

ST. PETER'S ABBEY NEWSLETTER

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Some 140 religious and monks enjoy an outdoor supper during the July 28 jubilee get-together. Special jubilee candles were presented to the superiors of the various communities, lower left: Sister Grace Kowalski, OSB, Winnipeg; Sister Eleanore Hanus, OSE, Saskatoon; Sister Agnes Ott, FdIP, Humboldt; and Sister Juliana Weber, OSU, Bruno (taking the place of Sister Maureen Maier, OSU). Part of the day's program included some skits depicting the life of St. Benedict, in this case, the final encounter between Saints Benedict and Scholastica.

1,500th anniversary celebrations

Several celebrations were planned at St. Peter's this year to mark the 1,500th anniversary celebration of the birth of St. Benedict.

The feast of St. Benedict was celebrated on

COVER

Archbishop Angelo Palmas, apostolic pro-nuncio to Canada, was guest and main celebrant at the Eucharist at the abbey on July 11. During his visit he posed with various members of the community.

July 11. Archbishop Angelo Palmas, apostolic pro-nuncio, came from Ottawa to be main celebrant at the Eucharist. In his homily he compared the Benedictine task of waging relentless war on self-will to St. Benedict's destruction of all vestiges of pagan worship on Monte Cassino. In a spontaneous homily at the end of Mass he commented on the role of humility in monastic and Christian life.

During Mass the four jubilarians this year renewed their vows in Abbot Jerome's presence: Father Edward Benning and Brother Dominic Distel,

golden jubilarians; and Father Daniel Muyres and Father Maurice Weber, silver jubilarians.

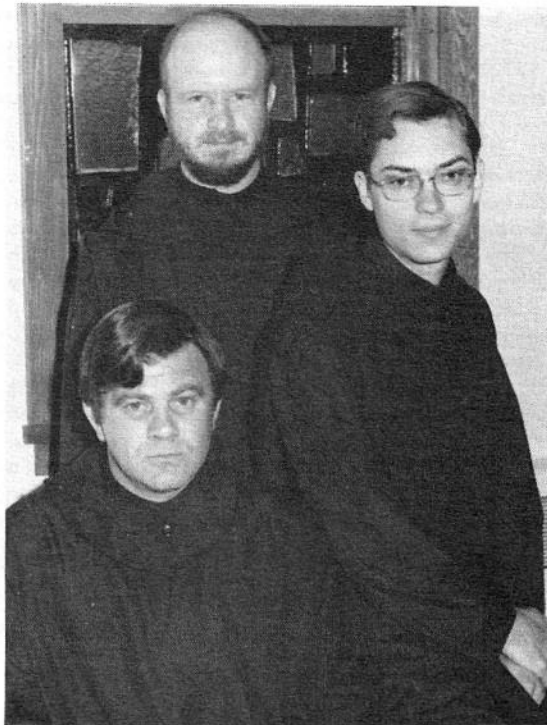
The day previous was Oblate Day, the first time we had such a gathering for Oblates for many years.

That evening during Vigils, three novices were invested with the monastic habit: Brothers Vincent Lalonde, William (Al) Thurmeier and Stephen Carthy.

A day for the religious of the abbacy plus the Benedictine nuns from St. Benedict's Priory, Winnipeg turned out excellent in terms of weather, meals and visiting. There was a ball game and some tours in the afternoon. By the time Mass began at 4:15 over 140 had gathered in the chapel and more chairs had to be added. Abbot Jerome Weber was chief celebrant. The lawn by the car garage proved to be an excellent spot for an outdoor supper. Everyone returned to the chapel for sung Vespers and then gathered in the gym for a program of slides, talks and skits — ending up with Compline.

The Benedictine nuns stayed overnight and joined us for prayers, Mass and breakfast the next day, before going off for morning tours of Mount Carmel, the Ursuline Convent, St. Peter's Cathedral and the abbey grounds.

A week later, on Aug. 4 there was a reunion for former community members. Eight members and their families came. The same number responded that they had previous commitments. Again the day was spent in visiting, Vespers, an outdoor supper, a short program and Compline.



Brothers Vincent Lalonde, William (Al) Thurmeier and Stephen Carthy (front to back) were invested as novices during the Vigils service on July 10.

More jubilee get-togethers are planned before the summer is over.

Four monks celebrate jubilees

Four members of St. Peter's Abbey celebrated anniversaries of their monastic profession this year. Father Edward Benning's 50th anniversary was on June 22; Brother Dominic Distel's 50th anniversary was on July 8; and Fathers Daniel Muyres' and Maurice Weber's 25th anniversary was on July 11.

The community celebrated the four anniversaries on July 11, in connection with the visit of the apostolic pro-nuncio. A summary of their years of service follows:

Brother Dominic Distel

Dominic Distel was born in Hochemmingen, Baden, Germany, and came to Canada as a youth in 1923. He stayed with his uncle Fred Distel on a farm near Marysburg. In November, 1928 he came to St. Peter's Abbey as a postulant. He entered the novitiate in July, 1929, keeping Dominic as his monastic name. He made his first profession of vows on July 8, 1930.

Brother Dominic has been closely associated with St. Peter's Press since the first week of his postulancy. From 1930 - 47, on the old molten-lead intertype machine, he set up all the type for the German St. Peter's Bote and did much of the proof-reading, under the editorship of Father Peter Wind-schiegel. He also set type for the Prairie Messenger and for much of the job work.

A major item of his extra work for over 20

years was the printing of two catechism correspondence courses prepared by the Ursuline Sisters of Bruno for the schools of St. Peter's Abbey. This involved many hours of typesetting and two weekly runs of the large press.

During all these years it has been Brother Dominic's responsibility to bring up from the kitchen the saucepan of flour-paste glue used on printing days to seal the wrappers on bulk orders of the paper. He chuckles at an incident which occurred in connection with this chore. One day he found the saucepan not only empty, but licked clean. Two novices had mistaken the glue for cornstarch pudding.

A less pleasant memory is that of the "type pies" which occurred from time to time under the "hot-type" system. A "type pie" is the mess of scrambled lead-type lines which results when a poorly locked form opens while being carried to the press. Disposing of the "pie" involved many hours, sometimes a night, of reassembling, re-setting, and proof-reading.

Since 1971, when "cold-type" offset printing was introduced, Brother Dominic no longer puts in long hours at the intertype, but he still keeps the machine in shape for job work, frequently obliging neighboring printers. He also helps full-time on press days, with the mailing and the clean-up chores.

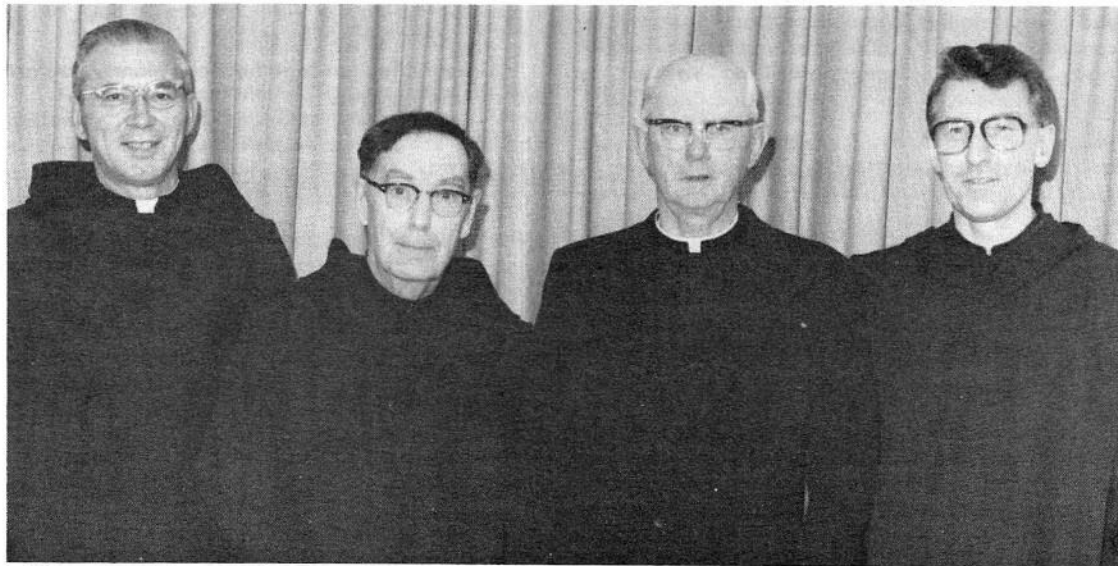
The new printing system has given Brother Dominic some time, after many years, for outdoor work. One of the outdoor services which he renders the community is that of trimming the white-cedar hedge flanking the printing shop.

His favorite outdoor occupation is that of tending the Blessed Virgin grotto which he built a number of years ago, when a friend donated a statue of Our Lady obtained directly from Fatima. A garden near the shrine supplies the flowers. Hidden among the evergreens, this shrine is a favorite place of prayer and recollection for the many retreatants who come to St. Peter's Abbey.

Brother Dominic has also shared generously in the day-to-day work of the monastery. From 1930-58 he was sacristan. This assignment involved many minor and some major chores, among them: preparing the main altar for three daily Masses; preparing the auxiliary altars in the sacristy for more than a dozen daily Masses; serving one or several Masses daily; and providing flowers for the sanctuary.

Another service he has rendered the monastic community for many years (since 1932) is that of ringing the morning awakening bell with the regularity and accuracy of a CBC time signal.

During the past 10 years he has spent many volunteer hours daily minding the telephone and giving information at the main entrance. His help-



Jubilarians celebrating their anniversaries of monastic profession this year are, from left: Father Daniel Muyres, Brother Dominic Distel, Father Edward Benning and Father Maurice Weber.

fulness and geniality as porter have won him friends and penpals from Saint John, N.B., to Seattle, to Manila, to Hong Kong.

Before 1960 there were no official and few unofficial holidays for monks of St. Peter's Abbey. Since that time Brother Dominic has had three vacations. Twice (in 1963 and 1975) he visited relatives and friends in Germany. Last year (1979), to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his coming to St. Peter's, a Marysburg neighbor, resident for many years in B.C., made him the gift of a trip to B.C. and the State of Washington.

Father Edward Benning

Father Edward (Clarence) Benning was born in Arcadia, Wisconsin. He took his high school studies and first year university at St. Peter's College, from 1924-29.

He was preceded to St. Peter's by three brothers, Leonard and Xavier, already doing their seminary studies as members of St. Peter's Abbey, and Anthony, a senior high school student.

As a student, Clarence distinguished himself in several dramatic productions and oratory contests, and also played the violin in the school orchestra.

In June, 1929, he was invested as a novice, receiving Edward as his monastic name. After completing his novitiate at St. John's Abbey, he made his first profession of vows on July 22, 1930. He received the BA degree from St. John's University in 1932, with special credits in Greek and French.

At St. John's he had the opportunity to become acquainted with the Liturgical Movement, then under the pioneer leadership of Father Virgil Michel, OSB, and attended one of the first National Liturgical Weeks.

He took his theology courses under the rectorship of Father Ulrich Beste, who was just completing his monumental *Compendium Juris Canonici*, (*Compendium of Canon Law*).

Father Edward was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1936, in St. John's Abbey Church, by Bishop Joseph Busch of St. Cloud, Minn.

From 1936-43 he taught a variety of high school classes at St. Peter's, including French, Latin, and religion. He continued his interest in music and dramatics, played violin again in the college orchestra, and supplemented the annual major dramatic productions by a special Red Cross benefit program for several years.

His interest in nature and bird-life during these years was evidenced by the building of several

dozen bird houses, many of which still (40 years later) invite wrens and swallows to the beautiful abbey grounds.

During the summer of 1942 he assisted Father Rudolph Palm, OSB, at Lake Lenore, and then was administrator of the parish after the latter's death in August of that year.

In the fall of 1943 Father Edward was appointed pastor of St. Michael's Parish, Cudworth, St. Maurus Parish, Dana and chaplain of St. Michael Hospital. From 1945-61 he was Pastor of St. Michael's and St. Leo's, north of Cudworth. During this, his first parochial assignment, he began his devoted service to the CWL, which has continued ever since.

In the fall of 1961 Father Edward became pastor of St. Bruno's Parish, Bruno; St. Agnes, Peterson; Holy Family, north of Bruno; and St. Maurus, Dana. In 1966 St. Agnes and St. Maurus were placed under the care of a priest resident at St. Peter's Abbey. During most of these years at Bruno he was chaplain of the sisters of the Ursuline Convent there.

From 1968-75 he was pastor of St. Augustine's and St. Dominic's, Humboldt. One of his successful projects there was the acquisition of a new gymnasium in joint ownership with St. Dominic's School, for Sunday and feastday services. He also organized St. Augustine's Parish Council (1970), the first in the abbacy.

In 1975 he became chaplain of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Humboldt, and pastor at St. Joseph's Church, south of Fulda. He continued to serve on the Medico-moral Commission, of which he had been a member already since 1971.

Since 1978 he has been pastor of Holy Guardian Angels Parish, Englefeld, and Holy Rosary Parish, LeRoy.

During his pastoral ministry Father Edward has supervised the building of three churches: St. Leo (1947), St. Maurus, Dana (1962), and the new Holy Guardian Angels Church at Englefeld, completed this spring.

He has been a member of the Priests' Senate for about 10 years, a member of the Senior Council for several terms, and vicar general of St. Peter's Abbey since 1970.

Father Daniel Muyres

Daniel Muyres was born at St. Gregor where he received his schooling before coming to St. Peter's College for Grades 11, 12 and arts. At St. Peter's he took part in several major dramatic productions.

In 1954 he entered the novitiate at St. Peter's Abbey, receiving the religious name Ambrose, which he later changed back to his baptismal name, Daniel. He made his first profession of vows on July 11, 1955.

He received his seminary training at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 10, 1961 by Bishop Francis Klein at St. Peter's Cathedral, Muenster.

At St. Peter's College he was prefect of students for three years, and taught in the high school for four years (1961-64), during which time he was in charge of the typewriting department.

He has been parish assistant at Humboldt (1969-70) and Bruno (1970-72); pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Fulda (1972-74); and since 1975 pastor of St. Scholastica's Parish, Burr.

He took a year for studies in 1974 at St. Paul's University, Ottawa, and received a master's degree in pastoral studies.

A major contribution of Father Daniel to the community has been that of business manager for the abbey, college, farm and press. He began as assistant to the late Father Leonard Benning and supplemented his experience with a course in accounting at the University of Saskatchewan.

As business manager, Father Daniel has also been a member of the Senior Council since 1966. From 1975-78 he was subprior of the community.

Father Maurice Weber

Raymond Weber was born at Watson and received his schooling there before coming to St. Peter's College for Grades 11, 12 and arts. He was active in dramatics, public speaking and the year book staff.

In 1954 he entered the novitiate of St. Peter's Abbey, receiving Maurice as his monastic name. On July 11, 1955, he made his first profession of vows.

He did his seminary studies at St. John's Abbey. He was ordained to the priesthood at St. Peter's Cathedral, Muenster, on June 10, 1961, by Bishop Francis Klein of Saskatoon.

At St. Peter's College Father Maurice taught religion, literature, and chemistry in the high school from 1961-64. Then he studied chemistry at the University of Saskatchewan and at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri (1965-67), receiving his master of science degree.

From 1967-76 he taught chemistry in Grades 11, 12 and arts at St. Peter's College and, from 1972-76, at St. Ursula's Academy, Bruno. He was also part-time prefect of students, chaplain of students (1968-72) and moderator of the student paper.

From 1973-76 he was principal of St. Peter's College, when he supervised the adjustment of St. Peter's from the status of a boarding school to that of a day school.

Since 1961 Father Maurice has also been active in pastoral work: assistant priest in St. Peter's Cathedral and St. Gregory's Parish (1961-62) and assistant priest at St. Bruno's Parish and part-time chaplain at St. Ursula's Academy, Bruno (1971-74).

At the abbey he was prior and a member of the Senior Council from 1968-76. He also served as assistant to the abbot-president in the regular canonical visitation of St. Martin's Abbey.

In the fall of 1976 Father Maurice went to study theology and monastic history and spirituality at the International Benedictine College of San' Anselmo in Rome, where he received his licentiate in theology in 1978. During his stay in Europe he visited many Benedictine monasteries plus the Holy Land.

Since his return he is assisting in the instruction of novices, is dean of students and religious co-ordinator at St. Peter's College, is vocation director for St. Peter's Abbey, and is Sunday-assistant at St. Augustine's Parish and St. Dominic's, Humboldt.

New St. Benedict statue

To mark the 1,500th anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict, the community of St. Peter's Abbey commissioned Calgary artist Albert Gerritsen to carve a statue of St. Benedict.

Preparatory to designing the statue, Mr. Gerritsen studied the Rule of St. Benedict, *Renew and Create* and photographs of our monastic garb. In the artist's words, he envisioned Benedict as:

"A man, who, though he was a sophisticated intellect (or because he was) could refine, or constrict the monastic life to not just the bare essentials but rather the fundamental realities. Thus he became the foundation stone or pillar on which community religious life could be built. And he became the 'tree trunk' from which monasticism grew, and renews itself through all the seasons of the church and time.

"He was one who both literally and figuratively hews back the wilderness with mind and muscle. Therefore he is shown holding the book, which is Gospel, rule or the pursuit or maintenance of knowledge, close to his heart.

"He has a woodman's axe instead of a staff, to show he was a man who had and recognized a direct and immediate relation between the work and toil needed and the prayer and mental advancement."

The four-foot-high statue is carved from light bass wood and weighs 75 pounds. It was installed in the abbey chapel and blessed by Abbot Jerome Weber on July 10, vigil of the feast of St. Benedict.



The new statue of St. Benedict.

Around the abbey

Building and repairs has been one of the concerns of the community this summer.

After various discussions, the go-ahead for a new press building was given by the chapter and by early July the piles were being poured and the foundation made. Trenches had to be dug for water and sewer lines before the floor was poured.

In early August the Sask. Tel crew arrived to put in the underground telephone lines and abbey members pulled the wires into the various buildings and readied everything for the hook-up crew. New private lines are being added for the various

departments and the abbey will now have two lines instead of one.

Meanwhile Leo Torborg has been busy renovating various rooms in Michael Hall.

Talk of roof repairs continued and it was decided to repair the roofs on the main entrance, chapel, and arena foyer. The arena roof will probably also have to be re-covered this fall.

The possibility of beginning a bible school at St. Peter's College was discussed several times. The personnel and facilities needed will be decid-

ing factors in the decision whether to have such a school here or elsewhere.

Sister Lena Gaudette of Edmonton came here June 8-13 for a psychological testing program for the monastic candidates.

Various gatherings were held in June, including an outdoor supper for volunteer catechists and their families, organized by Father Lawrence DeMong, abbacy director of religious education. On June 18 Traugher Groh of Germany spoke to an earthcare workshop on integrated bio-dynamic farming. June 20 was graduation day for the third year class of the pre-vocational program.

Father Rudolph Novocosky received permission to buy a new car after his old Valiant, with more than 160,000 miles on it, began giving him trouble. St. Peter's College added to its audiovisual resources by purchasing a videotape recorder and monitor.

Another first for St. Peter's College this year

will be women boarders. The basement dormitory in Severin Hall will be used by women instead of men this year and Sister Zita Maier, OSU, will be their supervisor.

A note of interest about one of our early community members from the June, 1980 St. John's Abbey Confrere: During a visitation of monastic archives at St. Bede's Abbey, Peru, Illinois, Father Vincent Tegeder and Brother Ryan Perkins located the burial place of Father Bruno Riss, a founding monk of St. John's Abbey. In 1892 Father Bruno joined in the creation of the Cluny priory at Wetaug. Due to advancing age and health problems, he was appointed chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital in LaSalle, Ill., the town adjacent to Peru. He died there on Feb. 2, 1900 in his 71st year. He was buried in a parish cemetery now located in Spring Valley, Ill., only a short distance from St. Bede's Abbey. The Confrere printed a picture of his gravesite.



The new press building begins to take shape as the foundation is poured and the ground is packed for the cement floor.

Personnel notes

Abbot Jerome Weber and **Father Maurice Weber** took part in the 40th general chapter of the American Casinese Federation at Saint Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Penns., June 9-13. Abbot Jerome also directed numerous individual retreatants during the summer. He blessed the new church at Englefeld on June 22.

Father Albert Ruetz gave a directed retreat to sisters at St. Elizabeth's Convent in Humboldt, July 18 - 26.

Father Martin Brodner attended the alumni reunion of St. Benedict's Academy, Winnipeg, Aug. 8-10, and preached at the reunion Mass. He was student chaplain there from 1966-70. He also used the occasion to visit the various Benedictine convents where he used to be chaplain.

Father Leo Hinz was hospitalized in St. Elizabeth's hospital, Humboldt, June 10-13 after suffering a painful kidney stone attack.

Father Maurice Weber preached a retreat to the Benedictine sisters of St. Gertrude's Priory at Cottonwood, Idaho, June 1-7. From there he went to the general chapter as delegate of the community. He then went to St. John's Abbey to take part in the Benedictine Congress and stayed there to take classes in the monastic institute summer school program for a week.

Father Werner Renneberg, diocesan CWL director, went to Halifax to attend the national CWL convention, Aug. 3-9.

Father Lawrence DeMong spent four weeks in eastern Canada in July, two weeks in Ottawa to help revise the Grade 1 Canadian Catechism program and two weeks in Toronto to take part in a Listening therapy summer camp with Dr. Agatha Sidlauskas. Here he was joined by **Father Andrew Britz** and they travelled to Granby, Quebec to investigate the set-up of a Catholic bible school there. They also were able to visit St. Benoit de Lac.

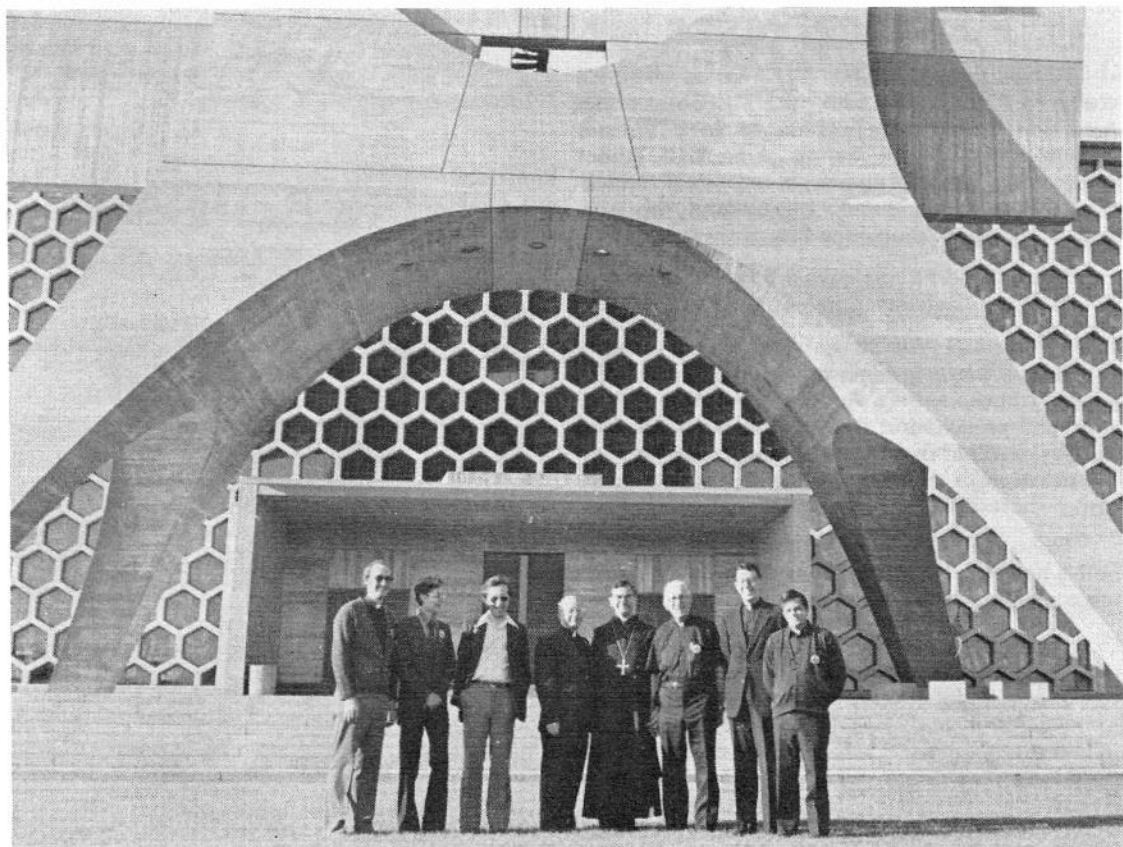
Father Sylvester Vredegoor arrived at the abbey on June 16, after celebrating his parents' golden jubilee in Picture Butte, Alta. He accompanied them to Holland for another golden jubilee, his aunt's jubilee of profession of vows. While in Holland he participated in an ecumenical celebration of St. Benedict's Day at Utrecht.



Father Sylvester Vredegoor returned to Canada in early June from Maceio, Brazil. He plans to return in early September.

Brother Patrick Genois made an eight-day directed retreat at the Augustinians at Marylake Retreat House near King City, Ont., in mid-July.

Father Francis Gannon, hermit, returned home to Texas on July 7 to take part in his mother's funeral.



In front of St. John's Abbey church are, from left: Father Peter Novacosky, Al Thurmeier (now Brother William), Brother Mark Hunt, Father Roman Schneider, Abbot Primate Victor Dammertz, Father Paul Kuehne, Father Maurice Weber and Vincent Lalonde. Missing from the picture is Steve Carthy, the photographer.

Journey to St. John's Abbey

Seven monks from St. Peter's used the occasion of this year's sesquimillennium celebration to take part in the Benedictine Congress at St. John's Abbey, June 19-21, and to visit several Benedictine communities on the way. The seven sojourners, in a rented 12-passenger van, were: Fathers Paul Kuehne, Roman Schneider and Peter Novacosky, Brother Mark Hunt, and Candidates Vincent Lalonde, Al Thurmeier and Steve Carthy. They were joined at St. John's by Father Maurice Weber, who came from the general chapter.

The journey began Monday morning, June 16. After a leisurely trip, the monks arrived at Assumption Abbey, Richardton, N.D., around 9 p.m.

The evening refreshments and welcome gave a hint of the hospitality the monks received next day from the whole community, but especially from Brother Victor, guestmaster. The tour included a visit to the Benedictine nuns at Sacred Heart Priory, a mile from Assumption Abbey.

On Wednesday the monks travelled to St. John's, arriving in time for Vespers and supper. Getting to St. John's a day before the congress began gave the monks a chance to look around the abbey-university and to renew acquaintances with old classmates.

The congress brought together some 250 monks and about 1,000 Benedictine nuns to St.

John's Abbey and neighboring St. Benedict's Convent. There were displays, concerts, liturgies, great meals together, and talks. The main speaker on Thursday evening was Sister Joan Chittister, who concluded her challenging address: "Let us not live in awe of the past but in hope for the future." She said the most needed pieties of this age are "anger" and "courage."

Other keynote congress speakers included Cardinal Basil Hume, Abbot-primate Victor Dammertz and Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, former abbot-primate.



Bishop Adam Exner, OMI, Kamloops, B.C., preached the annual community retreat from June 23 - 27.

Cardinal Hume said "clinging to God" is the way of finding fullness of life and that the vows are the Benedictine "God-given way" of doing that.

Abbot Dammertz said one reason the order has survived 1,500 years was because it has always been open to the signs of the times and to the needs of the church. He said Benedictines must serve the church and be church-oriented and not be selfish.

Archbishop Weakland noted the cultural contributions of Benedictines and called on them to develop a liturgical spirituality for the church today.

On the journey home the monks, joined at St. John's by two nun-guides from Winnipeg, stopped for an hour's visit at Mount St. Benedict Convent at Crookston, where retired Abbot Michael Ott of St. Peter's had been a chaplain for about 20 years. It was past midnight on Saturday before the van pulled into St. Benedict's Priory in Winnipeg.

The nuns in Winnipeg showed their St. Peter's brothers great hospitality during their stay there. On Monday the last leg of the journey brought the travellers home in time for the community retreat, after a dinner stopover at Russell with the Benedictine nursing nuns there.

Deceased brethren

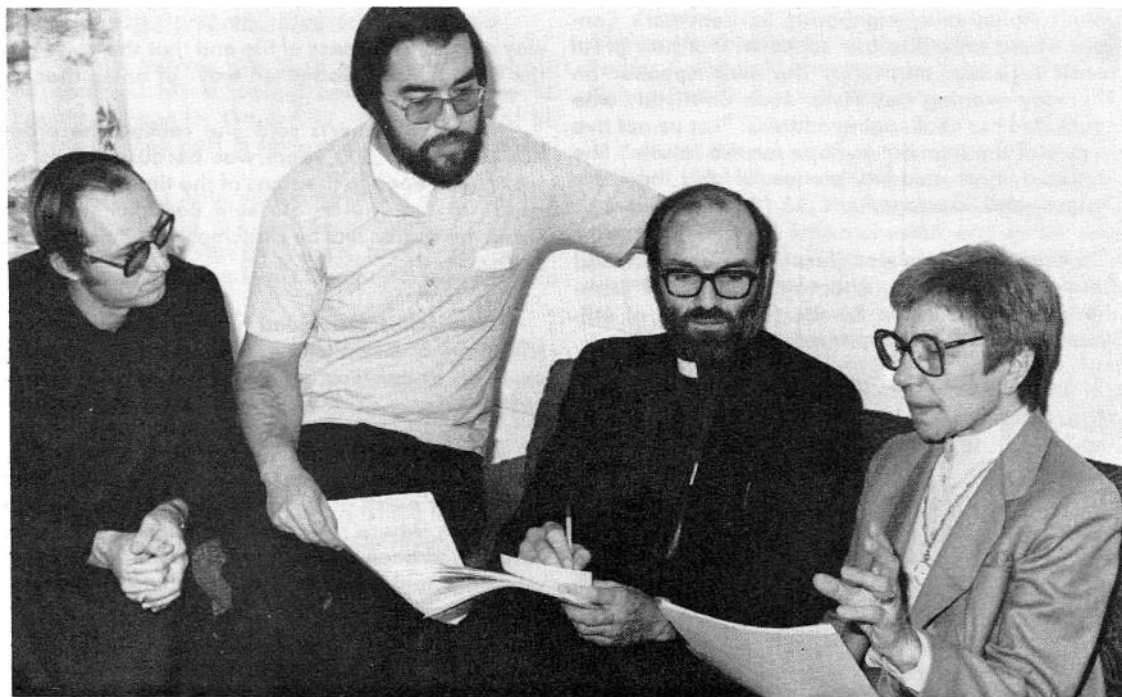
Father Bernard (Louis) Brinker, 82, Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, died on June 4.

Father Raymond Layton, 87, Holy Cross Abbey, Canon City, Colorado, died on June 11.

Brother Martin Valenta, 57, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Ill., died on June 25, of complications following cardiac by-pass surgery.

Father Florian Demmer, 84, St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas, died on July 12 after suffering a severe stroke.

Fray Enrique Thorin Casas, 78, choir oblate of Assumption Abbey's priory, Monasterio Benedictino de Tibati, in Bogota, Colombia, died Aug. 1.



Fathers Peter Novecosky, Andrew Britz and Lawrence DeMong discuss the Listening Therapy program with Dr. Agatha Sidlauskas during her June visit to the abbey.

The guestmaster's report

This summer the facilities were put to good use as various groups and numerous individuals came to St. Peter's.

In early June a group of eight university chaplains-in-training came for a few days of study under the direction of Rev. Ron Evans. On June 8 about 50 youngsters spent the day and night here to sharpen up their golfing skills under the direction of the Saskatchewan Golf Association. On June 11 there was a good turnout for a workshop on dyslexia by Dr. Agatha Sidlauskas of Ottawa.

The Humboldt AA group used our grounds again this year for a roundup the June 22 weekend and experienced a good turnout and good weather. The guest rooms were booked the last week of June for our pastors who came to the abbey to take part in the annual preached retreat. Also taking part were Fathers Bernard DeMargerie, Don Macgillivray, Ralph Kleiter and Leonard Kennedy, CSB, of Saskatoon. They vacated the guest rooms just in time for a group of 14 Sisters of St. Louis to take up residence for a week of

directed retreat.

As soon as the St. Louis sisters finished, seven Ursuline sisters from Bruno moved in to begin a week's retreat under the direction of Doreen Kostyniuk. There were enough rooms left, however, for several oblates of St. Benedict to stay overnight in connection with the Oblate Day celebrations on July 10.

Margot King arrived on July 18, with Peggy, for a couple of weeks of rest and retreat. The annual Humboldt Hockey Holiday sports camp, under the direction of Jack Cook of Saskatoon, started up operations on July 21. They were here for three weeks, with close to 100 boys each week.

The last week of July five Ursuline sisters and two Elizabethan sisters made a directed retreat under the direction of Father Jerome Hellman, OMI. In addition to the various retreat groups, numerous individuals, sometimes three or four at a time, were here for individual retreats, mainly under the direction of Abbot Jerome Weber and Father Albert Ruetz.



Oblates are, from left: Bob Lemke, Dr. Michael Segu, Anne Segu, Bette Lemke, Msgr. Askew, Leatta Witt, Alice Bergerman, Antoinette Askew (front), Marikay Falby, Agnes Bauer, Ted Bergerman, Abbot Jerome, Jessica Latshaw, Mary Boddy, Bro. Francis Fortney, Mary Gortler, Grant Maxwell, Father Albert (director of Oblates), Oris Fry, and Sister Mary Smith.

Oblates linked to abbey

Twenty Lay Oblates and observers met for a day of reflection and prayer at St. Peter's Abbey on July 10.

Oblates of St. Benedict are Christian men and women admitted into spiritual union and affiliation with a Benedictine community of monks or nuns, so that they may share in the spiritual life, prayers, and good works of the community. Within the framework of their daily lives, Oblates strive to lead full Christian lives enlightened by personal efforts to understand Christ's teaching in the Scriptures as interpreted by St. Benedict in the Rule for monks. They are a "spiritual arm" of the Benedictine community, reaching out into all areas of life, seeking to share with others what they themselves gain as Oblates of St. Benedict.

Abbot Jerome Weber addressed the Oblates on "The Rule as a Way of Life for Lay People." Father Albert Ruetz, director of Oblates, talked on "Prayer and Work in the Life of an Oblate." Time was set aside for private prayer, shared prayer and discussion. At the conclusion of Vespers with the community, Oblates renewed their Oblation and seven new members were invested as Oblate novices. This was followed by an outdoor supper with the community. Many stayed for evening vigils and the investiture of the three Benedictine novices.

Those invested as Oblate novices were: Dr. and Mrs. Michael Segu, Regina; Bob and Bette Lemke, Saskatoon; Jessica Latshaw, Saskatoon; Mary Boddy, Saskatoon; and Oris Fry, Muenster.



Participants at the general chapter at Saint Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, Penns., include Abbot Jerome Weber (second row, sixth from right, flanked by Abbot Primate Victor Dammertz and Abbot President Martin Burne in front row) and Father Maurice Weber, St. Peter's Abbey delegate (last row, fifth from left).

Father Maurice reports on the general chapter

Abbot-president Martin Burne opened the 40th general chapter of the American-Cassinense Federation at Saint Vincent Archabbey on June 8; abbots and delegates of 21 abbeys plus representatives of dependent priories were chapter participants.

Special guests were present to commemorate the 1,500th anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict. Archbishop Rembert Weakland, OSB, from Milwaukee, Wis., spoke to participants and others on "The Role of Monasticism in the Life of the Church." He emphasized humility and reminded the monks of the fragile nature of their communities as he noted that we might be tempted to triumphalism on our 1,500th anniversary of the birth of Saints Benedict and Scholastica. He stressed the ecclesial dimension of monks, who must see their role as part of the full mission of the church — not only of the "whole church" but also of the "local church" in the spirit of monastic stability.

He saw four values that monasticism could

bring to the mission of the church today: 1) The primacy of God and his kingdom; 2) An eschatological polarity; 3) A balance within that polarity in regard to active commitment and contemplative call; and 4) A paschal (resurrectional) dimension of life in the church. For the present age, he stressed the Benedictine charisms of communal living, hospitality and service to the local church.

Abbot Primate Victor Dammertz addressed the topic, "Benedictine Presence in the Third World." He reviewed monk missionary activities from the 6th century to the present.

Abbot Victor described the problem and challenges for Benedictines in South and Central America, Africa and Asia. He noted that Benedictinism has assuredly taken root in the Third World and that St. Benedict could be considered not only the "Father of Western Monasticism" but also the "Father of many peoples." He noted that foundations in South America, Africa and Europe have unique problems but in every case the monks, nuns

and sisters are attempting to apply the Rule of St. Benedict to their individual cultures.

Basil Cardinal Hume, OSB, spoke to the monks and guests about "The Monastic Ideal in Earthenware Vessels." He reflected on the Rule of St. Benedict as it can be applied in the monastery and noted that the comments of the Rule showed that the author realized that there were imperfections in the people living in a monastery. A major quality to help all monks live the cenobitic (family) life is the virtue of humility. Two pitfalls to avoid are self-will (selfishness) and murmuring. The true monk never gives up the pilgrim search for God in a community setting with an abbot as superior.

The following days were filled with much discussion on monastic topics and chapter material centering on abbatial elections and a charter for dependent priories. The chapter accepted the "Charter for Dependent Priors" written up by a committee headed by Abbot Robert West.

After some modifications dealing with methods to be used for identifying and evaluating possible abbatial candidates prior to an election, as well as other minor changes to the original

document, the "Guidelines for Abbatial Elections" was accepted for use in our federation until 1986. Modifications to the 1977 edition of Juridic Elements are to be made so that it agrees with the most recent decisions of the chapter.

The participants were also challenged by the topic of Monastic Formation. More emphasis will be given to this topic in the future and a common program is to be worked out for the junior monks of our federation. There was great interest in pooling federation resources to have a summer institute in formation each year, possibly holding the program in different monasteries.

Elected to the Council of the President for three-year terms were Abbot John Eidenschink, of St. John's Abbey; Abbot Joseph Gerry, St. Anselm's Abbey, N.H.; Abbot Lawrence Wagner, Assumption Abbey, N.D.; and Father Demetrius Domm, Saint Vincent Archabbey. Abbot Martin Burne, St. Mary's Abbey, N.J. continues as abbot president, with Father Maur Dlouhy, St. Procopius Abbey, Illinois as executive secretary.

The 1983 general chapter will be hosted by the monks of Assumption Abbey, North Dakota.



Thirty-six Benedictine nuns from St. Benedict's Priory, Winnipeg came by bus to take part in the July 28 sesquimillennium get-together at St. Peter's.



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