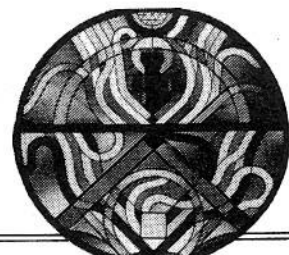




St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter

Vol. 17 No. 2 Spring 1995



Pastor, teacher and fisherman dies

By Fr. Jerome F. Weber, OSB

When Fr. Florian did not appear in St. Anthony's Church in Lake Lenore for the morning mass, some parishioners went to the parish house to find out the reason for his absence. They discovered that he was dead and from the evidence of what they saw it was concluded that he probably died shortly after his return from St. Anne's Parish (Annaheim) on the evening of April 5, 1995.

This news spread rapidly and was received with surprise and grief by those who knew him and whose lives he had touched in different ways. This



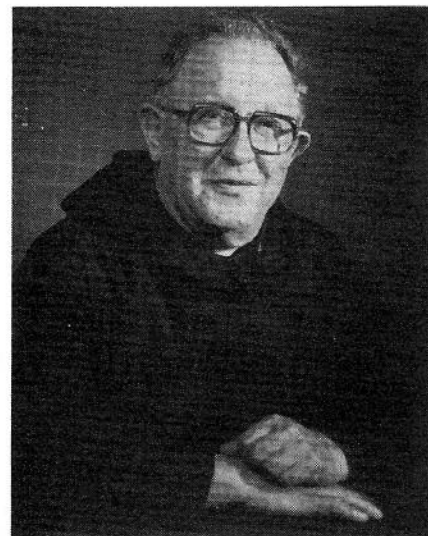
Abbot Peter Novecosky and Neil Pitzel on day of investiture

was clearly manifested by the many people who came to the prayer service, let by Prior Roman, in St. Anthony's Church (Lake Lenore), during the afternoon of April 9, at St. Augustine Church (Humboldt) led by his brother, Fr. Werner, in the evening, and at the mass offered by Abbot Peter Novecosky, along with many co-presiders, during the afternoon of April 10. After the celebration he was buried in the cemetery at St. Peter's Abbey.

Fr. Florian was born at Leofeld Oct. 27, 1920, son of William and Ida (nee) Pulvermacher, in a family of eight sons and four daughters. He received his early education in his home and in the school near his home. He continued his high school and took one year of junior college at St. Peter's College. After joining the Benedictine community there he made his novitiate at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., and after making his profession of vows on July 11, 1939, he studied philosophy and theology at the university there. He was ordained a priest in St. Peter's Cathedral by Bishop Duprat, OP, of Prince Albert on June 4, 1944.

During his 55 years as a monk and 50 years as a priest he shared the many talents of mind and heart, with which God had richly endowed him, with the many people with whom he came into contact.

The gifts of a keen intelligence and his fluent way of expressing his knowledge were evident in the many years he gave to teaching and preaching. At St. Peter's College he had the ability to teach practically any subject which was assigned to him. During these years he specialized in biology and after attending the University of Saskatchewan and summer course at the University of Minnesota, he received a master's



Fr. Florian Renneberg, OSB
1920 - 1995

degree from the former. Besides teaching this subject, and many others at St. Peter's, he taught summer sessions at the University in Saskatoon, and for several years at the Junior College conducted by the Christian Brothers in Yorkton.

During his years at the Abbey he was involved in many other occupations besides teaching. His extra-curricular activities included being prefect of students, involvement in sports, director of the student glee club and in the many other things that were necessary in a boarding school for young men. Along with Fr. Leo Hinz and Br. Gregory Brodner, he took care of the electrical work involved in the construction of new buildings. During the time when Fr. Leonard Benning was in charge of the farm he was, as it were — his right hand man — and he continued to contribute his knowledge and sup-

— CONTINUED, page 4

Activities and goings-on around the abbey

By Martin Brodner, OSB

HI ! As I start this chronicle (May 1) of the past six months, I still see snow in the bushes. It is a springtime that we'll talk about for a long time: with record flooding of fields, thousands of Canada and White geese, and ducks, resting and feeding in the stubble fields for most of April, and an APRIL in which spring never really sprung. Br. Bernard realistically can't foresee spring seeding beginning much before May 14. So what happened around the Abbey?

Oct. 14-16 — Ukrainian Youth For Christ Retreat, with Bishop Basil Filevich presiding at the Divine Liturgy.

Nov. 6 — Lutheran Pastors' Retreat.

Nov. 9 — A "week of tours." Four

busloads of senior citizens from Regina and the Saskatoon area chose to include St. Peter's as a major stopping point on their fall outing, including the Imhoff paintings in St. Peter's Cathedral.

Nov. 19 — Oblate Day: Fr. Kragbe Legre of Camrose, Alta., and Ed Felix of Bruno make final oblations as Oblates of St. Benedict.

Nov. 20 — Church history students from Aldersgate College of Moose Jaw, pay a final visit before the Bible college closes its doors this spring.

Nov. 24 — Forty Holy Cross Grade 12 students from Saskatoon make retreat.

Nov. 25 — First change of transformers by SaskPower Corp since we switched over to SaskPower in 1957. This included a new and taller pole to hold the transformers. Nine power

trucks helped in this operation as a minor blizzard blanketed the grounds.

Nov. 25 — The long awaited first shipment of CBW III hymnals arrived. They were used for the first time at the abbey on the Second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 6, 1994.

Dec. 2-4 — Bruno Ursuline Council workshop here with Sr. Janet Malone, CND, leading the deliberations.

Jan. 1/95 — Rod Scanson of Prince Albert arrives as a long-term guest, joining David Tompkins of Toronto and Simon Boivin who arrived earlier.

Jan. 3 — Fr. Don Bolen, home from Oxford, England, for the Christmas holidays, drove up from Regina for a quick, one-day visit.

Jan. 3 — Abbey church pipe organ: First phase began with the setting up of the huge basic frame structure on which the pipes will be mounted later this summer. The steel frame for it was cut and welded in our abbey farm workshop by Br. Bernard Lange and his capable helper Harold Dyck. The soundproof wooden panelling which encases this skeleton was applied by Br. Wolfgang Thiem and our all-around craftsman, Allen Vedress. Since then, Br. Wolfgang is manufacturing the gypsum (cement) columns which form the outer coating. Inside this structure will be housed the bellows and motor, while hundreds of pipes will be set up on top — to a total height of about 25 feet. Meanwhile, Fr. William Thurmeier has been assembling the organ console with three registers. All this fills the south end of the abbey church.

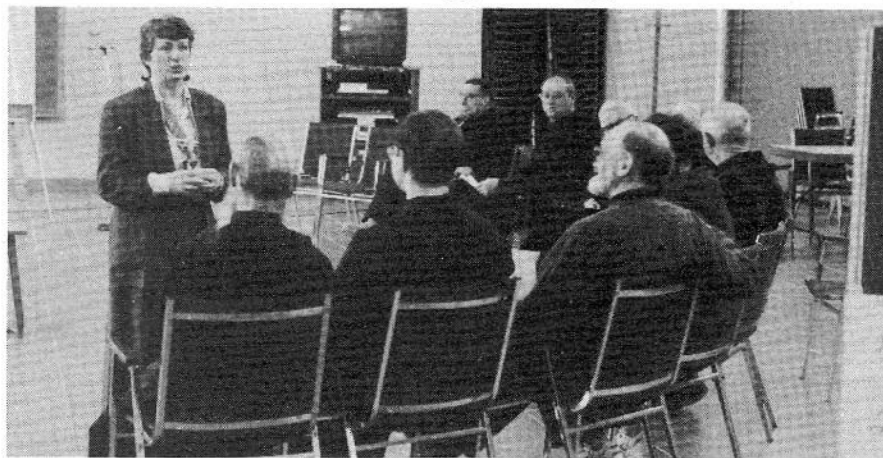
Jan. 11 — Fr. Leander Dosch (Anaheim) was elected abbot of the Trappist (Reformed Cistercian) Monastery at Huntsville, Utah (35 miles north of Salt Lake City). He was a Benedictine monk of our abbey until he followed his growing convictions of joining the stricter Cistercian monks on Aug. 5, 1975. Abbot Peter Novcosky was present for his blessing on March 12. Congratulations and blessings, Abbot Leander!!

Jan. 27 — Large number of STM students attend this year's Newman Club retreat directed by Fr. Ron Rolheiser.



New Abbot of the Cistercian community at Huntsville, Utah, and former member of St. Peter's Abbey, Leander Dosch, of Anaheim, Sask., with his mother and Abbot Peter Novcosky.

Activities and goings-on around the abbey



Sr. Janet Malone, CND, facilitates our Vision & Mission Statement.

Feb. 18 — Two-week "winter colony" sponsored by the Sask. Writers Guild.

Feb. 19 — Former resident SPC student, Bob Tucker of Esterhazy, stayed in his old room in res., S104 for a couple days. Other students visiting the Abbey recently were: Kevin Yakimoski, Dean Tatlow, Rob Twa & Robb Horner.

Feb. 25 — The Vancouver Chamber Singers, under the direction of Jon

Washburn, conducted a workshop in the Jerome Assembly Room for local singers. After a short rest in Severin Hall, they performed a concert at St. Augustine's Church, Humboldt. The Sask. Choral Federation, which conducts summer choir camps at St. Peter's every summer, sponsored this event.

March 2 — Bishop James Mahoney (Saskatoon), a former SPC student, friend and willing helper at abbey ordinations, died after several heart attacks and complications following bypass heart surgery. RIP

March 4 - Sr. Zita Maier, OSU, of Regina, conducted a workshop on liturgy for the lay presiders of the Abbacy.

March 4 — Giant Garage Sale in our gym — a joint effort of abbey-college-library. 'Twas wonderful to see you all!

March 5 — Greg Saretsky leaves with Norm Duerr on a Holy Land Tour until March 26.

March 8 — An art instructor has been hired by the Quill Lakes-Humboldt Arts Council to teach art to students of all ages; Kevin Quinlan makes St. Peter's his home base and teaches some students in a studio in St. Michael Hall.

March 10-12 — Emmanuel and St. Chad College (U of S) weekend retreat.

March 15 — St. Thomas School (Saskatoon) Grade 8 retreat directed by a former college student, Robb Horner. This was followed by a weekend retreat for Robb's former students (now in

Grade 10).

March 20 — Neil Pitzel of Regina, invested in novice's habit.

March 23 — 24-hour retreat by Grade 12 students from E.D. Feehan high school in Saskatoon, directed by Fr. Brad Bodnarchuk and Elaine Laverty.

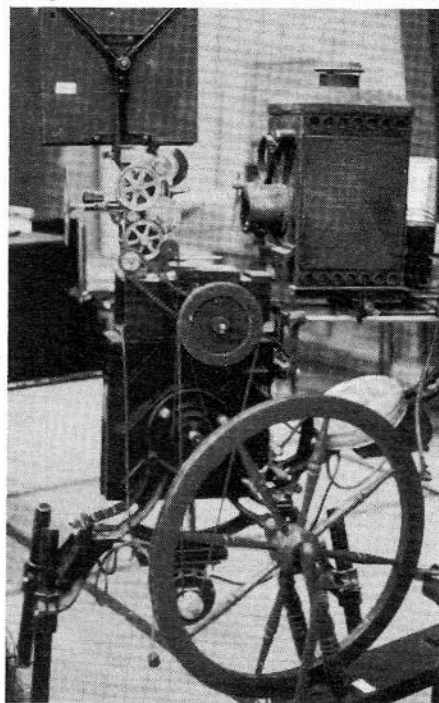
March 26 — Fr. David Kowalski (Brandon), ordained in Winnipeg in May 1994, makes a retreat and return visit to St. Peter's. Also on retreat was David Williams, of Marian Center, Regina, who made a two-week retreat in preparation for his final oblation in June for the Combermere community.

March 30 — Retired Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle is our weekend guest. He is guest speaker for the Prairie Messenger banquets in Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

April 2 — College students join monks for eucharist in observance of Solidarity Day. Archbishop Hunthausen in attendance.



Housekeeper Marilyn Tebbe of Muenster, replaced Agnes Toennies who retired May 15.



An ancient movie projector sells quickly at the garage sale.

April 5 — Fr. Florian Renneberg dies in his rectory at Lake Lenore about 10 p.m. after returning home from an all-day workshop at the abbey and from taking part in communal Penance Celebration at Anaheim. Parishioners found him dead on his kitchen floor the next morning when he did not show up for mass. He had suffered a massive heart attack which brought on instant death. RIP.

Activities and goings-on around the abbey

April 7 — St. John's Cathedral (Anglican) confirmation class retreat.

April 11-18 — Fr. Martin helps out for Holy Week-Easter at the Benedictine Monastery in Winnipeg. It also happened to be 25 years since he returned from there after being chaplain of academy-convent for four years, '66-'70.

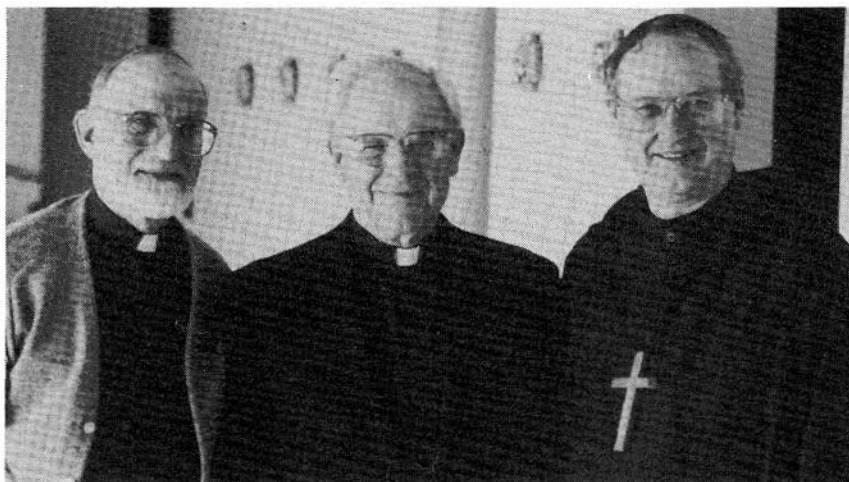
April 15 — Spring run-off finally begins — about 2 weeks later than normal.

April 20 — A brief visit by Luther College Choir (Regina) — very professional!

April 21-23 — Largest Engaged Encounter to date: 22 couples.

April 24-27 — First joint retreat for Saskatoon-Prince Albert clergy, conducted by Bishop Brendan O'Brien of Pembroke, Ont. The Anglican clergy of the Diocese of Saskatchewan (P.A. area) are scheduled to go on retreat May 2-5, with retired Bishop Henry Hill as director.

April 28 — Sask. Lutheran Synod workshop. Also a Pastoral Care Workshop sponsored by SIPCA and facilitat-



James Gray, OSB, with Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle and Abbot Peter Novecosky.

ed by John and Rita Kelly, Abbacy Centre.

April 29 — Another 40 Holy Cross (Saskatoon) Grade 12 students make a retreat, facilitated by the Christian Ethics teacher, Louise Bitz.

April 30 — Deadline for this issue of the SPA Newsletter.

WANTED
PIANO
FOR
GUESTWING

Pastor, teacher, fisherman dies

Continued from page 1

port to Br. Bernard Lange who took charge of the farm after the death of Fr. Leonard in 1970.

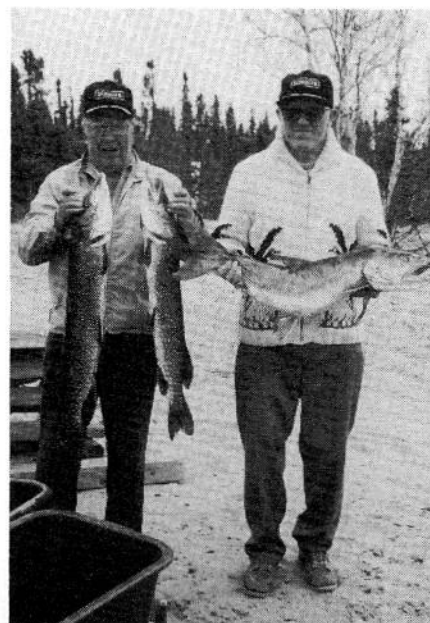
During these same years his heart was also in pastoral work. He was frequently asked to help in parishes whenever necessary. After a year as assistant at St. Augustine's Parish (Humboldt), he became resident pastor of Englefeld, 1970-1975, of St. Augustine, 1975-82, of Englefeld and LeRoy, 1982-91, and of St. Anthony and St. James, 1991-95. As pastor he would go through great efforts to provide Sunday mass for the parishioners.

In each parish he was very involved in the CWL, the KC and in community activities. He was much involved at the beginning of the Uniplex in Humboldt. The Benedictines at the Abbey are especially grateful to Anna Athmer, a

widow at Englefeld, who provided such excellent care of him during his years as pastor. She provided tasty meals, did the many chores involved in keeping house, looked after the garden and the many flowers which decorated the premises during the summer months, and the interior of the house during the winter months.

He did take out some time for hunting but most of all he found much delight in fishing trips with relatives and friends. After Fr. Edward Benning and Fr. Rudolph Novecosky were unable to go on their own, he made extraordinary efforts to make sure that they could accompany them on the fishing trips. He read a great deal and kept in touch on the latest in a great variety of subjects so that his opinions were always highly valued by his confreres.

May he now rest in peace from his many labors.



The fisherman, Fr. Florian, with his brother, Fr. Werner.

Long-term guest leaves St. Peter's

(by those who know him)

David Tompkins, who has spent most of the last two years as a guest at St. Peter's Abbey will be leaving the middle of June. David, who has a BA from York University in Ontario, is making plans to teach English in Korea.

In the early part of 1993 we received an application for long-term residence from Toronto. The applicant was looking for a home where he could do some writing while working for his room and board. On the strength of three excellent references, the community accepted David Tompkins for a one-year trial as an experiment.

David found the schedule and atmosphere at St. Peter's to be conducive to his immediate plans and, except for a six-month interruption, he spent the last two years here. David's keen interest in meditation and religion in general, and in peace and justice issues, made St. Peter's an ideal setting. When his short story was completed he continued to be of assistance to the most needy among our guests, staff, students and visitors.

David has a gentle, genial spirit of reverence that is remarkable. Thoughtful, quiet, companionable, he is a searcher and challenges others to exam-



David Tompkins helps kitchen staff Loretta Loehr and Viola Kuervers with the most popular dish among college students, pizza.

ine the faith that is in them. Though soft spoken and dedicated to peace and respectful co-existence, he is committed to personal integrity and makes others conscious of its importance. As a cheerful, responsible, dependable worker he is an asset on any assignment.

Being a man of deep spirituality, a man of prayer and regular meditation, it

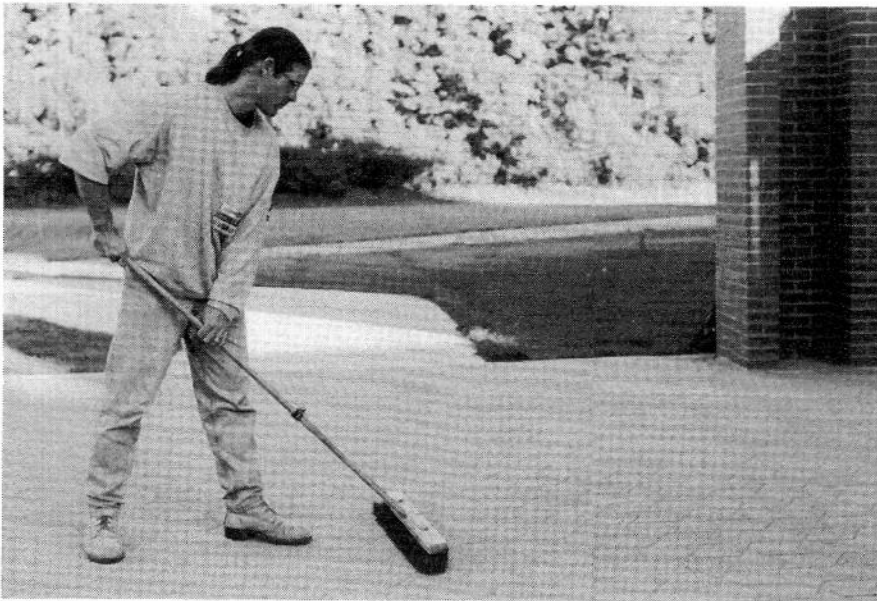
has been said that David would make a good monk. Because of his schedule he was certainly the envy of some professed monks, many of whom have more than their share of duties.

David never imposed on anyone. Yet it was easy to impose on him since he was always willing to help. Even without being asked David would offer to help in any job that had to be done. He assisted in the kitchen, library, guest department, farm, press, carpenter shop, sewer cleaning and all areas of general maintenance.

David took pride in the patio tile repair work in front of the Abbey church.

One of David's strongest characteristics is his ability to communicate and relate to anyone who shows interest. His approach is totally non-threatening. He quickly recognizes where other people are at, and this never deters him from speaking his own position on a variety of topics.

David has a tremendous thirst for authenticity as a person. He is more conscious than most of a God-given mission in his life. His mission is linked to effecting peace in the world



David Tompkins puts the finishing touches on the tile repair job.

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Of interest . . .

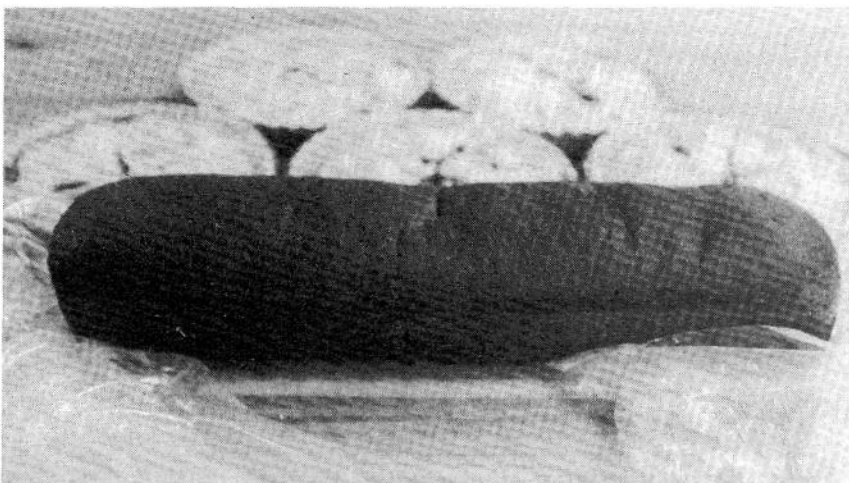
MONKS 'VISION' FUTURE. Our community had three discerning sessions (Jan. 4, Feb. 22 and April 5) to plot our ideals and mission for the immediate future (toward the year 2000). Sr. Janet Malone, CND, gave us valuable insights as she guided our deliberations.

CLOSING PARISHES: The declining number and the aging of our monks is making it impossible to care for all our parishes properly. Hence, smaller parishes have gradually been closed. The decisions to close several more were made: on April 21 of St. James, and St. Maurus (Dana) on April 27-28.

MONKS ACTIVE IN COLLEGE: We were able to involve more monks in the college this year: Frs. Albert and Lawrence and Br. Kurt — teaching; Frs. Martin and Alfred — part-time library; Br. Michael — janitor.

LOOKING AHEAD TO JUBILEE '96: All parishes have been busy this winter drawing up histories of their parishes. Thus **JUBILEE HISTORY BOOK** should be ready by May 1996 for the 75th anniversary of the Territorial Abbey of St. Peter's, which was officially established on May 6, 1921.

SR. VICTORIA KOENIG, OSE: still recuperating from a sore heel, is at the main convent of St. Elizabeth's in Humboldt.



All our bread is home-made. Whole wheat bread made by Loretta Tameling is one of three different loaves. Her pies are also very delicious.

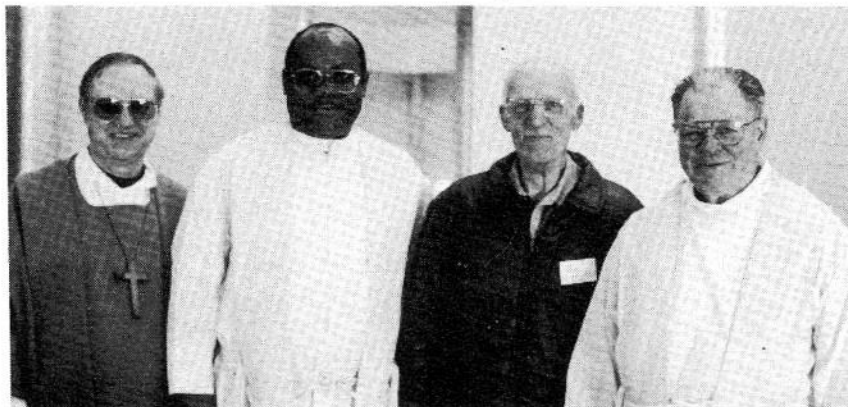
ORDINATIONS & PROFESSION: Three former guests will be ordained to the priesthood this spring: Dominic (Denny) Yuen of Brandon will be ordained in Winnipeg on May 18, and David Tumbach will be ordained in Saskatoon on June 23. Rheel Bussiere of Vonda, Sask., who made his deaconate retreat at St. Peter's, will be ordained with David.

Br. Eric Genereux, OSB, of Saint Benoit-du-Lac Abbey in Quebec will make Solemn Profession on May 21/95. Eric spent his winter break with us while he was a student at the University of Alberta in 1987.

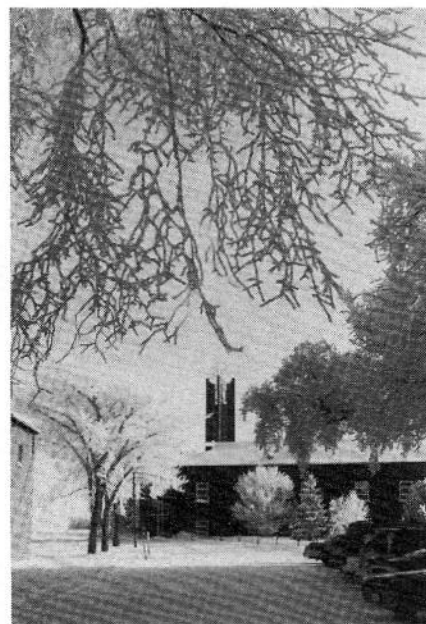
Congratulations to all !

*Severin Hall
has 30 guest rooms
for
retreatants and
business conferences.*

Phone 306-682-1775



Abbot Peter Novacosky with new Oblates of St. Benedict: Fr. Kragbe Legre, of Camrose, Alta., Ed Felix of Bruno and Fr. Albert Ruetz, Oblate director.



This past winter saw many days of frosty decorated trees.

Impressions of a pilgrim and tourist

By Gregory John Saretsky

From the 5th to the 24th of March, I was one of 31 people who took part in a tour of the Holy Land and Italy. The trip was lead by Norman Duerr of Humboldt and Fr. Roland Gaudet, a retired priest from the diocese of Prince Albert. Fr. Gaston Masse, a retired priest from Saskatoon, also accompanied us.

I thought of this trip more importantly as a pilgrimage. It really is a powerful feeling to think I was exploring the roots of the Christian tradition and actually walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. The most striking example

for me was walking the Via Dolorosa. One cannot help but feel the sense of the sacred when visiting the various shrines and sites. While the many tourists could sometimes be a distraction, there were moments when I felt projected back in time. For example, walking through the crowded streets of the old city of Jerusalem or upon entering the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

The cultural changes have had an effect on the geography of Israel, but much of the traditional ways of life remain the same. If you let your imagination run, it is possible to get a picture of what it might have been like 2,000 years ago. For example, the open market places or in the wilderness where shepherds and nomads still exist as they did centuries ago.

The Italian leg of our journey was a contrast to the Holy Land experience. The difference is part cultural and part historical but mainly it is the influence of the western world. There is a feeling

that one is a tourist rather than a pilgrim. In Rome and Florence one forms an impression of a church playing an important role in the development of western society and in politics. While visiting the picturesque city of Assisi and the church of St. Francis, however, it is possible to capture the flavor of a medieval village with its narrow streets and location, nestled in the Tuscan Hills.

Taken as a whole, the tour enabled me to observe things I had only read about and heard of. Furthermore, it helped in bringing home the reality of the faith. Truly it will be an experience I will never forget.

(Greg Saretsky, a former St. Peter's College student, has graduated from the University of Saskatchewan, and is just completing two-years' employment at St. Peter's Abbey as a porter and library assistant. His plans are to enter Newman Theological College in Edmonton this coming September. — Ed)

*That in all things
God may be glorified.*

Long-term guest leaves St. Peter's

Continued from page 5

through a deepening of consciousness. He is a searcher and his search draws him to examine various Eastern and Western religious traditions to help effect a marriage between them, resulting in authentic spiritual renewal.

One of those who knows David expressed his sentiments in this way:

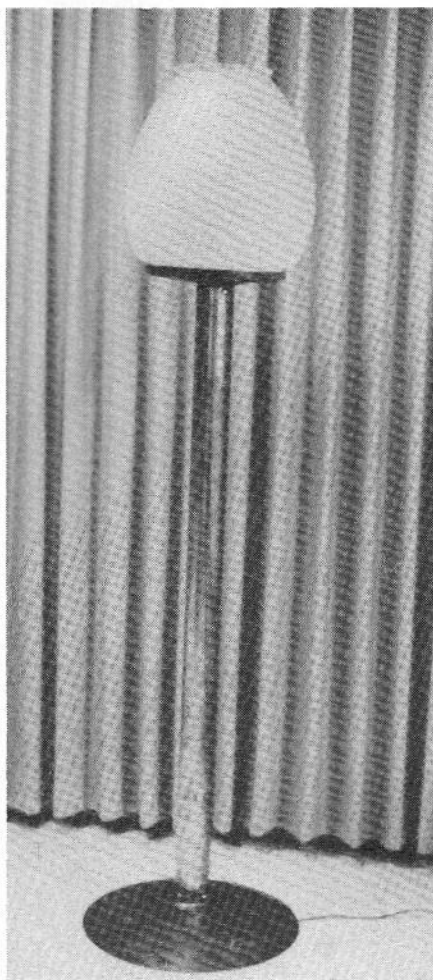
"Dave is a rare individual who adapts to people and places well. His stay here has not only been rewarding for me as a fellow worker, chess partner and movie buff, but as a friend, hopefully he got

some of the same. Sorry to see him go, yet — 'good luck'!"

We wish David well in his new and challenging work of teaching English as a second language. The friendships he developed while at St. Peter's will not be forgotten.

In fact, the prayerful support of the monastic community where he resided for almost two years, and the Tuesday night prayer group, will accompany David wherever his travels may take him.

He will be missed by those who know him.



A lamp stand made by Br. Randy Senecal as a special project for his recently completed welding course.

Oral history project complete

Simon Boivin of Winnipeg, who lived at St. Peter's as a long-term guest for one year, completed the task of interviewing monks, nuns, staff and lay people of the Abbey in early April. This project was mentioned in the last newsletter.

After interviewing and recording 68

people, Simon still has the job of transposing the main points of these interviews to computer discs where they will be better preserved. One interview, in several sittings, took nine hours, however, the average was about four-five hours. The oldest interviewed was a 92-year-old Ursuline sister.

Simon, who would travel any distance to interview someone, was successful in taping 27 of the 35 monks of

St. Peter's. He now has the gigantic task of transposing the interviews to disc. The discs, which are sealed until the death of the one interviewed, will be invaluable to students of church and monastic history. They will be stored in the Abbey Archives.

Simon, presently residing at a Basilian house in Saskatoon, will be returning to Winnipeg sometime this summer.

Deaths

Sr. Genevieve Falk, former Abbey porter, and Fr. Rudolph's housekeeper.

John Mahoney, former student and brother of Bishop Mahoney, heart attack.

Christine Loehndorf, former College art instructor, in a tragic house fire.

Anne Engele, mother of kitchen staff Doreen Szauner, of drowning.

Bishop of Saskatoon, James Patrick Mahoney, from heart and lung failure.

Margaret Saretsky, sister of Fr. Leo Hinz, OSB.

Sr. Delores Moorman, OSU, of Bruno, Sask.

Alphonse Schneider, brother of Fr. Roman and uncle of Fr. Richard Meidl.

Mrs. Susan Woell, 97, aunt of Fr. James Gray, OSB.

Published and printed by the Benedictine community of St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, Saskatchewan S0K 2Y0, twice per year, winter and summer.

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Photo Credits: Moran, Novecosky and Thompson.

Logo by Kurt van Kuren, OSB.



Novice Neil Pitzel and Novice Director Richard Meidl, OSB.



Vancouver Chamber Choir, directed by Jon Washburn, stayed at St. Peter's and performed at St. Augustine Church in Humboldt Feb. 25, 1995.