

St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter



Vol. 32 No. 1 Winter and Spring 2010

Benedictine replaces pastor in Saskatoon

By Fr. Lawrence DeMong, OSB

Something new has happened in the pastoral outreach of St. Peter's Abbey this past year. Since our beginnings in 1903 many monks have focused their energies on a small territory around Muenster which came to be the Territorial Abbey of St. Peter's with an abbot as ordinary, the only diocese in Canada without a bishop. True, the monks have always been aware of and open to the needs of the larger church, caring for Benedictine sisters in Winnipeg as chaplain, working in the Vancouver and Regina marriage tribunals, the national Office of Religious Education in Ottawa, and especially the diocese of Maceio in Alagoas, Brazil.

Ever since this "abbacy" was amalgamated into the diocese of Saskatoon in 1998, there has been a feeling that we ought to have a stronger presence at the centre of our new diocese in the city of Saskatoon. Although, we have been forced to cut back on our presence in parishes around the abbey for sheer lack of person-

nel, the abbey recently responded to a request by our diocese to substitute for a pastor on sabbatical at Holy Spirit Parish on the east end of the city.

Beginning in August, I have had the privilege of taking on this new challenge. By no means my first such "sabbatical substitute" — the first being treasurer for Fr. Daniel Muyres, then two stints in Brazil for Fr. Sylvester Vredegoor, OSB, and Fr. Emile April; this present one is for Fr. Ken Beck at Berkeley, Calif., until July.

I love variety and have always been greatly enriched by these "sabbaticals." And after 10 years of monthly trips to Cumberland House some 360 kms from the abbey, often on awful roads, I am delighted to be living in a rectory attached to the church. And with three bedrooms, this place has been a kind of "priory" for the abbey, having Br. Anthony Nguyen here for four months of English studies and often receiving monks before and after a trip involving the Saskatoon airport. On one occasion, two of us slept on floor mats to accommodate confreres; and



Fr. Lawrence DeMong consults with Delores McLean, secretary at Holy Spirit Parish, Saskatoon.

this home away from home has even served as a break for our novice suffering from "cabin fever" as he joked on arrival.

With a considerable number of marriages and funerals and activities of all kinds, Holy Spirit Parish is well staffed, with full and part-time employees and a huge number of volunteers. Because of a strong team approach, I would say it is a most powerful priestly experience for me. I'm busy and I love it. But I'm not counting collections, making out receipts or writing bulletins. I'm preparing and giving homilies, celebrating sacraments, helping with RCIA, visiting people in homes and hospitals, even celebrating Mass at the bedsides of the sick and the dying. I'm asked to do a lot of listening to personal struggles, sharing faith and being challenged and renewed in the process.

For example, today after celebrating a funeral, I was called away from the lunch by our secretary, with 22 years experience



Fr. Lawrence DeMong presides at a Sunday Mass at Holy Spirit Parish, Saskatoon.

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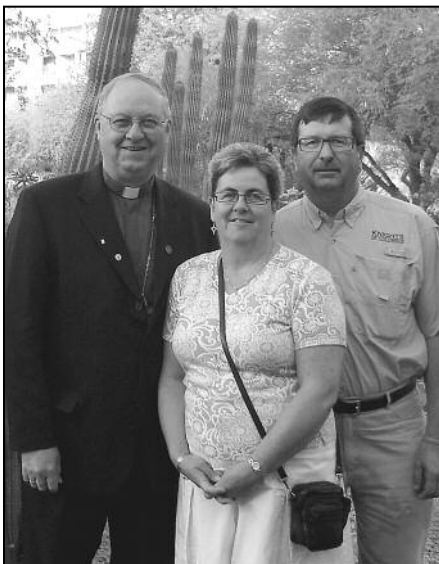
A message from Abbot Peter's desk

Dear friends of St. Peter's Abbey,

It has been almost a year since the last abbey newsletter was published. Editor Fr. Werner Renneberg fell on the sidewalk at the entrance to the CIBC bank in Humboldt June 12 and shattered the nob in the shoulder of his left arm. He returned to the abbey July 9 and resumed his routine, but with diminished vigour.

A year ago I noted two deaths in the community, Abbot Jerome Weber and Fr. James Gray. This year I want to note two new members, Novices Brs. Lee Evoy and Cosmas Epifano. Pierre April also spent several months with the community as a candidate and is now hired to do janitorial work at the college. Br. Pius Sprung, a junior claustral oblate, left this summer to take on a teaching job in China. Visitors and inquirers continue to express interest in our way of life and to appreciate the quiet atmosphere of the abbey.

This past year I made two trips to the United States. The first was to Phoenix, Arizona, to attend the Knights of Columbus Supreme Convention Aug. 2 - 9. The temperature outside rose to 115 F during the day, so that didn't encourage leaving the air-conditioned hotel. There were about 15 delegates from Saskatchewan and I went as state chaplain.

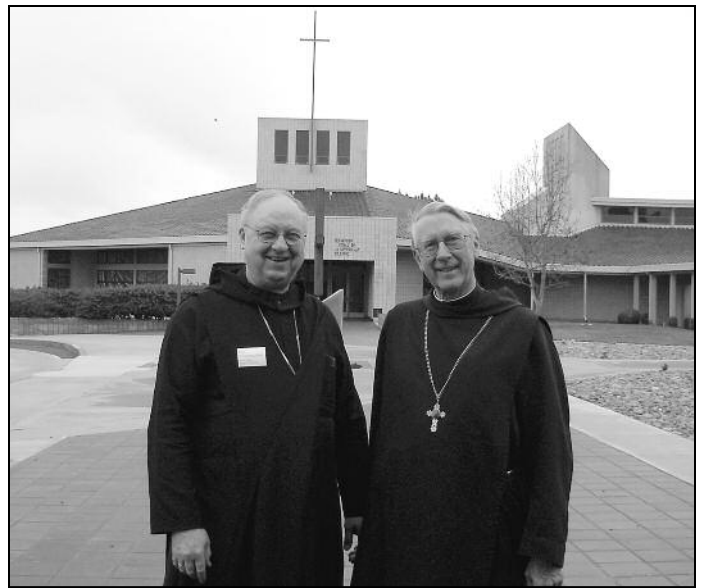


Abbot Peter Novecosky, state chaplain for the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus, attended the KC Supreme Convention in Phoenix, Ariz., Aug. 2 - 8, 2009, with State Deputy Arden Andreas and his wife, Sherry.

The second trip was to attend the annual abbots workshop held at Oceanside, Calif., this year, Feb. 5 - 11. The monastery was founded more than 50 years ago in a beautiful setting in southern California. Our meeting was highlighted by a fruitful workshop on the Trinity by Dr. Michael Downey, theologian to Cardinal Mahoney of Los Angeles.

Don Ward volunteered to edit a book of remembrances of Fr. James Gray and close to two dozen essays were submitted. The book should be published in the next few months. Fr. Andrew Britz is also published a book soon, a collection of his editorials over the past 20 years as editor of the Prairie Messenger.

Br. Kurt Van Kuren introduced a program this past summer that saw a number of young European visitors come to the abbey. The WWOOFers program is



Abbot Peter Novecosky poses with Abbot Charles Wright in front of the abbey church during the abbots' conference in Oceanside, Calif., Feb. 5 - 9, 2010.

described elsewhere in this newsletter and it caters to volunteers who wish to experience life in Canada on an organic farm.

Both Fr. Paul Paproski and Br. Anthony Nguyen were at school in Saskatoon. Fr. Paul took classes at the University of Saskatchewan and plans to complete his MA degree in history this summer. Br. Anthony studied English as a second language and plans to write his TOEFL exam this spring.



More than 40 abbots attended the abbots workshop at Oceanside, Calif. Main speaker Dr. Michael Downey of Los Angeles gave several sessions on the Trinity.

Support works of worthy causes

By Peter Goddard, CFP, EPC

It is very edifying to see so many people committing their support to various groups that they see as worthy and who enhance the value of the future of their families and communities. They give of their good fortune to ensure the ongoing work of their favourite charities and organizations to make sure they are sustained now and in the future.

For their support they receive not only the comfort of knowing that those organizations and charities they believe

in will continue their work in the future but will be able to reflect the values and beliefs that they, the supporters, have worked for their whole lives. They also receive a very favourable tax benefit for doing so.

In fact, this tax credit will sometimes make it possible for them to support these groups well into the future even after they have passed on.

Here is an additional benefit sometimes left unnoticed. These groups — hospitals, churches, schools, etc. — sometimes are the “keepers of the histo-

ry” of the community they are based in.

Think of it. Who among us can trace their family history due to the church they attended in their community or the schools they went to their whole lives? Who else did they attend church or school with? What part of history did those classmates or fellow parishioners contribute and, what values did these institutions instil in them to enable them to make these contributions to the history of the community? Now that is a legacy!

I ask you to consult your financial consultant as to how you can support St. Peter's Abbey through your will, a life insurance policy or whatever suits you. You can benefit yourself as well at St. Peter's Abbey through the tax benefits available.

Goddard has 33 years of financial planning service and experience.



(Top) The chickadees were hungry this winter and came to eat out of one's hand. (Right) A major snow storm Jan. 15-17 dumped a foot of snow on the ground. It was the only snow storm of the winter and produced enough spring runoff to fill our water reservoir. A wind storm hit us April 9 - 10.



Wonderful ecumenical experience is biggest surprise

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and an uncanny pastoral sense, to come to the office and see a young woman who was clearly depressed. She started with: “Do you believe in God?” I began by suggesting that my world would really come apart without God to lean on, that I always admired people who were true atheists. Then I told her about the funeral and what an incredible experience it was to believe in the resurrection of someone you know and love. Later I was walking over to the

house and saw this young woman heading home on foot, skipping!

My biggest surprise here is the wonderful ecumenical experience of being twinned with McClure United Church down the street. We regularly meet, pray and even exchanged pulpits recently. Several days after I was at McClure I was in a ward at the Royal University Hospital responding to a request for anointing and communion for one of our parishioners. I had gone with one of our Ministers of Care, a simple, saintly woman who spoke (with a

thick Italian accent!) to the patient in the next bed and discovered she had been at McClure when I gave the homily. She wanted me to pray over her. And the person across from her, also from McClure, was having a pacemaker put in that afternoon. And would I anoint her? And the other person in the room was also United, and would I pray over her?! When I returned to our office I announced that I was now the “pastor of McClure United Church”!

Surprises, challenges, joys! It's good to be here.

People and events around the Abbey

By Werner Renneberg and
Abbot Peter Novecosky

2009

April 28-29 — The Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Board booked into the guesthouse for a board meeting.

May 1-3 — A marriage encounter weekend was held at the abbey.

May 7 — Abbot Peter participated in the March for Life at the provincial legislature in Regina.

May 8 — Abbot Peter and Ken Mansfield attended Bishop LeGatt's Bishop's Dinner in Saskatoon. The dinner was one of the functions to raise money for the new diocesan cathedral.

May 13-14 — Abbot Peter attended a meeting of Catholic editors at the Canadian Church Press (CCP) meeting in Winnipeg. He drove the 750 kilometres (one way) in the abbey's diesel Smart Car. He stayed with the Benedictine sisters in Winnipeg.



Abbot Peter visited Sr. Virginia Evard and the Benedictine sisters in Winnipeg during a Catholic press meeting in Winnipeg, May 13 - 14, 2009.

May 15 — Since Easter we have had a number of days where the sun shone brightly, however the temperature has remained quite cool for the most part. It was +20 C the odd day about a week ago, but since, we have had a sprinkle of rain and a bit of snow. The trees and grass are biding their time. Summer weather will come!

May 20 — Abbot Leander Dosch, OSCO, and Al Hergott, former missionaries in Brazil, paid a surprise visit to the abbey and also surprised each other.

May 24 — The weather has remained on the cool side. Friday morning (May 22) a considerable amount of snow fell that soon melted. The rain gauge showed 2 mm, enough to settle the dust. Next day was sunny and +19 C. This morning hundreds of dandelions in full bloom dotted our lawns. This afternoon clouds threatened rain and it was +16 C (60 F) on the thermometer. Most of the seeding has been done in expectation of rain and warm weather.

May 24-28 — Our abbey's annual retreat. This year's retreat master was Abbot Placid Solari of Mary Help of Christians Abbey, Belmont, in the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina. Due to the rescheduling of the US airline, Abbot Placid's flight was delayed

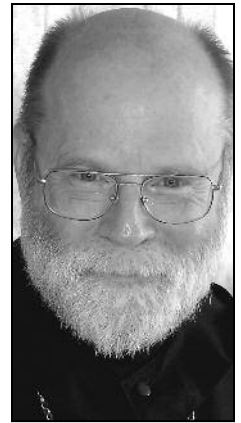
by a day. He remained a few days after the retreat to see the sights and relax.

May 27 — We had our first feed of delicious tomatoes grown by Br. Wolfgang in the abbey's greenhouse. Warmer weather is also causing the trees to show green and lawn grass to grow.

June 1-7 — Saskatchewan Stitches held their annual weeklong workshop here, attracting more than 250 people over the course of the week.

June 12 — Fr. Werner took a nasty tumble in Humboldt, shattering the knob on his left arm at the shoulder. The partial shoulder replacement took place in the Royal University Hospital, Saskatoon, June 18. He spent some time there, later to be transferred to the Humboldt hospital.

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Abbot Placid Solari, OSB, Belmont Abbey preached the monastic retreat May 21 - 28.



During the annual monastic retreat in May, 2009 the community prayed Vespers one afternoon in the cemetery.

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June 15-18 — The Saskatoon Eparchy held its annual clergy retreat at the abbey, facilitated by Sister Teresita Kambeitz, OSU.

June 16 — A number of monks attended a workshop on the new liturgical books in Saskatoon, given by Bishop Raymond Lahey of Antigonish, N.S.

June 19 — The St. Peter's High School graduation attracted a good crowd in the gym.

June 20 — Benedictine Oblates came to the abbey for an Oblate day.

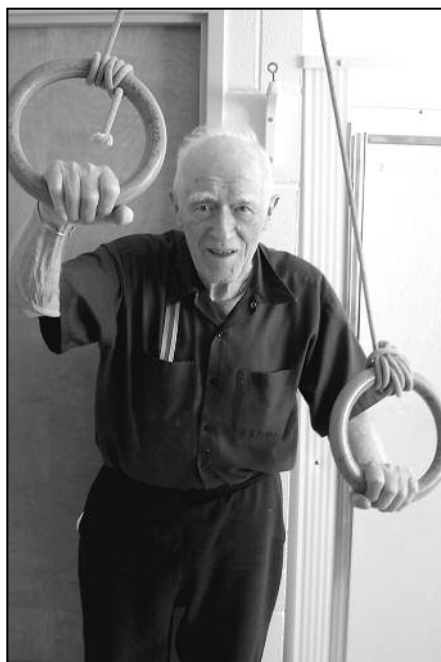
June 26-28 — Abbot Peter attended the KC organizational meeting in Weyburn as state chaplain.

July 4 — Abbot Peter and Fr. Rudolph attended the 100th anniversary of Burr, their home town.

July 5-18 — The Saskatchewan Choral Federation again held successful junior and senior choir camps at the abbey. Guest conductor was Lawrence Ewasko. As usual, the Benedictine community enjoyed the dress rehearsals Friday evening in the abbey church. The grand finale for both groups was held Saturday

afternoon in St. Peter's Cathedral, to which the public was invited.

July 9 — Fr. Werner returned to the abbey, still wearing a large sling on the arm until July 23. Much physiotherapy will be needed to get the arm functioning.



Fr. Werner does daily exercises to keep his shoulder in shape.

July 11 — Lee Evoy, originally of Smith Falls, Ont., became a novice after

spending a half year at the abbey as a candidate.

July 18 — Archbishop Antônio Muniz Fernandes, OCarm., of Maceio, Brazil visited the abbey as part of his visit to the Saskatoon Diocese.



Br. Lee Evoy

July 19 — Monks attended the annual pilgrimage at Mount Carmel.

Aug. 1-6 — Some 200 Chinese, including whole families, came to the abbey. They are members of the Chinese Full Gospel Fellowship. Some resided in available rooms; others had their campers, establishing themselves on abbey grounds. They brought their own food and cooks. They divided themselves into two groups for meals. It all went quite smoothly.

Aug. 2-9 — Abbot Peter attended the KC Supreme Convention in Phoenix, Ariz.

Aug. 10 — All pastors were invited to Bishop LeGatt's house for the annual BBQ for clergy.

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The first two weeks of July, 2009, were alive with the sound of music at St. Peter's College, while the Saskatchewan Choral Federation held their annual choir camp here.



Donna Remenda started work in the abbey kitchen Sept. 16, 2009.

People and events around the Abbey



Br. Kurt Van Kuren looks on as Br. Basil Schaan, left, and Fr. Leo Hinz, cut their anniversary cake. The three celebrated anniversaries of their monastic profession on Aug. 15. Fr. Leo celebrated 65 years of monastic profession (Aug. 13, 1944). Brs. Basil and Kurt celebrated 25 years of monastic profession (July 11, 1984).

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Aug. 12 — The Benedictines, Elizabethans and Ursulines got together in Humboldt for the annual Tri-community Day.

Aug. 17 — There were a few hot days so far this summer. But in general it has been cool. Garden and field crops are two weeks behind other years. In the past few days Muenster got 35 mm of rain and more is in the forecast. During this



The monastic community, aided by relatives and friends, harvested seven truckloads of potatoes on Aug. 5, 2009.

time Humboldt experienced hail and torrential rain that flooded some streets

Aug. 20 — The community and guests had a farewell for Fr. Lawrence DeMong who will take over the pastorate of Holy Spirit Parish in Saskatoon for a year, beginning Sunday, Aug. 23, while the pastor is on a Sabbatical leave.

Sept. 3 — Abbot Peter attended a meeting in Montreal in preparation for next year's biannual assembly of the Canadian Religious Conference.

Sept. 14-17 — The Saskatchewan Anglican Diocese clergy made their annual retreat at our guest wing.

Sept. 18-19 — Members of Holy Spirit Parish and McClure United Church, Saskatoon, met together here.

Sept. 20-26 — The Saskatchewan Institute of Prairie Rug Hookers had a week-long workshop here, with more than 60 people attending.

Sept. 15 — We have been having amazingly warm weather ever since the end of August. There has been no frost. Mostly warm sunny days helped the crops mature. We had our first taste of corn on the cob early last week. Yesterday we had over half an inch of rain. The warm sun and gentle breeze today soon dried the roads and fields. Forecast is for continued sunny weather.

Sept. 21 — Abbot Peter attended the installation of Albert LeGatt as archbishop of Saint Boniface.

Oct. 2-4 — There was a Buddhist Meditation retreat with about 40 people attending.

Oct. 9 — To the delight of farmers and gardeners, our warm weather kept on until the end of September. It allowed much of the grain to ripen and allowed farmers good harvesting conditions. Sunday, Oct. 1, the air turned colder. Rain began to fall which turned into snow that immediately melted on the warm ground.

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By yesterday persistent light snow and colder temperature changed the landscape colour to white. The trees are slowly shedding their colourful leaves. There is still considerable amount of grain to be harvested.



*Prior Rudolph
Novecosky*

Oct. 11 — Fr. Rudolph Novecosky was installed as prior, replacing Fr. Werner, who had served for seven years.

Oct. 18 — Carl McNally moved to Humboldt.

Oct. 19 — Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk had knee surgery in Saskatoon, involving repair of the cartilage.

Oct. 19-23 — Abbot Peter attended the annual plenary meeting of Canadian bishops in Cornwall, Ont.

Oct. 29 — The Men in Black invited college students and staff to join the monks for a special supper.

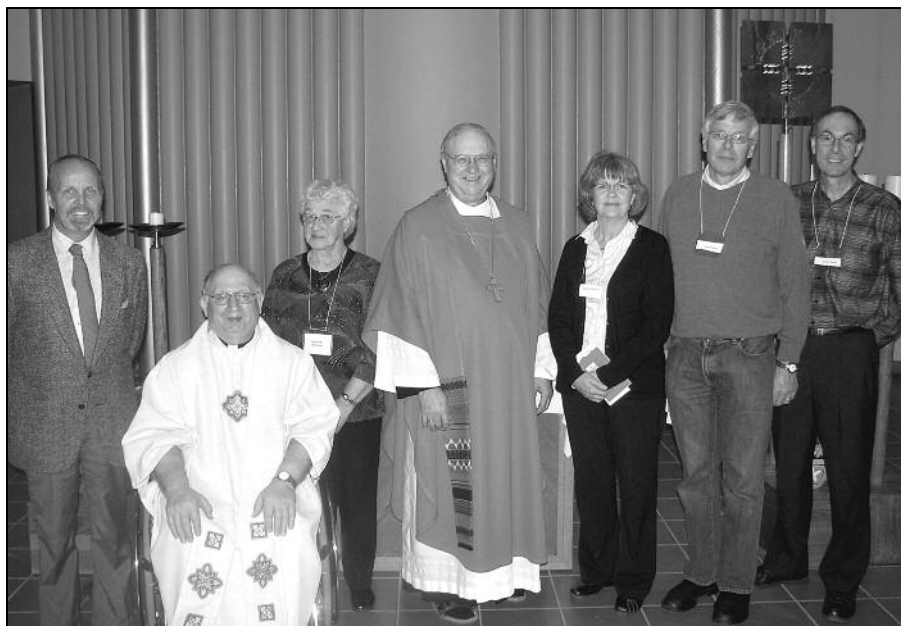
Oct. 31 — On Oblate Day Ruth Britz of Muenster made here final oblation as an oblate of St. Peter's Abbey. Myles Bantle and Bonnie and Ken Roberts, all of Saskatoon, were accepted as oblate candidates.

Nov. 5 — October was totally different from much of sunny and warm September. Many farmers, especially those south of Muenster, were able to harvest their crops. The temperature was cool. There was no hard frost to kill the leaves on the trees. The skies were cloudy and there was occasional rain as well as some light snow. Definitely no harvesting weather. Farmers are hoping for warm dry weather this month.

Nov. 5-7 — Abbot Peter gave a retreat to the KC state board and attended the Charity Appeal supper at the abbey.

Nov. 20-22 — Al Anon held a weekend get-together here with close to 100 people in attendance.

Nov. 24 — We were treated with



From left, Ken Mansfield, associate oblate director, Fr. Rudolph Novecosky, oblate director, Ruth Britz, Abbot Peter, Bonne and Ken Roberts and Myles Bantle, oblate candidates.

beautiful fall weather during the past few weeks. Farmers were able to bring in their crops, even though some of the grain harvested was damp and in need of drying, an added expense.

Nov. 25 — Abbot Peter was secretary for the meeting of religious superiors and bishops of Saskatchewan held in Lumsden, in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Regina.

Dec. 6 — Br. Anthony Nguyen's niece, Maria, and family arrive in Saskatoon from Vietnam, via Toronto.

Dec. 9 — The tower that will include a new elevator shaft and front entrance at St. Peter's College Michael Hall, was lifted upright by three cranes. The steel frame for the tower, which

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Br. Anthony Nguyen sponsored his niece, Maria, and her husband, Andrew Nguyen, Sr., and children, Peter and Andrew Jr. They arrived to -30 C weather in Saskatoon Dec. 6, the coldest week of the winter.

People and events around the Abbey



The new college elevator steel structure is hoisted into place by three cranes Dec. 9, 2009.

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stands 20 x 33 x 60 feet, arrived on the site Nov. 29. Crews from Miners Construction spent two weeks installing parts of the structure, including part of the elevator shaft, before it was lifted. The tower is part of a renovation of the college funded by federal and provincial grants and donations to the college.

Dec. 11 — Kevyn Ernest was enrolled as an Oblate of St. Benedict for St. Peter's Abbey, at Vespers. He lives in Edmonton.

Dec. 12 — The weather has been different this year. It seems the weather changes, as if on cue, with the change of the month. This was the case in September, October and November. Fine weather, along with enough cold to freeze the ground allowed combines and trucks to venture out on what had been soggy soil. This allowed farmers to complete their harvesting. With the aid of two neighbours helping with their com-

bines, a farmer in the Middle Lake area finished his flax field on the last day of November. True to form, December began with light snow and bitterly cold weather that has endured until now, and is expected to carry on for some time.

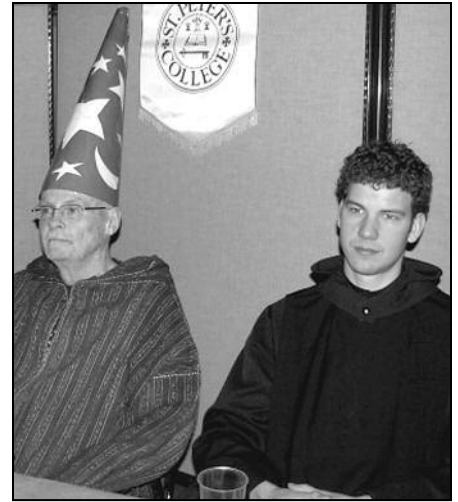
Dec. 26 — Monks invited their families to come and visit during the annual Christmas Family Day.

2010

Jan. 18 — The abnormally cold weather carried on until early January when for some weeks the temperature hovered between -3 and -20 C. We had the occasional light snowfall amounting to about 5 inches. The first major snowstorm of the winter set in Friday night to Sunday (Jan. 15-17). About 12 inches of snow fell and strong accompanying winds made for deep snow drifts. Many highways and country roads were closed this morning, with school buses cancelled nearly all over southern Saskatchewan.

Feb. 5-10 — Abbot Peter attended the annual abbots workshop held in Oceanside, Calif.

Feb. 11 — The annual Medieval banquet involving monks, students and guests in the Jerome Assembly Room was a great success.



Writer Dave Carpenter of Saskatoon and Joshua Mansfield, guest, attended the Medieval Feast.

Feb. 14-28 — The Winter Olympics were held in Vancouver and attracted good publicity around the world.

March 8 — End of February and early March will be remembered for, among other things, the disastrous earthquake at Haiti and again near Chile. So far we have had a very nice winter, with only one major snow storm. Much of the snow is still lying where it fell. Natural ice on indoor skating rinks is still good. We have had little thawing weather. Almost all of March until now we have had heavy fog in the morning.

March 2-5 — Abbot Peter attended the annual meeting of the Assembly of Western Catholic Bishops, held in Lumsden this year. Abbot Peter is secretary for the group.

March 12-14 — Fr. Demetrius helped with an engaged encounter in the abbey guestwing, with 12 couples participating.

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*Br. Cosmas
Epiphano*

incidentally, he's also a Benedictine oblate.

March 21 — Joseph Epiphano, a candidate at the abbey for half a year, was invested as a novice, and given the name Br. Cosmas. He hails from Nova Scotia.

March 25 — Several monks attended the ordination in Saskatoon of our new bishop Don Bolen;

March 25 — Fr. Roman Schneider, our oldest monk, is taken to the Humboldt District Hospital after suffering a small stroke.



*Fr. Roman
Schneider*

March 27 — About two dozen oblates attended Oblate Day. A highlight of the afternoon was a talk on Sports and Spirituality by Ken Miller, coach of the Saskatchewan Roughriders. During afternoon Vespers, Fr. Paul Paproski was blessed as the new oblate director and Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk was blessed as the associate director. They replace Fr. Rudolph and Ken Mansfield respectively.



*Fr. Paul
Paproski*

March 29 — About a dozen monks participated in the Chrism Mass in Saskatoon, led by Bishop Don Bolen.

April 6 — Much of our snow melted toward the end of March. The Wolverine Creek began to run and in a short time our large reservoir was filled March 31. The weather during holy Week and since has almost been ideal with lots of sunshine. A good general rain for our field and grass land would be most welcome.

April 9-10 — Just as the newsletter was going to press, a major wind storm hit the area, with winds up to 93 kph. It also brought snow. The

wind blew through Michael Hall and caused damage to the abbey front door, as well as to the abbey greenhouse.



The Christmas creche highlighted the Christmas season at the entrance of the abbey church.



Frs. Rudolph Novecosky, left, and Andrew Britz enjoy a game of crokinole during evening recreation.



Community members eating supper in the abbey dining room.

St. Peter's College undergoes major change

St. Peter's College is taking on a new shape both in its physical structure and in its scope of operations.

Built in 1921 as a boys' boarding school, Michael Hall is the key pillar of St. Peter's College \$15-million revitalization initiative.

The goal to revitalize Michael Hall is to provide a learning space that is safe, accessible and supports quality, life-long learning to meet the needs of 21st century students and community members.

Renovations to the 46,000 square-foot building will be done in a manner that ensures and maintains its historic character.

The transformation of Michael Hall began in the summer of 2009 thanks to a \$3 million investment from the Province of Saskatchewan, coupled with \$6 million from the Government of Canada's Knowledge Infrastructure Program and \$3 million from donations to the College's Key to Success Campaign.

One part of the renovation includes the construction of a new entrance and elevator for the four-story building to improve accessibility. In January renovations were started on the fourth floor

The remaining floors, including the



Br. Wolfgang Thiem and Andrew Nguyen Sr. (right) clean up the plaster on the fourth floor of the college, exposing the studs put in 90 years ago. The college is undergoing a major renovation this year.

basement, will undergo similar renovations in the coming year. This will provide classroom and cultural spaces to meet science, health, fine-art and drama program needs. Every step is being taken to ensure university classes and other college programming will continue as usual.

New classes introduced this past year at SPC included kinesiology and commerce (from the Edwards School of Business at the University of Saskatchewan). In a year's time, a nursing program will be initiated. This year 20 students boarded on campus. Plans for new student housing are being made.

In the other development, St. Peter's College and Carlton Trail Regional College are merging into one institution. SPC, based in Muenster, offers university classes and CTRC, based in Humboldt, offers technical and trade programs. The new SPC will become a learner-centred, educational institution that will be unique in the country. Glen Kobussen will continue as president of SPC after the merger. Much of the administration of CTRC will move into Michael Hall.

In anticipation of the new SPC,

changes in governance are being implemented to support and guide the new institution. A senate has been chosen, comprised of 30 members from across the region and a new board is also being formed. A joint syllabus will appear this fall for the new entity. The provincial government is encouraging the merger and the legislation is expected to be in place this fall to confirm the merger.

There are several benefits to the students and to the community in the new SPC. A student, for example, could begin taking an Adult Basic Education class like those now offered at CTRC, go on to a technical program and then take university classes. They could come out with a university degree without having to apply to a different college.

Students would also have consistent student advisors throughout their schooling and it would provide a seamless transition between technical programs and university classes.

Kobussen said that the college will conduct market research to help determine what people want in terms of future programming. Once the college has analyzed the results, it can "reverse-engineer" that into a plan for the new SPC.



Work continued on the new entrance and elevator for St. Peter's College, in this Jan. 28 photo.

WWOOF program attracts youth to St. Peter's

This summer the monks and staff of St. Peter's were introduced to more than a half dozen young people from Europe who came to Canada to do volunteer work and experience the Canadian way of life.

They are part of the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF). St. Peter's Abbey signed up as a host last summer through Br. Kurt Van Kuren, who was encouraged to look into the WWOOF program by Jim Ternier. Br. Kurt works with the abbey's Loehr Organic Project and Jim is a master gardener and president of Seeds of Diversity, one of Western Canada's most renowned seed-savers.

The men and women visitors were mainly in their 20s and they stayed from a week to a month, before moving on. Most of them started on the west coast of Canada and were working their way to the east coast over the course of 6 to 10 months.

The WWOOF organization started in the United Kingdom in 1971. It has since become an international movement that helps people share more sustainable ways of living.

WWOOF is an exchange program. In return for volunteer help, WWOOF hosts offer food, accommodation and opportunities to learn about organic lifestyles. Through the Internet, WWOOF organizations link people who want to volunteer on organic farms or smallholdings with people who are looking for volunteer help.

Volunteer helpers ("WWOOFers") choose the hosts that most interest them and make direct contact to arrange a stay. Volunteers usually live as part of the family. The arrangement is called Couchsurfing. Volunteers can find hosts around the world, usually through email, who offer free accommodations, food and friendship.

According to the WWOOF website, there are more than 850,000 couches available worldwide where travellers can stay.

WWOOFers generally work 4-6 hours a day for five and a half days. They work at tasks mutually agreed upon, whether with animals, with gardens and crops, or helping out in the kitchen.

One of the WWOOFers, Anne Katharina from Munich, Germany, wrote the following account of her experience at St. Peter's this summer:

"I'm just spending the last days of my



WWOOFers Katrijn and Steve enjoy a rest while working in the gardens last summer.

stay at St. Peter's Abbey (Loehr Organic Project) in Muenster (two hours east of Saskatoon, SK). This abbey is an absolutely wonderful and awesome place and the people you'll meet here are just marvelous! Don't hesitate to come here just because it's an abbey and you don't have to do (or don't want to have to do) anything with religious stuff. Nobody will force you to do anything that you don't want to do! You don't have to go to church if you don't want to and the monks definitely don't talk about religion the whole day (but if you want to have a talk about it with them they sure are willing to).

"All the monks are really funny people and once you're here you'll realize that they're just like you and me (they just chose a different way of life). They make lots of fun and you'll have some good laughs. The work you're supposed to do is, of course, outside in the gardens. Usually you'll be working with one of the monks or Jim the gardener. WWOOFing at this place you'll live in the guestwing of the abbey. You have your nice own room! You can do laundry as much as you want and the master of the guest department will always be there to give you everything you need and answer your questions. Food is served three times a day (two hot meals) and tastes great! So don't hesitate to come here to meet some truly open-minded people and have lots of fun!"



WWOOFers Katrijn and Steve worked with Jim Ternier in the High Tunnel growing vegetables.

Deaths: remember the faithful departed

Since the last newsletter the following have passed into eternity:

2009

March 1 — Fr. Conall Caughlin, OSB, St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, N.J.

March 28 — Fr. Kevin Sheeran, OSB, St. Procopius, Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

April 3 — Fr. Germain Fritz, OSB, St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, N.J.

April 11 — Br. William Borgerding, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Mn.

May 23 — Theresa Nguyen, Vietnam, sister of Br. Anthony, Vuong Nguyen, OSB, St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster.

June 13 — Br. Miguel Savieto, OSB, monk of St. Vincent's Archabbey, buried at Sao Bento Priory, Vinhedo, Sao Paulo, Brazil

July 10 — Fr. Roland Ripoli, OSB, St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

July 26 — Fr. Raymond Geyer, OSB, Bellmont Abbey, Belmont, N. C.

Aug. 22 — Br. Sebastian Kuhn, OSB, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

Aug. 30 — Abbot Robert West, OSB, Assumption Abbey, Richardton, N. D.

Aug. 30 — Fr. Michael Komechak, OSB, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

Aug. 31 — Fr. Ronald Mahnke, OSB, St. Andrew Abbey, Cleveland, Oh.

Sept. 10 — Fr. Alban Hrebec, OSB, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

Sept. 17 — Br. Francis Peters, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Mn.

Oct. 4 — Fr. David Prebula, OSB, St. Martin's Abbey, Lacey, Wash.

Oct. 10 — Fr. John Oetgen, OSB, Belmont Abbey, Belmont, N. C.

Oct. 26 — Br. Armand Huppe, OSB, St. Anselm Abbey, Manchester, N. H.

Oct. 29 — Br. Lambert Berens, OSB, St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penn.

Nov. 30 — Abbot Leonard Cassel, St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, N. J.

Dec. 22 — Br. George Rooney, OSB, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill.

2010

Jan. 14 — Fr. John Odermann, OSB, Assumption Abbey, Richardton, N. D.

Jan. 26 — Fr. Florian Muggli, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Mn.

Jan. 18 — Fr. Mathias Spier, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Mn.

Feb. 18 — Fr. Flavian Yelinko, OSB, St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe.

Feb. 22 — Fr. Terence Wager, OSB, St. Martin Abbey, Lacey, Wash.

Feb. 27 — John Ackerman, Regina, brother of Fr. Joseph Ackerman, OSB of St. Peter's Abbey

March 20 — Fr. Paul Marx, OSB, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Mn.

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

Our legal title is:

**THE ORDER OF
ST. BENEDICT**
Muenster, SK S0K 2Y0

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The mail truck comes each morning to the former St. Peter's Press/Abbacy Centre/Earthcare Connections office, which is now the Muenster Post Office. In mid-October, 2009 the mail for Muenster and area was delivered here and the St. Peter's Press staff is in charge of the post office.