



Christmastide, 1972

Dear Friends of Mount Saviour:



Once again as we approach the beautiful solemnity of Christmas we are reminded that out of his love for us, God appeared in this world of ours in human nature, in order that man might come to share in the divine nature. No birth has ever been the occasion of so much joy on earth as the obscure, humble nativity of Jesus, the Son of Mary, in the cave of Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago. With each recurring celebration mankind rejoices to recall that the Son of God once dwelt as a man among men.

During the months that have elapsed since the previous Newsletter, much has happened in the little world of Mount Saviour:

In February, Father Martin, accompanied by Brother Peter, journeyed to West Germany to attend a meeting of the De Re Monastica Commission, of which he is a member. This was done in order to make preparations for the Benedictine Abbots' Congress which is scheduled to be held in Rome during 1973.

Our periodical, Monastic Studies, will publish the English edition of the papers preparatory to the Congress.



Considering the prevailing dearth of religious vocations in America, we are fortunate to have three novices. On the feast of Saint Benedict, March 21st, William Schuyler, of Newark, Ohio, became a novice and received the name Brother Seraphim. On October 11th, Feast of the Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Gary Girard of Rochester, Minnesota, was clothed as a novice and was given the name of Brother Thomas. Earlier in the year the novices and postulants made an overnight trip to Jordanville, New York to visit the Russian Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Trinity.



This summer, as for the past several years, we welcomed a group of Notre Dame University Students, six of them, who lived within the monastery for ten weeks and shared in our daily life of prayer and work. An unusually intelligent, hard-working and eager group of youths they were, and very appreciative of the opportunity to experience monastic life.

"The Damasus Winzen Living Memorial Endowment" which was inaugurated in May is making steady progress. Father Martin and the Community are most grateful to the 360 friends whose contributions, whether great or modest according to their means, have already been received.



Our dairy farm continues to prosper. In spite of the problems and setbacks caused by the flood, the twelve-month milk production of 53 cows has reached the remarkable average of 16,211 pounds of milk per cow. The herd has also earned a special award for our farm on account of the high butter-fat content of our cows' milk. Brother Pierre, who superintends milk production and cattle breeding, has been elected a Director of the New York Dairy Herd Improvement Association of Chemung County.

Father Martin, accompanied by Brothers Mark and Aelred, attended the Conference on "Charismatic Renewal within the Catholic Church", held at Notre Dame University, the weekend of June 2nd. For them it was an immensely rewarding experience.

On Mount Saviour's titular feast, The Transfiguration, August 6th, at the Conventual Mass, Brother Ansgar Kristensen, home for the summer from his studies in Rome, made his Solemn Monastic Profession in the presence of Father Martin and the Community. A number of Brother Ansgar's friends, including some fellow-students from Rome, assisted at the Mass and witnessed the profession.



How did the flood of June 22-23 affect Mount Saviour? Thanks be to God, our monastery's location on a hilltop insured its safety. But below us in the Big Flats Valley the raging Chemung River swept away a small cabin of ours and ruined fifty acres planted to field corn. Two weeks later our farm crew re-planted those same fields, so that a moderate crop has been harvested from them. One day during this time we experienced the excitement of a military helicopter making three landings in our back yard to unload food cartons under the mistaken impression that we were a food distribution center. And yet the distribution of food and clothing was to be the daily occupation of most of our monks for the next two weeks. Working at three different distribution centers in Elmira, a daily contingent of 23 persons, including some Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur and other guests, left early each morning to spend the day supplying the basic needs of flood victims. Father Martin, as a physician, volunteered his services at an emergency medical center set up in an Elmira schoolhouse. After the main crisis was past, teams of monks continued to help clear debris and shovel out mud from private homes in the Elmira-Corning area and also at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Elmira. Despite the havoc and hardship wrought by the flood, we shall be forever inspired by the many acts of heroism and self-sacrifice which we witnessed during that tragic event.

On July 28th an outstanding monk and liturgical scholar of the Abbey of Maria Laach, Father Burchard Neunheuser, arrived to spend the remaining weeks of summer editing Reverend Father's conferences and writings. An old friend and confrere of Father Damasus, Father Burchard applied himself with enthusiasm and devotion to that enormous task, which for him was a labor of love. In one sense we were sorry that the work was completed within two months because we should have liked to enjoy for a longer time his genial company and inspiring presence.

In August our very distinguished Oblate, Bishop James Hickey, Rector of the North American College in Rome, spent five days with us on retreat and was the principal celebrant at the Conventual Mass on the feast of the Assumption. Our group of secular Oblates continues to increase, however, this year the Lord Jesus Christ called to himself two of them, William McIntyre of Rochester, N.Y. and Veronica Winiecki of Millerton, Penna. In October Brother Pierre went home to attend the funeral of his brother, Gilles Pratte of Three Rivers, Quebec. Our prayers attend his young widow and child. Word also was received of the death of Mrs. Olga Kolnacki of Buffalo, wife of our Oblate-novice, Frank Kolnacki. Our prayers are offered for the repose of these and all deceased Oblates and friends of Mount Saviour.



s the title of an unique event in the
 "Word Out of Silence" what Symposium held here during the last history of
 American Catholicism. The hundred and fifty people representing week of Au-
 gust gathered together oitual disciplines of the East and West. many of the
 major religious and spirn and exchange of ideas and insights am It brought
 about mutual appreciatioback-grounds and traditions. The daily ong persons
 of entirely different religious xercises, conferences, discussions both schedule in-
 cluded various contemplative eunity singing. in small and
 large groups, liturgies, and comm

ium the annual Fall Festival occurred o:
 Hard upon the heels of the Symposther was perfect, and this may have beenn September
 17th. Unlike last year, the weads of people. The new Fitch's Bridge, a factor in
 the attendance by so many thousane it easier for Elmirans to get to the m opened for
 use only two weeks earlier, madhich proved to be delightful, was the fonastery. A
 new feature in the program, one wacuted. One of the most rewarding thingolk dancing.
 Though spontaneous it was well exrs who, upon their departure, told us hs about the
 Festival was the number of visito: ow much they
 had enjoyed the day.

culties in Belgium held up the publicati
 During the spring, printing diffit, devoted to the memory of Reverend Fatbn of Monas-
 tic Studies, issue number eighsubscribers in the early summer. Some coher Damasus,
 but it was at last mailed out to dollars each. pies of this
 issue are still available at four



ram is under the direction of Father Tho
 The Community Study Progaches at Fordham. The overall theme of was Berry, a
 Passionist priest who tean, and Modern Dimensions of Man." In our program
 is: "The Human, Christiare considering symbol, myth and ritual, is year's
 phase of the program we Supplementing our private study there wand their
 role in the humanizing process. siting scholars. ill be a
 series of conferences given by vi.

Scholar, who is working on his thesis for
 Father James Kelly, our Biblical cently left for Rome, in order to take fthe degree
 of Doctor of Sacred Scripture, reblical Commission. inal exam-
 inations before the Pontifical Bi.



and Crafts Building has arisen from th
 A new much improved Artsl soon be ready for use. It contains potte charred
 ruins of the old and wilops, a studio for design and painting, andery, book-
 binding and carpentry sh a display
 room.



s on the Feast of the Incarnation your br
 At Midnight Masnt Saviour will be mindful of you and praothers in
 Christ at Mounng that Holy Eucharist. May the grace andy for your
 intentions duriant Jesus fill your hearts and minds du peace of
 the Divine Infas Season! ring this
 blessed Christm.

For the Community
 Father Placid