



# Mount Saviour Chronicle

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Dear Friends of Mount Saviour,

To travel means to leave one's home in order to enter into new horizons. Today we all travel a great deal, and I myself have just returned from a journey I want to share with you. But before I do it might be worthwhile for all of us to stop and consider the spiritual significance of travelling. There are some travellers who never really leave home: their minds are closed. Others forget everything they learned at home: they lack roots, perspective. In order to fruitfully travel one needs an open mind, and a home. Our Lord was this kind of traveller. "I came forth from the Father," he told his disciples, "and have come into the world. Now I leave the world and go to the Father." The beginning and end of his journey — his home — was with the Father. The love of his Father guided his steps. And yet he was open to us all, embraced us all, died for us all. He came into our world alone, but he returned to his Father, not alone, but "leading captivity captive." All of us who have risen with Christ in Baptism follow him to the Father, to reach that perfect liberty with which Christ has made us free.

When I look back on my journey during September and October in this light, three large horizons open up before me: Christian brotherhood at Pendle Hill (the Quaker center near Philadelphia); the love of family and friends in the Rhineland and in Austria; union in the spirit of St. Benedict at the Congress of Abbots in Rome.

## PENDLE HILL

I have attended many ecumenical meetings in the past. Not one equalled, or came near, the one we had at Pendle Hill from September 7-11. The seclusion and charm of the place; the quality of the people gathered there (not merely their theological background, but their human and spiritual qualities as well); the genuine warmth of hospitality which Douglas Steere (Chairman of the Friends' World Committee) and his wife Dorothy lavished on us; and finally the papers and discussions which allowed us to plumb the depths of prayer, its theology, its relation to man, to the world, to the community: it all flowered into a living experience of unity and friendship in Christ. We lived under the roof of the Friends. And what a large roof it is! All over the world the Friends work for peace, to heal the wounds of mankind. The Friends are men of peace because they are men of the Spirit; they serve the needs of all men, all races, all beliefs. This work flows from a deep spiritual life, from attention to the Word that speaks in silence. It is this truly contemplative element that makes a monk feel so much at home with the Friends. I was very pleased when it was proposed that next year's meeting of our "Institute of Spirituality" be held at Mount Saviour. We hope to extend the same kind of hospitality we so gratefully received at Pendle Hill.

## THE RHINELAND AND AUSTRIA

Unfortunately, I was unable to stay at Pendle Hill to the end of the session, as I was due to visit my home monastery, Maria Laach (near Cologne in the Rhineland), before going to Rome for the Abbots' Congress. Moreover I hoped to give our Br. Francis McGuire, who was on his way to Rome for studies, a little taste of Germany before he was lost to the glories of Italy and France. Br. Francis and I arrived in Cologne on the morning of September 11 and were greeted there by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Richardson of Manhasset, New York. The trip along the Rhine with Br. Francis and the Richardsons turned out to be a sheer delight.

From the Splendid Hotel Petersberg we drove to the lovely Romanesque church of Schwarzheindorf, and from there to Sonzig, which has a newly restored Romanesque parish church, and on to Maria Laach, beautiful Maria Laach, with its wooded hills, its lake and its magnificent church, the purest example of Romanesque style in the Rhineland. Then came the romantic castle of the counts of Eltz, and a delightful visit with the countess, and finally the Rhine valley with its castles, walled towns and vineyards. September 17 was the feast of St. Hildegard, greatly venerated in the entire Rhineland as the holy foundress of a Benedictine monastery of nuns, which now lives on in the Abbey of St. Hildegard near Ruedesheim. It was just the right day to be there and to participate in the festive Office and Mass, so magnificently sung by the nuns. The abbess (Mother Fortunata Fischer) and her community could not hear enough about Mount Saviour, in a holy curiosity that rejoiced in the beautiful variety of forms which Benedictine life takes in various parts of the world. No doubt, my roots are here in this blessed country whose meaning is so well expressed by this monastery, which might be called, "the monastery among the vineyards." There is, in fact, a deep relation between the centuries-old cultivation of the grape and the continuity of the monastic life . . . I would even say of the life of the Church.

This was evident not only in the Rhineland but in Austria too. I must confess that Austria was a new discovery for me, a conversion I should say. In the fire of such warm and generous hospitality as I experienced with "Uncle Egger" and the Schottenkloster in Vienna, in the beautiful house of Bishop Zauner of Linz, at Kloster Erlach, in the home of Balduin and Leni Schwarz in Salzburg, rose, out of the ashes of old Prussian prejudice, a new picture of the gentle, cultured Austrian Catholic — inseparable from Austria's wine. It played as large a role in Austria as it did in the Rhineland. Everywhere it was the symbol of sharing with one's guest the best in the human heart.

I do not want to close this chapter on monks and friends and wine along the Rhine without telling you that



FOURTEENTH CENTURY School of Paris Madonna donated to Mount Saviour in 1951 by the late Otto Spaeth.

the best visit I had was with my dear "little sister", Paula, who, despite her 81 years, valiantly travelled to Rome to see me.

#### THE ABBOTS' CONGRESS

To arrive at Sant' Anselmo in Rome for the Abbots' Congress, immediately after visiting the "monasteries in the vineyards" makes one realize that Benedictine monasticism has become more "sober" in the course of the last century. Still, I must say that the *sobria ebrietas* of the Spirit was more in evidence at this Congress than at any previous one.

One hundred and seventy-five abbots and conventual priors came from all over the world. A group of about twenty priors of recent Benedictine foundations in Africa and Asia had been invited to join the session as auditors. This assembly represented a wide variety of observances which developed in the course of history. They could be classified in three groups. The first comprises the "liturgical abbeys," which put emphasis on the solemn public celebration of the liturgy. The second group, by far the largest in number, is engaged mainly in educational work. Finally, there emerged at this Congress a third group comprised of monasteries that are characterized by "a more simple life." Not yet organized into congregations, they are represented mainly in the "New World": North and South America, Africa, Asia. Mount Saviour belongs to this last group, which is characterized by greater simplicity, smaller size, and the unification of the monastic family (that is, there is only one category of membership, with no distinction between "choir-monk" and "lay-brother"). Members of these communities usually are not priests, and their monasteries have more manual labor and *lectio* than is common in most Benedictine monasteries today.

The fact that the Abbots' Congress is not a General Chapter with legislative powers, and did not convene for the purpose of setting up universal rules of liturgical or monastic observance, made it much easier for all to discuss the problems confronting monasticism today; this was done in an atmosphere of objectivity, freedom, and natural understanding. The Congress proved its value as a means of exchange of ideas and of experience and mutual consultation and encouragement. Although the session had to be prolonged until October 4, we took leave of one

another with the feeling that we were just beginning to really get into things. At the same time we also realized that much had already been accomplished, and that this Congress differed profoundly from any other previous Congress because of the new situation caused by the Second Vatican Council. In fact, this Congress was only a beginning: we decided to have another session in a year or so, and to use the time between the two sessions to set up commissions for the intensive study of various problems concerning monastic worship, monastic law, and monastic spirituality.

During this first session the Congress of Abbots surveyed the field and set up the machinery for the work to be accomplished in the interval before the second session. This coming year should be a time of deep searching in fidelity to the authentic spirit of monastic tradition, and in openness to the needs of the Church and of man.

On the occasion of the approaching feast of the Epiphany of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ I ask all our oblates and friends to pray for the entire Benedictine Confederation that we, as a group, may open wide the gates for the King of Glory to enter into our monasteries and make us instruments of his peace. May he also come to you, drive away your anxieties and fear, all discontent, all sadness, all strife, and fill you with his light and with his joy, he who is — beneath all the changes! — the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Fr. Herman Wingen, O.S.B.

## MONKS AND STUDIES

Study and that special type of monastic reading known as *lectio divina* are an integral part of our life. The Rule of St. Benedict apportions the periods of the monastic day in harmony with the seasons of the year. The Holy Rule allows for more manual labor in the spring and summer months: this is the time of the muscles. The autumn and winter schedule gives more time to intellectual pursuits: these are the months with a naturally quiet and meditative rhythm.

A group of us have cooperated in formulating a program of studies that is aimed at helping the whole community, but especially the younger monks who are in process of formation. We have undertaken this studies program to enable them to sink their roots deeply and search confidently in the vast field of ideas and to aid them in their pursuit of the monastic ideal. The program, which is not formulated primarily with a view to the priesthood, is planned to last for eight years, following an Introduction to Scripture and a Monastic History class in the novitiate. The Fathers of the Church, Liturgy, Scripture, Theology, Philosophy, and the Humanities will be taken two at a time, some of them extending over several years. The program may spend a good part of its time in the hands of the revision committee, but we have made a start.

This year Fr. Hugh is teaching the first year of Theology, Anthropology, beginning with creation in general and moving to a study of man in particular. Fr. Basil's Scripture course this year is conducted as a seminar and deals with the books of Joshua and Kings — made easier by

the new Jerusalem Bible. Beginning students need to increase their acquaintance with a subject through extensive reading. But they have a further need to learn by experience how to approach a problem and how to relate what they know to what they are learning. It is the task of the teacher to impart this experience as much as it is his task to give his students a conspectus of any given subject. The tutorial and the seminar type of class seem to meet these requirements better than the lecture.

The "elders" who have passed beyond the study program are hard at work searching into monastic life under the tutelage of Vatican II, studying the great themes of the Scripture which are the sources of our life. Fr. Martin is guiding the seminars in which we talk over our findings, and intends us to go on to a study of the monastic fathers, and contemporary needs. It is a "pastoral year," a time in which to deepen our understanding of the place of monastic life and our own life at Mount Saviour in the economy of salvation.

During October those who needed it were offered an intensive course in French. The teacher was Mrs. Albert Reyburn of Montreal; she was the first woman to become an oblate of Mount Saviour. Now she enjoys an even greater fame as the first visiting *maitresse*. If ever there was French without tears it was during those wonderful days. Knowledge of another language adds a new dimension to our lives, and opens to us a dialogue with monks whose deep knowledge and love become our treasures as well. Faithful to her Swiss origins, on the last day of class Mrs. Reyburn produced a chocolate miracle, that, mingled with Uli's *espresso*, made one feel that the longed-for days had come. We are most grateful to her and to

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#### SOME TEXTS ON STUDIES

As his gift for Reverend Father on his feast day in December, Br. Peter assembled *Some Texts on Education*. We quote some of its "good words" to illustrate the spirit of monastic studies.

*Real culture lives by sympathies and admirations, not by dislikes and disdains.*

William James

*God is that Object to admire which (or, if you like, to appreciate which) is simply to be awake, to have entered the real world; not to appreciate which is to have lost the greatest experience, and in the end to have lost all. The incomplete and crippled lives of those who are*

*tone deaf, have never been in love, never known true friendship, never cared for a good book, never enjoyed the feeling of the morning air on their cheeks, never (I am one of these) enjoyed football, are faint images images of it.*

C. S. Lewis

*We will gradually, ruminatingly, get the whole of history unrolled before us. The all-important job is, I think, at each step to feel how rich, how inexhaustible, how alive it all really is. That is why I am trying to get such words as "Rome," "Athens," etc., to mean a great rich world to you.*

Baron von Hugel

*If humanism is the study of the classics for the reader's personal good, to enable him to enrich his personality, the medieval monks are in the fullest sense humanists. They had in view a useful and personal end: their education. And what, in fact, did they get from the classics? They took the best these authors had to give. Through contact with them they developed and refined their own human faculties.*

Dom Jean Leclercq

*Silence is essential to the life of study because to learn means to listen and one cannot listen when one is talking.*

Victor White

*If you are a theologian, you will pray truly; and if you pray truly, you are a theologian.*

Evagrius Ponticus

## A NEW BISHOP, AN OLD FRIEND

Reverend Father Damasus and Br. John represented the community at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Rochester, on December 15 when Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was installed as Bishop of Rochester. On that day the People of God of the diocese gave a warm welcome to their new bishop. We at Mount Saviour are one with them in their joy and in wishing Bishop Sheen a long and fruitful ministry in our diocese.

The beautiful address which our retiring and much loved Bishop James E. Kearney gave on that day was characteristic of the simplicity of heart, warmth, and depth of understanding which he has shown to Mount Saviour ever since 1951, when he gave us permission to establish our monastery in his diocese. He came to Mount Saviour a number of times and always left behind a blessing. In 1951 Bishop Kearney visited and blessed the tiny monastery at St. Peter's and broke ground for the chapel of Our Lady Queen of Peace. Through the imposition of his hands four members of the community, Fr. Benedict Tighe, Fr. James Kelly, Fr. Martin Boler, and Fr. Basil De Pinto, were ordained to the priesthood.

On August 6, 1961 Bishop Kearney returned for our tenth birthday and broke ground for the new monastic buildings. He blessed these buildings on September 14, 1964. On that occasion Bishop Kearney addressed words to the community and friends which we will always re-

member: "Jesus loved the hills, and Mount Saviour is certainly one of the hills that Jesus loves today because here Benedictine monks continue to preach Christ's doctrine by their lives of toil and humility, and sanctify their lives and ours by the prayers offered in this chapel."

## DECEASED FRIENDS

We recommend to your prayers the following friends who have departed this life since the spring of 1966: Fr. Leonard Kujawski, Fr. William Reed, Harry Bassler, J. A. Corcoran, E. Carlyle Hamilton, Ivan Johnson, Mary Barnwell, Mary Connelly, Anne Hastings, Julia Lynch. We remember them daily in our prayers and ask you to join us.

We would also like to single out, if we may, three friends who were particularly close to Mount Saviour since our very first days.

Otto Spaeth was brought to us through his work in fostering American sacred art. Mr. Spaeth was (to quote his eulogy) "always open to the new, imaginative approach. Yet he valued what wisdom had accumulated before him." These two aspects of Mr. Spaeth survive in the two statues he gave us: one is a fourteenth-century madonna which is the focal point of our shrine to Our Lady Queen of Peace; the other is a statue of Our Lady by the contemporary French sculptor, Lambert Rucki. In deep sympathy we are united to his widow, Eloise, who carries on the work her husband began.

Anne Quirk of Eire, Pennsylvania was a lover of books — a true bibliophile. She became acquainted with Mount Saviour through her friendship with our Br. Christopher Claas, of happy memory. What Mr. Spaeth was in the field of art, Miss Quirk was in the field of books: a connoisseur. Because of her great love of books, Anne was particularly concerned that our library increase in quality

(over)



BISHOP KEARNEY at Mount Saviour, September 14, 1964.



Our foundation in Abiquiu, New Mexico. Although Hope, Pennsylvania, is still under construction, the community and a group of friends.

Church, Grand Island, New York, and from Catholic churches in the Buffalo area. On September 26 - 27 twelve members of the Episcopalian clergy of the Diocese of Rochester came here for a two-day meeting on prayer. The Ministerial Association of Elmira held its monthly meeting at Mount Saviour on November 9; it was followed by dinner with the community and a tour of the monastery buildings.

### WE ARE ALL BROTHERS

At a community meeting on November 19 we decided to discontinue our custom of calling all the solemnly professed monks (including those who were not priests) "Father." The custom was causing a considerable amount of confusion, especially among our guests. Moreover, we wanted to give expression to the fact that we are all brothers living together in the love of Christ. With this in mind, we decided that, among ourselves, all of us would refer to each other as "Brother." Outside the monastery (and in this *Chronicle*), however, the priests of the community will continue to be known as "Father." As a result of this new arrangement we would have two Br. Bernards in the community; to avoid this, Fr. Bernard Collins has changed his monastic name to Brendan. We hope these changes will simplify matters for our guests and bring us all closer together as brothers in the Lord.

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and quantity. Her gifts of books to the library, both before and after her death, have indeed enriched Mount Saviour.

Joseph MacNamara of Elmira was, from our earliest days, a faithful friend. Fr. Gregory, who is in a particularly good position to appreciate this, expressed it in these words: "A genuine concern for our necessary material welfare prompted all the help and advice Joseph MacNamara gave us, and led him to encourage others in the Elmira community to support us. He was concerned not only about big projects, such as the rebuilding of our road and the construction of the monastery, but with all the details of our daily business. His own abilities were manifest in a very successful career, but, above all, his character shone out in his genial and firm manner, his generosity, integrity, and solid piety."

## COMMUNITY NEWS

On December 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Br. Joseph San Fratello, of Batavia, New York, and Br. Bernard Lambert of Cleveland, Ohio, made their solemn profession as monks of Mount Saviour. We ask you to join us in praying that their monastic consecration will be a source of grace, peace, and new life for the entire Church.

On July 10, Br. Paul (Robert) Thomas of Taunton, Mass. received the monastic habit and entered our novitiate.

#### DEDICATION DAY

Dedication Day, September 18, was certainly memorable. The weather was ideal; over three thousand visitors came (some from as far away as Ohio and Washington, D.C.); the tours of the new monastery were filled; the Arts and Crafts Show drew large crowds; the Pine City V.F.D. Band was splendid, as usual; the Food Tent, Cake Booth, and Variety Tent were completely sold out; the raffle was a success; and the children, who were very much in evidence, contributed a special kind of excitement and joy to the day. But none of this would have been possible without the selfless and enthusiastic help of our D-Day Committee, made up of about a hundred friends and neighbors of Mount Saviour, and the Boy Scouts of the troops of St. Patrick's and St. Casimir's Parishes, Elmira, who assisted them during the day. On October 9, after the crowds had gone, we invited our D-Day Committee to come back to Mount Saviour for a quiet day of recollection; many did come, and we were able to express again our deep gratitude for all their help.

#### SPECIAL VISITORS

Abbot Urban Bomm of Maria Laach, who was in this country for the Fifth International Congress of Sacred Music, spent a few days with us in early September. Abbot Urban and Reverend Father Damasus were novices together at Maria Laach, and their reunion here was a source of great joy to them and to us.

Anthony Milner, the British composer and musicologist, currently Lecturer in Music at the University of London, spent two days with us in August. His lecture on contemporary Church music, illustrated with tapes made at Loyola University, New Orleans (where Mr. Milner was teaching this summer) was extremely helpful, as were his practical suggestions about our own liturgical music.



THE NEW CHAPEL of Christ of the Desert Monastery, our foundation in Abiquiu, New Mexico. Although the chapel, designed by George Nakashima, of New Hope, Pennsylvania, is still under construction, Midnight Mass was celebrated in it this Christmas for the community and a group of friends.

Fr. Daniel Berrigan, who was in this area for a special workshop at Cornell during the summer, stopped in for a flying visit on August 14, and spoke words of peace to the community and a large group of friends.

Roger Corless, one of our oblates, presently working on a doctorate in Buddhist studies at the University of Wisconsin, gave us an excellent outdoor lecture on Buddhist monasticism this summer, followed by an unusually satisfying question and answer period.

#### ANNUAL RETREAT

Our annual retreat was given by Fr. Boniface Luyckx, O. Praem, an authority on sacramental theology from Belgium. Fr. Boniface is presently working to establish a house of his Order in the Congo, and his report on this project was a high point of his stay with us.

#### ECUMENICAL MEETINGS

We have recently had a number of fruitful ecumenical meetings. On November 4-6 an Ecumenical Week End, that grew out of some "Living Room Dialogues" organized by Johannes and Elizabeth Prast of Grand Island, New York, was held at Mount Saviour. Most of the participants came from Trinity Evangelical United Brethren

Church, Grand Island, New York, and from Catholic churches in the Buffalo area. On September 26-27 twelve members of the Episcopalian clergy of the Diocese of Rochester came here for a two-day meeting on prayer. The Ministerial Association of Elmira held its monthly meeting at Mount Saviour on November 9; it was followed by dinner with the community and a tour of the monastery buildings.

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