

ST. PETER'S ABBEY NEWSLETTER

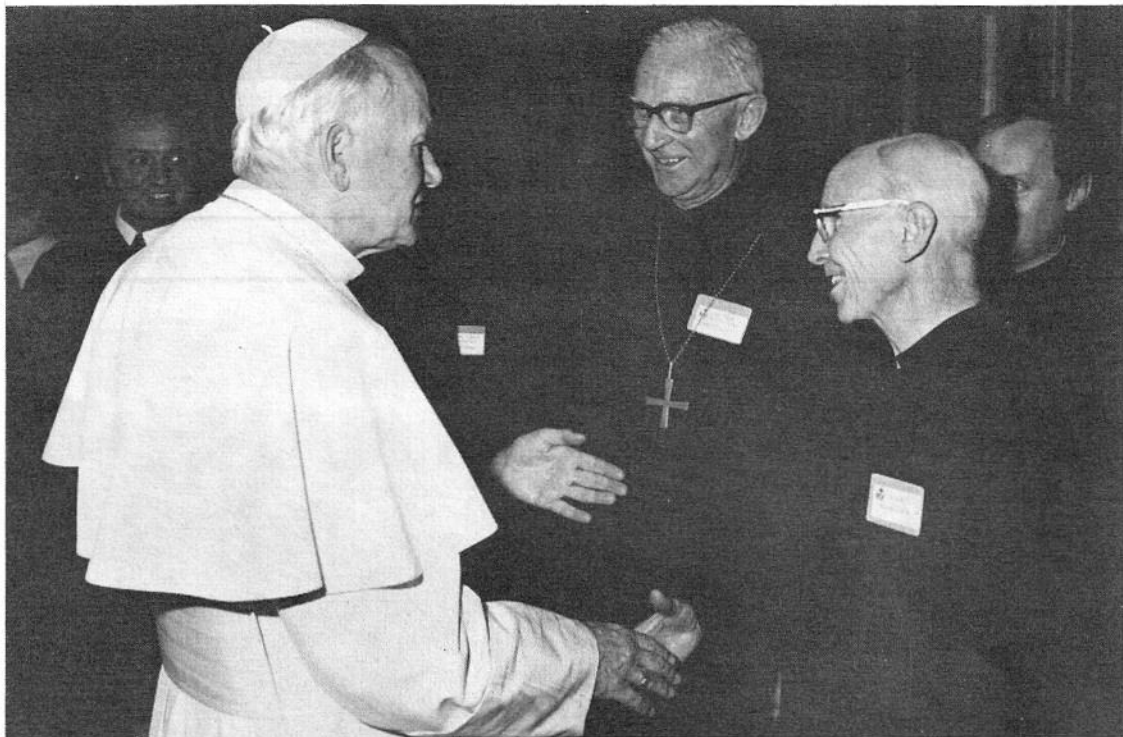
Vol. 8, No. 2

Muenster, Sask.

Autumn, 1984



My hospitable hosts, in front of the house Father Sylvester lives in, in Maceio, from left: Father Sylvester, Sister Marie (Imelda), Father Peter, Sister Claire, Father Bernard.



Abbot Jerome with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican, Sept. 27.

Abbot Jerome's activities

I was part of a team of five (two priests and three sisters) giving a directed retreat to 25 sisters, at Providence Centre, Edmonton, Aug. 17 - 25. En route I enjoyed the hospitality of Father Ralph Kleiter at Kindersley, and of the Sisters of St. Elizabeth at Macklin, on my return journey.

About every four years the Benedictine abbots in various parts of the world meet for a congress at the International College of S. Anselmo in Rome. I attended such a congress, Sept. 18 - 28, under the direction of Abbot Primate Victor Dammertz of Germany, who was re-elected for another term of four years. Simultaneous translation in four languages (French, Italian, German, English) made it possible to understand all that was said. There were several very good papers on the topic of the modern monk's response to the question of

Christ: "Who do you say I am?" A highlight of the congress was the audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican, on Sept. 27, about a week after his visit to Canada.

On Oct. 13 I attended the banquet in Humboldt during the meeting of the Saskatchewan pro-life groups.

The annual meeting of the CCCB (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops) was held in Ottawa, Oct. 22 - 26. I represent the Abbey of Muenster at this meeting to which usually about 80 bishops from across Canada come to discuss common concerns. This gave me an opportunity to stay with Father Lawrence DeMong and his mother at the parish in Cantley, P.Q., where he lives and also to visit the Ursulines and Elizabethans at Arnprior which is near Ottawa.

St. Peter's College report

Registration for St. Peter's College classes took place on Monday, Sept. 10. There were 362 year-course registrations and 94 semester-course registrations for university classes. The part-time enrolment was up by over 30 students from the previous year but full-time enrolment was down by about eight students. This trend seems to be reflected in the figures released by the College of Arts and Science in the University of Saskatchewan as well as by St. Thomas More College.

The principal for the college continues to be Father Maurice Weber and the dean of St. Peter's is Brother Stanley Vindevoghel. Father Albert Ruetz is the mainstay of the mathematics department and also organizes sports with some student representatives. Abbot Jerome Weber continues to teach history 112, while Father Florian Renneberg instructs bio-

logical sciences 100, and Father James Gray holds forth in English 110.

The three junior monks taking classes in the college are Brothers Antony Etty, Basil Schaan, and Kurt Van Kuren.

St. Peter's tries to accommodate demand for special classes and includes them in the curriculum. The new offerings this year are classes in education administration, special education, English and sociology. EDADM 321.3 deals with organization of public education, EDEXC 358.3 treats speech and language pathology, ENG. 115.3 includes literature and composition, ENG. 255.6 recounts American poetry and prose from the Civil War to the Great Depression, while SOC 207.6 is a study of the family.

Sixteen lay instructors have been hired to help teach the 28 college classes. Zita Maier in-



Father Maurice Weber, college principal, assists students on registration day, Sept. 10.

structs MUSIC 100.6, Sister Christine Loehndorf, OSU, teaches ART 112.6, while five other teachers come from the Humboldt area. The rest of the instructors drive in from Saskatoon.

This year there is a shift toward the physical sciences such as biology, chemistry and physics, with an exception being Computer Science 110. It is partly due to the expenses involved with science classes as well as rising costs in other areas that the school board of St. Peter's College looked forward to a meeting with the Honorable Colin Maxwell, minister of advanced education for Saskatchewan, as well as with E. W. Evancio, assistant deputy minister of advanced education for the province. We were fortunate to have the two officials fly in to the airport at Humboldt from Saskatoon. They were met at the airport by the principal and driven to St. Peter's on the afternoon of Oct. 1 for a brief meeting with the college board. The ministers said that they came to listen to our concerns and problems.

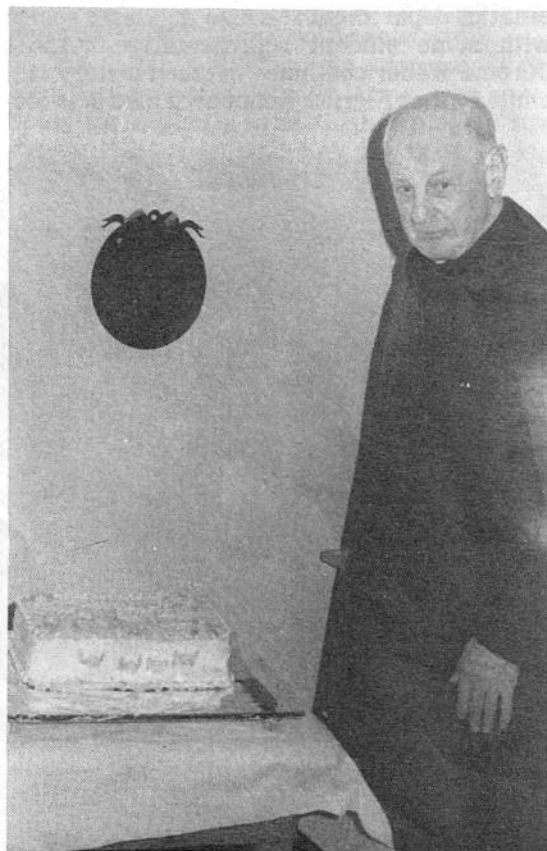
After lunch and a short tour around the premises the dignitaries were escorted to the airport by Dean Brother Stanley Vindevoghel where they boarded a plane to fly to Regina. It was felt that the meeting was very beneficial in relaying the strengths and weaknesses of our college program, with some emphasis on possible financial aid from the government in addition to that already received through regular grants.

St. Peter's College remains the location for an Office Education course from Saskatchewan Technical Institute. Two teachers are instructing 24 students in this area. The pre-vocational education group sponsored by the Humboldt Rural School Division and under the principalship of Sister Miriam Spenrath, OSU, is busy with over two dozen students. These programs, combined with the college class group, make St. Peter's a common gathering place for about 120 day students, while other persons are drawn to the campus by various other endeavors.

To accommodate changing conditions, renovations in the existing buildings continue to be made. Brother Stanley is in charge of this work. As well, the arena ice area will be moved this fall toward the north end of the building. This

is an improvement that has long been desired. It will allow for better ice conditions, easier disposal of snow scrapings, better spectator viewing area, and improvement of board design. Muenster Sports Club is responsible for the costs and labor of renovation. They will work together with a college committee composed of Father Daniel Muyres and Brother Stanley Vindevoghel.

St. Peter's College today is quite different from what it was in the 1960s but it is still very much an educational institution and centre. For Benedictines this adaptation has always been a necessary part of Christian life.



Father Xavier Benning celebrated the 60th anniversary of his religious profession, Aug. 29.



Family day with our lay staff and their families, Aug. 26.

Oblate survey

The Benedictine Sisters of Pittsburg conducted a survey on Oblates during this past year. They sent out a questionnaire to 101 houses of Benedictine men and women in the United States, Canada and Mexico and received 78 responses. Of those not responding several are known to have Oblate programs and others are reviving theirs.

These 78 monasteries and convents have a total of 10,416 Benedictine Oblates. They range all the way from 1500 Oblates to one Oblate. Six have 500 Oblates or more; 18 have more than 100 Oblates.

At St. Peter's Abbey there are 41 Oblates who have made their Final Oblation and six Oblate Candidates. Since 1980, 28 Oblates of St. Peter's have made their Final Oblation; whereas six have asked to discontinue for the present.

Congress of abbots

At the recent Congress of Abbots in Rome in September, 1984, Secular Oblates were given

separate consideration. The report was given by Abbot Jerome Nitz of Beuron. St. Peter's filled in a questionnaire which was used in the report.

Oblates are most numerous in the United States, Canada, France, Germany and Italy. Eighty per cent of the Oblates are women and 20 per cent are men with very few under 30 years of age. Oblates are searching for a deeper prayer life. In this they appreciate the help of monks and periodic Oblate meetings.

The Prayer of the Church in the vernacular has been a great help in sharing in the prayer life of the church. At the congress the abbots were urged to foster secular Oblates and to provide Oblate directors for this purpose.

Addresses

The address of Fathers Sylvester Vredegoor and Bernard Stauber is:

C.P. 161,
57,000 Maceio, Alagoas,
Brasil



Abbot Jerome (circled) with the Benedictine abbots at the Congress of Abbots in Rome.

Pastoral changes

Two pastoral changes became effective Sept. 16.

Father Albert Ruetz became weekend assistant to Father Leo Hinz at St. Augustine Parish, Humboldt.

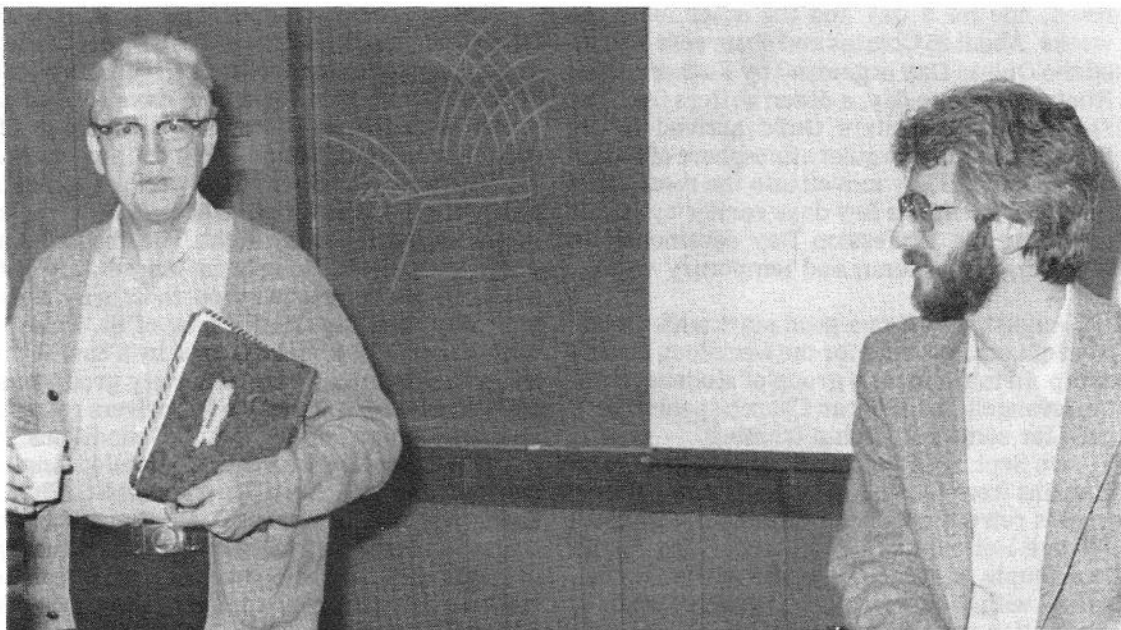
Father Damian Yaskowich has been named pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Carmel, and of St. Agnes Parish, Peterson.

Father Augustine Nenzel retired to St. Peter's Abbey in mid-August. He had been resident chaplain of St. Mary's Villa, Humboldt.

Dates to circle for 1985

Celebration marking the 25th anniversary of the blessing of Abbot Jerome Weber as abbot and abbot-ordinary of St. Peter's Abbey and Abbacy Nullius, Monday, Aug. 5, 1985.

Summer study week, 1985. Conducted by Father Bernard de Margerie Aug. 12 - 16, 1985. Topic will be the BEM (Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry) document.



Father Patrick Byrne, national director of Liturgy, left, is seen with Father John Buscemi, guest speaker at the Western Liturgical Conference held here, Oct. 1-4.

The guestmaster's report

I missed the guestmaster's report in the last newsletter due to the fact that I was on my way to Brazil while it was being put together. This report will, therefore, have to do "double duty."

While I was away, Bro. William Thurmeier filled in for me as assistant guestmaster. When he returned to school this fall, Bro. Antony Etty was appointed assistant guestmaster.

Over the past summer there has been the usual assortment of individuals and groups, familiar faces and new ones. Some of the new faces included diocesan personnel from across Western Canada taking part in the Western Canada Liturgical Conference meeting here Oct. 1 - 4. Rev. John Buscemi led the workshop on "Theology of Assembly" and up to 20 guests from Manitoba to British Columbia, plus Ottawa and Montana, were here.

Another new group that was pleased to use our facilities at the end of May, was the Saskatoon Catholic Deaf Community. Sister Doreen Smith and Father Danny Madigan (Winnipeg)

led the retreat, using sign language. Reports indicated that it was a great, and new, experience for all the participants.

The Baha'is had a small group here for a summer school in early July, and they plan to return in the future, as they find the setting very conducive.

Other new groups using our facilities this year for regular meetings include the newly-formed Muenster KC Council and the Muenster Al-Anon group.

June groups included the Anglican Primate World Relief and Development Fund, with Dr. Robert Moore as guest speaker. Dr. Moore was honored at St. Chad's, Saskatoon, Oct. 5, with an honorary doctorate. The Humboldt district AA group held its annual roundup here on the usual Father's Day weekend, with a good attendance of about 200.

In early July Kim Etty came for a month-long stay with her father and she helped around the abbey grounds. On July 14 two groups ar-

rived, one for a day and the other for three weeks. About 25 Oblates and observers attended the Oblate Day organized by Father Albert Ruetz. The same day, a dozen writers from the Saskatchewan Writers Guild arrived to ply their trade amid the quiet atmosphere of the abbey grounds. They moved into the rooms that had been vacated a few days earlier by guests attending the Profession Day ceremonies of those making solemn and temporary vows.

August got off to a good start with the arrival of about 100 boys for the week-long hockey camp. In mid-month a group of students from the Evangelical Lutheran Church spent a week here for some leadership training.

On Sept. 1, 14 second- and third-year seminarians from St. Pius X Seminary came for a week's retreat under the direction of Fathers Jerome Hellman and Bill Stang. They mixed in a couple of outdoor suppers and volleyball games with the community to balance off their meditation and prayer schedule.

Another seminary group, Lutherans, arrived later in the month for a weekend retreat here. The same animator for their group, Jay Rochelle, stayed over for a few days to lead a group of Lutheran pastors in a few days of reflection and meditation early the next week.

Two groups that came the weekend of Sept. 22 were in for a surprise, when we received a major snowfall Friday night. The group from Aldersgate Bible College in Moose Jaw got stuck on No. 20 highway on their way here Saturday morning. And a tour of St. Peter's Cathedral and the abbey grounds by a Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society group was delayed when one of the two bus drivers refused to drive because of the weather conditions.

Other September visitors included Anglican seminarians from Emmanuel-St. Chad, Saskatoon, the Ursuline Sisters Council from Bruno, and priests from the Wynyard deanery in the Regina Archdiocese. A group of social workers also came for week-long workshops in September and October.



Brother Basil Schaan gets a chance at the shovel after our first snowfall, Sept. 22.



The community honored Elaine Vedress at an outdoor supper on Aug. 14. Elaine completed nine years as secretary and librarian.

Abbey chronicle

Brother Francis Fortney was honorary pallbearer at the funeral for August Bernhard Aug. 1. August worked on our farm for many years.

While in Winnipeg, Aug. 3 - 6, **Father Martin Brodner** attended the silver jubilee of profession of Benedictine sisters Angela Chernowas, Cathy Joan Pietrucha, Irene Burzynski and Roberta Kehoe. Father Martin was chaplain to the sisters from 1966 - 70.

Father Peter Novecosky visited our abbacy mission team in Maceio, Brazil, Aug. 4 - 28.

Father Albert Ruetz attended the Workshop for Spiritual Directors at Queen's House, Saskatoon, Aug. 5 - 10.

Father Lawrence DeMong, national director of religious education in Ottawa, spent Aug. 10 - 15 at the abbey.

A farewell supper was held honoring Elaine Vedress who returned for studies after working for us as librarian and secretary for nine years. In appreciation for these many years of faithful service **Abbot Jerome Weber** presented her with a hand-painted brass flower vase.

Father Maurice Weber entered University Hospital, Saskatoon, Aug. 24 where he underwent surgery for removal of his spleen.

The annual family day for our staff and their families was held Sunday, Aug. 26. The usual ball games, visiting, outdoor supper, bean ball tournament and cards marked the event.

Father Xavier Benning was honored on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his monastic profession with a special eucharist and festive dinner at the abbey, Aug. 29. Along with the community, his brother Anthony Benning of Humboldt was also able to attend.

Brothers Patrick Genoio, Kurt van Kuren, and William Thurmeier motored to St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., Aug. 30 - Sept. 6. They travelled via Assumption Abbey, Richardton, N.D., where they also visited. Brother William remained at St. John's to begin his studies in theology.

Fathers Rudolph Novocosky and Werner Renneberg and Brother Basil Schaan attended the workshop given by Doreen Kostyniuk, "The Gift of Myself," at St. Elizabeth Convent, Humboldt, Sept. 4 - 6.

Abbot Jerome Weber, Father Norbert Schwinghammer, Brothers Gregory and John Brodner attended the funeral of Sister Mary Ludmilla Wagner, OSE, at Humboldt Sept. 13. Sister Ludmilla worked at St. Peter's for over 10 years in the kitchen and laundry.

Taking the bus tour to Winnipeg to see the pope, Sept. 14 - 17, were **Father Alfred Engele, Brothers Dominic Distel and Conrad Abs. Father Peter Novocosky** also travelled to Winnipeg and covered the visit as press representative for the Prairie Messenger.

Brothers Patrick Genoio, Antony Etty and Michael McAllister travelled to Edmonton to see the pope. They were part of the specially invited religious to attend the Prayer Service led by the pope at St. Joseph's Cathedral on Sunday evening, Sept. 16.

Autumn was welcomed with our first snowfall, Sept. 22. Although the snow didn't stay, it gave us a feeling of winter. The next snowfall came Oct. 15 in the form of a heavy blizzard.

Brother Wolfgang Theim visited Germany, Sept. 23 - Oct. 21. During the four weeks he visited with his mother who will be 90 years old in November, and other relatives.

Father Werner Renneberg conducted a Marriage Encounter Weekend at Saskatoon at the end of September.

On Sunday, Oct. 7, **Father Alphonse Ludwig**, who is retired at Carmel, was taken to St. Elizabeth Hospital, Humboldt. Doctors suspect he suffered a light stroke. Father Alphonse, who in recent years has suffered from deterioration of the blood circulatory system to his legs, has been confined to a wheelchair for the past year.



Part of this year's potato-picking crew. Besides a bountiful crop of potatoes, Brother Gregory Brodner reported over 70,000 cobs of corn sold.

The abbey church planning committee was named recently. Members of this new committee are: Fathers Leo Hinz, Andrew Britz and Damian Yaskowich.

Father George Brodner attended the annual conference of the National Federation of Senates of Priests held at Mississauga, Ont., Oct. 15 - 18.

Father Maurice Weber attended the Vocations Awareness evening at Queen's House, Saskatoon, Oct. 15.

A committee has been set up to prepare a training program for lay presiders at liturgies without a priest. Named to this committee are

Fathers Roman Schneider, Leo Hinz and Andrew Britz.

Brother Basil Schaan participated in the provincial meeting of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) at Saskatoon, Oct. 19 - 21. This educational meeting, represented by all the dioceses of Saskatchewan, featured Father Mike Ryan from the seminary in London as guest speaker.

The abbacy lay catechists held a workshop and supper at St. Peter's Abbey, Oct. 22. It featured the official commissioning of those involved in teaching religion in the abbacy schools, and a talk on ecumenism by Father Bernard de Margerie.



The parish secretary of St. Joseph's Parish in Macelo is Celeste. She is next to me as we stand with her family in front of their home. She is one of two young ladies interested in joining the Bruno Ursuline community. (See story on next page.)

A visit to Brazil

I had the privilege this summer of visiting our mission team in Brazil. It was great to spend three weeks with Fathers Sylvester Vredgeor and Bernard Stauber as well as with Sisters Claire Novecosky and Marie (Imelda) Doepker. It was also good to be able to meet some of the people with whom they work and whose names have become well known among our community, such as Zilda and Marival, two social workers, Victoria and Renato, two doctors, and Rosilda, who visited St. Peter's a year ago.

One of the lasting impressions I have of my journey is the excellent hospitality extended to me — by our team in Maceio, the Saskatoon team in Uniao dos Palmares, Dom Miguel, and by all the people in general. One of the great drawbacks of my journey was the fact that I couldn't speak the language. However, I feel I did get a good feel of the parishes and people with whom our mission team works.

I arrived in Rio de Janeiro, with Father Don Macgillivray of Saskatoon, on Monday, Aug. 6. I spent the next nine days in Maceio (with side trips to Recife/Olinda and to Uniao dos Palmares), and then I went on a five-day trip with Father Sylvester.

We flew to Salvador, a coastal city to the south of Maceio where the Elizabethan sisters from Humboldt are working. We spent a day with them and saw some of the awful slum areas which they visit and work in. We then flew to the capital city of Brazil, Brasilia, in the interior. What a contrast! It's a modern, sleek city built from scratch 25 years ago in the middle of the jungle. Ida, a nurse on the original Saskatoon team, along with her husband, Carlos, were excellent hosts during our one-day stay there.

We then flew to Manaus, a city in the interior Amazon region. We took a three-hour bus ride to Itacoatiera where several Canadian Scarboro missionaries look after a vast region of the Amazon jungle. We spent two days with Bishop George Marskell and Father Mike O'Kane. One of the memorable moments of this visit was to celebrate a mass with Bishop George in one of the barrios. Dressed in jeans and T-shirt, the bishop is not one to stand too much on ceremonial. But it was evident he is

sensitive to the needs of the poor he serves.

After arriving back in Maceio, I thought the remaining four days went by very quickly. I had looked forward to a trip to St. Michael's Farm, the farm Father Sylvester has been looking after for the past two years or so. We made the trip all right, but it happened to rain that day so we weren't able to look around as much as I had wanted. The experience of trudging across the pasture and through fences brought back old memories of my youth. And when one of the farmers answered my question, "What difference has the coming of Father Sylvester made in your life?" with, "Now we feel human," I felt that whatever troubles he has gone through these past two years in building up the farm have been worth it.

I was fortunate in having a companion for my journey home — Sister Marie, who came home for a year's sabbatical. We spent two days in Rio before taking off to Saskatoon via New York. — Father Peter Novecosky

Deceased confreres, relatives

Very Reverend Sergius Stephen Bachkovsky, 65, superior of Holy Trinity Monastery, Butler, Pennsylvania, died on Aug. 1.

Father Denis Parnell, 92, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, died on Sept. 4.

Father Maur Dlouhy, 65, St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Illinois, died on Sept. 8.

Bishop Paul Leonard Hagarty, 75, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, died on Sept. 22.

Abbot Theodore Kojis, 75, second abbot of St. Andrew's Abbey, Cleveland, Ohio, died Sept. 29.

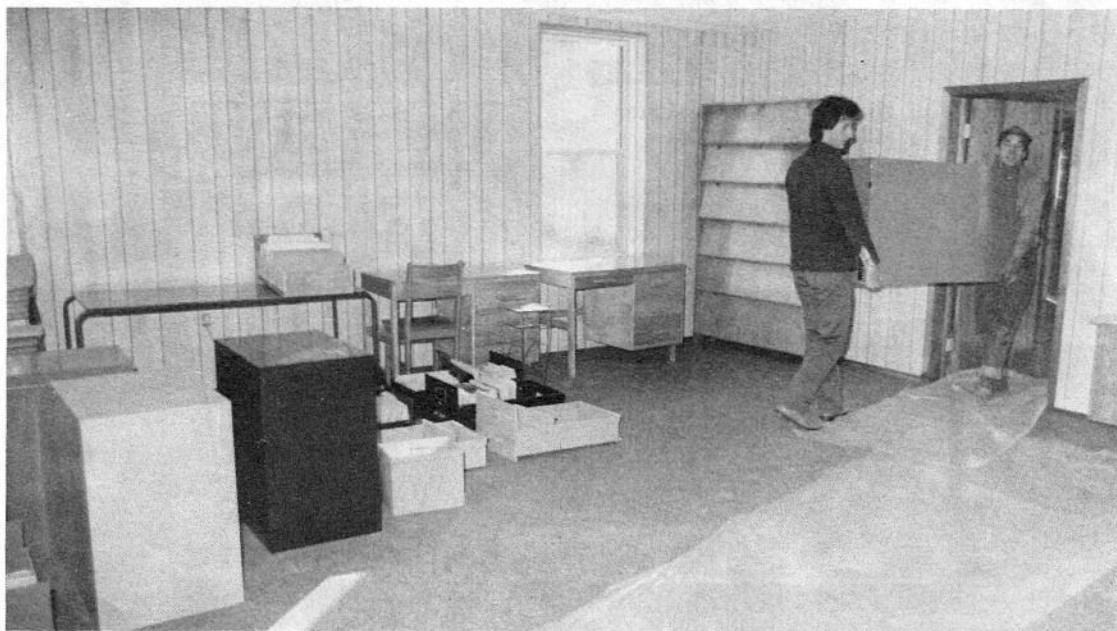
Oblate of St. Benedict, Anne Loxterkamp, 49, Humboldt, died Aug. 12.


Wilfred Engele, 63, Humboldt, brother of Father Alfred Engele, died Aug. 20.

Catherine Hinz, 81, Muenster, sister of Father Augustine Nenzel, died Oct. 7.



Sister Yvonne Billesberger, OSU, left, and Sister Celine Graf, OSU, co-ordinators of religious education, and John Kelly, Abbacy Pastoral Services Co-ordinator now work out of the new Abbacy Centre. The newly renovated centre which was the former St. Peter's Press building has been in use since Oct. 8 when furnishings from the former office of religious education were moved over (below).





St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter
Muenster, Saskatchewan
S0K 2Y0

Walter & Margaret Knott
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WINNIPEG MB
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