sr. Rita, O.S.E., with the Adrian Family memorial bell.



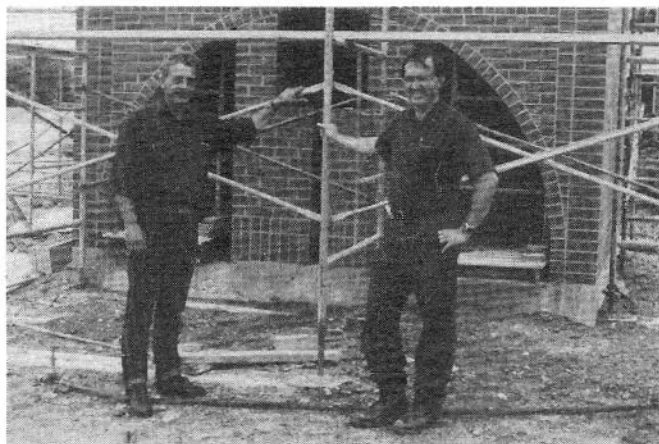
The Mount Carmel bell in memory of our pioneers.



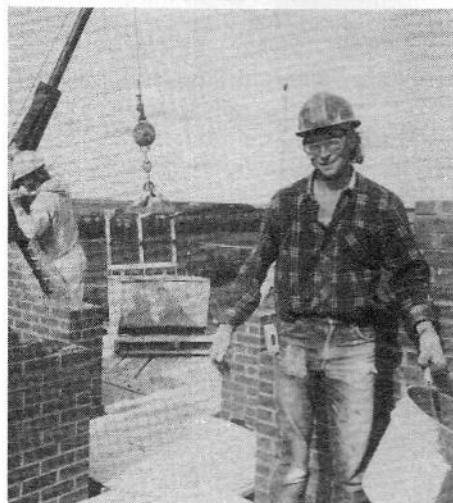
Abbot Peter blesses the bells before installation.



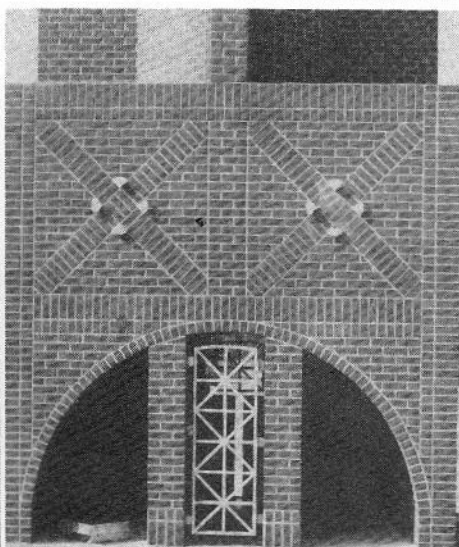
Oblates of St. Peter's were present for the blessing of the Oblate bell.



The bells, made in France, were installed by Leo Goudreau & Fils Inc., of Quebec - the same company which installed the four Lake Lenore church bells 40 years ago.



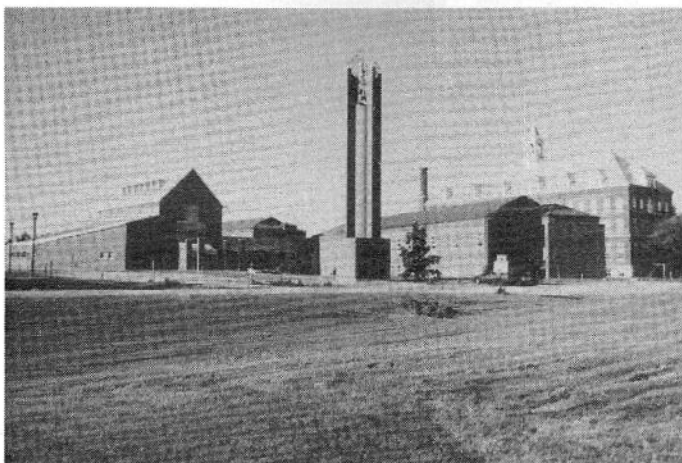
Lloyd and Dan finishing the brick work at the top of the tower.



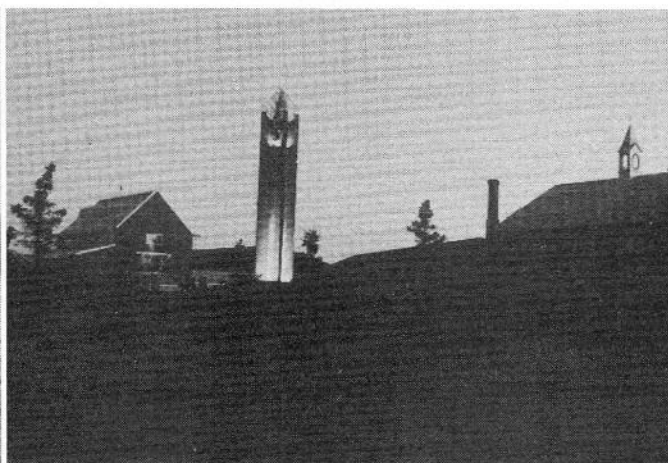
Close-up of the design on the tower base - same design is on the outside front of the church.



After the bells were assembled, the steel frame was lifted into position on top.



Our new skyline by day . . .



. . . by night.

Activities and goings-on

Continued from page 3

+Br. Anthony Nguyen made his solemn (final) profession of vows on Sept. 8, feast of the birth of Mary.

ELDERHOSTEL: The first Elderhostel program sponsored by St. Peter's was held from May 29 to June 4. Participants came from Boston, Oregon and parts in between.

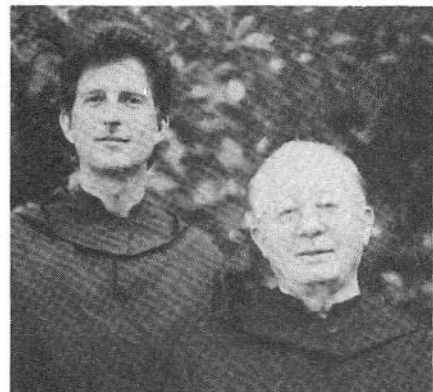
VISITORS: It is not often that the Benedictine Sisters in Winnipeg get to St. Peter's. However, this year we were privileged to have the Prioress of St. Benedict's Monastery, Sr. Grace Kowalski, O.S.B., and her guest, Sr. Jean Maher, O.S.B., of Duluth, Minn., visit us on Sept. 24.

TRUE: Fr. William Thurmeier and Br. Francis Fortney motored to St. Bernard's Abbey, Ala., to bring home a free

pipe organ for St. Augustine Church (Humboldt). On their return Sept. 23, Fr. Martin asked Fr. William: "Well, did you 'bring home the bacon?' " "No," answered Fr. William, "but I did bring home an 'organ transplant!'"

REUNION: Fr. Lawrence drove to Iowa on Aug. 4 with his brothers Walter, OMI, and Ray to attend the Wedewer family reunion (their mother's side). Burchard Wedewer from Germany discovered the North American clan after losing his membership card in a worldwide home exchange program for vacationers. When they brought the name Wedewer up on the computer he discovered Kent Wedewer in Edmonton, Fr. Lawrence's first cousin from Cudworth. That occasioned the contacts that led to this international gathering.

Fr. Lawrence and his brothers also looked up DeMong relatives in Minne-



New Subprior Br. Kurt van Kuren, and new Prior Roman Schneider.

apolis and Winona, Minn., and joined the monks at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., for vespers and supper Aug. 8. Fr. Lawrence was most grateful to visit his former novice master, Fr. Cosmas Dahlheimer, in the infirmary and renew acquaintances with many monks of St. John's.



Fr. Richard Meidl, college administrative council chairperson, with Phyllis Thompson, new college campus minister.



Helena Vredegoor, sister of Fr. Sylvester, visited St. Peter's this summer.



St. Peter's first Elderhostel participants - June 1994.

NEW BOOK AVAILABLE

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE COCONUT THIEF

the stories of two Brazilian street children
by Alphonse Gerwing (Oblate)

Order from St. Peter's Press, Box 190,
Muenster, SOK 2YO

Price: \$12.95 (tax included) plus
\$2.25 postage/handling per book.

Escaped Vietnamese makes solemn vows

By a Confrere

Brother Anthony Vuong Nguyen, one of St. Benedict's favorite sons, pronounced solemn vows as a Benedictine on Sept. 8, 1994. The large crowd witnessing the ceremony in Sts. Peter and Paul Abbey Church attest to the many lives this devout monk has touched since first coming to Canada 14 years ago.

In 1980, Br. Anthony escaped from his native Vietnam by hiding under a boat-load of dead fish. He and a nephew, Alphonse Man, lay on the bottom of the fishing boat, scarcely able to breathe, with only a net separating them from a load of fresh fish. It was a tense moment when the boat had to report to the communist guards. Providentially, the guards did not fully inspect the boat, and so the fishermen and escapees were able to continue their "journey."

Anthony Vuong Nguyen, born Jan. 19, 1954, in Hanoi, made his home in Saskatoon with relatives who also escaped the communist rule. For 10 years he worked at janitorial and other maintenance jobs while he searched for a religious community that would accept him with his 'limited' English.

He first visited St. Peter's Abbey in 1985 with his Canadian sponsor, Hans Huss, who was also present at the profession ceremony. After entering the monastery, keeping his baptismal name Anthony (after Anthony of Padua), he studied English for three years under the guidance of the Ursulines of Bruno.

Anthony made simple profession on



Ha Nguyen, Bishop Mahoney, Abbot Peter and Br. Anthony on profession day, Sept. 8, 1994.

Sept. 3, 1991, exemplifying a strong devotion to the saints, the Mother of God and the Blessed Sacrament. He uses his musical talents, which he gained from the Sisters of the Holy Rosary in Vietnam, to play and sing his favorite Marian hymns. Often Br. Anthony's high beautiful tenor or male alto voice can be heard when he is working in secluded areas of the monastery. His easy piano technique, with its flourishing arpeggios, is seldom heard by the public as he is easily embarrassed, and because he has a strong desire for humility.

While Anthony displays a deep, sincere spirituality and a willingness to help anyone in need and to do menial jobs, his greatest service to the St. Peter's community has been his work with the sick and elderly.

In his homily at the Mass of Profession, Abbot Peter Novecosky commented on the role of providence in

Anthony's life. He used the Scripture text, "All things work together for good for those who love God" (Rom 8). Br. Anthony's deep love for God has been revealed most clearly in his care-giving to Fr. Matthew (who died in January at age 97), and now to Br. Conrad Abs, who at 88 requires many hours of home-care every day. Anthony's patience with these elderly is an inspiring example of Benedictine spirituality.

Following the hour-long ceremony at which Abbot Peter officiated, the Vietnamese community in Saskatoon served a Vietnamese dinner for the 150 guests. To Br. Anthony's relatives, a monastic profession deserved the same festive celebrations as a family wedding.

The monks of St. Peter's Abbey welcome a new member into their community, and consider themselves blessed to have a confrere of Br. Anthony Vuong Nguyen's spiritual calibre.



Br. Anthony with some of his Saskatoon relatives - Sept. 8, 1994.



Br. Anthony reads his solemn commitment as a monk to Abbot Peter.

Farm reports a good harvest

By Bernard Lange, O.S.B.

This has been a very good year for agriculture, with favorable weather most of the season. There were some problems however, a few hot days reduced the yield of the Polish variety canola, and the wheat midge kept the wheat from getting too high. Still, the crop yield was very good.

* We seeded 835 acres of red spring wheat, harvesting about 28,000 bushels, or about 33 bushels per acre.

* 310 acres were seeded to the Polish variety canola, and we harvested 6,800 bushels, or about 22 bushels per acre.

* We seeded only 106 acres to barley, harvesting about 7,700 bushels at an overall yield of 72 bushels per acre.

* We seeded 238 acres of oats this year, more than we have had for many years. The harvest totaled about 17,000 bushels, or about 72 bushels per acre.

* We put in 86 acres of fall rye, yielding 4,300 bushels, or about 50 bushels per acre.

Deaths

Deaths which have occurred since the last SPANewsletter are:

Kathleen Boyd (Sharp), Oblate, died April 19, 1994, in Mirror, Alta.

Sr. Theodore Reineke, O.S.U., of Bruno, died July 30, 1994

Sr. Dolores Moorman, O.S.U., of Bruno, died Sept. 17, 1994

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Photo Credits: Boivin, Nguyen, Moran, Spenrath.

Logo by Kurt van Kuren, O.S.B.

* We had the best potato crop we have had for many years. For example, we planted 200 pounds of yukon gold variety which returned over 4,000 pounds of nice-sized potatoes.

* The corn crop, I believe, is the best we have ever had. We put a new variety in this year, an excellent eating white corn called Guinevere. Some people had difficulty with it because it wasn't yellow, but we had yellow corn as well. We sold over 33,000 cobs.

* Our entire garden did very well, keeping up nicely with the weeds which did just as well. The tomato plants must have produced over a ton of tomatoes.

* A light hail shower earlier this spring bruised our apples somewhat.

* 300 greyline pullets arrived May 13, and by the middle of September had started laying small eggs.

* The pig barns are full to capacity, but at present the price for pork is so low that there is no profit left.

* Most of our 50 cows have their young at foot. It is quite a sight to see the calves lying in the sun by themselves.

* As for our cats, we have gathered quite a herd. Each fall our cat population usually doubles when they seem to come from nowhere.

* We still have our four horses. Two we use almost every day during the winter, drawing feed to the cattle and cleaning the barns. One black horse is supposedly 32 years old, and is now living in retirement. The other we keep for its good behavior.

* The bees produced a crop of about 1,800 pounds of honey.

R & R in Severin Hall Guest-wing

For spiritual growth and enrichment in the peace and quiet of a monastery, try Severin Hall guest-wing at St. Peter's Abbey. St. Peter's monastery has wooded areas with meditation trails, orchard and gardens among tall evergreens planted by the monks. Spiritual direction available to men and women upon request.

All guests are encouraged to pray with the monks in their church; to rest, to listen in quiet solitude, and to share their concerns for healing, peace of mind and reconciliation, to return to their God.

Reasonable rates for religious groups; others pay by donation. Working with the monks is an option for those short on funds.

Phone the guestmaster at 306-682-1775 for reservations.

WANTED

for new Guest Meeting Room
Grand or Upright Piano

(in good condition)

Guestmaster
682-1775

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*ORDER OF ST. BENEDICT
Muenster, Sask.
S0K 2Y0*



Farewell dinner for Anna Kiefer - with husband, Joe