

St. Peter's Abbey Newsletter



Vol. 33 No. 1 Winter and Spring 2012

Renovations connect past to present

Renovations have been completed on Michael Hall — the home of St. Peter's College. The classrooms and offices of St. Peter's College have a bright, welcoming look, beckoning students into a new world of learning. Michael Hall, the official name of the college building, resembles a modern educational institution and yet retains a sense of the past in its design and atmosphere. The rooms of Michael Hall are painted a light brown, accented with dark brown trim around the wallboards, doors and baseboards. The floors are lined with heritage oak hardwood. The rooms are lit with low-energy fluorescent lighting and enjoy natural light with the help of large, energy-efficient windows. All the classrooms have comfortable leather-padded chairs and access to high-speed Internet. Some rooms are equipped with an overhead projection system for the display of PowerPoint and one has a Smart Board.

The renovations to Michael Hall began in September of 2008 with the launch of the Key to Success campaign. The campaign set a goal of raising \$15 million to improve the college infrastructure, enhance the classroom facilities, and improve student residences. The provincial government gave \$3 million in funding and the federal government provided a \$6 million grant. A local fund-raising campaign raised another \$2 million from donors, students and alumni. The college is presently campaigning for another \$4 million to pay the remainder of the renovations.

The renovations to the infrastructure of Michael Hall provided for a new heating and cooling system, electrical wiring replacement, plumbing upgrades, new elevator and stairwell entrance, and window refurbishment. All the classrooms and offices were enhanced with better technological access. New science equip-



READY FOR FUTURE — A new elevator and entrance add to the facade of Michael Hall, otherwise known as St. Peter's College. The elevator, standing 85 feet high, was designed by Maurice Soulodre Architect Ltd. It is designed to accommodate wheel-chairs and stretchers.

ment and a modern lab were added to the science rooms. The library entrance area was expanded and joined to a new student recreation room and lounge. The college building already had access to a new sports centre and renovated gymnasium.

St. Peter's Abbey complemented the renovations by giving students access to more student residences. The abbey transformed its guest wing into a student residence in the fall semester of 2011, according to Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB, supervisor of student residents. Students had accommodations in 14 rooms for 21 students in the lower level of the guest wing, otherwise known as Severin Hall. Another 18 rooms were opened in upper Severin Hall with space for 34 students. Another building, known as Scholastica Residence with accommodations for 11 students, was opened in

1999. The lower level of Severin Hall, previously used for guests at the abbey, was renovated in March of 2008. Student residents have the advantage of both living on campus and having access to an excellent food plan, Fr. Demetrius added.

St. Peter's College was built in 1921 when Abbot Michael Ott, OSB, was the leader of the Benedictine community. Michael Hall was named in honour of Abbot Michael who initiated the building of the college. He was a staunch supporter of education, especially the spiritual, intellectual, and cultural education of the person, Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, said. Michael Hall became a residential high school just after it opened in November of 1921. High school students lived on the top floor of the building in a

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A message from Abbot Peter's desk

Dear friends of St. Peter's Abbey,

This newsletter has not been published for two years. The former editor, Fr. Werner Renneberg died after a period of poor health and now Fr. Paul Paproski volunteered to carry on the tradition. In addition the abbey website offers opportunities to record some of the happenings at the abbey.

Looking back since the last newsletter, the major events have been the deaths of three long-time community members.

The first was Fr. Roman Schneider who died Dec. 26, 2010, while a resident at St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt. It was determined later that a carbon monoxide leak at the residence was a factor in his death. At age 89, he was the oldest member of our community.



Fr. Roman Schneider

Fr. Roman's love was being a pastor. He became pastor of Sacred Heart parish, Watson, serving from 1956 - 67. He was resident pastor in Carmel, Bruno, Cudworth and Muenster. He also provided services in LeRoy, Romance, Fulda, Peterson, Dana, St. Benedict, Marysburg and Burr. While in Bruno he was chaplain for the Ursuline Convent there. He undertook renewal studies at Divine Word Institute, London, Ont., from 1972 - 73 and this marked a significant turning point in his life.

After retiring as a resident pastor, Fr. Roman was named prior of St. Peter's Abbey in 1994 and held that post until 2003. At the abbey he enjoyed reading, playing cards during recreation and getting regular exercise outside. He was a willing hand at garden work and picking berries. His contacts with many people in the parishes remained a pleasure for them and for him.

In the last couple of years his health began to fail and he could no longer drive. After being a resident at the abbey infirmary for over a year, he moved to a care home, first at Watson then to St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt.

Though his memory failed him for events that happened a week ago, he continued to recognize and appreciate visitors. He maintained a spirit of equanimity and peacefulness until his death.

Fr. Leo Hinz, age 86, died of apparent

heart failure on the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, March 25, while eating supper with the monastic community.

Fr. Leo was ordained in 1950 and then studied canon law at St. Paul University, Ottawa. He returned to the abbey to teach at the high school from 1953 - 67. During this time he did a lot of manual work during the construction of the college and abbey buildings in the late 1950s and early '60s.

He then served as pastor in many of the larger parishes of the St. Peter's Territorial Abbacy. In the later 1960s he served in the Watson area, and again in 2006. Twice he was pastor in Bruno and chaplain for the Ursuline Sisters. He was pastor of Muenster from 1977 -



Fr. Leo Hinz

82, then served in Humboldt for 10 years. The new St. Augustine Church was built during this time. He was resident pastor in Cudworth from 1998-2006.

Fr. Leo worked at the regional

matrimonial tribunal in Vancouver from 1971 - 74 and at the regional tribunal in Regina from 1975 - 77, and again from 1992 - 93. Many religious communities



FAREWELL TO COACH – Abbot Peter, back left, joined a group of Regina clergy at a farewell supper for Saskatchewan Roughrider coach Ken Miller and his wife Maureen. Among them is Bishop Donald Bolen, next to Abbot Peter, and Archbishop Daniel Bohan, front left.

in Saskatchewan also called on his expertise as they revised their constitutions after the Second Vatican Council.

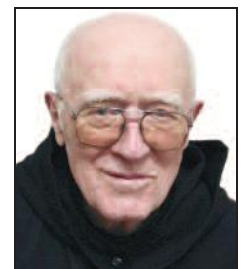
Fr. Leo's work with the marriage tribunals made him very sensitive to difficulties facing married couples. He was involved in marriage preparation courses for young couples and in the marriage encounter movement to foster healthy marriages.

At the time of his death, Fr. Leo was semi-retired at the abbey and he served as archivist for the community.

Fr. Werner Renneberg died a month later, May 3, while a resident at St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt. Fr. Werner was born in 1925 in Leofeld, the oldest parish in St. Peter's Abbacy. He was a later vocation when he joined his brother, Fr. Florian, at the abbey in 1951.

He taught at the high school for a couple of years then became manager of St. Peter's Press from 1959 - 67.

Fr. Werner was well informed about the church's social teachings and received a Certificate of Social Leadership and



Fr. Werner Renneberg

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Guest wing on top floor of abbey

Visitors to St. Peter's Abbey who have trouble finding the new guest wing need only to look for rows of yellow and orange dots. The dots follow two routes that lead them to the new location of the guest wing — the top level of the abbey (monastery). A line of yellow dots begins on the floor outside the monastery gift shop. The gift shop is at the top of the stairs from the north church entrance. Nearby is the famous Benedictine cross embedded in the floor. Another row of orange dots lines the floor outside the sacristy of the abbey church: Sts. Peter and Paul Church. The orange dots trace a path along the floor at the south end of the church. The path leads to a set of stairs behind the church sacristy.

It is very easy to become lost when searching for the new guest wing, according to guest master Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB. The long hallways and adjoining corridors resemble complicated mazes to new visitors who sometimes became disoriented when looking for their rooms. It is easy to take a wrong turn and end up in the college building or even in a section of the monastic enclosure.

The guest wing of St. Peter's Abbey has become part of an interesting chapter in the history of the abbey. The guest wing opened in September of 2011, occupying what was once the top floor of the Benedictine monastery. The guest rooms and oblate library are in what once were rooms of monks. The recreation room and lounge fill the former TV rooms of the monks.

The monastic community decided to move the guest wing to the upper floor of the monastery when it was informed by Rob Harasymchuk, president of St. Peter's College, that the college needed more rooms for student residences. The monks agreed to convert the former guest wing into a student residence and move the guest wing to the upper floor of the monastery. The old guest wing was housed in Severin Hall, named after Abbot Severin, who was abbot when the building was constructed in 1959.

One of the first impressions of the new guest wing is its spacious size and bright, cheery look. The hall of the guest wing is wider and longer than Severin Hall and the rooms are larger. The most impressive rooms are the new recreation



KITCHENETTE — Fr. Demetrius shows oblates of St. Peter's Abbey the kitchenette of the new guest wing. He conducted a tour at the November 2011 oblate meeting.

room and kitchenette. Both are comfortable sitting rooms that can each sit 15 guests. The new guest wing has 18 rooms that accommodate 34 people. Three rooms have their own private bathrooms with double beds. Most rooms measure 12 ft. x 15 ft.

Some of the more luxurious rooms have been given their own names. They are known as the Abbot's Suite, the Bishop's Suite, and the Antique Suite. Some guests have already commented how proud they are to occupy the Bishop's Suite or the Abbot's Suite, Fr. Demetrius commented. The rooms are very comfortable with their own double beds, bathrooms, elegant furniture, and beautiful art. The rooms facing the east side of the building have the picturesque view of the east lawn with trees in the background as well.

The Benedictine oblates should be pleased that they have a new oblate library, Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, oblate director said. There are four large shelving units that hold devotional books. The library has also had books recently donated to it by the Ursuline and Franciscan (Elizabethan) Sisters in Humboldt, and the Saskatchewan Writers Guild. Guests may use the oblate room. There is a chair for sitting and a table for cards and games.

Many of the visitors to the new guest

wings are impressed with the idea of spending time in a room that was once occupied by a monk, Fr. Demetrius noted. The top floor of the monastery has been home to Benedictine monks since the building was built in 1962. There were approximately 68 monks in the community at that time. The notion of converting it to a guest wing would have been inconceivable back then, remarked Abbot Peter Novacosky, OSB. Monks were involved with their local community, but never planned to open a portion of their monastic building to visitors. The Benedictine community has decreased to a fraction of what it was in the 1960s. It numbers 15 today.

Converting the top monastery floor began with a search of the abbey archives where the blueprints of the monastery building are stored. A committee, at the end of 2010, investigated the possibility of enlarging some rooms on the top floor so they could be supplied with showers and bathrooms. There was a common washroom with three toilets and three showers for men. Two rooms had their own bathrooms and the remainder only had their own sinks. The committee sorted through the blueprints of the monastery and decided to fit in a

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People and events around the Abbey

2010

April 23 — Fr. Roman Schneider, OSB, is moved to the Watson Central Plains Care Home.

May 16 - 20 — Abbot Thomas Hillenbrand, OSB, of Blue Cloud Abbey preaches the annual monastic retreat.

May 27 - 31 — Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, attends the bi-annual meeting of the Canadian Religious Conference, where he is elected as secretary-treasurer on the national executive.

June 13 - 18 — Abbot Peter and Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, attend the general chapter of the American-Cassinense congregation at St. Bernard's Abbey in Cullman, Alabama.

June 26 — Oblate Day.

July 9 — The Saskatchewan Writers Guild holds the first of five weeks of colonies for writers.

July 11 — The Canadian government sponsors a plaque at St. Peter's Cathedral recognizing the role of the abbey in founding St. Peter's Colony in 1903.

July 18 - 22 — Abbot Claude Peifer, OSB, and Br. Alban Petesch, OSB, conduct a visitation at St. Peter's Abbey.

July 30 — Ken Mansfield, resident at the abbey for a decade, moves to Humboldt where he takes a job as caretaker with the Humboldt Catholic school system. He later moves to Arnprior, Ont.

Aug. 3 - 5 — Abbot Peter attends the Knights of Columbus supreme convention in Washington, DC.

Oct. 2 — Oblate Day.

Oct. 7 — Annual general Chapter meeting. The community discusses using the top floor of the abbey as a guest wing and turning Severin Hall into a student residence, to meet the demand for more students.

Oct. 25 - 29 — Abbot Peter attends the annual meeting of the Canadian bishops at Cornwall, Ont.

Dec. 26 — Fr. Roman dies at St. Mary's Villa, Humboldt.

2011

Jan. 7 — Fr. Werner Renneberg, OSB, begins using a wheelchair.

Feb. 7 — Fr. Werner takes residence at Lanigan Central Parkland Lodge.

Feb. 18 - 21 — Abbot Peter attends the Abbots workshop in Jacksonville, Florida.



EUROPEAN SISTERS — Eighteen Elizabethan Sisters from Europe visited St. Peter's Abbey in May of 2011, during the centennial celebrations of the Humboldt Elizabethan Sisters.

Feb. 22 - 25 — Abbot Peter attends the meeting of Western Bishops in Prince George, B.C.

March 10 - 17 — Fr. Paul leads a Lenten workshop at St. Leo Abbey, St. Leo, Florida.

March 15 — Men in Black sponsor the Medieval feast for college students, staff, monks and guests the day before Ash Wednesday.

March 16 — Proposed merger between St. Peter's College and Carlton Trail Regional College is denied.

March 25 — Fr. Leo Hinz, OSB, dies while eating supper with the community.

March 26 — Oblate Day.

April 18 — Bishop Bolen celebrates last chrisom Mass at St. Patrick's; several Benedictine pastors attend.

May 1 - 6 — Fr. Paul leads the annual retreat of the Archdiocese of Regina at St. Michael's in Lumsden.

May 3 — Fr. Werner dies at St. Mary's Villa.

May 18 — Eighteen Elizabethan sisters from Europe visit the abbey, during the Humboldt Elizabethan centennial celebrations.

May 22 - 26 — Bishop Don Bolen of Saskatoon preaches the community retreat; several Ursuline sisters join us.



VESPERS IN CEMETERY — Ursuline Sisters and monks of St. Peter's Abbey gathered for vespers in St. Peter's Abbey cemetery in May of 2011 during the annual retreat of the abbey. Some Ursulines joined the monks for their 2011 retreat led by Bishop Donald Bolen.



FIRST VOWS — Br. Cosmas Epifano, OSB, is congratulated by Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, left, and Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolan after making his first vows in May of 2011. Br. Cosmas is studying for the priesthood in Rome.

May 22 — Haus of Stitches 10th annual stitching conference attracts more than 250 people for more than two weeks.

May 26 — Br. Cosmas Epifano, OSB, makes his first vows.

June 6 — Fr. Bernard Stauber, OSB, moves to Humboldt.

June 6 - 10 — Abbot Peter preaches a retreat for 40 Hamilton diocesan priests at the Carmelite Retreat Centre at Niagara Falls.

June 13 — Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB, travels to Germany for his sister's funeral.

June 26 — Fr. Daniel Muyres, OSB, has a come-and-go tea at the abbey to celebrate his 50th anniversary of ordination.

July 1 - Aug. 5 — Writers come for annual Saskatchewan Writers Guild sessions.

July 9 — St. Peter's College alumni from 1971 and 1972 have a 40th anniversary

get-together in Jerome Assembly Room (JAR).

July 25 — The Knights sponsor a Clergy Day at the abbey.

July 30 — Oblate Day.

Aug. 1 - 4 — Abbot Peter attends KC supreme convention in Denver.

Aug. 8 — Several Benedictine pastors attend the bishop's annual golf and BBQ get-together in Saskatoon.

Aug. 10 — Fr. Paul reports that 117 gallons of saskatoons were picked at the abbey saskatoon orchard. Wet weather, the previous year, reduced the harvest to 11 gallons. In 2009, 62 gallons were picked.

Sept. 5 — Potato-picking day.

Sept. 6 - 26 — Fr. Andrew Britz, OSB, takes a respite break at Cudworth

nursing home while Br. Pierre Rouillard takes a holiday.

Sept. 9 — Br. Cosmas Epifano leaves to visit family in Sydney, N.S., and to study theology at Sant Anselmo, Rome.

Sept. 9 - 11 — The People of Praise community is the first to use the new guest wing on the top floor of the monastery. The guest wing opened Sept. 2.

Sept. 12 - 16 — Fr. Paul conducts a retreat for the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan in Edmonton.

Sept. 17 — Frs. Andrew and Rudolph Novecosky, OSB, accompany Abbot Peter to a Riders football game in Regina and visit the coach after the game.

Sept. 23 - 26 — Abbot Peter attends the ATRI meeting in Calgary for religious superiors and accountants.

Sept. 30 — Fr. Andrew is a resident of the Humboldt hospital for three and a half weeks.

Oct. 3 — Men in Black college campus ministry sponsor a supper for the students and monks.

Oct. 17 - 21 — Abbot Peter attends the CCCB plenary meeting in Cornwall, Ont.

Oct. 20 — Bill Thurmeier repairs the abbey bells, which have been silent all summer.

Oct. 22 — Muenster community sponsors a trade show at the college gym.

Oct. 22 — Fr. Paul convokes from the University of Saskatchewan with a MA in history.



CLERGY DAY — Fr. Daniel Muyres, OSB, takes part in Clergy Day in July of 2011, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Clergy from three dioceses in Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and the Archdiocese of Regina participated.



POTATO PICKING DAY — A healthy crop of potatoes was gathered on September 5 of 2011, by monks and visitors to St. Peter's Abbey.

People and events around the Abbey

Oct. 27 — Fr. Rudolph invites his family to the abbey to celebrate his 75th birthday.

Nov. 5 — Oblate Day.

Nov. 17 — The Elizabethan Sisters of Humboldt join the monks for dinner and tours, in honour of their centennial.

Nov. 20 — Monks attend the college student awards program in the JAR. In the evening Fr. Andrew interviews Dennis Gruending in the college library at Gruending's book launch.

Nov. 23 — Br. Basil is admitted to the hospital for a few days.

Nov. 24 — The community holds its annual general Chapter meeting.

Nov. 27 — The new English Roman Missal is introduced.

Dec. 13 — Fr. Daniel has a knee replacement operation in Saskatoon

Dec. 16 — Martha Cowley gives a harp concert in JAR.

Dec. 27 - Jan. 1 — Peter Van Ginkel of Winnipeg came to the abbey as a live-in.

2012

Jan. 5 - 8 — Abbot Peter attends a retreat for Western bishops at Westminster Abbey, Mission, B.C.

Jan. 15 — Saskatchewan gets its first big snow storm of the year, and some cold weather for a week.

Jan. 16 - Jan. 30 — Andreas Hofer of New Zealand comes to the abbey as a live-in.

Jan. 22 — Br. Anthony Nguyen and Abbot Peter celebrate New Years with the Vietnamese community in Saskatoon.

Jan. 27 - 29 — St. Thomas More stu-

dents and staff come for their annual retreat.

Feb. 20 - 23 — Br. Kurt attends the Canadian Organic Science Conference at

the University of Manitoba. He is a representative of the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate, specializing in Horticulture.



CENTENNIAL — Abbot Peter watches as Sr. Philomena Dobmeier, superior general, cuts the centennial cake for the Sisters of St. Elizabeth (Franciscans) in Humboldt. The Sisters were recognized on their centennial by St. Peter's Abbey monks on Nov. 17, 2011, the feast of St. Elizabeth.



ENGAGEMENT ENCOUNTER — Representatives of the Western District of Engagement Encounter met at St. Peter's Abbey, June 10 to 12 in 2011. The facilitators came from Kelowna, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina and Muenster. Engagement encounters are held at St. Peter's Abbey annually, under the coordination of Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB.



BENEDICTINES — Abbot Peter welcomes Br. Alban Petesch, OSB, middle, of Assumption Abbey in North Dakota and Abbot Claude Peifer, OSB, of St. Bede Abbey in Illinois. The visitors led a visitation of the abbey in July of 2010 on behalf of the American Cassinese Congregation. Visitations take place every five years.



ARCHBISHOP VISITS — Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, visits with Archbishop Albert LeGatt of St. Boniface, Manitoba. The archbishop joined the monks and staff for coffee on Dec. 29.

Fr. Andrew was active force in community

By Abbot Peter Novacosky

Fr. Andrew Britz, OSB, died after I had finished my abbot's column, which listed three community members who have died in the past 14 months. Thus I will write a separate article with his death still fresh in mind.

The community received many tributes about him. Here is one sample:

I have always had a deep admiration for Fr. Andrew and his grassroots Christian theological teachings which came through in his editorials in the *Prairie Messenger* for many years. He was a respected speaker at conferences and a beloved pastor. I loved his passion to pursue the reforms of Vatican II.

Fr. Andrew was well known for his strong opinions which he shared as editor for 21 years through the *Prairie Messenger* (1983 - 2004). Some of his editorials were collected in 2010 in a book, *Truth to Power*.

Fr. Werner remembered

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Community Development following studies at the Coady International Institute in Antigonish, N.S., during 1969 - 70. He was pastor of Muenster and St. Gregor from 1970 - 77 and then became pastor for Pilger and area. Following a few years as assistant at Humboldt he was pastor at Bruno from 1986 - 92, then served at Cudworth from 1992 - 98 and at Watson from 1998 - 2000.

After he retired to the abbey, he served as prior and regularly celebrated Mass for the residents of St. Mary's Villa, Humboldt. He spent many hours translating the history of St. Peter's Colony in the first 11 volumes of St. Peter's Bote.

One of Fr. Werner's loves was working with married couples. He was active in Worldwide Marriage Encounter for decades, and was much loved and appreciated by the couples whose lives he touched. The community is grateful to have been blessed by the lives of service and devotion of these confreres. Their legacy will serve us well into the future.



MAILING BOOKS — Fr. Andrew prepares his books, Truth to Power, published in 2010, for mailing. He continued to remain active in projects even as his Parkinson's advanced.

While he gained a reputation as editor, he was involved in many other aspects of life at St. Peter's.

After his ordination on June 10, 1966, he became chaplain and teacher at St. Peter's College. He was principal when the high school closed in 1972 and he then pursued doctoral studies for two years in Toronto. In the late 1970s he again took up the leadership of the college as principal for several years.

He used his manual and organizational talents to reorganize our Liturgy of the Hours, to renovate the heating system in the college building, reorganize the library into the Library of Congress system, and to supervise the building of the abbey church, among other things. He also served as a pastor in Humboldt, St. Benedict, Englefeld, Naicam, Anaheim and Lake Lenore.

In his last decade

of life, Fr. Andrew lived with a gradually progressing Parkinson's Disease. His last two years were spent in a wheel chair. After spending three months at the Humboldt hospital, he transferred to Samaritan Place in Saskatoon. He lived there for less than two weeks when he died of a massive heart attack on Feb. 14.

Fr. Andrew was born in Lake Lenore in 1940. He is survived by his monastic community and by two sisters, Helen (Bill Krynowsky) and Karen (Wayne Schreiner) and their families.



ANNUAL RETREAT — Students from St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon meet at St. Peter's Abbey each year for their annual Newman Retreat. They gather in the Jerome Assembly Room where group discussions are often part of their program.

Vocations program helps in discerning

By Fr. Rudolph Novecosky, OSB

I lived in the rectory in the Annaheim parish from 1987 to 2008. At that time I was called back to the abbey to be novice master and formation director. This was a challenge I accepted with a certain amount of hesitation and timidity. Being away from the monastery for 21 years totally involved in parish work meant I had to make a dramatic change in my life. But I was ready for a change and welcomed the scheduled life in the monastery.

One of the first lessons I learned as formation director was that not everyone who wants to join a monastic community has a vocation to the monastic life. I formed an admissions committee to help with the discernment process of newcomers. Two other members of the monastery are on the admissions com-

mittee. The committee established some guidelines for each prospective candidate. The guidelines include: the setting of the cut-off date for entering monastic life at 50 years of age; a letter of reference from a pastor; baptism and confirmation certificates; relatively good health of a candidate; freedom of a candidate from debts and obligations outside the monastery.

These guidelines eliminated many inquirers because the majority were men over 50. Some had debts or obligations to their children. We do make exceptions to the rules on occasion depending on the circumstances involved. We also decided to start the candidacy program in September, around six months before the novitiate program starts on March 20.

When a person is accepted as a candidate we encourage him to spend time with

us as a “live-in”. The candidate lives with us for up to two weeks in the monastery where he follows the monastic schedule of “ora et labora,” pray and work. The visit gives the candidate insight into monastic life. The visit also gives each member of the admissions committee the opportunity to interview the candidate.

At the beginning of Lent in 2009, Joseph Epifano of Sydney, Nova Scotia came as a candidate. The candidacy program lasts for six months during which time a candidate studies monastic life. He is encouraged to learn the customs of the monastery, the Rule of Benedict, do spiritual reading and meet with a spiritual director. The candidate may learn other practical skills to help in future studies such as becoming familiar with computers, improving typing skills and using the Internet. He is assigned tasks by Br. Basil Schaan, OSB, work co-ordinator.

The novitiate program follows the candidacy and lasts for one year. It is more intense than the candidacy program. A candidate takes classes on the Rule of St. Benedict, scripture, spirituality, Benedictine history and the history of our monastery. Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, teaches the Rule of St. Benedict; Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, instructs in monastic history and I do the rest. Not all of the classes are lectures. I find videos and tapes very helpful.

Joseph Epifano, now Br. Cosmas, is studying in Rome in preparation for the priesthood. We are expecting two people to apply for the candidacy program starting this September. One is a music teacher from Winnipeg and another is a certified cabinet maker and mason from New Zealand. Both have come to the abbey for “live-in” visits and have asked for application forms.

It is somewhat disappointing that there are almost no inquiries about the monastic life from our own diocese. I had a brochure printed that I send out to people who want to know more about our monastery and our way of life. If anyone wishes to put some brochures in the entrance to your church, I would be happy to send you some. We also have a website at www.stpetersabbey.ca if anyone is interested in more information about our abbey and our formation program.

Guest wing is remodelled

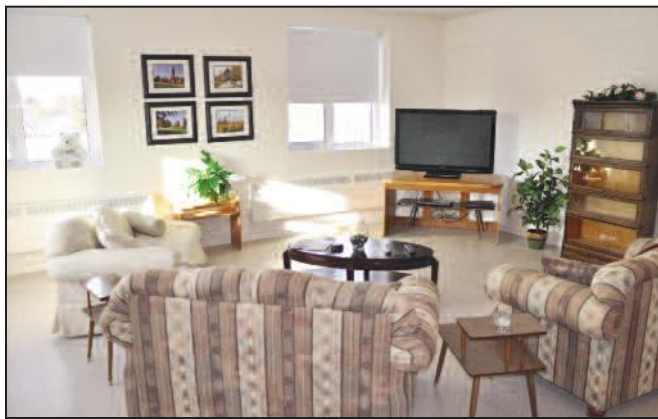
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with three toilets and three showers for women. A meeting room was converted into two rooms, one an oblate library and the other a room with a full bathroom (Bishop's Suite). An additional bathroom with shower was installed next to the kitchenette. Among those on the renovation committee was Fr. Andrew Britz, OSB, who remembered when the monastic building was first constructed. His research was impressive considering he was confined to a wheelchair because of Parkinson's. Fr. Andrew had amazing,

insightful options for expanding rooms, Abbot Peter remarked.

Six monks were living on the top floor when the decision was made to convert it to the guest wing. They relocated to the middle and bottom floors of the monastery. Some guest rooms were renovated with new flooring and painted. The Humboldt Knights of Columbus donated their time to paint the hallway of the guest wing. Furniture from the previous guest wing in Severin Hall was moved to the new location. Framed photographs of Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, line the walls of the hallway, recreation room, and lounge.

The new guest wing accommodates 34 guests. The two floors of the previous guest wing accommodated 47 guests. During the months from May to August, when students are absent, the full capacity of the past and present guest wing is 81 guests. Scholastica Residence is used for most of the summer by the Saskatchewan's writers colony.



RECREATION ROOM — The new guest wing of St. Peter's Abbey has a large, comfortable recreation room, complete with a large TV.

Donations are essential for charities

By Peter Goddard, CFP EPC

It has been a while since we last discussed contributing to a charity of your choice. Since that time (about two years ago) it has been abundantly clear that Canadians are contributing to their favourite charities in ever increasing numbers and ever increasing amounts. There are a couple of reasons that contributions to charities (churches, schools, hospitals, etc.) are on the increase.

The largest group in our population, 'the Boomers', are facing tax situations that are larger than ever before. This trend may be due to businesses winding down or the 'triggering' of retirement incomes where the withdrawals of 'registered assets' form the majority of income. People are looking for ways to preserve their income and their estates.

The second reason, made abundantly clear over the last three to four years, is the change in the marketplace. The downturn in the economy has had repercussions on charitable institutes in our communities. The services offered by various charitable organizations have been significantly reduced. The supporters of these charities have come forward in ever increasing numbers to pick up the shortfall because they realize that without the efforts of these charities, the social structure suffers.

Communities don't realize the values of their schools, hospitals, and churches until charities 'cut back' in their essential

supports. The 'awareness' of the tax treatment of charitable donations is finally being recognized by Canadian taxpayers because advisors are using this as a tax strategy. Donations do not have to be in cash.

Whether you are contributing to the charity of your choice or taking advantage of a 'generous tax reduction', you should consult with your tax advisor to determine if this 'charitable tax strategy' would be of help to you and your charity of choice. In many cases contributing to a charity will offer both immediate and future benefits to you, your family, and the charity you support.

If you decide to contribute to a charity, you can do so in many ways:

1. cash donations;
2. securities, i.e. stocks and mutual funds etc. (these help avoid Capital Gains Tax);
3. life insurance policies or their 'proceeds';
4. donating 'real property' such as land, art, etc. (Do you need an assessment?).

Supporting charities in your community represents one of the most valuable contributions you can

make to help these institutions build long-lasting, 'strong and stable' benefits for generations to come. Before applying any tax strategy consult with your advisors to make sure you are doing the right thing. Your contribution to a charity will only work if it is a registered charity. Make sure it is registered so you can receive your tax credit.

The author of this article, Peter Goddard, CFP EPC, has more than 30 years of experience in the financial services industry. Peter is a 'friend' of St Peter's Abbey. He is a 'certified financial planner' and, a 'certified elder planning counsellor'. Always check with your personal financial advisor, accountant or lawyer before implementing any 'tax strategy'.



WELCOME STUDENTS – Donna Remenda of Spalding, manager of St. Peter's Abbey kitchen, serves students at an Orientation Day Lunch, sponsored by St. Peter's College Campus Ministry. The lunch was served at the beginning of the new school year to welcome the students to college.



NEW HEATING SYSTEM – Br. Basil Schaan, OSB, stands beside the new energy-efficient boilers of St. Peter's Abbey. The boilers, installed in 2011, each have the capacity of 399,000 BTU. They take up less than 25 per cent of the space of the old boilers installed in 1958.



BR. WOLFGANG — Br. Wolfgang Thiem, OSB, 87, prepares plaster for one of the rooms of the monastery of St. Peter's Abbey. Br. Wolfgang has had a full-time job renovating rooms of the monastery for the past few years.

Ministry team has presence on campus

Topics ranging from journaling and Christian customs to cults and exorcisms have been addressed at St. Peter's College Campus Ministry luncheons during the past six years. Guest speakers have spoken to students and staff of St. Peter's Abbey, St. Peter's College and St. Peter's Press.

The guest speakers are part of the program of campus ministry that strives to bring Christian spirituality to student life, according to Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, chair of Campus Ministry. We have been very privileged to have Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, of the Eparchy of Saskatoon speak on topics ranging from Byzantine spirituality to our attachment to technology. Sr. Theodosia Papirnik of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Saskatoon addressed the Ukraine and her work with orphanages in the Ukraine. Rev. Bill Nelson, a pastor and former professor in a Lutheran seminary, spoke on journaling and grace. Rev. Colin Clay, an Anglican priest, gave lectures on cults. The students and staff learned about aspects of Benedictine spirituality from guest speakers Abbot Peter Novocosky, OSB; Frs. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB, and Paul Paproski, OSB.

Students are first introduced to members of the campus ministry team at the beginning of the school term. Campus

ministry sponsors a welcome lunch, tours of the campus and door prizes. The campus ministry team of Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB; Fr. Demetrius Wasylyniuk, OSB; and Br. Pierre Rouillard, OSB, is introduced to everyone. Some of the events sponsored by campus ministry during the college semester have included: writing contests on grace, the meaning of Christmas and Easter; a Seder Supper that commemorates Passover; and Alpha, a series of lectures on the basics of Christianity. Alpha is an interdenominational program that looks at basic Christian beliefs.

One of the highlights is the annual Medieval Feast held on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. The feast celebrates the beginning of Lent. Participants dress in medieval costumes and



BISHOP BRYAN — Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, of the Eparchy of Saskatoon discusses Byzantine (Ukrainian Catholic) spirituality at a luncheon attended by students and staff of St. Peter's College. His presentation was sponsored by St. Peter's College Campus Ministry.

enjoy a menu of medieval food at a banquet where the plates are made of bread. A king and queen are the guests of honour and everyone is entertained with singing, charades, poetry and "pass the parcel."

"We are always looking for new ideas to bring to our program," Paproski said.

College renovations link to future . . .

Continued from page 1

dormitory. The building served as a monastery for the monks who lived on the third floor. They gathered for prayer in their church on the south end of the third floor. The other floors were reserved for offices and classrooms. Everyone ate in dining rooms on the bottom floor. Food was prepared by the Franciscan (Elizabethan) Sisters of Humboldt. The college became affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan in 1926. In 1968, the college was registered as a corporate body.

It was necessary to improve the 46,000 square foot infrastructure of Michael Hall, according to Abbot Peter, to meet the needs of students today. The wiring system was not designed for computers or modern lab equipment. The elevator could not keep up to increasing demands



FINANCE OFFICER — Alison Kilpatrick is the new finance and administration officer for St. Peter's College. Alison was born in Windsor and raised in LaSalle, Ontario. Her last residence was Clementsport, Nova Scotia. Alison began her work on March 5.

for its use and was unable to provide adequate wheelchair access. The new look brings an improved atmosphere for learning. The college is better able to offer more courses that need to have access to

improved facilities. A new fitness centre opened to students and staff in 2010.

St. Peter's College offers two years of arts and sciences, business, and agriculture courses. The classes enable students to begin their degree program entrance requirements for colleges in: commerce, medicine, law, education, nu-

trition, kinesiology, nursing, and pharmacy. A creative writing program and other professional community programming is also offered.

Continued on next page



Hallway of the Main floor of St. Peter's College.



Entrance area to the Main floor of St. Peter's College.



Student recreation lounge of St. Peter's College.



A newly renovated classroom of St. Peter's College.



A look at the elevator shaft from the fourth floor.



New reception desk of St. Peter's College library.



KITCHEN STAFF — Three new members of the kitchen staff of St. Peter's Abbey stand in the newly renovated guest dining area. They include: from left, Valerie Weber of Naicam, baker; Shannon Forster of Lake Lenore, and Linda Demmans of Humboldt, cooks. Missing from the photo is Lisa Bruesch.

Thesis examines loyalty of Colony

By Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB

The people of St. Peter's Colony were loyal Canadian citizens who had the same aspirations as other Canadians. They lived in a religious jurisdiction that enabled them to hold onto their German-Catholic traditions and, at the same time, build communities that became part of the fabric of their new country. This was the conclusion of the thesis, *The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony: 1903 - 1930*, written as part of my requirement to complete a Master of Arts (History) degree at the University of Saskatchewan. I convoked in October of 2011.

The thesis examines the concept of loyalty in St. Peter's Colony between 1903 and 1930 among three genres, Benedictine monks, communities, and families. The German-Catholics lived in a province where the majority of citizens were Anglo-Protestants. Similar to other minority ethnic groups they were encouraged to adopt the culture of the majority. The elite believed there would be greater unity in Canada if immigrants became "Canadianized," or in other words, like the Anglo-Protestants. The Anglo-Protestant majority feared losing their culture as the province became increasingly multicultural. This fear materialized in the popular support of the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1920s.

The question of loyalty became a concern in the Anglo-Protestant community when separate schools opened in



RECEIVES DEGREE — Fr. Paul Paproski, OSB, is congratulated by Peter MacKinnon, president of the University of Saskatchewan, at the Oct. 22, 2011, convocation ceremonies.

Saskatchewan. Separate schools were denounced as a threat to national unity. Criticism was aimed, in particular, at German-Catholic separate and parochial schools. It was believed their schools were being used to resist assimilation into the larger culture. German Catholics comprised the largest minority of the province's Anglo-Protestant community.

One of the targets of criticism was the school system of St. Peter's Colony. The colony was home to Saskatchewan's largest German-Catholic settlement and most of the German-Catholic schools. School inspectors would occasionally pass through the schools criticizing them for being used to propagate the German language and Catholic religion. One of the inspectors, James Anderson, later became premier of the province. One of the most vocal

opponents of the separate schools was Rev. E.H. Oliver, principal of the Presbyterian Theological College in Saskatoon. He was a University of Saskatchewan historian and prominent figure in the Better Schools Movement. Oliver suggested the schools were promoting German nationalism and he used the media to voice his opposition to them. His accusations came in 1916 during the First World War when tensions were high between Canadians of German descent and the Anglo-Protestant majority.

The thesis looked at the loyalty of the Benedictines, communities, and families by analyzing their attitudes towards education, religion, nationality, and citizenship. It explored their perceptions of family, community life, and non-German ethnic groups living within the colony. Insight was given into the goals and aspirations of the German-Catholics through their stories and approaches to issues of the day.

The first chapter of the thesis concerned the Benedictines. It found the monks were preoccupied with building a monastic community and colony. The monks were active in parish and community life where they promoted German-Catholic traditions that included their religious faith, education, and health care. The second and third chapters of the thesis focussed on the communities and families of St. Peter's Colony. The thesis found the colonists were preoccupied with building schools and churches, and working together to promote their future. All the community history books celebrate their citizenship in Canada.

The thesis concluded the majority of pioneers in St. Peter's Colony did not express any awareness of outside suspicions of them. While the monks and colonists did not write about loyalty, they expressed loyalty to the country through the decisions they made and their cooperation with the larger Canadian community.

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