



Mount Saviour Chronicle

THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF MOUNT SAVIOUR
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EXALTATION OF THE CROSS 1964

Dear Friends of Mount Saviour:

September 12, 13, and 14, 1964 will long be remembered at Mount Saviour as great days. These days saw the dedication of our new monastic buildings. On Saturday the 12th we welcomed about 300 sisters from the Albany, Scranton, Syracuse, Erie and Buffalo dioceses as well as from our own home diocese of Rochester. The sisters joined the community in singing the divine liturgy of the Byzantine Rite, in English, under the direction of our Oblate and good friend Mr. Guillermo Romagosa, Oblate Brother John Chrysostom. As celebrant we were fortunate in having Father Austin Mohrbacher of the Pope John XXIII Institute of Fordham University. A buffet luncheon was served the sisters by our friends of the Elmira-Corning area, and afterwards we gave them the grand tour of the buildings. On Sunday the 13th upwards of 1500 friends visited, toured, and partook of the delicacies available in the refreshment tent. On Monday the 14th, Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, beginning of the monastic "Lent" and in so many ways a beautiful day to establish a new monastic enclosure, about 500 joined us as his Excellency, Bishop James E. Kearney of Rochester, himself took the grand tour while blessing all the important rooms of our new home. So, it is all over! We have many reasons for giving thanks. The response to the invitation to come and see our new buildings was remarkable. It brought us joy to see that our life finds an echo in the hearts of the faithful, and that we count as friends so many among our non-Roman Catholic neighbors. We want all God's people to know and love the monastic life.

But it is not all over! The buildings are still under construction, so we had to post signs telling visitors: "Watch your step!" This state of affairs brought out the latent poet, and we wrote (adapting an old English verse to new circumstances):

When in our old barn we laughed and wept,
Time crept;
When over plans we dreamed and talked,
Time walked;
When all the digging-work began,
Time ran;
When then the buildings rose and grew,
Time flew;
Today we found, while rushing on,
Time gone — — —
And a thousand things are left undone!

Having given the profile of a treasured week-end, let us repeat in a simple but solemn way the things that were in our hearts as we met the throngs who came to share our joy on those days.

On Saturday the 12th we welcomed our Sisters in Christ. "In the name of the Community of Mount Saviour and the committee of friends who have prepared your reception, I welcome you within the walls of our new monastery. Ever since we heard that as part of the "aggiornamento" Sisters would be admitted to the Council Hall of Vatican II as auditors, we decided to invite you to Mount Saviour as inspectors. But we hope that your verdict about monastic management will not be too strict. I am certain that you will be indulgent about the unfinished state of the buildings, and that you realize that our invitation is meant to be an expression of our deep feeling of gratitude and collegiality toward you. Our gratitude is heartfelt because Mount Saviour would not have survived these thirteen years without "the good Sisters." I mean that "survival" quite literally. Sister Patricia Ann of Saint Joseph's Hospital in Elmira gave our young cooks some vital instructions in that fine art of survival known as dietetics. I think, too, of the many sick brethren cared for at Saint Joseph's, and, if I may, put myself at the head of that grateful list. I certainly would not be able to greet you on this happy occasion if it were not for the prompt care I received at St. Joseph's when in 1957 God sent me a near-fatal heart attack. The list of benefactions of Sisters to us could be considerably extended, but I limit myself to mentioning the truly extraordinary charity we have known during these years through the Sisters of Saint Joseph at the hospital.

"We were also eager to have you here today because of the collegiality that exists between us. Now we all know that there is a limit to the collegiality between Monks and Sisters! But once that has been stated, for the peace and composure of all, I can speak of the bond between us. If we call you Sisters, it is because of our relatedness in Christ. Are not we who have consecrated virginity to Christ united to one another in the Holy Spirit as brothers and sisters? I am sure that you will find in these new buildings many features that will strike you as manifestations of what we have in common in Christ, though all that you see in them somehow has its hidden heart in the crypt, Mary's special home. In her name we greet you, and we greet her in you. You are the mirrors of Mary's heart. You are the laboring and suffering instruments of her

motherly care. You bring to us the radiance of her peace. Thank you for coming, dear Sisters."

The next day, Sunday the 13th, we greeted the laity. We rejoice in this glorious and happy day which has risen over Mount Saviour, a day on which the sun shows us all its splendor and we take in all its goodness and warmth. You know that it has been the constant prayer of the monks here that Mount Saviour be a home built in the sun. The sun shows us two things: it has unity in itself, and it shares itself, bestows itself upon others. These two actions complement one another. We see our new monastery as a home combining this unity and sharing.

"Human life can neither build nor be built without a center. The center for us who are of the Faith is our Lord Jesus Christ. We have tried to achieve centeredness in these buildings, the chapel as the hub of an overall plan, a court as the place on which the two new buildings converge, a garth at the heart of the three buildings to give them perspective and bind them compactly together as a kind of replica of the holy city. Of the two new buildings this desire for centeredness is probably more evident in the west building, the residence of the monks, which so clearly expresses our unity in Christ and the sharing of our lives. For our life to ripen we need a certain concentration and quiet, since the essence of our life is contemplation and restraint. To crown this blessed hill we have presumed to build three tabernacles to try to lead a life drawn to the imitation of the mystery of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ on the holy mountain, to try to express the unity of our being and the sharing of our being that the monastic life of its very nature demands. True, we aim ideally to contemplate the glory of our Lord Jesus as he manifested himself on the mountain of the Transfiguration, but we also try, in our architecture as well as in the pattern of our life, to indicate that the discerning eye of faith will perceive that Christ still manifests himself in these our own days. God gives us the grace to bring this mystery of the Transfiguration to life among men!

"Though this building is for monks, you all have a real share in the life lived here. We monks love to share what God's grace gives our poverty. Thirteen years ago we started from nothing on this hilltop and the experience of our beginnings will stay with us and be a constant reminder of our poverty and complete dependence on God's gifts. Indeed we always lived and always live in grace. We depend on help and we shall always appreciate that everything that is here now is, through you, a gift of the Lord who has loved our hill. The poor ones of Christ are grateful for the house you have built for them. May their life be a constant hymn of thanksgiving to the heavenly Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit!"

On Monday the 14th, day of the visit of the bishop and 500 invited guests, we took the occasion of supper served in the still unfinished refectory and chapter room to take stock of some of the friendships that lie behind the accomplishments of these past years. Having followed the bishop joyfully through the buildings as he blessed the various rooms, and remembering his other visits here, it was no effort to affirm: "We are so happy and so grateful that we can today greet our beloved Bishop James Kearney. We greet him as representative of Christ and of our Holy Father Pope Paul VI. Since our first days, Bishop Kearney has shown this monastery much kindness and fatherly love. We know that he understands deeply our life as one which has no other purpose but a striving for closer union with our Lord Jesus Christ under the guidance of the Rule of Saint Benedict.

"The blessing of the Father builds the house for the children. Bishop Kearney came here first on August 6, 1951, to bless St. Peter's. At that time we had only three rooms to bless, so the route was shorter than today. To give the day an episcopal character we added the groundbreaking for a chapel to be built at a later date. Bishop Kearney came to Mount Saviour several other times and always left a blessing behind him. Through the imposition of his hands, four members of the community were ordained to the priesthood. Again we thank Bishop Kearney for this visit and the sympathy he shows for our life.

"The history of building is a history of cooperation. The glory of this building bears out this fact. We thank our architects and builders for all their time and patience. Mr. J. Sanford Shanley of New York City designed the original octagonal chapel. Mr. Ronald Cassetti, of the architectural firm of Hirsch and Cassetti, of Elmira, designed the two new buildings and the renovated chapel. It is to him that we owe the fact that our abstract ideas have been expressed in beautiful architectural forms. Mr. Arthur Welliver and Mr. Robert Voorhees, contractor and foreman, together with all the workers, deserve this expression of warm thanks for their labor to bring the buildings to their present beauty.

"The list of our benefactors is long, indeed, but I would like to single out two people in a most particular way. In Mr. H. Lyman Stebbins I greet all our friends. It was through the generous material help of Mr. Stebbins that many of our dreams materialized. I commemorate, too, the late Gertrude Newell. May the Lord grant her eternal peace. It was her bequest which made it possible for us to think of building a monastery of these dimensions.

"Speaking of the dimensions of the monastery makes one think in terms of time as well as of space, because the monastic community, like a family, develops slowly in a certain environment and over the years. Thinking of the brethren who will live in these buildings, and who have lived in provisional quarters of varying quality during the years since the foundation impels me to express to them a word of profound gratitude whose roots are deep in the charity of Christ that has kept us together in extraordinary living conditions and will unite us even more wonderfully in the more normal monastic environment we anticipate in these our new buildings. It will be a difficult step to take, from the old familiar quarters to the new. As you might imagine there were many lively discussions about what the proposed new should contain, and these will probably continue as we try to adapt to the new as it actually is. One can only anticipate that the spirit of the community will not change, and, in this hope, express thanks to all whose monastic profession has, with the grace of God, brought the community of Mount Saviour into being."

With these words we close our part of the Chronicle and make way for the one whom at this point we introduced at the great gathering of our friends in the new refectory and chapter room on September 14, His Excellency, the Most Reverend James E. Kearney, D. D., Bishop of Rochester.

H. Cameron Winzen, O.S.B.

Dedication Day Address of Bishop Kearney

"My first thought is the thought that is in the mind of all of us. Our sincere congratulations to Dom Damasus Winzen and his community for the realization of a great dream. Thirteen years ago I came down here and Dom Damasus had at that time a great dream in his heart. One of the poets of old wrote these impressive lines:

Let me dream as of old by the river,
And be loved for the dream alway;
For a dreamer lives forever,
And a worker dies in a day.

— John Boyle O'Reilly

"Being a dreamer, one of the most gracious gifts that his friends could do, was to make that dream come true.

"We are happy today because the dream of the dreamer, a very zealous, devoted, and pious priest, has been made a reality. What we attended today has been God's magnificent gift of making a holy dream come true.

"Needless to say, I am happy to have the privilege of blessing this building and to hang the crucifix of our Divine Lord on the wall. I can think of no more beautiful way of celebrating this feast of the Holy Cross than by hanging the Cross of Christ in a new spot. I have often said that in the life of a bishop, there are two greatly rewarding things. One is to build a new tabernacle and the other is the opportunity to hang the Cross of Christ on another building.

"The hanging of a new crucifix means an opportunity for the influence of Christ to be felt in the community. The Evangelist tells us when He went about the streets of Galilee: 'Goodness went out from Him and touched everything.' The erection of this monastery is a significant thing for the whole Diocese. The power of the Holy Spirit cannot be confined within its walls. Like the power of our Divine Lord, it will go far beyond these walls and influence every element in the community.

"I have always been impressed by the devotion and love of Our Lord for the mountains. The mountains run throughout the Gospel Story. On the day we laid the foundation here, I made bold to say, 'Jesus will love this mountain.' The ceremony we have seen today is to me a graphic expression of this love. I and all the people of the



Diocese of Rochester are very grateful for this. Jesus has loved Mount Saviour as He loved the mountains of Judea. We could not ask for any more."

From Dedication Day Correspondence

"On the occasion of the Consecration of Mount Saviour Monastery, the Holy Father cordially imparts to the Very Rev. Damasus Winzen, Prior, and to his religious community, as a pledge of abiding divine assistance and heavenly graces, a paternal apostolic blessing."

Cardinal Cicognani,
Vatican City

"The House of Bread, Bethlehem, is united to the House of the Saviour on the feast day of glory which means such a leap forward in your monastic growth. I trust the structure is everything you wished for and that the Lord's Blessing will perfect it as an instrument of His Service."

Rev. Mother Benedict Duss, Prioress
Regina Laudis, O.S.B.
Bethlehem, Conn.

"Now the monks won't need so much stickum on their shoes to stay on the hill when the winter winds howl."

A Mother of a Brother.

"It was my first visit to a monastery, and I had never given much thought to what life might be like in one. I was impressed by the happy countenances and personalities of all the men, and sensed a genuine spiritual joy among them."

A Methodist minister.

"I am happy that after so many years of hard, but devoted and happy labor, you are now to be sheltered in suitable buildings of your own. I believe you know something of my feeling for Mount Saviour and for all of you who live and labor there: you are a candle alight in a gloomy desert, and every day, morning and night, I thank the Sacred Heart for the ray of hope you maintain."

An Anglican clergyman

"Our hearts will long remember the joy that was present at every turn."

An Oblate.

Commemoration of the Deceased

On the approaching feast of All Souls, the Church reminds us that those who die in Christ are members of His Mystical Body. This is why for centuries the cemeteries were around Church buildings. In monastic architecture the same custom was followed. The monks were buried on the north side of the Church. The abbots often found their place of rest in the cloister. In modern times these customs have been abandoned more and more.

One of the features of our new building is the fact that the cemetery is part of the monastery layout. It will be located on the plot of land west of the chapel. Thus the deceased members of the community will find their resting place within the precincts of the community home. As an expression of our Faith, we will have a figure of the Risen Christ in this cemetery. This teak wood piece will be done by the Polish sculptor, Joseph Stachura, and is a gift of Mr. Chauncey Stillman.

Our present cemetery for oblates and friends is situated in a field on a hillside to the west of the chapel. Here we would like to have a statue of the Good Shepherd carrying a lamb, for which Peter Watts, the English stone sculptor, has submitted a design. In recent months three people were buried in this cemetery. Two good Christian mothers who wanted to be near their sons in the community, found their rest in our earth. Marion Kelly, Br. Hugh's mother, was a native of Jamesville, N. Y. Elise von Rast of New York City was Fr. David's grandmother but she was truly a grandmother to all of us.

Anthony Ekes died suddenly on August 11, at 48 years of age. Tony was our close friend and neighbor from the first days of Mount Saviour. He helped us in innumerable ways to find our way through those "ditch-digging" years. Fine candlesticks, kneelers and a lectern came from Tony's metal working shop to add beauty to our chapel. Tony worked on stair rails for the new buildings on the day before he died. We pray for Tony and the family he left behind. There are Margaret, the three children, and Matthew and Rose Ekes, Tony's parents, who moved here nine years ago. We extend to them our deep sympathy on their great loss.

With these three recent burials, there are now eight graves in our hillside cemetery. The five others belong to our Brother Christopher Class, Francis Medina (Oblate Brother Aelred), Joseph and Catherine Hofbauer, and little Joseph Hays. Joseph was the grandson of Carlton J. J. Hayes, also recently deceased. "May they rest in peace." We want to be worthy guardians of these graves.

Besides the above mentioned, we would like to recommend to your prayers during the month of November, the following deceased friends: Leon Crook (Oblate Brother Louis), Harold Schultz, Ludwig Rampft, Eugenio Battista, Dr. W. T. Boland, Margaret Laux, Antoinette Cerio, and Brigid Scanlin.

In the litany which we sing before Compline, we pray,

"For all who sleep in the Lord, that with the saints they may rest where there is neither sickness, sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting. Lord have mercy!"

During the month of November this prayer will take on a special meaning. As in previous years we ask you to send us names of your beloved dead. We will include them in our Masses and supplications during the month of the Holy Souls.

DEDICATION DAY BOOKLETS are available to those who would like them. They contain a statement of Mount Saviour's aims, a brief chronology of the monastery, a word from the architect about the design of the new buildings, and pictures of the buildings themselves. Please return the form included on the fly-leaf if you would like one sent to you.

GIVE ONE SQUARE FOOT AS YOUR BUILDING MEMORIAL

Average cost of the new building is about fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per square foot. Many have already given a square foot — will you?

GUEST HOUSE

Friends are reminded that the monastery and guest house telephones are answered only between 8:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

MOUNT SAVIOUR SHOP

for

NEW FALL BOOKS

on the

Council, Liturgy, Ecumenism, Role of the Laity

—
Ask for book list.