



St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter



Vol. 22 No. 1 Winter 2000

Jubilee Doors of abbey church blessed on Dec. 24, 1999



*Father most merciful,
during this Holy Year
may our love for you
and for our neighbour
grow ever stronger.
May Christ's disciples
promote justice and peace;
may they proclaim
the Good News to the poor;
and may the Church our Mother
direct her love,
especially to the little ones
and the neglected.*

We praise you, Father, forever!

A message from Abbot Peter's desk

Dear friends,

Well, it's come and gone.

I'm not speaking of Christmas, the new year, or the new millennium. I'm speaking of the much publicized "Y2K" problem, which wasn't much of a problem after all. For us Benedictines, we could say, "For us, it's the second time around! We were there 1,000 years ago."

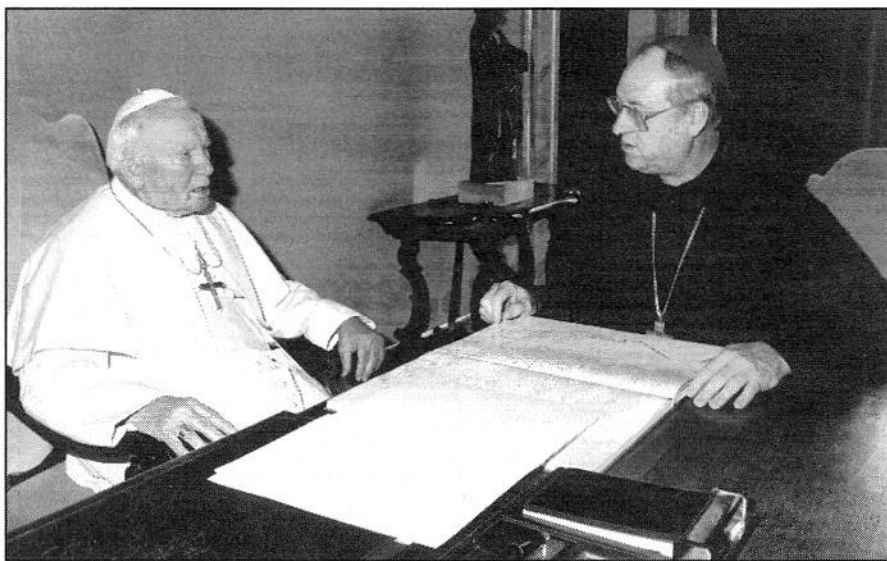
Here at the abbey, we celebrated the beginning of the third millennium with a compline service at 9:00 p.m. on Dec. 31, followed by a period of quiet time, and then a vigil service at midnight.

We tolled out the old millennium on the church bell and rang in the new millennium at the stroke of midnight with a 15-minute peal. The abbey church was almost half full for the vigil service, with guests joining us. Then we enjoyed some lunch together.

The prayer service was one suggested by Abbot Primate Marcel Rooney for Benedictines throughout the world. So we were in solidarity with other communities of men and women in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe as we "prayed in" the new millennium, and the Jubilee Year, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Earlier, on Dec. 24, the monks gathered to bless and decorate the doors to the abbey church as Jubilee Doors for Jubilee Year 2000.

The abbot primate has suggested that Benedictines (and friends) honor the Jubilee Year with a special project of prayer and fasting. He wrote in his Christmas letter:

"One way we Benedictines can contribute to our own renewal and the renewal of the entire Church is through an intensification of prayer and asceticism, as well as of charity. Prayer and fasting are at the core of the monastic way of life. And charity is the primary reason we choose to live in community, as well as the way we embody and witness our monastic values. Our gift to the Church this year should surely be a transforming intensification of our professed



Abbot Peter Novecosky met with Pope John Paul II Nov. 2, 1999.

commitment, becoming more authentically that which we are called to be, in and for the Church."

He invites all the Benedictines of the world to take three weeks of this year for more intense prayer and asceticism. This includes the first and last weeks of the year for all, and then the rest of the weeks are divided up among the various communities around the world. It means three communities, from different continents, are represented each week of the year.

The week assigned to St. Peter's Abbey is the week of May 28 (besides the weeks of Jan. 2 and Dec. 24). We certainly invite any friends of the abbey to join us in spirit in this project.

This fall I felt blessed to be able to visit a number of monasteries. A meeting at the beginning of September took me to England. While there I had the good fortune of visiting three abbeys.

The first was Ramsgate on the east coast. It is near Canterbury Cathedral, which I visited, and the English Chunnel, which I didn't. It is also at the spot where St. Augustine landed in England in 597, sent by Pope Gregory the Great.

I then visited Ealing Abbey in

London, and spent a day in downtown London too. Then, I spent part of a day and a night at Worth abbey, which is near Gatwick Airport where I landed and took off from.

At the end of October I accompanied the bishops of Western and Northern Canada to Rome for their Ad Limina visit to the Vatican. While there, I had a chance to spend two days at Sant Anselmo, the Benedictine Centre in Rome, and to meet briefly with Abbot Primate Marcel Rooney.

I also visited St. Paul's Outside the Walls, and was main celebrant for Mass there with the bishops. It's one of the four basilicas the bishops visit, and one at which Pope John Paul II will open a Holy Door. The bishops also went to visit Monte Cassino on Nov. 1, celebrated Mass with the community, ate with them and got a royal tour.

On the way home, Bishop Blaise Morand of Prince Albert and I used the occasion to visit three more abbeys: the first was Metten abbey in Bavaria, which is the grandmother abbey of St. Peter's; the second was the Benediktinerabtei zu den Schotten in Vienna; the third was

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Sister Salesia Zunti, OSE, dies

By Martin Brodner, OSB

Although Sr. Salesia was outside the territory of our abbey-college covered by this Newsletter, she definitely left her mark here at the beginning and the end of her religious life.

Sr. Salesia Zunti, OSE, was born on a farm near Luseland, Sask., in 1916. In 1937 she entered St. Elizabeth Convent at Humboldt.

For the first years she served the community of St. Peter's Abbey primarily as a seamstress and tailor, and became quite proficient in making the monastic habits for the monks. She also helped in the laundry which included the washing of clothes for both monks and the student boarders whom we had at that time.

In 1971 she returned to school and university where she obtained a B A in Fine Arts. In 1978 she took a course in stained-glass leaded windows and became well known in Saskatchewan for her artistic work and designs.

Enter St. Peter's Abbey. Our abbey church was completed in 1990. Architect Etienne Gabouri, visited us and during Morning Praise heard the reading from the Book of Revelation: "Then the angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb..." (Rev 22:1).

That was the inspiration that he was looking for: the stained-glass windows which he had in mind to cover the plain windows all around the top of the church would depict The River of Life flowing along the entire edge of the roof. And he set about to work out the blue prints for the sixteen 4' x 16' window panels.

"... that in all things God may be glorified."

— Benedictine Motto



Sr. Salesia Zunti, OSE, worked with Fr. Alfred Engele, OSB, from 1992-94.

Putting "two and two" together — we had an artist right in our midst who could handle the job, Sister Salesia. Fr. Alfred Engele had recently retired, was also artistically inclined and most willing to learn this new skill from Sr. Salesia, cutting the stained glass for the windows.

Together the two worked on these windows for the next two years (1992-1994) to complete the job. Fr. Alfred calculated that it took him about six

weeks to complete a half panel (4'x 8'). The windows were blessed on the Feast of St. Scholastica Feb. 10 1994. (Look for the plaque of dedication just inside the main entrance of the church).

It is for these reasons that we wish to pay this special tribute to Sr. Salesia. She died Dec. 3, 1999 and Fr. Alfred Oct. 2, 1995. May both of them have found the REAL RIVER OF LIFE in heaven of which these windows are a modest symbol.

Abbot Peter's message

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St. Peter's Archabbey in Salzburg.

All these abbeys were around at the turn of the last millennium, and I had a great sense of history just walking through the buildings, some of which are more than 700 years old.

The visits to the abbeys also gave me a great sense of belonging to a Benedictine "family."

There was no need for long introductions or getting acquainted with a different schedule or lifestyle. Since we all follow the same rule it was, more or less, "just like at home."

Pope John Paul II has encouraged all of us to make this Jubilee Year a special year of grace, using the opportunities given us by the Lord to make this world a better place.

May this be the spirit in which we embark upon this new millennium.

People and events around the abbey

By Martin Brodner, OSB

Sept. 1 — We started combining barley, and completed our harvesting on Sept. 28. The weather was very good for getting the crops in. A bumper crop, but very low prices. The gardens and potatoes were also good, while our regular corn field was stunted somewhat by the cooler rainy summer weeks.

Sept. 2 — Our Benedictine pastors joined the diocesan clergy, pastoral associates and pastoral ministers at Queen's House of Retreats Centre, Saskatoon for an all-day meeting. The two main topics were: education for the future and the Bishop's Annual Appeal which is launched in October.

Sept. 3 — Fr. Lawrence DeMong was blessed as Junior Master, replacing Fr. Martin. On this day also, Fr. Francis Lohmer reached the age of 97. On Oct. 19 he actually reached the status of being our oldest monk ever and is setting a new record every day. He still cares for

St. Scholastica Parish and St. Mary's Villa.

Sept. 5 — Abbot Peter left for the Isle of Guernsey off the coast of England, for a Benedictine Heritage Meeting. On his return trip he stopped over in Edmonton for the installation of the new archbishop, Archbishop Thomas Collins.

Sept. 8 — Our university classes opened with an increased enrolment of 103 students. Frs. Albert and Lawrence and Br. Kurt are on the faculty this year.

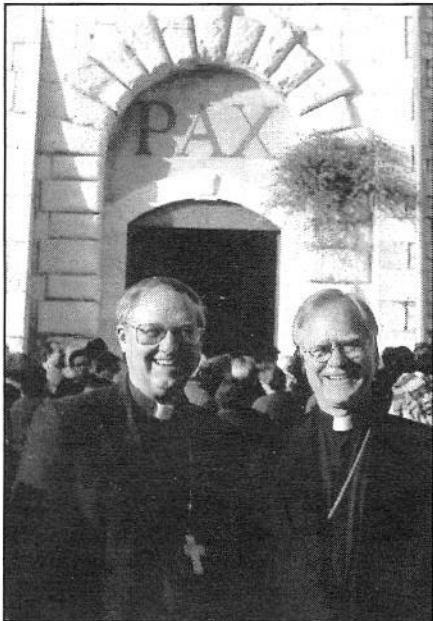
Sept. 24-26 — Sixty young people attended the Ukrainian Youth for Christ Retreat at the abbey. Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky, Ukrainian priest from Kamsack, Saskatchewan, presided at the Divine



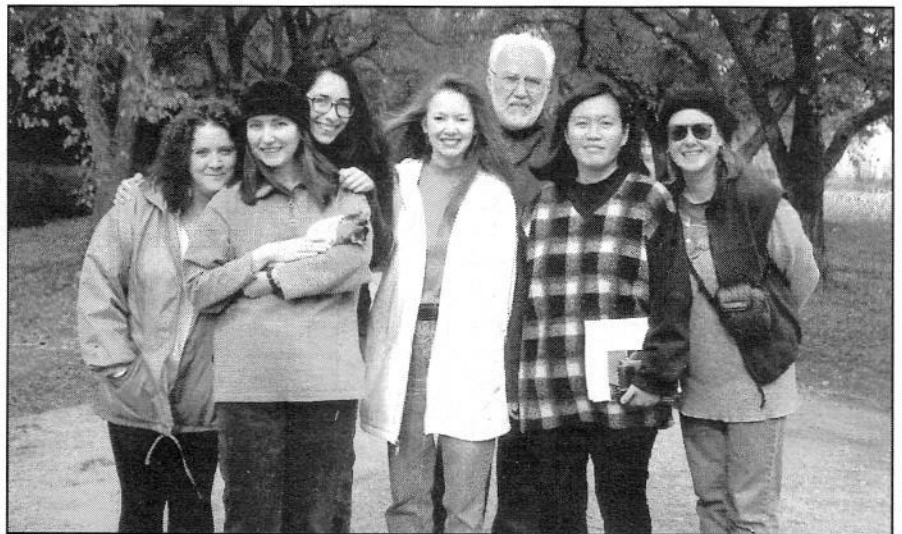
Holy water font installed in October.

Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, in which the monks also participated.

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Abbot Peter Novacosky and Bishop James Weisgerber visit Monte Cassino Abbey Nov. 1.



Sage Hill Poetry Colloquium were here from Oct. 1-21. From left: Kimmy Beach, Catherine Greenwood, Rebecca Campbell, Holly Borgerson Calder, Robert Kroetsch, Lydia Kwa and Heidi Greco.

Sept. 28 — Bishop James Weisgerber was in Humboldt to initiate the "Bishop' Annual Appeal" for our deanery parishes.

Oct. 14 — Br. Wolfgang's 1983 water font was moved out into the rock garden in front of the abbey church. A new water font, four-foot-cubed, was constructed by Russel Baron a former parishioner from St. Benedict, Sask., and a college alumnus. It was set up on Oct. 19 in the monks' entrance to the church. The water was blessed as the introductory rite for the Eucharist on Oblate Day.

Oct. 19 — Abbot Peter left with the Western Canadian bishops for Rome for the "ad limina" visit, returning on Nov. 10.

Oct. 23 — Oblate Day. Three new people were enrolled as Oblate candidates today. They were: Nancy E. Gordon of Stewart, B.C., Dr. Marta Frascati-Lochhead of Saskatoon, Sask., and Arvid-Peter Sprung of Brandon, Man. In the afternoon a joint program was prepared. Fr. Albert, the director for 20 years, bade farewell and the new director, Fr. Lawrence, looked to the future with much hope and enthusiasm.

Oct. 25 — Work began cutting down trees by the road that leads from the abbey to Muenster to improve this access road to the abbey grounds.

Oct. 25-27 — Our Benedictine pastors attended the Diocesan Study Days held at Queen's House of Retreats Centre, Saskatoon.

Oct. 30-31 — The two-day auction sale at St. Ursula's Convent, Bruno, marks "the end of an era" for the Ursuline Sisters who have served so well in fostering education in most of our parishes for over 80 years. The entire Saskatoon Diocese is very conscious of this historic event and wishes the community God's blessing in their new homes, mostly in Humboldt, and on their future apostolates.

Nov. 12-14 — Br. Thomas attended the Western Conference for Liturgy which was held in Regina this year. The facilitators for the conference were two



Service awards, from left: Rose Marie Strueby, 20 years, and Sylvia Reiter, 10 years.

bishops: Most Rev. Raymond Lahey from Corner Brook, Nfld., and Most Rev. Attila Mikloschazy from Scarborough, Ont. Their presentations focused on Celebrating the Eucharist.

Nov. 14 — Many former pastors of St. Agnes Parish, Peterson, gathered for the 75th anniversary of the parish with Bishop James Weisgerber presiding.

Nov. 19 — Awards Night (St. Peter's College). Students and families gathered in the Jerome Assembly Room for this first large college event of the school year. Twenty-seven scholarships were awarded, which included several new scholarships: Bishop James Weisgerber Scholarship, Ursuline Sisters Scholarship and the Roger DeMong Memorial Bursary were among the new ones this year.

Nov. 22 — The monks' recreation and chapter room is being enlarged; Br. Wolfgang being the master mason is guiding this project.

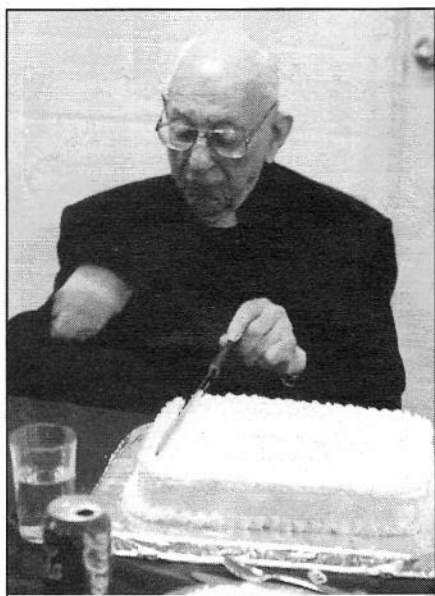
Nov. 24 — The Prairie Messenger of this week summarized the extensive work already done in rural research done by the Centre for Rural Studies



Fr. Lawrence with Oblate candidates: Marta Frascati-Lochhead, Arvid-Peter Sprung and Nancy E. Gordon.

Continued on next page

People and events around the abbey



Fr. Francis cuts his 97th birthday cake Sept. 3.

and Enrichment, especially the farm crisis which is threatening many farm families because of extremely low returns for farm products in the past 20 years.

Nov. 25 — One month before Christmas the monks had a first meeting

to plan for the opening of Jubilee Year 2000. The glass doors leading into the church were designated as the "Jubilee Doors" to be opened at 1st Vespers Dec. 24. (A follow-up meeting was on Dec. 14. Now we're ready to go!)

Nov. 26 — Staff Appreciation Supper — A fitting acknowledgment of the splendid work and cooperation the staff are bringing to our abbey departments. Rose Marie Strueby, 20 years, and Sylvia Reiter, 10 years, received gifts in appreciation for their many years of service here.

Dec. 2 — St. Peter's Press Open House. Demonstrations of the black and white, and colour photocopiers with the capability of producing printed and stapled booklets. This is a promising addition to the weekly *Prairie Messenger* and job printing that is already being done.

Dec. 9 — The monks met with the college president, Colleen Fitzgerald, for a report on St. Peter's College in the present school year. Student enrolment was about 100 students with, however, more taking a full course in our two-



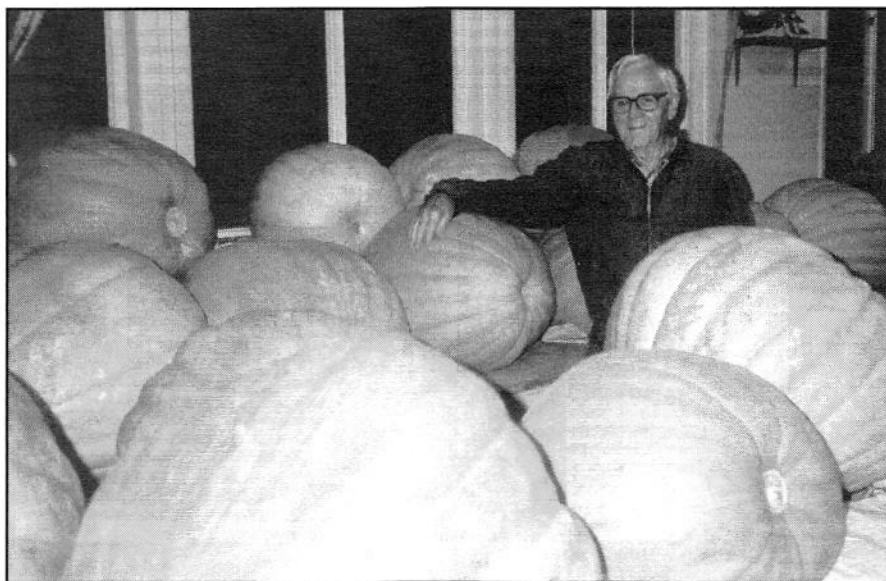
Wedding of OSB Oblate Lucille Chevrier to John McCurrie in Qualicum Beach, B.C. (Vancouver Island) — Aug. 28, 1999.

year program. Also Colleen outlined 11 areas of programs and activities, of which CRSE (see Nov. 24 above) is a major undertaking.

Dec. 19-20 — First major blizzard of winter with frost-biting temperatures. This was in sharp contrast with the very mild above-zero temperatures with which this year, indeed this millennium, "went out like a lamb."

Dec. 22 — Fr. Lawrence motored north to Cumberland House, Sask., for the Christmas services. This parish of The Pas Diocese is now frequently ministered to from the Saskatoon Diocese.

Dec. 24 — First Vespers of Christmas began with the blessing and opening of the abbey's Jubilee Doors, which marked the beginning of the Jubilee Year 2000 here.



Br. Wolfgang with a host of pumpkins.

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Abbot Peter blessed the new holy water font on Dec. 31.

Dec. 31 — Vespers was followed by our regular year-end service of thanksgiving. At 9 p.m. the community and guests gathered around our *new Holy Water Font to bless it*. This was followed by a special compline service of water and light. Before midnight we gathered in the Jerome Assembly Room, and at 11:50 p.m. the abbey bells “tolled out the old millennium.” This was followed by a two-minute pre-midnight silence, after which the bells rang out jubilantly: to usher in Millennium 2000. The community and guests processed with candles into a darkened church for vigils. The **THIRD MILLENNIUM** has begun!!!

The Saskatchewan Benedictines



invite you
to experience

Monastic Life

by sharing some time with the monks at
St. Peter's Abbey to assist you in
discerning your life vocation

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*In your
last will
and testament
please remember
St. Peter's Abbey.*

*Our legal title
is:*

**ORDER
OF
ST. BENEDICT**

Muenster, Sask.

S0K 2Y0

Deaths

Since the last newsletter the following have passed into eternity:

Sept. 1 — Fr. Myron Kochaba, OSB, 71, Holy Trinity Monastery, Butler, Penn.

Sept. 2 — Fr. Bernard Rosswog, OSB, 88, Belmont Abbey, Belmont, N.C.

Sept. 6 — Br. Andrew Feeney, Obl.OSB, 89, Saint Leo Abbey, Saint Leo, Fla.

Sept. 10 — Sr. Martha Fleischmann, OSE, 98, Humboldt, Sask.

Oct. 9 — Fr. Canice Welsh, OSB, 78, Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

Oct. 9 — Sr. Veronica Plemel, OSU, 91, Humboldt, Sask.

Oct. 22 — Fr. Edwin Watson, OSB, 72, St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kan.

Nov. 5 — Fr. Bernard Slimak, OSB, 86, Saint Andrew Abbey, Cleveland, Ohio.

Nov. 17 — Fr. Luke O'Donnell, OSB, 85, Saint Martin's Abbey, Lacey, Wash.

Dec. 3 — Sr. Salesia Zunti, OSE, 83, Humboldt, Sask.

Dec. 4 — Oblate Alice Bergerman, 83, Muenster, Sask., sister of Fr. James Gray.

Dec. 8 — Fr. Sebastian Schramel, OSB, 82, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

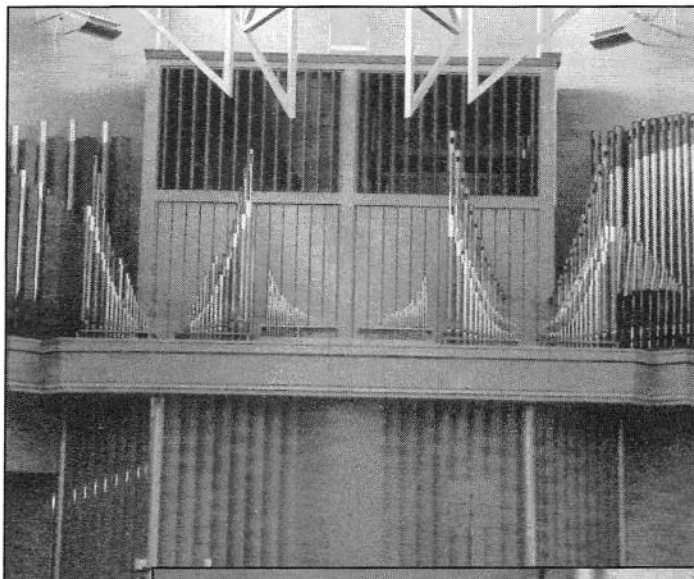
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The pipe organ of Sts. Peter & Paul Abbey Church is almost finished.



The flowers of Christmas.



Br. Anthony doing what he loves to do — washing dishes.