



# Mount Saviour Chronicle

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*Sermon given by Rev. Father Damasus  
at Mount Saviour in the holy Easter night.*

We have greeted the light of Christ; we have listened to its praises; we have renewed our baptismal vows; we have sung the new "Alleluia"; and now we have heard the glad tidings of the Lord's Resurrection. Truly, the night is as clear as the day! Look at this chapel! Light has swallowed up darkness. Everywhere the candles are burning. They remind us of the lampstands that are burning before the Lord in the opening vision of the Apocalypse. They also remind us of the critical message John the Evangelist has to convey to the Church of Ephesus: "I know of your achievements, your hard work and your endurance. You don't tolerate evil men . . . yes, endurance you have: you have borne up under my cause and never flagged. But I have this against you: that you have lost the first love. Think from what a height you have fallen, repent and do as you once did. Otherwise, if you do not repent, I will remove your lamp from its place." (Apoc. 2:2-5) Critical words indeed! Here are the lamps of Mount Saviour. For sixteen years we have been celebrating the Easter night. We should ask ourselves: what about the first love of this community? We should all ask ourselves this question. The Church is an institution that can count nearly two thousand years of history. Is the first love still alive in her? Church renewal can only mean our returning to the first love. Is that what we are doing?

A critical question indeed! We cannot answer it without knowing what Holy Scripture understands by this "first love." If it is not achievement, hard work, endurance, bearing up under God's cause without flagging, all the condition for success, what is it? What is left? In this Easter night we see the first love portrayed before our eyes. You have heard the proclamation: "After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the grave." They came with spices to anoint Jesus. They loved Him, beyond His apparent failure, beyond His death. They loved Him with a love for which the beloved can never die. This is the first love. It is not love of a cause, but love of a person. The apostles had given up, because their cause had been lost. Mary Magdalene was not worried about a cause. She was looking for the friend of her heart. "My Lord — where have they put my Lord?" Jesus calls her: "Mary!" She recognizes His voice, and from the depth of her heart she answers: "Rabboni — my Master!" Christ is the bridegroom of her soul, and this is what we understand by first love. "Your face I seek, O my Lord."

This love is always in danger of being lost. The Church is an institution, necessarily affected by custom, convenience, routine, legalism. These form a system, which we call Catholicism. Though we may rally to the cause, yet the first love has been lost. May it rise again in our hearts in the light of this night. Let us seek the Lord's face, that we may be transformed into His very image, from glory to glory. (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18)



THE RISEN CHRIST, SENDER OF HIS SPIRIT  
Painted by Robert Rombusch.  
Given to Mount Saviour by Father H. A. Reinhold

How does this first love gain entrance to our hearts? It comes when we realize our guilt and sin. We have to repent like Mary Magdalene and St. Peter. Mary entered a personal intimacy with Christ as the bridegroom of her heart through weeping for her sins. St. Peter came to the moment in which his manly bravery collapsed in the face of a servant maid: "Do you know this man? No, I don't know him." Then the Lord turned to Peter and told him by a glance of His eyes that Peter's denial was forgiven by an act of infinite personal love. Then Peter entered the first love, weeping bitterly. When asked later "Do you love me?", Peter could answer, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." This is indeed a personal mystery between you and me. "You know that I love you" means

first love. The first step, my dear friends, toward love is the personal realization of our need for grace and mercy. It is the answer of our heart to the fact that we have been forgiven. Our first love is the fruit of the love with which the Father loved us first, sending His Son as a propitiation for our sins. "If God has so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (I John 4:10, 11) Just as Christ broke down the wall of partition between the Father and mankind, so does our first love break through the walls of prejudices, of social barriers, of differences in education. It is not limited to those of equal standing or cultural level. It reaches out for those who are in need, for those who are difficult to approach, for God's poor ones. The first love compels us to carry in and with Christ the sins of all men. It makes us realize that we are not here to judge, but to save. As soon as we feel the sins of others as our own sins, a flood of forgiveness for our brothers pours into our hearts. This is first love — infinite forgiveness for one another, and this means also the willingness to suffer for one another. First love means sacrifice. It is patient, bears with all things, endures all things. Why do we celebrate this Easter Vigil in the night? Because we want to enter into the night of suffering, knowing that out of this night true love is born, the first love, the love that is stronger than death. The Lord was hanging on the cross. All glory was taken away. Night enveloped the earth. Not only did Peter no longer know Him, but all the Apostles "went into their own." Only St. John stayed, the representative of the first love; Our Lady was there, Mary Magdalene was there — the women, God's poor ones. They stood by the cross, because they loved Jesus for His own sake.

We are fast approaching the time when, if it be the will of God, the Church in the United States won't be as glorious as it was just a few years ago. There was a time when one took pride in being identified with the Catholic Church. One belonged to a strong social organization, with power, money, prestige. Today all this is changing. The bastions seem to fall apart. The number of those who put their entire selves at the disposal of the Church is dwindling. We Americans love to be associated with success. Will American Catholics have the spirit of the first love? Will they stand by the Church in the night of suffering?

"Eye has not seen or ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what things God has prepared for those who love him." (I Cor. 2:9) Heaven is the final step into the fullness of the first love. Faced with the idea of an eternity in heaven, we Nordic-Germanic people always ask ourselves the fatal question: "What are we going to do in heaven?" What about the racial question there? and the social question? No sick, no poor, no doctors, no nurses, no social workers, no teachers! What is left but boredom? Dear friends, I am afraid these are typical questions which indicate that those who ask them have lost sight of the first love. Could it be that we ourselves are the Church of Ephesus, Christians who love achievement, hard work, endurance, devotion to God's cause, but have lost the first love? If we dread heaven because nothing is left there but the first love, love for love's sake, we have indeed fallen from a great height. We are not ready to enter it. We are not ready to celebrate. Heaven is a feast. It is the wedding-feast of the Lamb. Let us put on the festive garment of the first love. Let us learn how to sing. Let us learn how to give

thanks. Freed from the slavery of purposes, let us enter into the everlasting meaning of love for love's sake.

In this night when we celebrate the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and you receive Holy Communion, take the risen Christ, and "put him like a seal upon your heart, like a seal upon your arm." (Cant. 8:6) The heart is your innermost person, the seat of your first love. With your arm you embrace your neighbor. Many waters will not quench this love. Neither floods nor time will drown it because "love is stronger than death." This is what we celebrate in this night.

In the fire of this first love let us move forward on our way. Let our lighted candles be the sign that we are children of the light, children, that is, of the first love. Then the Lord will come and kiss us with the kiss of His mouth. *Maranatha* — Come Lord Jesus — give us the kiss of eternal life.

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Dear Friends of Mount Saviour,

These blessed fifty days after Easter, this season of the "Alleluia," is the right time to commemorate the *pascha* of two of our closest friends, Msgr. Wolodymyr Pylypec and Father H. A. Reinhold. Both were true children of the First Love, living under the radiant light of the Risen Christ, and in the warmth of the Spirit of Pentecost.

There existed a striking similarity between them and two outstanding apostles: Msgr. Pylypec was the image of St. John the Evangelist, while H.A.R. showed all the traits familiar to us of St. Thomas.

Ever since Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture of the Last Supper we think of St. John as a youth with an angelic face, a little on the languishing side. The Eastern Church has a completely different picture of St. John. The icons show him as the *Leitourgos*, as the "High Priest," who, in his old age, had matured into the eternal love that Christ had poured into the disciple whom He loved. Msgr. Pylypec was just this. We shall never forget the way he celebrated the Divine Liturgy here in our chapel. One felt immediately that the "house of the Lord" was his real home. He really and truly celebrated the Holy Mysteries.

Msgr. Pylypec's earthly home was the Ukraine, and the Church of Kiev was spiritually his mother. His wife was killed when the Russians advanced, at the end of the Second World War, into Carpathia. The military catastrophe forced Msgr. Pylypec to flee with his three children to Germany. The love of his wife and of his children always remained deeply rooted in his heart, and when he came to this country one can say that he had two places where he truly felt at home, with his children in Washington, D. C., and with the monks of Mount Saviour.

H. A. Reinhold was unmistakably a Christian of the West. He was born in Hamburg, and Hamburg is a complex city, with a strong tradition of independence. He inherited much of the gift of realism, critical judgment, discernment that grows out of the wide range of knowledge of human affairs proper to a city which for centuries was accustomed to dealing with the world at large.

H.A.R. was a "citizen of the world." The constant widening of his horizons remained one of his main preoccupations all through life. His library, which is now here at Mount Saviour, shows the vast range of his interests. We find in it books on politics and the social sciences, which always held a prominent place in his interest and studies. There is a magnificent collection of books on Christian art, on theology, on poetry, on literature, and especially, of course, on liturgical subjects. He hated any kind of provincialism. He was "ecumenical" in the deepest sense of the word.

In Hamburg he grew up in Protestant surroundings, and always retained great sensitivity and understanding for the "protestant protest." But it was as a seminarian in Innsbruck, when he heard for the first time in the Christmas night the prophecies sung in Gregorian chant, that he felt, here at the very heart of the Church in prayer, that he had found the resting place for his restless heart. He entered Maria Laach just for this reason, in the longing to integrate his whole life in the service of God's glory, as the Church offers it in her public worship. After some time of novitiate, Abbot Ildefons Herwegen decided that his vocation was not in a monastic community. This was perhaps the deepest disappointment of his life.

Now that the monastic life was closed to him he fully turned to his priestly vocation. The comparatively short time he spent at Maria Laach gave him the direction for his activity as a priest. The ideas and the spirit he had received there were his inspiration no matter if he worked among the sailors in various ports, or as a teacher of theology, or as a pastor in a small parish in the state of Washington. They carried him through the trials of exile, through the night of discouragement and doubt, through the sufferings of a sickness affecting body, speech and mind. They inspired him in his literary activity. They offered a common spiritual ground with those close friends who, as Oblates of St. Benedict, shared the same ideals.

It was providential that, during the most critical time of his life he found the unflagging support of Father Thomas Carroll and Dr. Thomas Caulfield, of Boston. They, together with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mann of New York, and others like Otto and Eloise Spaeth were people he could completely rely on. It was a wonderful act of Providence that, toward the end, when H.A.R.'s way of the cross was made more difficult by the added trial of Parkinson's disease, Bishop John Wright of Pittsburgh took him under his wings, understood and patiently bore all his weaknesses, and gave him a home in his diocese. As a result of this truly generous and loving attitude H.A.R. began to lose much of his former "acidity." It was a great joy to all of us here at Mount Saviour that during his last visit here (it was Christmas 1967) he was full of peace and joy. One can say that his whole stay with us during those weeks, the end of the old and the beginning of the new year, was a wonderful finale of his life.

A person born to suffer much in his life because of sensitivity, his complexity and his inner contradictions, a restless seeker, a great lover of men, was planted by baptism into the Peace of Christ. The precious Pearl was there, shining in the darkness of a skeptic mind. He never let go of it. Fr. Reinhold's whole life shows that

there is in every Christian a "monastic dimension," a nucleus of simplicity, joy, all-embracing universality, peace, and song. It is a sign for our times that a priest with a world-wide influence lived all his life in such close inner contact with the sons of St. Benedict.

*Fr. Reinhold Wiegman, O.S.B.*

*We find that more often as the years go on, men and women come here to strengthen that part of their human and religious personalities which we call the "monastic dimension." All men and women are called to cultivate "the hidden man of the heart," and to grow through the experience of community life. A monk's vocation is to live this "monastic dimension" in a systematic way.*

*Among those who have become close friends of Mount Saviour in recent years are the Sisters of St. Mary. Four years ago a few Sisters from Buffalo visited us and since then the visits have multiplied with Sisters coming singly or in groups for retreats and days of recollection. Founded in Belgium in 1819, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur came to the United States in 1863. Now they teach and do social work throughout the country. Sister Mary Judith, Novice Mistress at the Mother House of the Eastern Province, Buffalo, New York, wrote the following article.*

Perhaps a life lived in response to the Holy Spirit is possible today! Perhaps Christianity is the most free, and happy and attractive thing on earth!

These are the impressions of the Sisters of St. Mary who first experienced the joy and peace, and tranquility of Mount Saviour; since then many of our sisters have been drawn there singly and as renewal committees, local communities, and as groups of tertians or novices. We have found that Mount Saviour is extreme in its manner of life, and this speaks to a generation seeking an authentic Christian experience. A visit there is a penetration point for God into our lives as Sisters of St. Mary. In contrast to the prevalent attitude that "all religious life is falling apart," the monks are living proof that we can have hope and optimism about who we are. We come away from Mount Saviour with a firmer conviction that by our lives we can redeem our times.

Recently a group of our formation people went to be instructed on how to impart the religious ideal to the new generation. At the monastery we found a life that exemplified what we hope to impart to our own young; for the Sisters of St. Mary consider their foremost service to a diocese that their sisters live in community, with intense faith, through love of Christ, a life of prayer, poverty, chastity, and obedience: a collective sign of anticipation.

We found this collective anticipation at Mount Saviour, and it is strikingly evident that Christ is the center there; it is He who reconciles; He who is the reason and source of the unity of minds and hearts that exists.

There is much for sisters to learn from the monks' liturgical experimentation. There is not a vestige of a dead form, and yet all the renewal is done with a sense of God, of the Church, and of the changing responses of nature. There is no doubt that the prayer at Mount Saviour belongs to the world of faith: the measured rhythm and the intervals of silence help to maintain an atmosphere of adoration and true prayer. All the guests are welcome to join in the praise of the office and in offering of Eucharist. Even on Sunday the church is filled with visitors; there is no thought that the children might distract from the harmony of the service — there is rather the primary concern that all the people of God join in thanksgiving.

A young woman's response to the genuine worship was: "And do you know why God is dead? Because hardly anyone knows or hears or has anyone to speak to them of the Lord who wrote names on the palms of His hands — or brought back the Israelites — the lame, the halt, the blind — and refreshed them with good things. God is short-changed by His prophets. I must go all the way to Mount Saviour to find the fullness of Christian worship."

Truly it is at Eucharist that Christ is most fully revealed and the celebration of the Eucharist at Mount Saviour is strength, power, life — it is making concrete the words "God with us." It is at this time, more than any other, that what Christ came for is manifest: the coming together of God's life and ours.

This unity of life the monks make manifest to all who approach them; the presence of God is tangible and meets one everywhere. Sr. Corita has said that one way to prepare for big celebrations is to allow life to reveal itself all ones: we must make love, make believe and make hope with the ordinary, everyday people and stuff around us.

How can I explain how this happens in this Spirit-invested world of Mount Saviour? Perhaps by calling attention to the fact that there are no stylized, institutional ways of acting there. — the monks come to praise their God in the nitty-gritty attire of dungarees, and at the same time they seem to have a sense of mystery. This is exemplified in their total availability to persons; in their understanding of all age levels, backgrounds, and religions; in their respect for even the smallest forms of life; in their sense of the art and music to be used in the worship of God.

Their spontaneous responses to life draw many college men, who are craving something that life hasn't shown them yet. Our formation team was present at the same time these students were; we found that these men were like the other Americans who are flocking to Zen Buddhism — they want to learn to be still. So they reject busy, active, dashing-around-people and come here where, by the attention they receive, they know that they are an important part of something big.

Some young seminarians were also present with us that weekend and their opinion was asked and listened to with great interest. Their aspirations were taken seriously, and one among them was given the privilege of being deacon at the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist.

One of the monks spoke to our formation teams from Texas and Buffalo, and he exemplified what he said. He told us to have the same patience with the young that God has with all His growing things. The young must

be encouraged to seek their potential, and then they will find out that their aspirations for life and being are infinite.

This monk warned us that none of us loves enough. It was important to watch then his expression of love and service: his kindness, with each brother; his understanding of the young guests; his concern that we should have coffee early in the morning. In the details a whole spirit was revealed. He is so genuinely himself that one finds oneself saying, "You can become a full person here."

Father Damasus told us that the superior must speak the Words of eternal life and rekindle the first love when it appears to be burning low. He was often available for questions about religious life and he would answer them candidly. Often he would reveal his faith in the goodness of others and his daring trust in the Spirit.

Mount Saviour is not a place but a spirit — a special presence of the Holy Spirit. We encourage other communities to experience this atmosphere of living Christianity. This is absolute — it is real. There is Life there.



THE DISTRIBUTION OF BLESSED BRANCHES ON PALM SUNDAY

## LIFE TOGETHER

We have always felt that the best thing we could give our guests was a share in our own life. We recognize that it is chiefly our faith and hope and a union in charity that we can share with you directly. We follow the same Christ, rejoice in the same Spirit, and acknowledge the same Father even though our lives and those of our guests must take a wide variety of forms. Without any desire to make the world a monastery, we do feel that it is an essential part of the renewal of the Church that all Christians rediscover the 'inner man of the heart' in themselves. With this in mind we offer an opportunity for Life Together for a limited number of men and women, Catholic or not, during August 26 — September 6. We intend to share with you the wisdom of the Scriptures, the spiritual teaching of the Rule of St. Benedict and monastic tradition, the riches of Christ in art and literature. We also invite you to share some of our work and the burden of the day while you are with us. If you are interested, please write

Life Together  
Mount Saviour Monastery  
Pine City, New York 14871



PAUSE IN A WINTER WALK. Left to right: Petrus Tatsuo Hisatomi of Tokyo who is with us to learn English and the rudiments of the monastic life; Br. Elias Mandall; Fr. James Cranen, novicemaster, who has transferred his stability to Mount Saviour from St. Paul's Abbey, Newton, N.J.; Br. Ansgar Kristensen, a native of Denmark, who made his triennial profession on the feast of Pentecost.

## H. A. R. PAPERS

Most of Father H. A. Reinhold's friends know of his love for Mount Saviour and that he gave us his library and is buried here. We also will be the recipients of his papers. That his memory and his work may be kept alive, we would like to be able to furnish scholars with as complete a collection of his personal papers as possible. Letters or original work, or a statement that such material will eventually come to us, can be sent to

H.A.R. Papers  
Mount Saviour Monastery  
Pine City, New York 14871



FR. PLACID CORMEY in the garden of the dormitory building. Fr. Placid, one of the founders of Mount Saviour, went in 1964 to help establish our foundation, the Monastery of Christ of the Desert, Abiquiu, N.M. He returned to Mount Saviour on May 1 — just in time to take care of the orchard! In his stead, Fr. Gregory Borgstedt has now gone to Christ of the Desert to assist Fr. Aelred Wall.

## DECEASED FRIENDS

We recommend to your prayers the following friends who have died this winter and spring.

Abbot Bertrand Dolan, O.S.B.  
Msgr. Francis J. Lane  
Msgr. Wolodymyr Pylypec  
Father Hans Ansgar Reinhold  
Mother Lawrence Swineburne, S.H.C.J.  
Brendan Burke  
Mark Delker  
Daniel DeMann  
Harry Martin  
Melchior Paul  
Paul Schewegler  
Gertrude Fox (Oblate Sister Gertrude)  
Ursula Levinger (Oblate Sister Mary Bernard)  
Anna M. Fischer  
Anne Hennigan  
Anna Jaskolka

May they rest in peace.

THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF MOUNT SAVIOUR, ELMIRA, NEW YORK

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