

# Mount Saviour Chronicle

THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF MOUNT SAVIOUR  
P.O. BOX 272, ELMIRA, NEW YORK

NUMBER 1

SOLEMNITY OF ST. BENEDICT 1953

Dear Friends of Mount Saviour:

It is over a year since you have received a newsletter from the monastery. As many of you know, after an illness almost a year ago, our Superior, Reverend Father Damasus, had to remain away during a long convalescence. Thank God, he profited greatly by the enforced rest. He is now visiting Rome, Maria Laach and other European monasteries and is purchasing things for us to sell in the Mount Saviour religious articles shop. We expect him back in the course of the summer.

In the past year, four novices, Brothers Ildephonse Lundberg, Benedict Tighe, and John Brown, and Father Joseph Riordan, have made their Simple Profession. Besides these four new monks, there are six novices and two postulants. Four or five more postulants are expected during the course of the summer.

We have had many visitors, clerical and lay, retreatants and volunteer workers. There were a number at Christmas, and for Holy Week and Easter we managed to take care of fourteen—putting cots even in the living room and kitchen of the guest house. Our guests have included our major superior, Father Abbot Bernard Kaelin, Primate of the Benedictines, who was here from Rome last summer, and, more recently, Abbot Patrick O'Brien of St. Mary's, Newark, N. J., Abbot Leo Rudloff of the Dormition, Jerusalem, and Abbot Bertrand Dolan of St. Anselm's, Manchester, New Hampshire.

On Sunday, October 4, at 3 P.M., our Bishop, the Most Reverend James E. Kearney, D.D., of Rochester will come to Mount Saviour to bless the Shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace. This ceremony will mark the climax of the opening of the chapel. In the meantime its blessing will take place and the first Mass will be offered in it on the Sunday within the octave of Our Lady's Assumption, August 16, at 9 A.M. Vespers will be sung and benediction given that afternoon at 3 P.M.

I hereby extend to you our cordial invitation to attend the ceremonies on August 15 and 16 and ask you to write indicating whether or not you will be present and how many there will be in your party. Special invitations will be mailed later for the ceremonies at which His Excellency will preside on October 4.

Those coming from a distance are recommended to arrange as soon as possible for overnight accommodations in Elmira at the Mark Twain Hotel, the Tom Sawyer Motor Inn, or Shady Rest Tourist Home, 1720 West Church Street.

Thank God, we can say that the generosity of our friends has, so far, made it just possible to provide for the simplest needs of a growing family and, in part, for its essential activities such as the farm and the building project. More is said about these enterprises and other news of Mount Saviour is given elsewhere in this chronicle.

We take this occasion to express publicly our thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Otto Spaeth, for their magnificent gift of a statue of Our Lady, which is specially mentioned on another page.

With deepest gratitude to all of you for continued and generous help and assuring you of daily remembrance in our prayers and Masses, believe me,

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,

Gregory Borgstedt, Subprior

## CHAPEL PROGRESSES

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1952, the work was begun on the chapel for which Mr. Joseph Sanford Shanley of New York had drawn plans. The community had decided that great as was the need for expanded living quarters we should first build the House of God to His glory and in honor of Our Lady Queen of Peace. It is hoped that it will be finished and ready for use, even though not completely furnished, sometime in August. The high altar, Blessed Sacrament altar, altars in the crypt, choir stalls, windows and other furnishings are still to be donated. Information regarding these will be sent upon request.

The octagonal shape immediately strikes the visitor and is the occasion of many questions. The primary reason is to permit the whole congregation, visitors as well as monks, to gather closely around the altar, and thus it encourages and assists active participation in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice and of the Divine Office.

Back of the high altar, prominent and accessible, will be the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, in a special chapel hung with lamps and decorated with the 14th Century Triptych of the Crucifixion and Saints, given us two years ago. Either side of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel will be stairs leading to the crypt where will be the shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace and six side chapels. The crypt may also be entered from the outside by stairs near the main porch and entrance.

Fifty-two feet across the octagon with an additional 18 feet long, the chapel will take care of a congregation of 100 people, not including the community for whom 32 choir stalls are planned. There will be additional room for oblates, or for "overflow" when the chapel is crowded, in the ambulatory behind the choir.

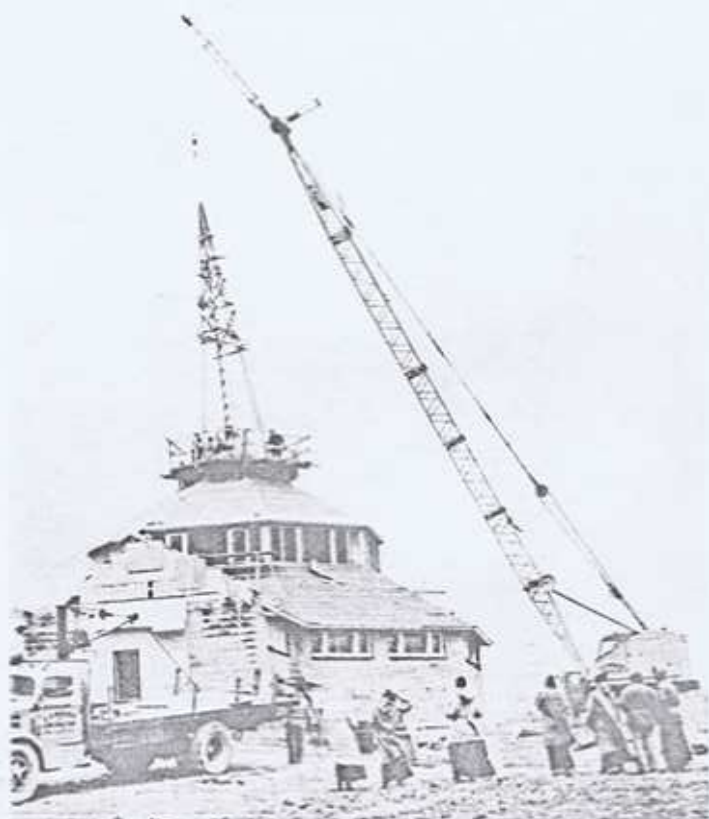
The chapel is constructed of cement and cinder block, the roof being framed by eight laminated wooden arches which converge beneath the belfry. A slim spire, sheathed in lead and topped with a bronze cross, rises 30 feet above the main roof line.

The exterior walls are white stucco with gray trim. The interior block will be painted an off-white and the woodwork will be stained a weathered gray. The floor of the main chapel will be paved with stone and the floor of the crypt will be brick.

No architectural "style" has been copied nor has any attempt been made to be "modern." The result is a simple building of dignified proportions and interesting mass, which nestles comfortably into the beautiful rolling hillside. There is here, perhaps, something reminiscent of the lovely provincial churches found in the mountainous districts of Europe.

## FUTURE PLANS

When sufficient funds are available, it is planned to build, wing by wing, a one-story monastery about a quadrangle to the north and linked with the chapel. This urgently needed building will not only provide essential living quarters for the growing community but



Monks watch as steeple frame is mounted on new chapel.

by releasing space now occupied by the monks will enable us to meet another great need: the provision of more room for guests.

In the meantime, with material which has been donated in the course of the past two years, part of the barn near the monastery will be turned into ten cells, a scriptorium, and carpenter shop. "St. Joseph's," the former carpenter shop, (and earlier in its career a chicken coop) will provide three cells. All these alterations will be made by two of the community skilled in the carpenter's trade and with the expert assistance of our good neighbor, Mr. Anthony Ekes.

## RELIGIOUS ARTICLES FOR SALE

Reference has been made to sale of religious articles at Mount Saviour. These include: rosaries made in England and France; medals designed by Fernand Ty of Paris; silver medals designed and executed by Louise Reggio of Boston; enamel plaques made by the monks of Liguge, France; decorated small wax candles and plaques from Bavaria; colored post card reproductions of famous religious paintings; a variety of excellent holy cards from Europe; transparencies of stained glass windows from Chartres and Paris.

A complete list and prices will be gladly sent on request to anyone interested.

## FARM OCCUPIES MAJOR ROLE

Of the greatest importance to Mount Saviour's development is the farm. A monastery farm is one of the chief of those departments in which St. Benedict's prescriptions concerning manual labor are realized. A farm should provide, so far as possible, the food required by a community and also provide income from the sale of produce.

In the plan to make Mount Saviour eventually self-supporting, the farm occupies a major role. During these early years, of course, it cannot be expected to make any substantial contribution. Indeed, in order that it may become a source of help, it must first be itself helped. Livestock, machinery and other equipment must be obtained; land must be improved.

Of our 550 acres, three-fifths are tillable, the rest being woodland. From the latter, some timber has been sold to a local mill. This year we have planted seventeen acres of oats, eight acres of field corn and eighteen acres of buckwheat. Twenty-six acres of hay have already been cut and gathered; seventy-four acres are soon to be cut. At present the cattle have sixty acres of good pasture.

A vegetable garden three-quarters of an acre in size, has provided us with its produce not only during the summer but also in the winter and spring, due to the kindness of a group of ladies who make the Guest House kitchen a busy center of canning operations. The orchard consists of fifteen apple trees, ten pear, ten plum and three peach trees. Father Placid, who is in charge of the garden, devotes himself particularly to the care of the garden and orchard.

The dairy herd at present consists of: six dairy cows, one yearling heifer and seven calves. The beef cattle (largely Aberdeen Angus) number: four cows, two bred heifers, two yearling steers, seven calves and, a recent arrival, a fine pure-bred Aberdeen Angus bull calf, the generous gift of Mr. Victor Ridder of New York.

It is impossible for us to operate the farm entirely by ourselves due to lack, as yet, of sufficient experience and numbers and also to our heavy schedule of Divine Office, meditation and prayer and other necessary work for all plus study for the younger members. We have been extremely fortunate therefore in having good assistants on the farm. With the aid of their knowledge and hard work real progress has been made despite the great handicap of insufficient equipment. Members of the community and volunteer workers do, of course, as much of the farm work as their other duties permit.

## LITERATURE AVAILABLE

We still have on hand some of the original brochures circulated when Mount Saviour was being established, giving the aims and program of the monastery.

Also available is the brochure with pictures which was sent out last November.

Copies of the above will be gladly sent on request.

## NEW OBLATES INVITED

An Oblate is one who affiliates himself spiritually with some Benedictine monastery, offering himself to God and promising to strive for greater Christian perfection under the guidance of the holy Rule of St. Benedict.

Soon after Mount Saviour was established some priests and several laymen and women inquired about becoming oblates of the monastery. Thus far thirteen have become oblate novices, of whom three have finished their year's novitiate and made their oblation.

Regular meetings in various places will be planned in the future for our Oblates who are regarded as being in a special way part of the Mount Saviour family.

Anyone interested in the oblates' rule of life and in the procedure for becoming an oblate is urged to write to:

Director of Oblates  
Mount Saviour  
P.O. Box 272  
Elmira, New York

## GIFT TO MOUNT SAVIOUR



Late 13th or early 14th century statue, "school of Paris," of Our Lady and the Holy Child. Gift to Mount Saviour of Mr. and Mrs. Otto L. Spaeth. The statue will be placed in the center of the new chapel crypt — the shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace.

## NEW YORK BENEFIT

The community is particularly grateful to Mrs. Henry Mann, Miss Edith King, Miss Dorothy Coit, and all those who helped them, and the children of the King-Coit Association, for the benefit performance given for Mount Saviour in New York City on May 18. Thackray's "The Rose and the Ring" was presented and played with great artistic skill. Due to the efforts of those who organized the production, it was enjoyed by a capacity audience.

## LECTURE SERIES

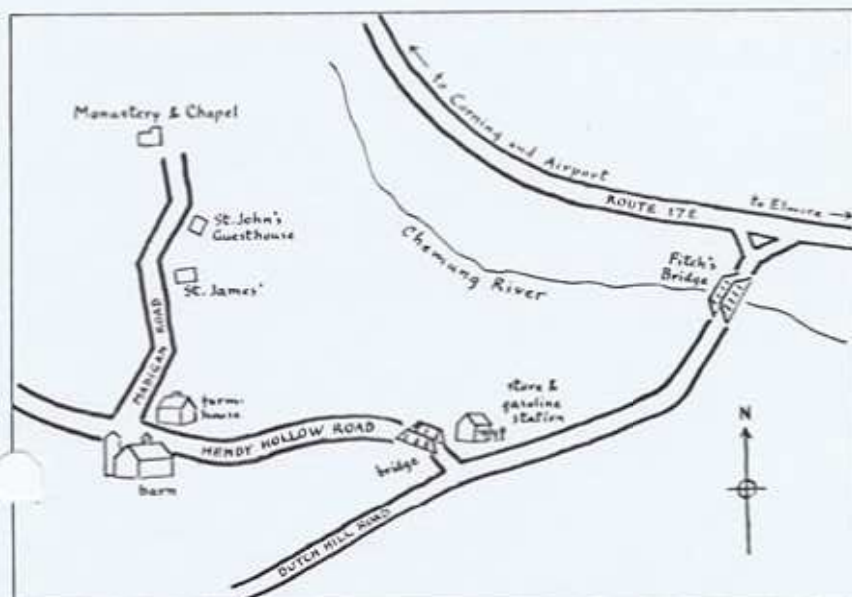
Appreciation must also be expressed to Mr. & Mrs. J. John Hassett for arranging a lecture at the Mark Twain Hotel, Elmira, on Sunday evening, May 24, and to Mr. & Mrs. Francis E. Cunningham, at whose residence in Rochester a lecture was given on Sunday, May 31. Father Gregory gave both these lectures, and along with colored slides of life at Mount Saviour, showed two short films: one of Saint-Benoit-du-Lac, and one entitled "Medieval Monastery."

Illustrated slide lectures were also given by the Rev. Thomas W. Phejan at Troy, Albany and New York City. The lectures were all very well attended and enthusiastically received.

At the present time a new series of slides is being prepared for the Fall Series of Lectures. Friends of Mount Saviour interested in organizing groups for these lectures are asked to let us know.

## NEW NAMES SOUGHT

Please send names and addresses for us to add to the list of those who may be interested in receiving information about Mount Saviour.



## CALENDAR

NOTE: The calendar will list only those Feasts which have some particular connection with the monastery or on which special ceremonies will take place.

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|----------------|---|
| Sat., July 11  | Solemnity of Our Holy Father, St. Benedict  |
| Sat., July 25  | St. James Apostle<br>Conventual Mass and Simple Profession Ceremony (9 A.M.)  |
| Thurs., Aug. 6 | Feast of the Transfiguration<br>Titular Feast of the Monastery<br>Conventual Mass (9 A.M.)  |
| Sat., Aug. 15  | Assumption of Our Lady<br>Patronal Feast of the Monastery<br>Conventual Mass and Simple Profession Ceremony (9 A.M.)                                      |
| Sun., Aug. 16  | Blessing of and first Mass in the Chapel (9 A.M.)<br>Vespers and Benediction (3 P.M.)   |
| Tues., Sept. 8 | Nativity of Our Lady<br>Anniversary of His Excellency the Bishop's permission to establish a monastery in the diocese (1950).<br>Conventual Mass (6 A.M.) |
| Sun., Oct. 4   | Blessing of Shrine of Our Lady Queen of Peace by His Excellency, Bishop Kearney (3 P.M.)  |

Vespers and Benediction on Sundays and Great Feasts will be at 4 P.M.

Mount Saviour is 8 miles from the center of the city of Elmira, N. Y. The Lackawanna and Erie railroads and the American and Mohawk airlines provide good service. Taxi service is available directly to the Monastery.

By car, one takes Routes 17 and 17E. Outside West Elmira, at the city limits one comes to a large intersection where there are an "island" and roads to the left only, if one is driving from Elmira, to the right from Corning.

The detailed map pictured shows the way to the Monastery from this intersection.