

The Communicator

Volume 29 | Issue 56

Article 1

2012

Volume XXIX, No. 2, Cumulative Issue 56

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Recommended Citation

(2012) "Volume XXIX, No. 2, Cumulative Issue 56," *The Communicator*. Vol. 29 : Iss. 56 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.snc.edu/communicator/vol29/iss56/1>

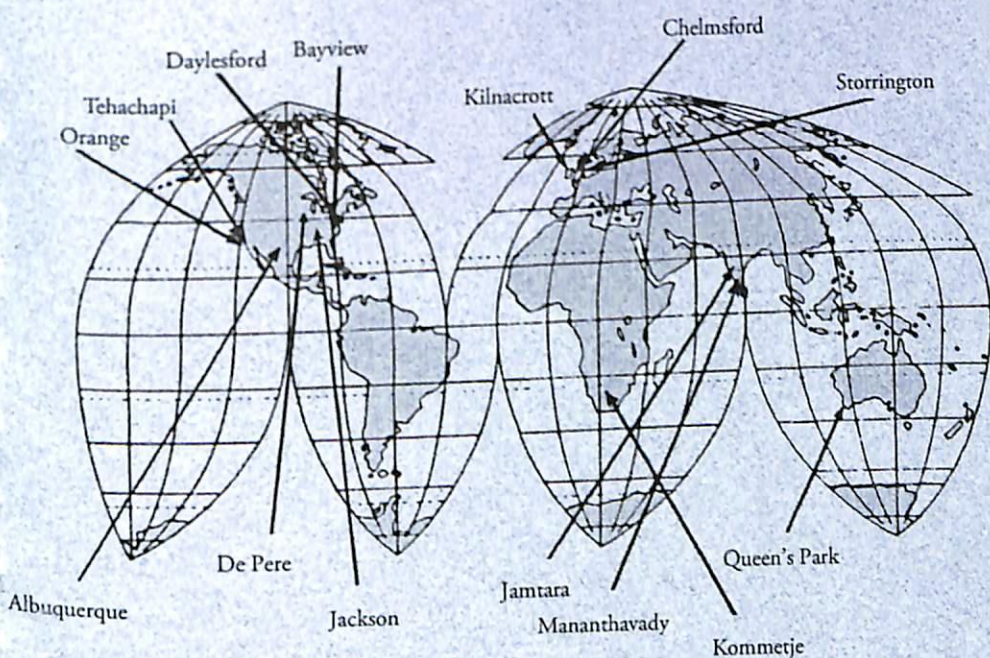
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COMMUNICATOR

Volume XXIX, Number 2

December, 2012

Cumulative Issue 56



*The English Speaking Circary
of the
Order of Prémontré*

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<i>Michael F. Frisch, O. Praem.</i> The Editor's Page:	1
<i>Br. Pius Colins, St. Philips Priory, Chelmsford</i> A Book Review - Porta Fidei - The Door of Faith	2
Santa Maria De La Vid Abbey: A Short History	10
<i>Rev. Francis Dorff, O. Praem.</i> Homily: For the Abbatial Blessing of Abbot Joel P. Garner, O. Praem.	16
<i>Xavier Colavechio and Theodore Antry</i> A Peek At Our Past: The General Chapter of the Order of Prémontré Celebrated at Prémontré in the Year of the Lord 1717	19
<i>Jeremy Tobin, O. Praem., Jackson</i> Love Overcomes Division and Hate	33
<i>Matthew Thankachen, O. Praem., Mananthavady</i> Religious Vacuum and Centralized Capitalism	36
Premonstratensian Spirituality	39
<i>Circary Chronicle</i>	43
Albuquerque	44
Chelmsford	46
Daylesford	50
De Pere	53
Jackson	55
Mananthavady	60
Orange	

Editor's Page

The General Chapter of 2012 is behind us and for all who were involved it was an event of great remembrance. A debt of profound gratitude goes to Fr. Dane Radecki, O. Praem. (De Pere) for his organization and execution of the entire two week event of meetings, liturgies, entertainment, and general care of all those who attended. Another debt of gratitude I personally extend to Fr. Stefan Kling, O. Praem. of Roggenburg for graciously taking over the responsibilities of playing the organ for all of the General Chapter's daily liturgies - a task that was initially mine, but due to a physical ailment, I was not able to accomplish. So to Fr. Stefan - a big "thank you" for your generosity and musical expertise in leading the General Chapter in sung prayer.

An important decision that came out of the 2012 General Chapter was that the Priory of Santa Maria de le Vid (Albuquerque) was granted its request for elevation to abbey status thus making it the newest canonry of our Order and Abbot Joel Garner the Order's newest abbot. To celebrate that historic event, the canonry has provided the article: *SANTA MARIA DE LA VID: A Short History* (see page 10).

Speaking of history and General Chapters, Fr. Xavier Colavechio (De Pere) and Fr. Ted Antry (Daylesford) collaboratively have translated the minutes of the General Chapter of the Order held at Premontre in the year 1717. Their prologue to the translation is entitled *A PEEK AT OUR PAST* which provides a background to the document they translated. (see page 19)

This edition of *THE COMMUNICATOR* takes a moment to pay due respect to our brother the Rev. Thomas Meulemanns, O. Praem., who passed to his eternal reward on December 4, 2012. He was 78 years of age. For a countless number of years Fr. Tom was the diligent editor of this periodical to the English speaking circary, a task he truly enjoyed. Fr. Tom had a remarkable gift for the English language and its grammar, a gift he used as an editor, a writer, a homilist, and as a conversationalist. Anyone who engaged Tom in a conversation quickly found out how Tom loved to converse.

A priest of Daylesford Abbey, Fr. Tom Muelemanns was born in Appleton, Wisconsin in 1934, was vested in the Order in 1952 and was ordained a Norbertine priest on May 23, 1959. Fr. Tom had earned an undergraduate degree in Philosophy from St. Norbert College and a Master of Arts degree in Speech from the University of Wisconsin. Tom spent a number of years at De Pere serving as its Mission Procurator for the missions in Lima, Peru. May he rest peacefully in the light of heaven's glory.

Michael F. Frisch, O. Praem.

A Book Review

Porta Fidei – The Door of Faith

For the Proclamation of the Year of Faith

Porta fidei was published as an Apostolic letter '*motu proprio data*' on 11th October, 2011. The purpose was to announce to the world that from 11th October, 2012 until 24th November, 2013 (the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, Universal King) a Year of Faith is to be observed; this is in the same vein as the recent Year of St. Paul. This article will be looking at the content, background, and aim of the *motu proprio*, with the hope of explicating how this fits into Pope Benedict's grand vision.

The date of 11th October, 2012, the opening of the Year of Faith, is significant because it also marks the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council by Bl. John XXIII, and the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by Bl. John Paul II. These two events are significant markers for us Catholics, and we can see from this very first date that the Holy Father seeks in this Year of Faith to teach us something about the Second Vatican Council as well as the *Catechism*. In his 2005 address to the Roman Curia, the Holy Father spoke about the importance of reading the pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council in a hermeneutic of reform in continuity (often abbreviated to the "hermeneutic of continuity") rather than a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture.

On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture;" it has frequently availed itself of the sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the "hermeneutic of reform," of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us¹.

The hermeneutic of continuity is a recurring theme of the document, as we shall explore later.

In the homily at Bl. John Paul II's funeral, the Holy Father, then Cardinal Ratzinger, spoke about the dictatorship of relativism that had fallen over the Western World. He spoke of how the failure of the world to cling to the truths of the faith has led to a failure to cling to the principle of truth at all.

We are moving toward a dictatorship of relativism which does not

1 Pope Benedict XVI, Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering them his Christmas Greetings, 22nd December 2005.

recognise anything as definitive and has as its highest value one's own ego and one's own desires; . . . having a clear faith, based on the creed of the Church is often labeled today as a fundamentalism . . . whereas relativism, which is letting oneself be tossed and swept along by every wind of teaching, looks like the only attitude acceptable to today's standards.²

The answer to this can be seen in what the Holy Father has to say about the Year of Faith.

As background we can also see this initiative as a follow up to the creation of the new dicastery last year: the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation, in the *motu proprio Ubicumque et semper*. The aim of this organ is to co-ordinate and resource endeavours and enterprises to re-convert previously Christian territories, and in part to bring Christ back to Europe. As part of this Year, October 2012 will also see the Holy Father convoke the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on, "The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Catholic Faith."

We can now see, before we begin to look at the document itself, that the context of the Year of Faith addresses the three themes, perhaps, most central to the Holy Father's pontificate. These are: the hermeneutic of continuity for the Second Vatican Council; the end of the "dictatorship of relativism;" and the New Evangelisation. This may begin to show us how important this Year could be for the universal Church as well as for our Order.

Before moving on to discussing the document itself, I think it opportune to discuss, briefly, what exactly the Holy Father means when he speaks of "faith." As we know, faith is one of the three theological virtues enunciated by St. Paul in 1Corinthians (13:13). It is the supernatural virtue which God infuses into our souls by which we believe everything He reveals, and the Church proposes for our belief. The *Catechism* adds:

Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed (Para. 150).

We can see therefore the important twofold aspect to the theological virtue of faith; it is both God's free unmerited gift of supernatural grace of belief in Him and revelation, and also our assent and our adherence to God and His revelation. A further twofold dynamic takes place when we remind ourselves that faith is not only a theological virtue but we also use

2 Joseph Card. Ratzinger, Funeral Mass of the Roman Pontiff John Paul II: Homily of His Eminence Card. Joseph Ratzinger, 8th April 2005.

the word as a shorthand for the deposit of faith, i.e. the truths of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition that make up the content of our faith. However, and very importantly, as the Holy Father states when talking about the *Catechism* in the *motu proprio*:

what is presented here is no theory, but an encounter with a Person who lives within the Church.³

To the text then.

In the Acts of the Apostles 14:27 we read: “And when they arrived, they gathered the church together and declared all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.” Thus Paul and Barnabas and their arrival in Antioch from the mission is recounted. The incipit of the text then tells us that still today this door is open for us to enter, opened by Christ on the cross and still open for us now. How do we enter through this door then? We are told that this is possible when, “the word of God is proclaimed and the heart allows itself to be shaped by transforming grace;”⁴ we then begin the journey that will last a lifetime: beginning in baptism, the sacrament of faith, and passing through death to eternal life.

The Holy Father then goes on to affirm that from the very beginning of his pontificate, a great appreciation for the journey of faith has been important. He then adds two notes on faith in the contemporary world that are important. He says, “It often happens that Christians are more concerned for the social, cultural and political consequences of their commitment . . . ,”⁵ furthermore that we cannot take it for granted that the content of faith provides the bedrock to culture and society “because of a profound crisis of faith that has affected many people.”⁶ Here, I must add, it is obvious that the Holy Father is not criticizing those who see the mission of charity as important (in fact this will be pointed out later as critically important), but rather reminding us that we cannot perform good works and assume that people will understand why we do this. This profound crisis of faith that has affected much of the Western World, and continues to rear its ugly head in varying political and social guises, affects the ability of Christians to witness, and also their ability to unite themselves with the ever-living God.

As can be seen from the accompanying note on pastoral recommendations as well as from the Holy Father in the *motu proprio*, a

3 All references are to the paragraph numbers of Porta Fidei (PF): PF 11.

4 PF 1.

5 PF 2.

6 Ibid

tool for the Year of Faith will be the *Catechism*. As mentioned previously, the start of the Year of Faith will begin on the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism* which, along with the *Code of Canon Law*, is often considered to be one of the final documents of the Second Vatican Council. The *Catechism* is arranged using a model which the Holy Father himself partly adopts in this document: it moves from profession of faith to liturgy and then to witness. Of course we also now have the wonderful Compendium to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* published by the Holy Father in 2005.

In paragraphs four and five the Holy Father returns to one of themes that I identified in the background: the hermeneutic of continuity. The Holy Father mentions that this is not the first Year of Faith to be called, but that Paul VI called one in 1967 to celebrate nineteen centuries since the martyrdoms of Ss Peter and Paul. It was obvious to Pope Paul VI, Bl. John Paul II and the current Holy Father that the “profound crisis of faith” that affected the Western World in the middle of the last century has infected the Church as well, and in this current, the teachings and reforms of the Second Vatican Council were seen by some as a rupture with the past (and there were those incidentally who saw this as good, and those who saw it as bad). The Holy Father quotes the previous Pope saying,

“They [the texts of the Second Vatican Council] need to read correctly, to be widely known and taken to heart as important and normative texts of the Magisterium, within the Church’s tradition.”⁷

Pope Benedict adds that we need to use the “right hermeneutic.”⁸

From paragraph seven, the Holy Father moves from preamble to the main body of the *motu proprio*; however, before he does this adds an important caveat that is, in fact, the correct hermeneutic to view the Year of Faith as, “a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Saviour of the world.”⁹ With all this talk about the content of the faith it might be possible to view this initiative of the Holy Father as some sort of academic exercise; it is not. The purpose of the Year of Faith is to bring us closer to Christ.

It may be opportune to reiterate a point that was made previously. In the *motu proprio* the Holy Father emphasizes two tools that should be at the disposal of all those who seek to celebrate the Year. I have mentioned the *Catechism* previously, and about this he adds that in the Year we should

7 PF 5.

8 Ibid.

9 PF 6

make a concerted effort to rediscover and study the *Catechism* because in its presentation, the faith receives its “systematic and organic synthesis.”¹⁰ Seeing the faith as organic and systematic is obviously an important step to being able to accept it in its entirety.

At the beginning of paragraph thirteen, the Holy Father also states that “retracing the history of our faith”¹¹ will be of “decisive importance”¹² during the Year. In studying Church history, we see the interweaving of sin and holiness that should give us confidence in the future. Not only this, but it should help us grow to love the Church more and more.

The Holy Father also gives us an indication of where he hopes this Year of Faith should reach, or more precisely, where it should be located in order to reach out.

We will have the opportunity to profess our faith in the Risen Lord in our cathedrals and in the churches of the whole world; in our homes and among our families...Religious communities as well as parish communities, and all ecclesial bodies old and new, are to find a way, during this Year, to make a public profession of faith.¹³

We can see then that all areas of the Church from the grand basilicas of Rome to the domestic Church of the family hearth are not only to be recipients but actors in the Year of the Faith.

Now in paragraph nine is the model for how we should be celebrating the Year of Faith: profession, celebration, and witness. Those are three key areas of Christian life so it is not surprising that the Holy Father should want them to be of prime importance in the Year of Faith; however, I feel it is appropriate to spend just a little time to see what the Holy Father says about these three things in the document.

Profession. The Pope, quoting Our Holy Father Augustine, states that the people “strengthen themselves by believing.”¹⁴ St Augustine spent his whole life in search of the beauty of the faith, and many times in his extensive writings tells us of the importance of believing the truth of the faith. Also important is the self-abandonment of believing, living in a “continuous crescendo,”¹⁵ that does not involve the renunciation of one’s will or intellect but is about using one’s faculties in service of the truth and

10 PF 11.

11 PF 13.

12 Ibid.

13 PF 8.

14 PF 7.

15 Ibid.

uniting them to God. The Holy Father said the following at the publication of the Compendium in 2005:

[H]ow necessary it is today at the dawn of the third millennium for the entire Catholic community to proclaim, teach and witness to the entire truth of Catholic faith, doctrine and morals in a unanimous and harmonious manner!¹⁶

The Holy Father here, and elsewhere in the document, is emphasizing that we can only ever have faith if we hold to the entirety of the content of divine revelation: we cannot unite ourselves to only a part of Christ. He adds later in the *motu proprio* that though faith is intrinsically a personal encounter with Christ, it is both “personal and communitarian.”¹⁷ We say ‘I believe’ as the body of Christ as both an individual and as the Church herself. Important also is that we retain zeal for the faith, the Holy Father admonishes that, “none of us grow lazy in the faith.”¹⁸ Echoing the Psalmist who tells us never to grow tired of doing right, this injunction might be directed at faithful Catholics, even those professional religious people (priests, deacons, and religious) to use this Year as an opportunity to reinvigorate their faith.

The Holy Father, linking profession with witness, furthermore states unequivocally that the communitarian aspect of faith demands of us social action and that this Year is an important time to emphasize this.

Celebration. The Holy Father states that this Year is also an important opportunity to intensify our celebration of the faith in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist. Pope Benedict, both before and after his election, has written reams on the importance of the liturgy in the Christian life. We know that it is during the Mass that we come closest to the Divine, and so (as he has said previously) it is important that there is the important link between our faith and our liturgy: neither should be idiosyncratic, neither should be individualistic, and neither should be narcissistic. He says, “Without the liturgy and the sacraments, the profession of faith would lack efficacy, because it would lack the grace which supports Christian witness.”¹⁹

Witness. Our Christian witness is most obviously about our care for those less fortunate than ourselves, and in the *motu proprio*, the Holy Father repeats the ringing injunction of St. James that, “faith without works is dead.” Faith and love are woven together in the intricate tapestry

16 Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus Address, 3rd July 2005.

17 PF 10.

18 PF 15.

19 PF 11.

of the Christian life and they need each other. "Faith without charity bears no fruit, while charity without faith would be a sentiment constantly at the mercy of doubt."²⁰ When we take care of the poor and dispossessed, the hungry and hopeless, we see Christ's face in each one of them; however, it is only faith that allows us to see Him. In paragraph thirteen the Holy Father offers us a beautiful, almost lyrical, description of the power of faith, and in this our Blessed Lady as model for our Christian witness; she trusted in God completely and her witness was great. This is faith.

To conclude, the Year of Faith is not an academic exercise to learn more about the teachings and history of the Church but rather an initiative to dive ever deeper into the beauty of faith and fall in love with the Church again. This is principally through a focus on profession, celebration and witness an opportunity to convert our lives and love our Lord more dearly. This is an opportunity for our Order, for our canonries, for the people we serve, and also for us all to fall in love with Church once more and rededicate our lives to serving and proclaiming the revealed truth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and proclaimed by our holy mother the Church.

There is much more that could be said about the Holy Father's apostolic letter but I will confine myself to quoting a portion of paragraph thirteen on the power of faith.

By faith, Mary accepted the Angel's word and believed the message that she was to become the Mother of God in the obedience of her devotion (cf. Lk 1:38). Visiting Elizabeth, she raised her hymn of praise to the Most High for the marvels he worked in those who trust him (cf. Lk 1:46-55). With joy and trepidation she gave birth to her only son, keeping her virginity intact (cf. Lk 2:6-7). Trusting in Joseph, her husband, she took Jesus to Egypt to save him from Herod's persecution (cf. Mt 2:13-15). With the same faith, she followed the Lord in his preaching and remained with him all the way to Golgotha (cf. Jn 19:25-27). By faith, Mary tasted the fruits of Jesus' resurrection, and treasuring every memory in her heart (cf. Lk 2:19, 51), she passed them on to the Twelve assembled with her in the Upper Room to receive the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:14; 2:1-4).

By faith, the Apostles left everything to follow their Master (cf. Mk 10:28). They believed the words with which he proclaimed the Kingdom of God present and fulfilled in his person (cf. Lk 11:20). They lived in communion of life with Jesus who instructed them with his teaching, leaving them a new rule of life, by which they would be recognized as his disciples after his death (cf. Jn 13:34-35). By faith, they went out

²⁰ PF 14.

to the whole world, following the command to bring the Gospel to all creation (cf. Mk 16:15) and they fearlessly proclaimed to all the joy of the resurrection, of which they were faithful witnesses.

By faith, the disciples formed the first community, gathered around the teaching of the Apostles, in prayer, in celebration of the Eucharist, holding their possessions in common so as to meet the needs of the brethren (cf. Acts 2:42-47).

By faith, the martyrs gave their lives, bearing witness to the truth of the Gospel that had transformed them and made them capable of attaining to the greatest gift of love: the forgiveness of their persecutors.

By faith, men and women have consecrated their lives to Christ, leaving all things behind so as to live obedience, poverty and chastity with Gospel simplicity, concrete signs of waiting for the Lord who comes without delay. By faith, countless Christians have promoted action for justice so as to put into practice the word of the Lord, who came to proclaim deliverance from oppression and a Year of favour for all (cf. Lk 4:18-19).

By faith, across the centuries, men and women of all ages, whose names are written in the Book of Life (cf. Rev 7:9, 13:8), have confessed the beauty of following the Lord Jesus wherever they were called to bear witness to the fact that they were Christian: in the family, in the workplace, in public life, in the exercise of the charisms and ministries to which they were called.

By faith, we too live: by the living recognition of the Lord Jesus, present in our lives and in our history.

Santa Maria De La Vid Abbey: A Short History

The Beginnings

In the years after Vatican II, under the leadership of Abbot Benjamin Mackin, a conviction grew among the men of St. Norbert Abbey that the canonry should put forth a greater effort to serve the increasing number of Hispanic Catholics in the United States. Fr. Robert Brooks, a trained sociologist, was sent to the Southwest to visit dioceses that might provide an appropriate setting for a new Norbertine foundation. His research led to the recommendation that we mission some men to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe in New Mexico, where many Hispanic families have lived for centuries. In 1984, Fr. Robert Brooks and Fr. Robert Olson moved to Albuquerque to seek an appropriate setting for our Norbertine Community. They ministered at the University of Albuquerque where Fr. Alfred McBride was president.

In 1985, Archbishop Robert Sanchez invited the Norbertine Community to take pastoral responsibility for Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish on Albuquerque's West Mesa, a primarily Hispanic working-class parish. The parish included a former convent that could house a small community. Fr. Ed Sdano was named pastor of the parish and Fr. Joel Garner his associate.

On September 8, 1985, the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, the canonry created a permanent foundation in New Mexico, to be known as Santa Maria de la Vid Priory. The name, which means Our Lady of the Vine, was adopted in memory of one of the first Norbertine Abbeys in Spain, which was founded just after the death of St. Norbert and thrived for more than 700 years until it was suppressed in 1835 by an anti-clerical government.

Fr. Joel Garner was named as the prior of the new foundation. Fr. Richard Mulroy, a missionary in Lima, Peru, and Fr. Vincent DeLeers, a former academic dean at St. Norbert College, joined the fledgling community in 1986.

From the very beginning, the Norbertines of New Mexico saw as their primary mission "the witnessing to the reality and power of a Christian faith community by living a simple, communal life according to the Rule of Augustine and the ancient traditions of the Order of Prémontré (Mission Statement). Morning and evening prayer, common table, the Eucharist, and a monthly community day were initial vehicles for the deepening of communio.

A Difficult Start

The initial years of this new venture were marked with numerous challenges, and the rhythm of dying and rising that marks Christian life. Fr. Sdano, the pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, died the day after leading an annual pilgrimage for vocations in which the *peregrinos* walk 100 miles from the four directions to the Santuario at Chimayo. He had been pastor only nine months when he died of a heart attack in June of 1986. Fr. Brooks, who had founded the new parish of St. Joseph on the Rio Grande out of the campus ministry program at the University of Albuquerque, died of cancer two years later in 1988. Fr. Robert Olson and Fr. John Tourangeau, who had joined the community in 1987, departed from Norbertine life in 1989. However, as the years passed, other Norbertines came to share in the life of this new mission. Among them were Jim Huth, Christian O'Brien, Norbert Manders, Francis Dorff, Domenic Rossi, Joe Serano, Stan Joppe, Gene Gries, Rod Fenzl, Nick Nirschl, Larry Mayer, Angelo Feldkamp, John Tourangeau (who returned to the community), Brother Dennis Butler, who became the first solemnly professed member from New Mexico, and Robert Campbell, a newly-ordained priest.

A New Location for the Priory

As the community grew, several other houses were purchased near the priory in our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, but the living situation was not conducive to the community life that was envisioned. So in 1995 the Norbertines of Santa Maria de la Vid Priory moved to 70 acres of land in Albuquerque's South Valley. Located on a southwest mesa, the present abbey overlooks the city of Albuquerque and the Sandia and Manzano Mountains. Memorable sunrises and sunsets are a regular experience.

The history of communal residence on this land is a fascinating one. There is strong evidence that the descendants of neighboring Native American peoples inhabited the land when St. Norbert was preaching in Europe in 1121. Subsequently sheep grazed there under the flags of three different countries - Spain, Mexico, and the United States.

In the late 1940s, Bernard May, a former World War II fighter pilot, purchased the 70 acres which formed the boundaries of the property. He built a family home, an airstrip, and a small airplane hangar on his land. May sold the land to a community of Dominican Sisters from Philadelphia in the 1950s.

The Sisters, whose main Apostolate was retreat ministry, built a dormitory for retreatants in 1960. In the mid-1980s, the sisters added a small convent, four hermitages, and a desert chapel. Subsequently, the

Dominican Sisters sold the retreat house to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The New Mexico Norbertines purchased 30 of those acres from the archdiocese in 1988 and subsequently were invited to purchase the remaining 40 acres and its six buildings in 1994. Ten years after its founding, the Priory of Santa Maria de la Vid and its members had a new home in a new location. Here the community has created a center for spiritual life for its members and for anyone who wishes to deepen their own relationship with God.

The Long-Range Plan

In 1995, Phase I of the long-range development plan for the priory began. This included building the Church of Santa Maria de la Vid, renovating the original May home to serve as a communal dining and living room facility, converting the former airplane hangar into a temporary library, renovating the former retreat center dormitory into housing for the community, and the renovation of Bethany Guest House (the former Sisters' convent) and the Hermitages of Prémontré to make them more suitable for retreat guests.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Norbertine presence in New Mexico was celebrated in 2010. Phase II of the three-phase building process had been completed two years before. The second phase addressed the need for a new residence-living center (St. Norbert Cloister) and a library-spiritual learning center (The Norbertine Library).

The Norbertine Library is a theological resource for the entire state. The library, currently with almost 17,000 volumes and growing, has an animating vision expressed in the dedicatory phrase, "That All May Be One." The Norbertine Library is open to the public.

The planning for these two buildings began in 2004 and was realized in 2008. Abbot Gary Neville dedicated St. Norbert Cloister in September of 2007, and Archbishop Michael Sheehan dedicated the new library in August of 2008. The church building assures a space for liturgy, the library a place for study, and the cloister a place for rest and renewal for active ministries. These are the three pillars of abbey life.

We are presently in the design-development step of Phase III of our long-range plan. We hope to break ground in February, 2013 for Our Lady of Guadalupe Commons, a multipurpose facility which will serve as a place for retreats and workshops as well as a place for dining. It will also house two offices and a small conference room.

Ministries in New Mexico

The high desert environment of Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey is a sacred space where Norbertines and those who spend time there are nourished for their ministries in the Southwest and beyond. The prayerful, inclusive atmosphere of the Abbey invites all who enter this holy ground to silence, solitude, study, and dialogue. It is the contemplative hospitality of this place that sustains the Norbertines and others in their active ministries.

The *Parish Outreach* of the Abbey touches a number of Catholic faith communities in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The primary service is to the 2,700-family parish of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary where the renovation of the family center was initiated in 1988, and the building of a new church was completed in 1992. The liturgical design of the church has received national recognition. The community has reassumed pastoral responsibility for St. Augustine Parish at Isleta Pueblo which was founded in 1613. Recently, this Native American parish became the Shrine of St. Kateri Tekawitha in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. In addition, we minister to other parishes and convents of sisters in the local area.

The *Educational Outreach* of the Abbey is reflected in our collaboration with ecumenical friends. The abbey has provided a New Mexico campus for the Master of Theological Studies program of St. Norbert College. It enables local residents to earn an advanced theological degree. The Norbertine Library is open to people of all faiths as a space in which a shared search for Wisdom can be pursued in peace. The community is also involved in other adult educational efforts.

Finally, the *Pastoral Outreach* is ecumenical, including retreat ministry, involvement in interfaith dialogue, and ministry to the marginalized: the poor, the immigrants, the imprisoned, and the sick and dying in area hospitals.

New Initiatives

Other important developments have taken place since the turn of the century.

First, a number of lay men and women who are drawn to our spirituality initiated a Norbertine Associates program in 2001. This was followed by an Oblate program in 2006 whereby an oblate enters as individual covenant with us and participates in a formal formation program.

Second, in June of 1999, the Canonry Chapter of our mother abbey of St. Norbert proposed a fraternal relationship with the Canonry of

Mananthavady in India. In 2000 a formal document was crafted which spelled out the De Pere-Mananthavady Covenant.

In 2004, the Abbot General of the Norbertine Order and the Prior of Santa Maria de la Vid Priory were visitators to the Canonry of Mananthavady. From that experience, the idea emerged of inviting several confreres from Mananthavady to live in the Albuquerque Priory and to serve in the priest-poor Archdiocese of Santa Fe. In early 2005, both the Chapter of Santa Maria de la Vid and Archbishop Michael Sheehan endorsed the idea and subsequently, Prior John Nelluvilil and his Council agreed to mission several confreres to New Mexico.

Fr. Binu Joseph and Fr. Bijoy Francis arrived in Albuquerque in September of 2006 and Fr. George Pavamkott in January of 2008. Since that time, our Indian confreres have become fully integrated into the life and community of Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey and their service is deeply appreciated by the people of the Archdiocese. Their presence has been critical to our request for independence and abbey status.

Third, after many conversations, which intensified during our 25th anniversary in New Mexico (1985–2010), we decided to request independence from our mother abbey in De Pere. After hearing the Canonry Chapter of St. Norbert Abbey, Abbot Gary Neville and his Council approved our request in June of 2011, as did Abbot General Thomas Handgräter and the Definatory in the Fall of 2011. We had a wonderful celebration of our being raised to a Canonry on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 2011.

Request for Abbey Status

At our Community Day in January 2012, in an executive session of the solemnly professed members of our community, we held a lively, spirited and substantive discussion about whether or not to request the General Chapter of 2012 to raise our canonry to the status of an abbey. The general direction of the conversation was in the affirmative.

After additional prayer and discernment, we held another executive session later that month and collegially decided to ask the General Chapter of 2012 for abbey status. Some reasons were:

1. In the wake of requesting and receiving a new status as an independent canonry, becoming an abbey would provide us with greater visibility. People, in general, understand what an abbey is more than a priory;

2. Becoming an abbey will have a positive effect on our vocation recruitment and our financial development program. It communicates progress and stability;
3. Our Archbishop, Michael Sheehan, has been very supportive and encouraging of such a move;
4. Our men in formation were very much in favor of our making the request.

On August 2, 2012, at the General Chapter in De Pere, the Chapter Fathers voted to give the gift of abbey status to the community of Santa Maria de la Vid.

We are a small community of thirteen members. We see this as a blessing because it enables us to live a life of *communio* characterized by mutual love and concern through daily contact and interaction.

In requesting the gift of abbey status from the 2012 General Chapter, we promised to deepen the *communio* which is our patrimony and to continue to serve the culturally rich and diverse people of the Church in New Mexico. And, with God's grace, we will.

HOMILY

FOR THE ABBATIAL BLESSING OF ABBOT JOEL P. GARNER, O. Praem
September 9, 2012

"I am among you as the one who serves" says the Lord. (Luke 22:27)

This is a day of great blessing. We are all blessed to be here. We are doubly blessed to be joining Archbishop Michael in blessing Abbot Joel as the first Abbot of the youngest Abbey in the long line of Norbertine Abbeys that stretches back to the beginning of the Twelfth Century. For us who have grown to know and love Abbot Joel, this Eucharist of blessing is a real Peak Experience.

It reminds me of another peak experience that I shared long ago with Abbot Joel. It was when we were rebuilding the church of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. When the builders reached the highest peak of the church roof they mounted a little tree there as is the custom. That night after dinner, Joel came to me and said, "Let's go up on the church roof and watch the sun set." So we climbed about seven ladders and sat down together on the roof of the church. Then Joel lit up a cigar and we watched in wonder and praise at the beauty of the sun saying good night to the Sandia Mountains. As I recall, we also solved all the problems of the Church, the Order, and maybe even the world, before it got too dark. Fortunately, no one saw us sitting there like two Norbertine fiddlers on the roof. For me, that night was a real Peak Experience.

What I really rejoice in today, however, is that Abbot Joel did not stay on the roof of the church. He did not send me down the ladder to get him a pair of binoculars and a bullhorn so that he could lord it over us and shout out commands at us from on high. No. He climbed all the way down the ladder into the hearts of the people of this parish and of his Norbertine brothers and sisters and walked with us for twenty-seven long, hard years as the one who serves.

That is what makes today's abbatial blessing such a special Peak Experience for all of us since, for us as Christians, the highest point in our Church is not at the top of our organizational ladder. It is at the very bottom of it. It is in the depth of our hearts and in the empty space between us as God fills it through our service to others with a divine compassion, and forgiveness, and a self-effacing quality of relating with one another that goes far beyond anything that we can ask, or imagine, or try to do on our own.

We cannot experience this blessing of being servant leaders ourselves without being moved to join the Pregnant Virgin in singing her Magnificat, as we Norbertines do every day at sunset. If you would like, you may sing this refrain after me,

“The Lord has done marvels for us. Holy is God’s Name.”

If we sing that song as the Pregnant Virgin sings it, we will have to say to ourselves in all honesty, “I serve now, not I, but Christ is serving in me.”

Fifty years ago, the great Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner prophesied that in the Church of the future a Christian will a mystic or will not be a Christian at all. When I look at the signs of these times, I am convinced that the future he was talking about is right now and that, in these days, a Christian leader will be a mystic or will not be a leader at all.

I am not talking about the first stage of mysticism in which God often embraces us in the solitude of a mountain, or a cave, or a hermitage somewhere—or maybe even on the roof of a church. I am talking about an advanced, apostolic kind of mysticism that takes place right in the middle of our action of ministering to other persons. It takes place in the empty space between us when we experience Christ Himself filling that space “as the one who serves.”

As anyone can see, the Norbertine Community of Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey is not General Motors. We are a very small, modest operation just like the very first Christians were. We are just a handful of dedicated modern apostles longing to share the heart and mind of Christ in everything that we do and say on our journey together into God. We deeply believe that, if we remain faithful to this journey, God will do marvelous things through us. This much we know for sure: that unless the Lord had built this Abbey, we would have labored in vain to build it.

The last thing we need right now is a religious C.E.O. to treat us like General Motors. The last thing we need is a boss to lord it over us by shouting orders to us through a bullhorn from the top of an institutional ladder. As Jesus makes very clear in today’s Gospel, that is the way in which some others lead, but it is not to be that way among us.

We Norbertines have unanimously elected Abbot Joel to be our Spiritual Father since we know from experience that, like Zacchaeus, he has climbed all the way down the ladder to be with Christ among his People. We know from experience that Abbot Joel often models for us in word and deed what it really means to be personally united to God and each other in

Christ by living as “the one who serves.” He models for us what it means to be apostolic mystics just like the first apostles were.

This is the way that God has been blessing us for so many years now through the servant leadership of Abbot Joel. And this is why we are so happy to be joining Archbishop Michael today in blessing Abbot Joel as the first Abbot of Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey. For this is the day the Lord Himself has made for us by still being among us as “the one who serves.”

So, today, we can't help singing,
“The Lord has done marvels for us. Holy is God's name. “
In Christ Jesus, Our Risen Lord.

A Peek At Our Past

Abbot General Thomas Handgrätinger, on the occasion of the recent General Chapter in DePere, presented a gift to Abbot Neville, a bound copy of the minutes of the General Chapter held in Premontre in 1717, under the leadership of the then Abbot General Claude Honoré Lucas deMuin, the Abbot of Premontre' (1702-1740). The Acts were printed on parchment, very well preserved, and they give us a glimpse of the state of the Order after the devastation of the communities in the British Isles and German lands, due to the Protestant Revolt, but before the devastation wrought by the French Revolution later in that century. Glimpses of the difficulties with the Spanish houses also can be found in the document. The King of Spain had appointed Jerolomite priests as visitators to the Premonstratensian abbeys, and eventually, all those abbeys were either turned over to the Jerolomites or suppressed by the King. There is also suggestions concerning the confreres of Berne Abbey who had been dispersed from their abbey in Heusden, near the Mosel River. The Chapter gave support to the plan to return to conventual life in a place near s'Hertogenbosch, which is where the present abbey of Berne is located in Heeswijk. The translation of this document is presented as a contribution to the history of our Order which experienced in the twentieth century, a somewhat similar situation for our communities exiled and persecuted by the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The translation was made collaboratively by Xavier Colavechio, DePere, and Theodore Antry, Daylesford.

**The General Chapter of the Order of Prémontré
Celebrated at Prémontré in the Year of the Lord 1717
Presided by Most Rev. D. Claude Honoré Lucas,
Doctor of the Sorbonne,
Abbot of Prémontré and General of
the Entire Same Order of Prémontré**

**At Paris
Printer: J.B-Christopher Ballard,
Regis Musicae Monotypographi, Necnon Eiusdem
Majestatos. Capellae Notatoris.**

**1717
Cum Privilegio Regis**

**Common Acts and Decrees of the General Chapter of
the Order of Prémontré**

celebrated at the Abbey of Prémontré in the year of the Lord 1717, from April 25th until May 1 inclusive.

On April 25, 1717, which was CANTATE Sunday, the fourth after Easter, at Prémontré, in which had gathered the day before, from the entire Order, Abbots, Provosts, Priors, and others, as well as Deputies called to the General Chapter, at about 9 a.m., the solemn prayer was begun, during which the Most Reverend Abbot General ¹, dressed in pontifical vestments, and assisted at the throne by the Most Reverend Abbots of Cuissy ², Clairefontaine ³ and Weissenau ⁴, and preceded by the entire community of Prémontré, processed from the Church with the above named capitulars to an area outside the monastery. Thence, all being in order, and having sprinkled everyone and honored them with fragrant incense, and from there, all were admitted, with candles burning, to the monastery.

1 Claude Honoré Lucas de Muin, 1702-1740.

2 Joseph Dionys, 1704-1733.

3 Bernard du Fours, 1677-1724.

4 Leopold Mauch, 1708-1722.

Then, the cantors having intoned the antiphon "Christus resurgens" all, two by two, singing the aforesaid antiphon, entered the Church; and then the Most Reverend Abbot, imploring the help of the Divine Spirit for the entire gathering of the capitulars, celebrated the Mass of the Holy Spirit in the pontifical ritual in the midst of the surrounding ministers, and when concluded, all gathered in the Chapter Room in order to listen to the customary sermon.

First Session April 25

Sunday, April 25, three o'clock in the afternoon.

Gathered by the ringing of the large bell in the Chapter Hall, the Most Reverend Abbot General entered the room and immediately dropped to his knees and led the antiphon "Veni Creator Spiritus" with verse and response and the prayer to the Holy Spirit; then he rose and sat down, and because according to the dictates of the Statutes, Section 4, Chapter 3, Article 1, he had not offered his obedience, he did so. After his offering to the Lord of Cuissy, the fourth Father of the Order, in the hands of the most Lord de Fours, Abbot of Clairefontaine, the Reverend Abbot General offered his, and afterwards, in a line, on their knees, the other Lord Abbots and Provosts who had not yet done so swore with these words: "I promise to you, Most Reverend Lord, obedience and reverence."

Then the Most Rev. Abbot General took counsel together with the Most Reverend Lords of Cuissy, Clairfontaine, Weissenau, Rot an der Rot and Knechtsteden named as Definitors and appointed others:

Abbot of Cuissy as fourth Father of the Order

Abbot of Clairefontaine as Vicar General of the Order and of France

Abbot of Weissenau in Swabia as Vicar General of Swabia

Abbot de Castello of Gascogne ⁵ Vicar General

Abbot of Beaulieu ⁶ as Visitor General of Campania

Abbot of Rot an der Rot ⁷ in Swabia

Abbot of Knechtsteden ⁸ near Cologne

Abbot of St. Augustine among the Odemarum

5 Henri Depuis de Cressonville, 1698-1731.

6 Johannes Christophe Mathon, 1701-1730.

7 Hermann Vogler, 1711-1744.

8 Arnold II Brewer, 1703-1723.

Abbot of Bellelay ⁹ among the Swiss
Abbot of Wadgassen ¹⁰ near the Saar River
Abbot of Mondaye ¹¹ of the strict observance
Provost of Zwierzyniec near Cracow
Father Prior of Prémontré
Father Prior of the College at Paris

To these and other officials of the Chapter, without observing any precedence, the oath of fidelity was administered in the hands of the Most Reverend Presider, committing oneself faithfully and observing all secrets. The same Most Reverend Lord, as was customary, summoned all appointees, commissioners, Vicars, visitators and other commissions of the Order, whether general or particular, or deputies whose offices or tasks were completed, who immediately, in the hands of the same Most Reverend Abbot, humbly placed their reports and resigned.

Then the Most Reverend Abbot General mentioned that his archabbey had not been visited for many years and asked that the Chapter submit the names of 2 abbots who together with the abbot of Cuissy would do the visitation without delay; he excused himself with the permission of the Definitors. The abbots of Clairefontaine and Weissenau were named with the abbot of Cuissy. Rev. P. Bruslé, Prior of the College of Paris, was named secretary of the visitation.

The General then proposed to the Chapter the lack of enough copies of the Book of Usages for the Order and the need for such to be reprinted. The Chapter responded that more choir books could be printed, but as for the Statutes and Ordinarius, there was need to wait until the Vicars of each circary could send their notices to the Abbot General within a year.

Soon the Chapter raised up the feasts of Epiphany and the Ascension of the Lord to First Class. They also approved that the office of St. Leopold be celebrated on November 15 as a duplex, all to be included in new breviaries to be printed.

9 Jean XIV Georgius Voirol, 1706-1719.

10 Hermann Mertz, 1705-1743.

11 Philippe Lhermite, 1704-1725.

Second Session April 26

The Chapter decreed that in each circary, when a General Chapter is not celebrated, a Provincial Chapter is to be instituted, and the frequency should be at least every 3 years.

Likewise it decreed that the Statutes of the Order oblige as they are at present, in Germany, France and everywhere, and they ought to be observed under penalty of a 3 year fast for those who hold them in low esteem and presume to disparage them.

The Chapter also decreed that uniformity is to be observed for every canonical election throughout the whole Order, by every priest and those initiated into sacred orders, excluding professed clerics, observing common law, by those who have active voice in the election of a prelate, the alienation of temporal goods, and in the vestition and profession of novices.

Likewise, The Chapter, unwilling to lose those remaining from the famous former monastery of Berne near s'Hertogenbosch, charges the Vicar of Brabant to approach the Abbot and Religious of Berne asking that within 3 months, they give him reasons for not having formed a monastery. He will then communicate them to the Most Reverend Abbot General, who will have to make a mature judgment whether to command the said Vicar to compel, even with censures, the Abbot and Religious of Berne to build a monastery in a place which would be judged suitable by the Vicar and Abbots of Brabant.

The Chapter likewise forbade any professor of the Order, even one with the dignity of Abbot, to publish any book or writing without first obtaining permission from the General Chapter itself or from the Most Reverend Abbot General.

Likewise, the General Chapter, according to law, its own and from antiquity, declared and declares that Reverend Priors in the monasteries commended to them, have ordinary jurisdiction, and therefore, those who promise obedience to them in the absence of Fathers Abbot, promise it to those in whose place the Priors act, and in whose name they enjoy delegation, according to the decrees of the General Chapters of 1618 and subsequent Chapters, about which has been printed in subsequent editions of the Statutes so that the profession formula in these circumstances should be, instead of "representing the Regular Abbot," the words "representing the Father Abbot."

The Chapter also decreed that the removal of a hernia after a judgment by a physician is not a canonical impediment to vestition and profession, just as a hernia recognized and treated by a physician is not an impediment to any office for a religious.

Moreover, the Chapter, wishing to provide for the utility, décor and history of the Order, elected and named the Very Rev. Louis Hugo ¹², Abbot of Fontis Andreae, who can require all our superiors to send him all pontifical Bulls and important documents at their own expense so he can collect them all together.

Third Session April 26 afternoon

At the request of the Most Reverend Abbot of the Abbey of Saint Feuillien ¹³ the Chapter confirmed the decree emanating from the last visitation in 1716 by the Most Reverend Abbot General which granted the abbey the right to celebrate the feast of St. Feuillien as a Triplex first class, with an octave.

The Chapter likewise decreed that the feast of the Holy Relics can be transferred in each and every abbey to the feast day of the Saint whose significant relics are in that abbey.

Likewise the Chapter decreed that the feast of a secondary patron ought to be celebrated as a Triplex of the third class.

Then, to the proposal of Rev. Father Vicar of the community of the Primitive Observance about what ought to be done about the deaths of our Pastors whose burials the Rural Deans want to appropriate to themselves, the Chapter replied that with all our strength, our privileges must be upheld, both in this issue and preserved in all others.

The Chapter decreed that in every circary where there is a common novitiate, to which all novices go after vestition, all Superiors, except the abbot of Wadgassen, are bound to send their novices there.

Fourth Session April 27

The Chapter decreed that from the Feast of All Saints until Easter, in all the Abbeys in France, the Canons of our Order ought to wear the rochette under their woolen capes and long capuches, and from Easter until the Feast of All Saints, the surplice and almutium while attending the Divine Office from Prime on, and the 4 corner biretta which even priests of the strict observance wear throughout the day in the house and in the church.

¹² Later abbot of Étival, 1723-1739.

¹³ Norbert de Reusmes, 1697-1718.

It forbids those of the community of the Primitive Observance who have a doctorate from using a head covering other than white.

Likewise, let all pastors as well as conventuals, always be in full habit, namely shoes, tunic, scapular, cincture and cape in our abbeys; nor is it allowed for the procurator, cellarer or other abbey officials, under the pretext of whatever custom, to appear before others in a habit open all the way to the chest.

In each circary let there be the same form of vesture, the same material, the same shade of white, even for travelling.

With respect and humility toward the merits of the proposal from Neustift (Freising) and having in mind the request and desire of the community itself, the Chapter raises up and elevates Neustift perpetually to abbey status at the recommendation of the Most Rev. Abbots of Weissenau and Rot an der Rot, and the superior of that same place to enjoy the dignity of an abbot and de facto, be one.

In favor of studies and where studies are actually pursued, the Chapter allows the Superior to designate four canons to read the seven penitential psalms in the choir and the Office of the Dead in the name of the whole community.

The Chapter also decreed that during Easter time and on each Saturday and Sunday during ordinary time, as a memorial of the Resurrection of the Lord, there is no genuflection during the recitation of the Antiphon of peace and the Angelus.

Likewise, in each circary, there should be one or two prisons where criminals and especially the incorrigible can be enclosed and held at the expense of their own monasteries.

Fifth Session, April 27 afternoon

A letter that was addressed to the Most Rev. Abbot General was read out. It was on the status and nobles of the Duchy of Julia and Montes in which the General was petitioned as far as possible that the cloister of the noble nuns in that place in which there is strict control not be made stricter lest more very noble maidens be discouraged from entering this convent.

After mature deliberation and consideration of those who spoke, the entire issue about a stricter or less strict cloister, and the question of leaving was left to the prudent judgment of the Most Rev. Abbot General.

Soon the Chapter moved on to the issue of the deputy of Hagenau, an abbey to be transferred into the Circary of Campania, and the Chapter declared it transferred.

Then the General Chapter decreed that no provost can resign his office, especially when retaining his pension, without the express permission of the Most Rev. Abbot General.

Sixth Session, April 28

The Most Rev. Abbot of Rot an der Rot proposed, in the name of the Most Rev. Abbot of the Abbey of Steingaden ¹⁴ in Bavaria:

1. Whether our canonical Order has the privilege of sending its religious to any bishop without dimissorial letters in order to receive sacred orders, and the Chapter responded that we have the privilege;
2. Whether our sacred Order has the privilege of placing our religious in all churches and parishes where we have the right of patronage and the right of presenting, and the answer was affirmative;
3. Whether it is licit to celebrate the feasts of the Blesseds of our holy Order and by what authority that can be done, and the Chapter responded in the affirmative, according to letters of the Procurator General of Our Order in the Roman Curia, which were often required, and the response was the Papal Bulls alleging the contrary were not meant for our Order.
4. Since the house of Griffen, daughter of Steingaden, had not had a visitation for more than 20 years, whether it was expedient to send a mandate to the Abbot of Steingaden in which he would be enjoined to visit its daughter Griffen. The Chapter responded positively and decreed that the Father Abbots ought to exercise their rights everywhere, even outside the limits of whatever territory, preside at the elections of Abbots in their daughter houses, either by themselves or a delegate, confirm elections, visit, etc.

Seventh Session, April 28, afternoon

A petition from the Rev. Father Nicholas le Juge, the advocate in the Paris Curia of the Order, was brought forth, in which he asks the Most Reverend Chapter:

1. That his election that took place in the National Chapter at Paris in 1707 be ratified and confirmed, and that payment be sent to pay off

¹⁴ Magnus Pracht, 1715-1729.

those expenses that are due up until now, which were agreed upon on June 8, 1712.

2. That in accord with the dictates of the National Chapter, no dispute from any Superior of our Order in France, can be brought up without consulting this same National Chapter and without the express advice of patrons and procurators if necessary. However, those named are in Parliament, and have great wisdom: Lord Cappon, an outstanding man in the Order with great kindness and with profound learning, serves in the Privy Council of the King; Lord le Roy as Patronage, Lord Menassier in Parliament, Lord Chauvain in the great council, Lord Peter Benoventura Beviere as Procurators, beyond these, no one can be added, and Father Nicholas le Juge, with the authority of the General Chapter, can reject or recall anyone.
3. That the decree from former Abbot General LeScellier of happy memory, which was dated March 12, 1653, and which was published and renewed by his successor, Lord Colbert, on February 6, 1702, be confirmed. According to this decree the Prior and Advocate of the College in Paris are bound to gather and return to the houses of their profession those living in Paris who are referred to as "vagi", "wanderers" or "fugitives". If necessary they should call on the help of the secular arm.
4. He further requests that Papal Bulls, royal decrees, edicts of the king and whatever else seems to pertain to the confirmation of privileges and immunities of the Order be gathered and printed, especially those which could pertain to exemption from tithing and the care of benefices continuing in the regular state and the restitution of the remains of deceased pastors and the possession and use of what is received so that each church can and ought to have recourse to whatever tribunal or jurisdiction and using these instruments can defend its rights. Each and every one of these points of the said Father Nicholas le Juge the General Chapter willingly approved and assigned him to bring this about.

Eighth Session, April. 29

The Chapter decreed that what is contained in our Statutes concerning pastors is to be renewed, namely:

1. That every year, for at least 3 days, either in one's own abbey or in another place designated by the abbot, every pastor at his ordination as well as their associates will cease every other occupation, exchanging them for spiritual exercises so that thus, their spirit may

be renewed, and that they recollect their mind and regain that unity from which their strength flows.

2. That every year, they render an account of all the things they have to use and all dispensations and that they give a sincere and faithful description in which they list all debts and credits, under pain of loss of ownership.
3. That they do nothing in the conventual house which would cause disturbance or discord, and if they do so, they should be subject to public penance, trying to repair that which was destroyed.

The Chapter also decrees that pastors are to be visited canonically every year by Superiors.

Ninth Session, April 29 afternoon

A letter of petition from the Prior of Braine and others was read asking how much reimbursement was to be given for the expenses for several different scholars from various abbeys, who had to pay for their upkeep which was necessary to support them. The Chapter decided they were to be reimbursed.

The Chapter also decreed to leave the annual vacations to the prudence of Superiors and they should decide which offices each was to carry out through the year.

The Chapter also decreed that beards were to be cut every eight days.

The Chapter also decided that the subprior should not be in the same row as the Abbot, but in the same place with the brethren in his part of the choir.

The Chapter also decreed that in the future, both Provosts and Priors of the Sisters of our Order should present an annual accounting of the temporal holdings to the Father Abbot, Prioress or Magistra, and certain elders of the house; money is to be kept under triple lock, and the Provost should have one key, the Magistra a second, and the third given to one elected by the community.

The Chapter, renewing a decree of former General Chapters of 1670 and 1686, declares that a religious who secretly causes an injury to a Superior or other brother is under great danger, even up to a mortal sin, *ipso facto* suspension, and if he is not in Orders, he incurs excommunication, although no proof is found against him, such cases should be seen as reserved.

Tenth Session April 30

Someone asked whether the Psalm "Deus misereatur nostri" ought to be said in each hour of the Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary on those days in which it is usually said, and the reply is that it should only be said in Lauds and Vespers.

The Chapter likewise decreed that the house of "Blessed Valley" is separated from the abbey of L'Étanche reserving always the abbot of L'Étanche's¹⁵ right of paternity towards it.

It also decreed that anyone who gambles for money is to be punished with the penalty against property owners.

Eleventh Session April 30, afternoon

At the request of the Subprior of Licques, delegated by his Prior, the Chapter transferred the monastery of Licques to the circary of Ponthieu, and declared it transferred.

The Chapter likewise decreed that the Circator can impose penances in Chapter, other Superiors being absent, and he can sit at the side of the presider at meals in the refectory if he is a priest.

At the request of the deputy of the Westphalian circary, the Chapter decreed that a younger provost of men should not precede an older provost of virgins.

The Chapter then renewed the decree, already confirmed in many former Chapters that when a Premonstratensian abbey is vacant, jurisdiction goes to the Vicars, and if there are none, then to the Circators.

The Most Rev. Abbot General, moreover, explained to the full Chapter that he had sent, with letters of obedience, F. Francis Mangeot, a priest of the community of the primitive rigor of Étival, having taken prior counsel with the Vicar of said community, and that the Rev. Abbot of Étival¹⁶, in disregard to his authority, and against the dictates of the Statutes, was unworthily remiss and the Abbot General asked that what is found in the law would be decided by the Chapter.

After mature deliberation, the Chapter decreed that the aforementioned Abbot of Étival had incurred the penalties of the Statutes, but nevertheless, wishing to deal with him kindly, decreed that within a month, either by

15 Joannes F. J. Boucart, 1711-1719

16 Simeon Godin, 1682-1723.

himself or through a deputy, he would come before the Most Rev. Abbot General to explain the reasons for his disobedience.

Then the results of the visitation of Prémontré by those commissioned by the General Chapter were returned by the Lord Abbot of Cuissy: he found all, both in spiritual and in temporal orders, to be in a praiseworthy state, all things which were in the house were well done by the Abbot General, who paid off an almost three million pound debt, and nothing else, except worthy praise, which was amply given with approval and congratulations. The Rev. Abbot General then left the Chapter, and in a short time, returned to express his thanks to the Rev. Commissioners and to the entire Chapter.

Then the Chapter took up the issue of the Spaniards who ever so often have been called to be present but nevertheless have not appeared, nor did they send any delegates from the circary nor any letters or excuses for their absence. Therefore, the Chapter declared them rebels and contumacious, and so declared, in accord with decrees of former Chapters, wishing to preserve its rights vis à vis the said circary. It ordered the Order Procurator in the Roman Curia to proceed against them with all avenues of the law, and finally force them to comply with the Abbot General and the General Chapter.

The excuses from other Rev. Abbots and Provosts, as that of Priors, were examined by those in charge and were found valid and approved.

One hundred copies of the Missal were sent to the communities of the primitive observance, and the rest to abbeys designated by the Most Rev. Abbot General, and likewise with Rituals

Twelfth Session May 1

The Chapter proceeded to the nominations of vicars, visitators, and other offices. The Most Rev. Abbot General proposed to the Chapter the Most Rev. Abbot of Clairefontaine as Vicar General of the whole Order, but the Most Rev. Abbot of Cuissy said he was offended as the fourth Father of the Order and claimed injury to himself. Consulting the most revered General Chapter, and having maturely considered the matter, the Chapter declared that the Most Rev. Abbot General could name a Vicar General, to which decree the abbot of Cuissy was opposed and sought and obtained action and nevertheless it was done, in spite of the opposition; the Most Rev. Abbot General nominated his Vicars General.

Appointed Vicars General:

For France and the entire Order: Abbot of Clairefontaine if necessary

Floreffe and Flanders: Abbot of Floreffe¹⁷

Ponthieu: Abbot of Dommartin¹⁸

Brabant: Abbot of Tongerlo¹⁹

Gascogne: Abbot of St. John de Castello

Westphalia: Abbot of Steinfeld²⁰

Campania and Burgundy: Abbot of Bellelay

Swabia: Abbot of Weissenau

Bavaria: Abbot of Steingaden

Bohemia: Abbot of Strahov²¹

Hungary: Abbot of Louka²²

Poland: Provost of Plock

Spain: Abbot of St. André-au-Bois²³

As Visitators or Circators, deputized by the General Chapter

Ponthieu: Abbot of St. Augustine

Westphalia: Abbot of Sayn²⁴

Bohemia: Abbot of Schlägl²⁵

Poland: Abbot of Hebdow²⁶

Communities of the Primitive Observance: Abbot of Cuissy

17 Bernardinus de la Perle, 1701-1718.

18 Carolus Ricouart, 1708-1719.

19 Gregorius Piera, 1695-1723.

20 Michael Küll, 1693-1732.

21 Marianus Hermann, 1711-1741.

22 Vincent Wallner, 1712-1729.

23 Andreas Thomas, 1688-1731.

24 Engelbert Colendal, 1698-1719.

25 Siard Worath, 1701-1721.

26 Michael Wilkowski, 1692-1732.

Beauport and Blancheland: Rev. Father Bellozane

Lieu-Dieu in Jardo: Rev. Father P. Belliportus

As Procurator General in the Roman Curia: Abbot of Belchamps

To the Paris Advocate: Father P. le Juge

Having made the nominations, the Most Rev. Abbot General indicated that the next General Chapter will be celebrated at Prémontré in 1720 on **Cantate** Sunday, the fourth after Easter.

Then, all having been defined and ordained, the Acts and Decrees were read and published with the whole assembled convent present, and with the Abbot General giving a lively and efficacious prayer, and his giving a solemn benediction vested in stole and crosier, the General Chapter ended on May 1, 1717, the Acts signed by the Most Rev. Abbot General who presided, and the other Definitors.

signed: F. Reynal, General Secretary of the Chapter

Love Overcomes Division and Hate

I sit on the advisory board of the Mississippi Chapter of the Institute of Interfaith Dialogue, part of other chapters in 16 states. Houston, Texas sponsored our chapter in 2003. It is a Turkish Muslim organization inspired by the teachings of Imam Fethullah Gulen, a scholar who has spent his life forging greater relations between Muslims and Christians. They are Sunni Muslims. Gulen is of the Sufi Order and follows a spirituality more understandable to westerners. He sees the Turkish style of Islam a good model to forge dialogue between Christians and others given its wide interpretation from very religious to a more "secular" observance. I would compare it to Judaism from Orthodox to Reform. He has published several books, met with international religious leaders including Pope John Paul II.

The Gulen movement is active in several countries in the Muslim world and is famous for its schools. It is passionate about quality education for both genders and all socio-economic categories. There are several Gulen schools in Texas and elsewhere. A television documentary covered these this past year.

I spent considerable time in Turkey and visited some of these schools. I also visited Muslim and Christian Shrines, chatted with the Imam at the Blue Mosque in Istanbul who prayed there with Pope Benedict XVI. These Muslims are sharp critics of the current brand of fanatics wreaking havoc throughout the world. They believe dialogue, understanding, tolerance, friendship is the only way to change minds and hearts. It is easy to see a comparison between King and Gandhi, both of whom are highly respected.

Next year will be the tenth anniversary of the Mississippi Chapter of the Institute of Interfaith Dialogue. In the ten years it has been here it has accomplished an amazing coming together of people of all races and religions in a spirit of genuine friendship and understanding. This is no mean accomplishment.

Mississippi, like the South in general, is a very compartmentalized society. Race, class, education, economic status, even language and dialect separate people into various subgroups, who generally stay among themselves. The IID, as the Institute for Interfaith Dialogue is generally called, has done this mainly through an annual dinner that grew into a major banquet and social event reaching all sectors of society. Our bishops and other religious leaders and a host of people, from government officials,

civic, business and academic leaders attend. We have covered a range of topics and issues from race relations, civil rights, religious extremism and terrorism.

The Institute also operates the Rainbow Turkish House that attracts a range of people to discussion groups, Turkish language classes and Turkish cuisine which, in my humble opinion, is wonderful.

The Mississippi Legislature, Mississippi Media people, and religious leaders and social activists have made trips to Turkey to experience an atmosphere of tolerance, friendship and understanding. Through its efforts the local media has been kinder to Muslims in general. The IID had an influence in breaking down opposition to a mosque in the City of Madison sponsored by mostly Muslim physicians and professionals, hardly a radical group.

When the advisory board comes together we have Muslims, Catholics, Episcopalians, Southern Baptists, Jews, Presbyterians, Methodists talk freely about their beliefs in a spirit of friendship, something really amazing if you understand Mississippi. After all, out there in the woods are some people who are not sure if Catholics are Christians. Genuine healthy change is happening.

The DRC, Democratic Republic of the Congo, is evolving into chaos as the New York Times reports. M 23, the rebel group is sweeping through the eastern Congo and hopes to take over the country. Nobody likes "Little Kabila" the current president, the son of the previous dictator. He cannot run the country. Most media doesn't cover this, but we do. Our Congolese confrere gets it in French complete with videos of fighting in Goma. Whole villages are on the move. This touches us personally since we are an international community of Norbertines in Mississippi. We pray for his family and his country.

Syria runs in blood. The Arab Spring is an Arab hell. No end is in sight. Mar Musa, a monastery also influenced by our Patron, St. Moses, was a bridge and a place of prayer for Christians and Muslims. Their leader, an Italian Jesuit, was expelled from the country. Did another light of hope go out?

The IID is an organization dedicated to breaking down divisions and forging unity among all people, especially among decision makers and policy creators. In a world filled with so much religious extremism, this Muslim organization puts the truth to lies and says that there is another way.

Jesus said to be the yeast in the dough to transform the world. A Christian-Muslim monastery in Syria, where the followers of Jesus were first called Christian is an oasis of peace, understanding and prayer. This is hope.

The second time in its almost thousand year history the Canons Regular of Premontre met in De Pere Wisconsin in General Chapter. We can list countries: France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, UK, Republic of Ireland, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Italy, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Spain. Pardon me if I left one out, but the point is here was an international, multicultural, multiracial, multilingual gathering of people bound by fraternal love and the highest religious ideals. The goal always is "to be of one mind and one heart on the way to God." This, like these other efforts at unity and dialogue, is another expression that unity, love and peace is not only possible but essential to life on the planet.

The General Chapter is like a mini United Nations, but with one essential difference. It is bound by Christian love that is all inclusive. Members represent countries in chaos and division but are sustained by love that breaks down walls. They go back to their countries of origin reinforced by a deep faith, by an unconquerable hope, and love that brings people together.

Our tradition emphasizes unity achieved by love, as Augustine says it so well. This past General Chapter in De Pere says to the world, "Yes, unity sustained by love is not only possible, but is the only way to peace."

More important than global warming, humanity must find a way, this century, to forge unity, understanding and harmony or it is all over. Our founder, an African Bishop over 18 centuries ago still says it. "Before all else. Dear brothers, love God and then your neighbor, for these are the chief commandments given to us." There is no other choice.

Religious Vacuum and Centralized Capitalism

World order is in transition from everything to nothing, a reversal of the biblical dictum "God created everything out of nothing." The high point of civilization and progress in the spheres of the economy, culture, religion, science and communication is on a path of degradation and nihilism. Economic recession, the subversion of culture, the move to annihilate religion, ephemeral science and the misuse of mass media are becoming global phenomena.

Selling weapons, austerity measures, plundering, and waging wars, investing outside the homeland (FDI), creating more jobs within, passing anti-immigration laws, tax exemptions for the super rich and industrialists, tactics of putting pressure on trade and tariffs are some of the measures used to deal with the issues, indeed a peripheral approach. Ecology perturbed, economy without a human face, humanity is on the verge of collapse. The vulture is flying over the canopy, seeking the corpse and resting on it, until every bit of it is gorged. The Prophet Ezekiel is once again dreaming the dream of a skeleton asking God to give it flesh, but the attitude seems to be "if you meet religion, kill it," even among the priest or theologian who cuts the stem, preferring "spirituality" rather than religion.

We have before us the West which rebelled against centralized hierarchy, giving rise to humanism and later, Christian humanism, ignoring history, origins and rituals, with the nations falling into the path of chaos. Churches deserted, vocations diminished, family life thwarted, the immorality of individualism, hedonism, abortions, homosexuality and lesbianism flourished. The result is human restlessness, failure to seek God or happiness, serenity and meaning in life, driven by the culture of tourism, "hype-ism," and other forms of so called spirituality, e.g. ashrams and yogas. Thus, the freedom enshrined in the post-Vatican II began to be misused rather than used in the way it was intended.

In the past, monastic values and a sense of the sacred attracted the laity, but today the values of secularism has infiltrated religious life, leading to an identity crisis, not only extrinsically, but also intrinsically. Even politicians and judges began to intervene and interpret moral values to suit their ends, while religious leaders, accepting secular values, lost their credibility to interpret and teach. Thus, the role of religion in the life of human beings began to be sidelined. In contrast, scientific developments were presented as contradicting faith and religion, and their findings were

said to be empirical. To fill this religious vacuum, decentralized sects, e.g. Pentecostals, thrived in place of organized religion. The institutional church is retreating to the "domestic churches" of early Christendom. The basic Christian community is an attempt to maintain the strand of a domestic church within the centralized church. The migration of workers also added new clusters and forms of worship in the host countries, adding more challenges to organized religion. In the past, pagan emperors, Protestantism and communism were the greatest enemy of the Church, but today, capitalism is equally exploiting the moral authority of the Church over its faithful. However, it is but a paradox to note that while the communists exalt Christ as the great revolutionary who ever lived, in Asia and Africa, they identify Church with western capitalism and imperialism. The effort of Pope Benedict XVI to fill the vacuum is to be seen in the light of the New Evangelization, by instilling faith and family life with the motif of Christ: "that all may be one." Today, the Church is an archaic institution with nominal Christians, powerless in real faith, membership and finance. As a matter of fact, the Church fails to carry out quality institutions, comparing to NRI and the welfare State, unless they extract capitation fees from beneficiaries. The diminishing of vocations and faith in the West equally effected the flow of church sponsored charity funds for the developing world. Oil rich nations are ready to sponsor quality institutions in poor countries, bringing about an imbalance among the minority and majority. Even terrorism is imported under the cover of corporate investment. Social communication media are as capable as weapons of mass destruction to create social unrest and mayhem in many parts of the world. The government becomes a puppet in the needs of centralized economists and the electronic media. There are many instances of blackmailing politicians. They make and break empire for their own benefit. The deeper the vacuum of religion and its values and impact on culture, the wider will be the chasm between the rich and the poor.

It is quite evident in the economic progress of China where the rural economy is quite distanced from the urban economy and the various allegations of corruption springing up in the 18th Chinese Congress, giving way to the new regime. It was the same dynamism of centralized economy and religious vacuum that led to the collapse of communism in Russia two decades ago. The Communist Party of India is all out to imitate the Chinese model of centralized economy. The reversal is taking place also in the United States which sees communism as their age old enemy, and now depends on China, trying to outdo the religious values which had held the social and family life together. Despite the victory of Obama for a second term, there are critics who think that the country is "no more united, as the nation is broken along a religious divide, as the values of the Church,

e.g., the right to life of the unborn, the institution of marriage, etc., are not respected. Spirituality is the fruit of religion and synergetic values of various religions constitute universal human dignity, based on natural law, devoid of particular tenants of the religions. Any attempt to mollify the role of religion will only create Communism, not Socialism, and dictatorship within democratic institutions, ultimately leading to civil war. The movement, such as that of Anna Hazre and Krjriwal in India is only a stopgap to this dynamic process.

The Cave of Womb

Illuminated the world over with stars
Alas, not illumined the hearts
So deep to wipe away the scars
The filth of the world plays her part
The perennial ego on a ride
Makes only man more proud
To dig within his own grave
Bothers not the Bethlehem Babe
The disturber of conscience
Sleep babe I tell thee
Wake not I lull thee
Shriek not your voice
It's your last choice
In the cradle of the womb
I prepare for you another tomb
Think not of Peter's key
"It's here, it's here, do you see?"
Fake not I am, break not I am
"Civilized we are, aren't we?"
"Savior I am, don't you think?"
Hollow me, follow me
The lady of liberty slips away
From the centre, looming the cloud
Yet to reign, yet to rain.
Wishing you the rays of hope
The rays of light, a very 'merry Christmas'.

Mathew Thankachen, O.Praem.

PREMONSTRATENSIAN SPIRITUALITY

After The Statutes of the Order were revised and published in 1947, Emmanuel Gisquiere of Averbode, at the request of the Abbot General, composed a work entitled *Directorium Spirituale*, as a supplement to the Statutes, dealing with Premonstratensian spirituality, since the Statutes dealt only with legal issues. After Vatican Council II, the Statutes of the Order were completely revised in keeping with the decrees and documents of the Council, and to a great extent, this work, now called Constitutions, included a great deal concerning spirituality, both in our communities and in our apostolic works.. Rather than update the *Directorium Spirituale*, which now seems somewhat dated, given the effects of the Council and theological developments, it seems more appropriate to gather together commentaries on the Constitutions published in the *Communicator*, the publication of the English speaking circary of the Order that deal with the various issues of the spirituality of the Order. Frs. Ted Antry, O. Praem, Andrew Ciferni, O. Praem, and Xavier Colavechio O. Praem. have undertaken this task and submit the following list of articles, divided according to subject matter, for consideration concerning the spirituality of our Order.

CONSTITUTIONS

Statutes of Canons Regular, J. Lozano, Spring, 1985, pp. 30-39

Spiritual and Social Structure of the Constitutions, X. Colavechio, Dec. 2004, pp. 11-28

An Ecclesiology of the Constitutions, X. Colavechio, June, 2005, pp. 5-13

SAINT NORBERT

Norbert, Founder of the Order, L. van Dyck, Fall, 1984, pp. 63-65

Norbert of Xanten, the Peacemaker, T. Antry, Spring, 1985, pp. 26-29

A Reflection on the Spirituality of St. Norbert, B. Mackin, May, 1989, pp. 3-13

St. Norbert in Context, D. Kirkham, May, 1991, pp. 4-17

Norbert and His Communities, A. Peters, June, 1995, pp. 23-29

Norbert in the Judgment of His Contemporaries, S. Weinfurter, Dec, 2002, pp. 20-22

Remarks on Norbert of Xanten, J. von Walter, June, 2004, pp. 11- 20

St. Norbert, Apostle of the Blessed Sacrament, T. Antry, Jan., 2005, pp. 5-15

St. Norbert – Shaper, Missionary, Leader, Walter Card. Casper, June, 2007, pp. 27-35

Message for the Norbert Jubilee 2009, T. Handgrättinger, June, 2008, pp. 5-9

St. Norbert-Deacon, Priest, Bishop, T. Handgrättinger, June, 2010, pp. 37-50

Cleanliness About the Altar, T. Antry, December, 2010, pp. 34-41

Correction of Excuses and Negligences, T. Antry, December, 2010, pp. 42-50

Hospitality and Care of the Poor, T. Antry, December, 2010, pp. 51-58

SPIRITUALITY

The First Christian Commune and its Religious Life, Part I, J. van Bavel, Spring, 1983, pp. 30-41

The First Christian Commune and its Religious Life, Part II, J. van Bavel, Winter, 1983, p. 51-60

What Happened to the Religious Ideal of Norbert?, L. van Dyck, Dec., 1985, pp. 245-36

A Reflection on the Spirituality of St. Norbert, B. Mackin, May, 1989, pp. 3-13

Premonstratensian Charism on the Threshold of the New Millennium, Commission on Canonical Life and Spirituality, Dec., 1999, pp. 5-46; See also Dec., 2001, pp. 25-30

Key Elements of Norbertine Spirituality, A., Mc Bride, December, 2000, pp. 29-35

Norbertine Spirituality, X. Colavechio, January, 2002, pp. 30-35

Norbertine Spirituality, A. Ciferni, June, 2003, pp. 32-36

Spirituality of the Constitutions, R. Vanasse, Dec. 2004, pp. 5-10

Order Spirituality, T. Handgräteringer, June, 2007, pp. 5-16

Message for the Norbert Jubilee Year, June, 2008, pp. 5-9

Three Accesses to our Canonical Spirituality, T. Handgräteringer,
December, 2010, pp. 3-17

Religious Priests in the tension of Contemplatio-Actio-Communio,
T. Handgräteringer, June, 2011, pp. 3-16

CANONICAL LIFE

The Canonical Tradition, X. Colavechio, June, 1998, pp. 9-19

The Canonical Life, L. Mayer, Dec., 2001, pp. 31-39

The Eucharist and Canonical Life, A. Ciferni, Dec., 2005, pp. 40-48

What is a Canon Regular?, W. Hyland, June, 2007, pp. 35-43

Priestly Identity and the Canonical Life, A. Criste, June, 2008, pp. 9-17

Premonstratensian Life Yesterday and Today, T. Handgräteringer,
June, 2008, pp. 18-28

LITURGY

The Liturgy of the Hours and Norbertine Spirituality, A. Ciferni,
December, 1994, pp. 69-74

The Liturgy of the Hours, R. Mc Carron, Dec., 1998, pp. 8-17

CHARISM

Perspectives of Norbertine Charisms, X. Colavechio, May, 1989,
pp. 30-42

Premonstratensian Charism on the Threshold of the New Millennium, Commission on Canonical Life and Spirituality, December, 2000, pp. 5-46

The Canonical Life, L. Mayer, Dec., 2001

Norbertine Charism at the Dawn of the 21st Century, A. Ciferni, pp. 13-18

Premonstratensian Life Yesterday and Today, T. Handgrättinger, June, 2008, pp. 18-28

Communicantes—Premonstratensians in the Here and Now, B. Vander Veken, pp. 18-33

MARY, MOTHER OF OUR ORDER

The Relevance of Mary, X. Colavechio, May, 1986, pp. 4-11

The Assumption, N. Terico, December, 2006, pp. 61-63

Circary Chronicle

Albuquerque

Joel Garner, O.Praem.

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On August 2, the Chapter Fathers of the 2012 General Chapter voted to raise Santa Maria de la Vid Priory to abbey status. Our abbey is now the youngest in the long history of Norbertine Abbeys.

On November 9, 2012, Archbishop Michael Sheehan blessed Joel Garner as the first abbot of Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey. The Eucharist of Blessing was celebrated at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Community where Joel has served as pastor for many years. Fifty diocesan and religious order priests concelebrated including Norbertines from around the country. The Abbot General, Thomas Handgrätinger came from Rome. Abbot Gary Neville of St. Norbert Abbey, Abbot-emeritus E. Thomas Dewane of St. Moses the Black Priory in Mississippi, Abbot Richard Antonucci of Dalesford Abbey in Pennsylvania, and Prior Michael Proulx of Saint-Constant in Canada were also present. Abbot Garner and the Albuquerque Community are very grateful for the many cards, letters and e-mails they received from confreres around the world.

Our parish of St. Augustine of the Native American Pueblo of Isleta and its pastor Fr. George Pavamkott experienced two memorable events this past year. The first was a visit from pilgrims from Agreda, Spain who were meeting with community leaders in New Mexico to advance the cause for sainthood of the Venerable Sor Maria de Jesus de Agreda (aka the Lady in Blue or the Blue Nun) based on her tremendous contributions in promulgating the faith in New Mexico while remaining a cloistered Carmelite in Spain. It is a fascinating story.

The second event was the establishment of the Archdiocesan Shrine at St. Augustine Parish Church to St. Kateri Tekawitha, the first Native American saint. Archbishop Michael Sheehan blessed the image of St. Kateri at a Eucharist at the pueblo on November 10, the day after Abbot Joel's blessing. This enabled the Abbot General and a number of other Norbertines to attend. Fr. George Pavamkott and Fr. Binu Joseph had led a pilgrimage to Rome for the canonization of St. Kateri in the middle of October.

In February of 2013 the Abbey Community is planning to break ground for Our Lady of Guadalupe Commons, a multi-purpose facility for lectures, workshops, retreats and dining.

Joel Garner, O Praem.

Chelmsford

Hugh Allan, O.Praem.

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At the beginning of May, Fr. John moved to Storrington priory for six months to look after the parish and priory there. Also at the start of May, Fr. Hugh attended a series of meetings in support of the Ordinariate and looking at ways of helping it grow and looking carefully at its purpose and what its future might be. At the end of May we had our usual May Procession with the children from our Primary School. As always, it was a great afternoon for the whole school and community. Also, Fr. Cadoc returned from his university work for his summer at home with the community and Fr. Rupert returned from his studies in Louvain.

The first weekend of June saw many celebrations for the Queen's diamond jubilee. Despite the typical English weather, the whole weekend was one long garden party. In June we welcomed Fr. Aelred Niespolo to stay with us for six months. He is a Benedictine monk from Valyermo, California, and is staying with us for his sabbatical from teaching. For St Norbert's day we travelled to Storrington with a bus full of parishioners to celebrate the feast together. Sadly, the M25 (motorway) had other ideas and we had a terrible journey to get there. However, Fr. John gave us a warm welcome and it was good to be together. Br. Stephen was unable to join us as he was knee deep in exams. He returned home to priory soon after St Norbert's day. Later in June we welcomed the Benedictine community from Farnborough Abbey (originally a Norbertine house) to Chelmsford for lunch and vespers.

At the beginning of July we celebrated our annual Forty Hours of Exposition. As always, a truly wonderful time filled with many graces. Following this we celebrated the simple profession of Br. Pius. We were joined by his mother and many of his friends. It was a very happy and joyous evening for both the community and our parishioners.

Mid July saw Fr. Hugh, Fr. Cadoc and Br. Stephen head off to the General Chapter. No doubt this will be covered elsewhere in the Communicator. At the end of the Chapter, they enjoyed a few days exploring New York (well, eating mainly).

In August we welcomed Fr. Zachary Cristek from Strahov Abbey to stay with us for six months. He is here to improve his English and it has been excellent to have him here.

On 17th August we celebrated Mass together at Beeleigh Abbey, a former Norbertine abbey just 5 miles from Chelmsford. It is owned now by the Foyle family (Foyle's Books is a famous bookshop in London). They have become good friends and we often visit the abbey. The refectory, chapter house and dormitory is still used and forms the basis of their home. We celebrated Mass in the Chapter House and over 300 people squeezed into the small space.

At the end of August Br. Stephen was installed as an acolyte. After this he and Br. Pius went to Rome to continue their studies, which began with an intensive month of Italian. They studied alongside Mary McAleese, former president of Ireland – join the monastery, see the world.

At the beginning of September we welcomed Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor to Chelmsford to ordain Br. Rupert to the priesthood. It was a memorable evening and the Cardinal preached a very gentle and warm homily about the priesthood. Our excellent choir sang their hearts out. The following day Fr. Rupert celebrated his first Mass and again a good number of people joined us for a solemn and beautiful liturgy. Following his ordination, Fr. Rupert has been appointed chaplain to the local university (Anglia Ruskin) and continues his studies for his JCL.

In October we held a Mission Week to mark the beginning of the Year of Faith. It was a week full of enriching talks, a large number of confessions and some very beautiful liturgies. The most inspiring talk of the week came from a man called John Pridmore. Until his conversion, he was an what we call in England an "eastend gangster." He is over 7 foot tall and is huge. Not a man to mess with, yet he spoke very movingly about his conversion and especially his love for the Mass. One parishioner commented that he said pretty much what they hear in homilies all the time, but he looked like he'd rip your throat out if you didn't do as he said! Not sure that was what we were going for, but if it works.....! It was a great week and a good beginning to the Year of Faith. Following from this some confreres then took a group of pilgrims to Assisi for a week's pilgrimage. The weather was remarkable – there were four seasons in 4 days. Assisi in the snow was just lovely.

During October builders had to tackle another outbreak of dry rot in the Priory. We were without a kitchen for four weeks. It was a real test of patience and endurance - we survived, maybe a few pounds lighter, but we survived – deo gratias.

Daylesford

Joseph McLaughlin, O. Praem.

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Saint Edmond Parish in South Philadelphia celebrated the centenary of its founding on June 10, 2012. On June 1st Maurice Aviccoli, pastor, hosted a Vespers and dinner for the whole community. John Joseph Novielli and Andrew Ciferni, both sons of the parish, were presider and homilist. Thomas Rossi was the first Norbertine pastor (2004-2010).

Saint Norbert parish in Paoli had a picnic on June 2nd to mark the Solemnity of Saint Norbert. Confreres from the abbey concelebrated at the 5:30PM Mass before the picnic. Michael Lee and Carl Braschoss are pastor and parochial vicar.

Abbot Richard Antonucci presided at Archmere Academy's graduation on June 3rd. Joseph McLaughlin was presider/homilist at the Baccalaureate Mass on June 1st. Archmere's Board of Trustees met at Daylesford on June 4th. Theodore Antry completed his term on the Board and has been succeeded by Andrew Ciferni. Joseph Serano is also on the Board.

Daylesford held its annual Canonry Chapter June 5-7. The following confreres were elected to committees: Abbot's Council - Michael Lee; Finance - Thomas Rossi; Personnel - Thomas Rossi and Joseph McLaughlin; Formation - Abbot Ronald Rossi.

Abbot Richard installed Gerard Jordan as an acolyte on June 6th at the Missa Summa. Gerard is currently studying theology at CTU and living at Holy Spirit House of Studies in Chicago.

On June 7th the community marked special anniversaries of Ordination: Francis Cortese - 50 years; Abbot Richard and James Rodia - 40 years; Prior Steven Albero - 20 years. Steven celebrated also with his family on May 12th and Francis with the community on September 12th - the actual anniversary.

Abbot Richard presided at the Installation Mass for the newly elected IHM Sisters General Administration on June 17th. Joseph McLaughlin was the homilist and John Joseph Novielli concelebrated.

On June 27th Abbot Richard held a special House Chapter to hear the community on the various proposals submitted to the General Chapter. Francis Danielski was the canonry delegate.

Norbertines served as chaplains at the IHM Sisters retreat house in Stone Harbor, NJ from June 29th to July 19th. Thomas Rossi coordinated the program daily; Theodore Antry and Nicholas Terico served as retreat directors.

On July 1st Prior Steven Albero was installed as rector of the abbey church. Other new assignments took effect that day: Theodore Antry - assistant formation director and translator of Directorium Spirituale; Andrew Ciferni - canonry liturgical consultant; David Lawlor - apiarist; Ronald Rossi - researcher and consultant for canonical, Augustinian, and Norbertine spirituality; Thomas Rossi - Vocations Office staff; Joseph Serano - Associates advisor. Recently Michael Collins has been providing part-time religious enrichment to the various grades of Saint Norbert Elementary School.

Many Norbertines came to Daylesford on the way to or returning from the General Chapter in DePere: Itinga - Milo Ambros, Michael Schelpe; Frigolet - Patrice Jegat and Abbot Thomas Secuianu; Doksany - Sister Alberta, Sister Augustina, Adrian Zemek; Abbot General Thomas Handgratinger; Jamtara - Sabu Thomas, Benny Jacob Panackai, Anil Bara, Maria Diraviam; Kilnacrott - Kilian Mitchell, Gerard Cusack; Montes Claros - Alessandro Heleno, Toninho Galvao. Attending the General Chapter from Daylesford were Abbot Richard, Francis Danielski, Andrew Ciferni (Associates), Joseph Serano (protocolist); Arul Amalraj, who lives at Daylesford, was the delegate from Jamtara.

The annual community retreat was held at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, PA August 19-24. The retreat director had to cancel, and so the following confreres were presenters: Andrew Ciferni, Joseph McLaughlin, Ronald Rossi, Joseph Serano.

On August 27th two diocesan priests were vested as novices: Herbert Sperger (Philadelphia) and David Driesch (Pittsburgh). Francis Danielski is novice master.

James Garvey professed First Vows on August 28th. He is currently studying theology at CTU and is living at Holy Spirit House of Studies.

The following confreres marked special anniversaries on August 28th: Thomas Meulemans - 60 years vested; Joseph Serano - 50 years professed; David Lawlor and Joseph McLaughlin - 50 years vested; John Zagarella - 30 years professed; Nicholas Terico - 30 years vested.

Francis Cortese dated his new book, "Passages and Transitions," for September 12, 2012 - his golden jubilee day. It is a history of Norbertine ministry in the East from 1932 to 2000.

Thomas Meulemans moved from Daylesford to Saint Catherine's Infirmary (Vincentian) in Philadelphia on September 20th. Tom had had cancer surgery in May and a follow up surgery in October.

Thomas Rossi was re-elected to the House Council for a two-year term on September 26th. Tom serves with Joseph McLaughlin and Steven Albero.

Bishop John McIntyre, regional bishop for Chester County, made a pastoral visit to Saint Norbert Parish September 28-30. Abbot Richard concelebrated, along with Michael Lee and Carl Braschoss.

Daylesford hosted a presentation on October 11th to mark the 50th anniversary of Vatican II. Andrew Ciferni gave five evening presentations on the four dogmatic constitutions of Vatican II. Joseph Serano gave four presentations on Social Justice, with focus on the "Declaration on Religious Freedom" and "The Church in the Modern World. Ronald Rossi and Herbert Sperger led book discussions in the fall. Nicholas Terico led the fall Men's Retreat.

Abbot Richard celebrated Archmere's 80th Anniversary Mass on October 12th. Also concelebrating were Michael Collins, David Driesch, Joseph McLaughlin, Herbert Sperger, John Zagarella. Joseph McLaughlin blessed the 80th Anniversary mural in the Student Life Center on October 6th; it contains the images of many DePere/Daylesford Norbertines who served over the last 80 years.

Abbot Richard, Paul DeAntoniis, Joseph Laenen, Joseph Mulholland, John Joseph Novielli, and Joseph Serano attended the funeral mass on October 13th for Martin Frigo of Bayview. Marty was a member of Daylesford from 1963 to 1996.

The 40th Anniversary Art Show was held at Daylesford October 13-28. Among the 93 artists was Normand Bessette (St.Constant).

John Ginder had surgery at Paoli Hospital on October 24th; he has recuperated well. William Craig and Joseph McLaughlin were in Paoli Hospital in November.

Abbot Richard attended the blessing of Abbot Joel Garner in Albuquerque on November 9th. Also attending were Andrew Ciferni

(Master of Ceremonies), James Rodia, Domenic Rossi and Joseph Serano; Domenic and Joe had served in Albuquerque in the 1990's.

Abbot Richard was celebrant/homilist of the Abbey Summa on November 11th, to begin Daylesford's 50th year. After Mass and brunch, Abbot Richard and Abbot Ronald made presentations to the 100 guests on the history/charism of Daylesford.

Dennis Snyder, TOR, received his PH.D from Immaculata University on November 15th. Dennis lived at Daylesford during his doctoral studies and cited Abbot Richard and Joseph Serano in his thesis for special thanks.

The 44th Annual Dinner Dance was held on November 16th. John Joseph Novielli coordinated this fund-raising event, attended by 20 confreres.

The community held its Thanksgiving Dinner on November 21st. Joining the community were eight diocesan priest-associates of the abbey. Abbot Rossi is the coordinator of priest-associates.

Joseph Laenen was in his native Belgium for a month beginning May 24th. Andrew Ciferni was in Albuquerque teaching in June. Francis Danielski was at Holy Spirit Priory in September. Andrew Ciferni, John Joseph Novielli, and Thomas Rossi visited DePere in the fall. The following confreres have visited Daylesford: James Herring, John Tourangeau, Alfred McBride, Mark Falcone - DePere; James Owens - Albuquerque.

De Pere

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At the 2013 Spring meeting of the Definitors of the Order, **Father Robert Finnegan** of Saint Norbert Abbey will have completed 30 years as a member of the Norbertine Order Finance Commission and 15 years as Provisor Ordinis (Grand Treasurer of the Norbertine Order). At that time, Abbot General Thomas Handgrättinger will accept Robert's resignation from those positions and appoint a replacement. Fr. Finnegan received a Master of Business Administration degree from Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, in 1959, and has held many administrative positions over the years: Novice Master (1962-1963); Prior of Saint Norbert Abbey (1963-1973); member of the Abbot's Council (1963-1998); Chair of the Saint Norbert Abbey Finance Committee (1973-1998); member of the Board of Trustees of Saint Norbert College (1976-2004); Director of the Workshop for Treasurers of Religious Institutes at Notre Dame University (summers 1982-1992); member of the Green Bay Diocese Finance Council (member of the Diocesan Investment Committee) (1985-present), to mention a few! He has been a volunteer at Paul's Pantry, Green Bay (food distribution center for the needy) (1997-present). At age 85, he still has many more miles of wear and tear to go.

Norbertines of Saint Norbert Abbey continue to offer presentations at the Norbertine Center for Spirituality at Saint Norbert Abbey. **Father John Tourangeau** for a second time offered HEAVEN: IS IT FOR REAL? to an overflowing crowd. He will make another presentation in the Spring session and has already made a presentation at a local parish. **Father Brendan McKeough** uses the words of Jesus and the Scriptures to answer the question: ARE YOU REALLY CATHOLIC? **Father John Bostwick** answers the question: WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY FOR? exploring some qualities of both a healthy and unhealthy spirituality. On the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, October 4, **Father Mark Falcone** again blessed the pet animals in honor of Saint Francis who loved them because of their unconditional love. **Father James Neilson** addresses the nature of beauty and the beauty of nature. Images and ideas that celebrate the glory of God in simple realizations and humble moments are emphasized. He also made a presentation entitled THE MYSTERIES OF JOY, GLORY, SORROW, AND LIGHT: THE CATHOLIC IMAGINATION AND THE ROSARY. **Father Mark Falcone** again presented THE GREGORIAN CHANT WORKSHOP, how to read and sing medieval chant manuscripts. **Father James Neilson**, in a five part series, gave an overview of SACRED ART

THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES. During the Morning of Spiritual Renewal for Men, **Father Tim Shillcox** (forgiving and forgiven: becoming a merciful Christian man) and **Father James Neilson** (images of faith-filled men) were two of six presenters. On All Saints Day, **Father James Neilson** presented images of men, women, and children who have become our role models in faithfully following Christ. **Father Mark Falcone** shared an experiential evening of music, which has the power to lift one's spirit to heights of great joy and happiness as well as allowing one to feel deep sadness and fear. **Father James Neilson's** offering during the Advent season considers how Mary has been imagined by centuries of visual artists in service and response to the Church. On World AIDS Day, **Father James Neilson** will lead the participants to view works of art made in response to the AIDS crisis, with special emphasis on the 25th anniversary exhibition of The Names Project/AIDS Quilt. **Father Roman Vanasse** shared some reflections on the meaning of the Second Vatican Council in a historical and contemporary perspective.

The first of three organ concerts was presented by Stephen Tharp, internationally renowned performer. Two more concerts will be given in the Spring by Christopher Houlihan and Michael Hey.

The Schola d'Arezzo under the direction of **Father Mark Falcone** will again present two concerts: Gregorian Chant from the Christmas season and Gregorian Chant from the Easter Season.

Father Lukas (Stanislav) Buchta, O. Praem., a member of Strahov Abbey, Prague, spent two months in the ESL (English as a Second Language) program at Saint Norbert College. He lived on the college campus at Saint Joseph Priory during the week and at Saint Norbert Abbey on the weekend. He is living in the Slovak Republic as a parish priest in the town of Sala.

The Brass, Organ, and Choral Christmas Spectacular, featuring the Saint Norbert College Faculty Brass, **Father Michael Frisch** (abbey organist), the Abbey Singers of Saint Norbert College (students who contribute to the Sunday liturgies in Saint Norbert Abbey church), the Saint Norbert College Women's Chorus and the Green Bay Girls Choir, was held in Saint Norbert Abbey church.

Classical guitarist Christopher Cramer performed music from the Renaissance through the 20th century in Saint Norbert Abbey church. Dr. Cramer currently serves on the faculty at Beloit College (Beloit, Wisconsin). He also teaches guitar related courses at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and elsewhere.

Devlin Atteln, a junior at Saint Norbert College, has been the associate organist at Saint Norbert Abbey church since August, 2012, and will continue in that position into early 2013. He is a double Major in Musical Performance (Organ Performance) and German. He began playing piano in 3rd grade when he was at Saint Mary Immaculate Conception School in Tomah, Wisconsin. In eighth grade he began accompanying weekend Masses with piano. However, early in 2010, his pastor, Father Steven Kachel, approached him about learning to play the organ. He said that by learning to play organ Devin would become much more sought after in the Catholic Church, seeing as fewer people are learning to play the instrument. Devin began teaching himself some of the rudimentary skills of the organ during his senior year of high school; he began formal instruction with Jeff Verkuilen in the fall of 2010 when he was a freshman at Saint Norbert College. Much of his organ inspiration comes from the Installation Mass of Bishop Jerome Listecki in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. While attending the Mass, Devin felt the effects that music can have on a large congregation, and he knew that was something he wanted to consider doing as a career. Outside of music, Devin's greatest interests lie in languages. He is preparing to spend an academic semester in Munster, Germany. He describes himself as "slightly less than fluent in German." During the summer of 2012, Devin began learning Russian, as well. He also enjoys reading classic novels, studying geography/maps, running, football (Green Bay Packers), and baseball (Milwaukee Brewers). After graduating from Saint Norbert College, Devin would like to go to graduate school for Sacred Music or Organ performance or spend time teaching English to high school students somewhere in eastern Europe, while hopefully furthering his Russian speaking skills.

Jackson

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To close out the Year of the Eucharist, Onwuham Akpa, O.Praem. and Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem. went to Atlanta's 17th Annual Eucharistic Congress. They ran the Norbertine display table and spoke to hundreds of people who stopped by. Bishop Gregory spoke with us and sent congratulations to "his" two Norbertine priests he ordained at St Norbert Abbey shortly after becoming bishop, Fr. Richard Chiles and Fr. Tim Shillcox on their 25th anniversaries of ordination.

Fr. Crispin Solula, O.Praem., Prior of Kinshasa and Fr. Leopold Kumundu, O.Praem., of Kinshasa spent a wonderful week with us after the General Chapter in De Pere. Some of us went with them to Port Gibson and visited Faustin Misakabo, O.Praem., Pastor of St. Joseph, the "Blue Church," on the main street of town. It gets its name from the blue stained glass windows that cast a blue light all through the church. We had a fine African meal and good conversation that evening.

Our bishop and Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem., together with many other individuals and organizations, gave testimony at a standing room only, public hearing for "immigration reform" held by the MS House Judicial B Committee on August 23, 2012 at the state capitol. Each read a lengthy statement for justice and compassion.

Two more events had Jeremy speaking to the media. One was the "Undocubus" a busload of undocumented immigrants traveling from the West Coast through select cities to make their case for immigration reform at the Democratic National Convention.

Another one that occurred on August 28, 2012 was the "Caravan for Peace." This one comprised over 175 Mexicans, all victims of the war on drugs that rages along the US Mexico border. We held a big rally and Press Conference in the Mississippi State Capitol Rotunda. Jeremy sat on a panel with Javier Sicilia whose son was killed. He is a famous poet and chief organizer for the event.

On election Day Derrick Johnson, President of the State Conference of the NAACP together with Jeremy Tobin., O.Praem. gave a radio interview urging people to vote. Both were part of the Protect the Vote Campaign to insure honest elections.

Jeremy Tobin, O. Praem.

The big event to report on for this issue is the General Chapter. The second General Chapter held outside Europe, in the United States. Both chapters were held at St. Norbert Abbey in De Pere. A significant minor event, for social justice, was Jack MacCarthy, O.Praem, MD, a doctor and pastor in the Peruvian Jungle on the Rio Napo. His hospital and adjoining church are the last remnants of the De Pere Canonry mission to Peru going back to 1963. As he said to us this past summer, "I'm the last duck in the pond." He appeared at the chapter with a letter filled with the fire of mission. He wanted the whole order to feel the necessity and urgency of the mission at Santa Clotilde and somehow to take a collective involvement with it. Not being on the official Agenda, he managed, thanks to Abbot Richard Antonucci of Daylesford Abbey to get copies to every member of the chapter.

The Priory of St. Moses the Black will host 10 SNC students and staff for a week in January 2013. This will be an immersion experience of living and experiencing a Norbertine Community's life and ministry in the poorest State in the Union.

Paul Madden is getting deeper into his MSW Program at Southern University on New Orleans. He spent Thanksgiving with us, and is always a welcome visitor.

Onwuham Akpa, O.Praem. hosted Sr. Bibiana Oti, DMMM, a Nigerian sister, a physician and neurologist who practices in a hospital in Germany.

Abbot Tom DeWane continues his prison ministry, two days at the for profit private prison in Natchez. Together with Jeremy they serve the Federal Prison in Yazoo City.

St. Therese Church is South Jackson, where Norbert Nzilamba, O.Praem. is pastor celebrated Thanksgiving by having their annual Turkey Fest, their parish festival that they have been doing for 50 years. This year it was dedicated to Ms. Betty Farthing their cafeteria manager for 30+ years who passed away this year. She was a charter member of the parish.

Abbot Tom DeWane and Fr. Jeremy Tobin represented the Priory of St. Moses the Black at the abbatial blessing of Abbot Joel Garner, O.Praem. in Albuquerque NM November 9, 2012.

Our faithful group joins us for Morning Praise and Mass each day and we offer all our efforts to God who heals all things.

Mananthavady

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Canonry of Mananthavady remains so grateful to God for His bountiful Blessings on our community with its manifold activities, spiritual and religious commitment and people oriented ministries and initiatives. The canonry, as always, has focused on sharing our communion and apostolate to the Norbertines in different parts of the world.

It is a great pleasure for us to congratulate our Prelate Rev. Fr. Alois Jose Anthanattu, who was elected as one the Definitors of the Order in the recent General Chapter from July 22nd to August 4th at St. Norbert College of De Pere Abbey, USA. Prelate Fr. Alois Jose was also elected as one of the councilors of Major Superior Forum of Syro-Malabar Religious Communities in India. Both these events are seen as the recognition and acceptance of fast growing young Norbertine spirit in the Order as well as in the Syro- Malabar Church in India.

The unexpected sickness and demise of our beloved confrere Rev. Fr. Shaji Vadayattukuzhy, O. Praem., took our community through pain and sorrow (see photo 1). Thanks to the Norbertines all over the world for your prayer and support. Fr. Shaji was a spiritual, active and fully committed religious priest. His death has left a vacuum in the priory and a great lost for the global Church. He had been working in Germany for many years as assistant parish priest, parish priest, formator and procurator of the Mananthavady Norbertines in Germany. He was under constant medical care in different hospitals at Germany and India due to malignant brain tumor. He was called to his eternal reward on 01-04- 2012 in the presence of all the community members of St. Norbert Priory. Now Fr. Shaji is resting in peace and he implores for us all to the Heavenly Father.

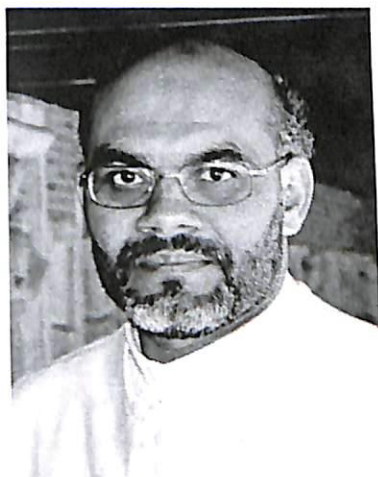


Photo 1: Fr. Shaji Vadayattukuzhy
(1970-2012)

St. Norbert Sadhan, the newly built minor seminary of Mananthavady Norbertines was blessed and inaugurated on 12-04-2012 by Bishop Mar. Jose Porunedom, Diocese of Mananthavady. St. Norbert Sadhan

Benny Peekunnel, O. Praem..

is at Dwaraka, five kilometers away from priory. It is the residence for Postulants as well as for the confreres teaching at Sacred Heart Higher Secondary school, Dwaraka. At present there are three priests and 25 brothers at St. Norbert Sadhan. Candidates are doing their secular studies along with spiritual formation. The construction of this new seminary has been completed under the guidance and leadership of our Prelate Rev. Fr. Alois Jose Anthanatt, Fr. Jose Cheruplvil, Fr. ShajuVadakkumkara, and Fr. Benny Asharikunnel. The whole community is grateful to the benefactors, supporters and the persons involved in the construction of the Building. (see photo 2)



Photo 2: New Minor Seminary at Dwaraka, Mananthavady

ECHO Jeevana is the center for juvenile delinquents established at Eranakulam, Kerala. The Center focuses on juvenile delinquent children across different cities of Kerala. The center primarily aims to release children from the government observation home and to promote education, rehabilitation and eventually reintegrate them into society with dignity and moral aptitude. Fr. Shijo Neluvalichira, O. Praem., and Fr. Siby Thadathil, O. Praem. are involved in this ministry (see photo 3)

Sneha is another social Intervention Center of the canonry and is involved in a genuine attempt to uplift the standard of poor and tribal people living in and around the priory. This year the center offers educational and welfare programs aimed at transformation and self-earning for daily working classes of the rural poor.



Photo 3: Inauguration and Blessing of ECHO Jeevana

One of the fresh initiatives of the canonry is Sangama Rural Initiative at T Narasipura- Mysore, Karnataka. It is a new venture for bringing people together irrespective of their social, cultural, religious and academic background. Fr. Salu Mooleparambil O Praem is engaged in this ministry.

Norbertine Social Development Trust (NSDT) at N. R. Pura is a well recognized social welfare center of Norbertines in N.R. Pura. It has started many innovative programs with the help of the government as well as NGO's for the sustainable development of the people living in and around Chickamangalore district of Karnataka state.

St. Norbert church at Kasvanahally, Bangalore is rendering the spiritual care of the Syro-Malabar faithful of the locality. The parish is widening its strength each day and at present the parish has 350 families. Fr. Jose Murickan O Praem is the parish priest at present. And along with this, Rev. Dr. Jose Murickan also has started mass communication training for the pastoral leadership. This Nobi Communication promotes short term courses in communication and formation.

The canonry is making a lot of effort for the educational development of the people in Karnataka and Kerala. Sacred Heart Higher Secondary School at Dwaraka made excellent results in its 10th and 12th standards of State Board examinations this year. St. Norbert CBSE School at Koppa is one of the best educational institutions in Chickamangalore District,

Karnataka. It has made outstanding performances in academic and co-academic activities.

Confreres involved in pastoral ministries abroad are rendering a well appreciated service. And we have begun two new apostolates in South Africa and Western Australia. Fr. Vigil and Fr. Siju have taken up the responsibility in working Cape Town, South Africa. Fr. Jose Cheruplavi and Fr. Johnson Thonikuzhy have recently taken up pastoral activity in Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.

A meeting of Juniors' parents meet was held on 28th and 29th April, 2012 at St. Norbert priory, and it was a remarkable event. The meeting included parents of those doing philosophy, regency, college studies and theology. It was a great occasion for the parents to know each other and introduce themselves to the family of Mananthavady Norbertines.

The major Archbishop of the Syro -Malabar Church, Mar. George Cardinal Allenchery (see photo 4), visited our priory on 07/05/2012. The presence of the bishop of Mananthavady, vicar general and other dignitaries graced the occasion. The Cardinal, in his address to the gathering, commended the Norbertines of Mananthavady for our contribution to the Syro-Malabar church.



Photo 4: The Visit of Mar. George Cardinal Allenchery,
The major Arch Bishop of Syro -Malabar Church

Canonry Chapter was held in the month of August. It was really a time of coming together and sharing views and opinions regarding several new attempts of witnessing the Norbertine way of life. The Canonry had its annual retreat in the month October at Santhidhara Ashram in Sulthan Bathery. Most of our priests participated in the retreat. We are also preparing for the priestly ordination of three of our Deacons in the month of December.

Orange

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The abbey purchased a new parcel of land for the relocation of the physical plant last January. The planning commission of Orange County approved the community's plans for the new abbey and school. Work continues toward raising funds and working to bring the project to a point of breaking ground in the next year or two.

Last August 27, five men arrived as postulants from California, Canada, Washington and Louisiana. They will be vested as novices on December 24th. The next day feast of St. Augustine four novices completed a 20-month novitiate and made first temporary profession of vows.

In September, six of the juniors left to continue and/or start their theological studies in Toronto - they will return to the abbey for Christmas and then to Canada again for second semester. At the same time, two of the deacons returned to Rome where they are pursuing licentiate work in Biblical studies and spirituality.

The Preparatory School has a new Headmaster, Fr. Victor Szczurek, and this year is filled to over capacity with a waiting list. The students have academic scores well over the state and national average on their standardized tests and the school is building on the many years Fr. Gabriel Stack served and improved the curriculum and structure of the school.

Notes