

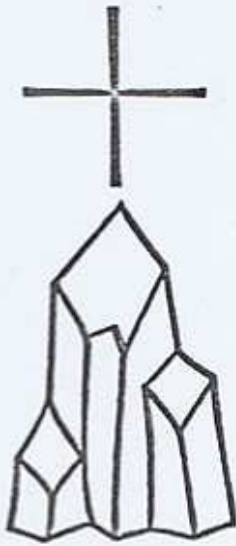
St. Benedict powerfully states in a single sentence what it means to live as a monk: "...by patience so to share in the sufferings of Christ, that we may deserve to be partakers also of His Kingdom." This share in Christ's passage through death into life is, of course, the life principle of every baptized Christian. St. Paul puts it this way: "We were buried in death with Him by means of Baptism, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, so we also may conduct ourselves by a new principle of life . . . If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him."

The "patience" by which we share in Christ's Transitus takes one form in the monastery, and a different form in the world; but its source is the same: the Sacrifice of Christ, His Death and Resurrection, accomplished once and for all, yet made present again and again on our altars. There we share in the sacramental reality of His dying and rising: there we die with Him and rise with Him sacramentally. There radiates the power we need

in our daily life, again and again to die to self-will so as to live towards God, to bear "witness to the Resurrection."

"Witness to the Resurrection"—that is the essence of monastic life. It must consequently be the essence of monastic architecture. Still there remains a variety of ways to apply this principle. The scheme we have chosen makes the altar the center of the Chapel, and the Chapel, in turn, the center of the monastery proper, just as the liturgy is centered on the risen Lord and our whole life is centered on the Liturgy. A glance at the layout will show this.

On the right hand side, east of the road, you see the farm buildings: old "St. Peter's Barn" with the two little "Hermitages" behind it; the horseshoe of our new farm buildings, constructed in 1959, and a row of work shops north of the farm, on the edge of the woods. To the left of the road, as you come up the hill, lies the monastery proper. Its layout is a square subdivided into smaller squares which are occupied alternately by building units and by planting.



# Mount Saviour Chronicle

THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF MOUNT SAVIOUR  
P.O. BOX 3066, ELMIRA, NEW YORK

NUMBER 18

PENTECOST, 1961

Dear Friends of Mount Saviour,

Pentecost, the Fifty Days of the Alleluia, is the fulfillment of all that took its beginning at Christmas, when God laid the foundation, "a Chief Corner Stone in Sion, chosen, precious." And now "the whole structure is closely fitted together in Him, a dwelling place for God in the Spirit." The Holy Spirit "fills the whole house."

In the Christmas Chronicle we were able to share with you our joy over the new living stones which the Lord has fitted into His dwelling place on this mountain. Thanks be to Him Who has given this increase. Our task is now to build and to provide room for our growing family. About this project we want to tell you today. What season could be more timely to show you the plans for our permanent monastery than this season of Pentecost, when God made the Church His permanent dwelling place?

"Spiritus Domini firmavit orbem terrarum; alleluia." There is a profound connection between the permanence of the Church and the permanence of monastic stability. Both are rooted in the firm ground of God's unchanging mercy; both are the steady reflection of eternal light on the dark and ever-changing waters of this time. And more than that; for this permanence is more than a mere reflection on the surface: "the light shines in darkness," penetrates darkness, transforms the very darkness into light, the very chaos into order.

One ascending line leads from the Bible account of primeval chaos to the temple in Jerusalem, earthly representation of the heavenly order. And the same line leads directly to the perfect order of the Apocalyptic Jerusalem. In the beginning the Holy Spirit hovers over the waters of chaos, and in the end He fills the City which is as wide as the world. Through the power of His breath, earth is a mirror heaven. The Good News is to be preached to every creature. The whole universe is to be hallowed by the Church, even inanimate creation: bread, wine, oil, fire and water, wood and stone. Chaos is to be transformed

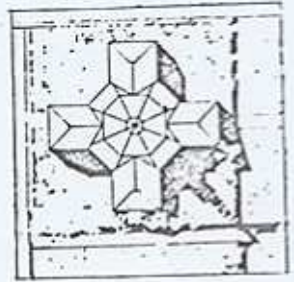
into the Cosmos of Grace. Building a monastery is one phase in this process of transfiguration.

Have we not often touched upon this in former Chronicles? It is a topic of which I never grow tired. Indeed it is a basic theme of monastic life, of Christian life as a whole. "Contemplation" in this sense is the bringing together of the two temples, the heavenly and the earthly temple, through our life in Christ. In Him, the God-man, the two temples are one. In His Transfiguration we were shown a glimpse of this tremendous mystery. But for us Mount Tabor is not yet the place to settle down. We must descend into the valley, where our task remains the task of Moses, the great Contemplative of the Old Testament: "Look carefully, and fashion everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain."

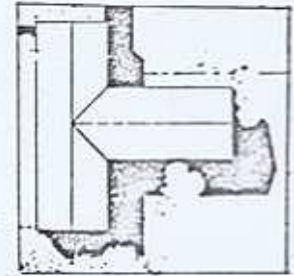
This divine command is echoed by St. Benedict's word to the monks he had sent to found a new monastery: "Go and build everything as you were directed in the vision." St. Benedict had appeared to them in a dream, St. Gregory tells us, "to show them exactly where each section of the monastery was to stand." Should we be surprised at that? St. Benedict introduced the vow of stability into his monastic Rule as a decisive innovation. Many times he refers to "the circumstances of a given place;" he knew how important these "circumstances" would become for a monk whose life is firmly rooted in one place. He certainly knew the principle, cleverly stated in our own time: "First we shape our buildings, and then our buildings shape us."

Why, then, has St. Benedict not left us a clear-cut master plan for the monastery he had in mind? Well, it would seem to me that he has given us all the essential directions we need, if only we will follow them. Yet he has shown his wisdom by the number of details he has left open to the choice of every pioneering generation. He wanted us to re-think the principles laid down in the Holy Rule, in order to apply them to the concrete needs and possibilities of a given time and place; a great privilege this, and an ever new challenge.

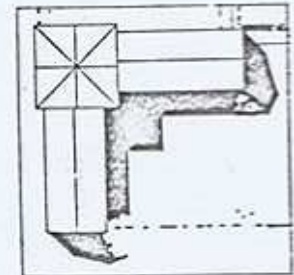
The Chapel occupies the central square. Two shapes are combined in the plan: the octagon and the cross. All those of you who have celebrated Sunday Lauds with us during Eastertide will understand the symbolism of this plan. As the sun rises on the eighth day and fills the octagon with light, the choir sings the "Alleluia" and through the naves this song of the Resurrection is carried out towards north, south, east, and west. There is also a practical aspect to this layout: on ordinary days the octagonal center-room alone is used, while for bigger celebrations, when many guests are present, the four naves can be opened up to provide additional room around the altar.



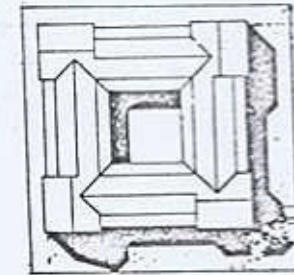
Just as the position of the Chapel has a deep significance, so has the position of the guest house. You see its east wing (St. Joseph's", finished 1956) extending from the monastery proper, or rather leading into it. From the beginning it has been our special concern at Mount Saviour to make our guests feel at home in God's house, to lead them into the joy of our life. This we consider an important way of "bearing witness to the Resurrection." Guests are not "the world" intruding into the monastery. It is the risen Lord St. Benedict bids us welcome in all who come to the monastery. Time and again we have recognized Him "in the breaking of bread," like the disciples at Emmaus.



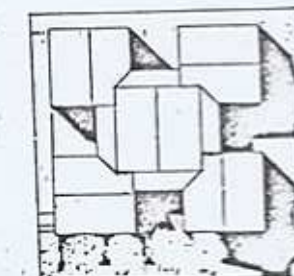
For many guests a visit to the monastery is their first contact with the Church. Others stand in a close relation to us and deserve special attention; St. Benedict calls them "domestici fidei." There are above all our Oblates, who, after a year of "bearing witness to the Resurrection" in the valley, come to this hill to take a deep breath and to gather new strength in silence. The two wings of their private rooms open onto a separate quiet quadrangle and unite in a corner building with a library and common rooms for study and conferences. This same corner houses on the upper floor the novices, strictly by themselves as the Holy Rule prescribes.



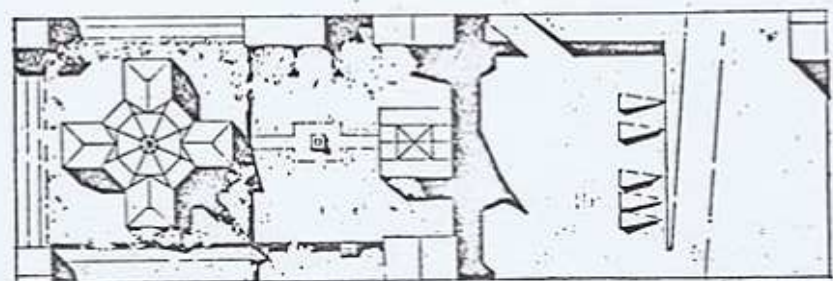
This arrangement gives a maximum of seclusion to the area in which the monks sleep and study. All other activities are excluded from this complex, which contains the living quarters and the library. This building breathes the silence of the cloister garth which it encloses. Forty monks live in this quadrangle, ten (one "deanery") to each side. They share common quarters, but allowance is made for individual needs. And then, behind the monastery, hermitages are scattered through the woods. Though not shown on the plan, they belong essentially to the scheme. Common life finds its organic continuation in the eremitical life, and the monastery buildings, in the silent expanse of the surrounding forests.

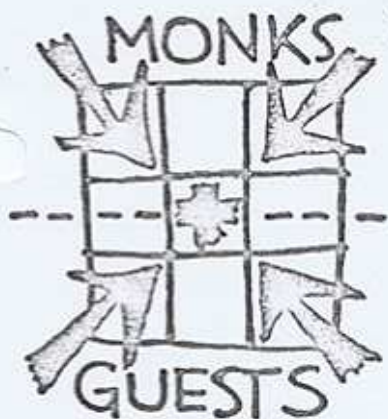


Except for work at the farm and workshops, most of the daily chores center around the refectory, and there we have made room for them. The Chapter Room, where the daily work is blessed and distributed, lies right above the refectory. Apart from practical considerations, this connection is justified by St. Paul's word: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat." St. Benedict prefers to point out how charity grows as the brethren serve one another in humble tasks in kitchen, laundry, and infirmary. Yes, the sick have quarters of their own in the most quiet corner of this building. The tailor shop, storage, and offices are accommodated on the east of this complex near the service driveway.



The parking lot (notice the "model-1975" cars) is right off the main road, and so the approach to the whole monastery is concentrated in one point. Here the Porter meets visitors and the Guestmaster receives guests. The Eastern Rite Chapel, of which we spoke in our Chronicle at Christmas 1958, is here connected with the Portery. Thus one passes a quiet "atrium" shaded by trees around a well, then one enters the main Chapel . . . And so we are back again from our little tour.





It is, of course, only a sketchy glimpse we could give you here, but no doubt the general concept must have become clear: this is "your" monastery as much as it is ours. It is yours because this scheme reflects the new role which monasteries are given by the will of God in our days. We have mentioned it before: the Liturgical Movement, the Bible Movement and the Retreat Movement are deeply rooted in the monastic life; we may add the Ecumenical Movement, of course. A monastery is the natural center of these movements in the Church, not as a focal point of activity, but as a spiritual fulcrum, the firm pivot which makes action effective. Monasteries are near to the quiet gravitation point of all movement in the Church, because "contemplation," as we have seen, is the concern of the whole Church. We trust that the very layout of our plan expresses concentration on the Source of all life in the Church.

This source is a wellspring gushing forth in all directions. The Bride in the Song of Songs is compared to "a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up." But this fountain is "a well of living waters running with a strong stream from Libanus." Water pours forth, light radiates: the witness fills the whole earth. This motion, too, is expressed in the arrangement of our buildings. In fact, the measuring unit for the whole complex is taken from the altar and multiplied progressively towards the periphery, so that the outer square of the enclosure wall is still by its very measurements related to the innermost center. We dream of inscribing on the field stones of this enclosure wall the "Holy, Holy, Holy" of the Seraphim in as many different languages and alphabets as we can find. The whole world shall have a share in the praise of God which it is our privilege to sing as we stand around the altar. It shall go out like the expanding rings on the surface when you drop a stone into a pond, until the word comes true: "Round about in every direction is the Holy of Holies." This is why Mount Saviour belongs to you.

But maybe, as you look at our plans you might begin to worry: "Am I really going to feel as much at home there as I do now?" Don't be afraid, you certainly will! The very reason why the monastery might look extensive on the plan is that we have avoided the institutional look of a massive building complex and rather designed several simple units that can be economically constructed one after the other; units that allow the peaceful scenery of this hill to come right up to the doorsteps of the chapel.— Yes, this is going to remain "your good old Mount Saviour."

In a way it will be more truly Mount Saviour than what we knew in years past, for many things have become clearer to us during the re-thinking of our principles. The community has matured in this task, and every single member contributed. We took no short cuts. Even in a monastery there exists the danger of playing off one exaggeration against another, each of the two as wrong as a mere compromise between them. We tried to rise to a higher level. St. Benedict shows us the common ground on which to meet; "Let no one follow what he considers good for himself, but rather what profits another." "Let all follow the rule in all things as their guide . . . and let no one in the monastery follow the will of his own heart." This takes courage. And it takes patience.

Here then is the place to write in big letters THANK YOU to all who helped us with our building plans for all their patience! We can single out only a handful: first of all Joe Shanley, who from the earliest days carried a lion's share of our building problems with the patience of a lamb; also Knight Sturges, his associate; Emilio del Junco; John Hunt; our many friends at Cornell University, among them especially Professor Henry Elder. Our Brother Dennis (Charley Greene) deserves a special "thank you." Together with our Father David he has developed these plans. Reward, O Lord, all those who for Your Name's sake do good things to us, with everlasting life!" And we include all those who with spontaneous generosity have pledged their help as soon as they learned of our project; in partic-



ular, Victor Tretjakewitsch, Michael Janesik, and Peter Cunningham.

This list would be incomplete without our heartfelt thanks to our beloved Bishop Kearney. Ten years ago on the Feast of the Transfiguration he broke the ground for our first building, the Chapel, and he has promised to break the ground for our new buildings on the same day this year. We hope that many of you can be with us on August 6th, and that all of you will join us in prayer. "If the Lord does not build the house, those who build it work in vain." "O Lord, be gracious unto Sion, build Thou the walls of Jerusalem!"

*H. Aemmerling Wignam, O.S.B.*

#### SUMMER HORARIUM

Workdays	
4:10 a.m.	Rise
4:30	Vigils, Lauds
	Lectio
7:10 ca.	Prime
7:30	Conventual Mass (8:00 Sunday)
	Breakfast
9:10	Terce, Chapter Work/Classes
12:45 p.m.	Sext
1:00	Dinner
	Siesta/Lectio
2:35	None
	Work
5:20	Vespers (5:00 Sunday)
	Lectio
6:20	Supper
6:45	Recreation or Conference
7:30	Compline Reading, Compline
8:10	Retire