



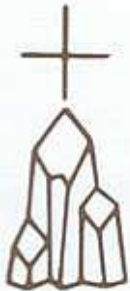
The Brothers puzzle a puzzle. From left to right: Brothers James Cronen, John Thompson, Gabriel, Pierre, Martin & Timothy.

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*Chronicle*



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### **An Election or Re-Election Time**

You would have to be living on another planet not to realize we are in the throes of an election year. Among other things, the process helps to bring to the forefront the question of choice in our lives. There is a sense that we have limited choices and therefore an excuse not to choose. Unfortunately, this attitude is not confined to the political arena. Past choices limit (or expand) future choices. They shape our lives in ways never actually chosen. Yet we never lose the ability to choose, to elect to do one thing rather than another and to do this informed by principles that eventually guide us to our true goals. Some of the dissatisfaction and fear involved in making choices comes because we concentrate on the limitations and not the opportunities.

The election or re-election I have in mind is not the one due in a few months but the one recommended by Ignatius of Loyola some 500 years ago. He reminds us that we are created for the praise of God and our salvation so our intention in making a choice of a way of life should be simple and help us to this end. Many of us have chosen marriage, religious life, or a professional career and then secondarily the service of God within these parameters. This actually puts God at our service and not ourselves at God's service. Ignatius does not speak of re-election, but that is what I am suggesting.

I write this Chronicle motivated by a number of events. Not the least was the sight of 80,000 people gathered in the rain at the Meadowlands during the Pope's last visit. The Pope, in essence, was begging

them to choose, or re-elect a life informed by the gospels, to rekindle the spirit of evangelization that is part of our calling as Christians, regardless of our state in life. We ask ourselves, as monks of Mt. Saviour, what does this mean for us? St Benedict's choice was to establish a school for the Lord's service and are we doing enough to make the gospel known in our day? In two encyclicals, Pope John Paul II wrote: "Indeed it can be said that monasticism in antiquity - and at various times in subsequent ages too - has been the privileged means for the evangelization of peoples." Used here, evangelization simply means to proclaim the good news of the gospel. Preaching is one way and teaching is another way of proclaiming the gospel. The way we live together is the commonest, and in the long run, the most effective way the gospel is proclaimed.

Most Christians seem to believe it is someone else's responsibility to evangelize, that they are too insignificant, too un-holy or too inadequate in a variety of ways to undertake such an exalted task. Most of us should neither preach nor teach. Each of us is very significant in God's eyes and capable of living as an effective witness to the good news of the gospel. False humility does not exempt us from heeding the call of Pope John Paul II. In the first letter of Peter, chapter 3, we read: "Don't be afraid...but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence...."

When guests write to thank us, the most common reason given for their gratitude is that they found hope during their stay here. Not always a solution to their problems, but a hope that is enabling them to open to God's love for them without excessive concern for themselves or their vulnerabilities. This is a great joy for us. It is some assurance that we can, by remaining true to our monastic life, assist others in this call to evangelization.

In the past, we have had summer programs which have allowed laity to experience the monastic life more fully than what is offered by a normal stay with us. The recent summer program with a limited number of students housed within the monastery enabled us to keep the guest houses free. In seeking a way to do more, I put forth this proposal and ask for your response. We could offer a series of monastic study weeks during the summer months. A Monday evening to Friday noon time frame, the second week of June, July and August in 1997. It will take time to work out the logistics of doing this and continuing to accommodate guests who come with their own agenda, but if there is sufficient response, we will go to work on it. Please write and let us know if you want your name on a mailing list for future developments.

We must confront the fact that many people have a fatalistic belief we are living in a Post-Christian Age. The Jesuit, Walter Ong, has an excellent article in the February 3rd issue of America in which he shows "Post-Christian Age" turns out to be "Christendom", the Eurocentric society that took form after Constantine in the Middle Ages. It is the Church, not Christendom that is God's own radical instrument of evangelization.

We have a trumpet call to awaken to the light of the Risen Christ and not to despair in darkness and gloom. We are to share the victory of Christ over sin and death. There will be difficulties and suffering along the way but it is the joy of the Lord that is our rampart and joy! Alleluia!!

In Xto,

*Fr. Martin*



**Fr. Martin and Bob Gill look to future repairs of the link between the chapel and the monastery buildings while work continues on the roof and sides of the East Building.**



**Br. Bruno and Wally Ochterski discuss the over-all plans for building repairs.**

### **News Notes April 1996**

We didn't have room in the Christmas Chronicle for much news of the monastery and the activities of the monks. Now the news is so old it is not fit to print.

The Good News since January of 1996 begins with our Visitation by Abbot Brian Clarke of St. Mary's Abbey in Morristown NJ and Prior John Hammond of Weston Priory in Vermont. Unfortunately, Abbot Aiden Shea of St Anselm's Abbey in Washington DC was snowed under in the District and couldn't be with us. We want to give public expression of our gratitude and our pride in being governed by this age-old monastic practice of fraternal guidance and love and to Abbot Brian and Brother John in particular.

Another way of recalling us to our first love, namely the Annual Retreat, we share with all other religious communities.

We have been most fortunate in recent years in the monks and nuns who have led us in this exercise. Abbot Francis Kline of the Trappist Abbey of Mepkin in South Carolina more than kept up the tradition. Monastic life as a school of fraternal charity is the topic of the Trappist General Chapter in Rome this October. Abbot Francis shared with us his experience and wisdom in this fundamental area of our common Christian monastic life.

Actually the Trappist Chapter will follow the Congress of all Benedictine Abbots and Priors at Rocca di Papa some 18 miles south of Rome. We ask your fervent prayers for both gatherings. We Benedictines must elect an Abbot Primate to replace Abbot Jerome Theisen of Collegeville Minnesota who died suddenly last June. It is not quite like being Pope or President, but it is a very difficult and demanding task.

We were given two Border Collie pups, Bart and Jacob. We put Br John Thompson who began his novitiate last October in charge of them. In this way he is experiencing the trials of a novice and a novice master as the same event. It is always a struggle to keep a balance in our lives and it doesn't always happen. Br Luke still exhibits water colors four times a year with the Elmira Art Society. The lion's share of the Guest Brother's job goes to Br. Timothy which he shares with Br. James Cronen. This way Br James can do some tutoring and Br. Timothy gets a little break. Br Gabriel has been taken up with work at the Annex getting it ready for its next occupant. The bottom fell out of the beef market so Br Bruno has been on the road even more than usual. He and Br. Pierre are our computer experts. The Internet has Br Pierre almost conquered or vice versa. Br. Raphael cooks every other week to everyone's delight. Br James Kelly is hard at work on a new book. Br. Sebastian has his eye on the business office and oversees our finances. Thank God for the daily help of Madeleva, Enrique and Sarah Govantes, Barbara Sekella and Linda Aagaard, and Piero Masia. Our guests pitch in as well so we are very grateful for all we receive

Fr Martin has also been on the road so much in the past 6 months that only a partial listing will be given. Visits were made to the monks at Valyermo in California and Christ in the Desert in New Mexico and the monks and nuns in Petersham Mass. Christ in the Desert will soon become an Abbey and we are very proud of them and the leadership of Prior Philip Lawrence. Travels included the Oblates in NYC, a Legal Seminar in St Louis, talks to friends of the monastery in Philadelphia and Buffalo and finally a Workshop in Oberlin Ohio where he spoke on Monastic Stability! We also want to express our appreciation to the people in our area who formed The Friends of Mt Saviour and meet monthly and consider a pertinent topic.



**Br. John Thompson with Jacob and Bart who is nearly invisible to us but already has the 'eye' that controls sheep.**

MSAVIOUR@GNN.COM

Most computer users have recognized the heading. It is our latest E-mail address for those who like to correspond through the Internet. Last year, we acquired a new computer to meet the demands of a more elaborate mailing list. The software package included a program to explore the Internet. After trying various Internet providers with their free offers, I could see a place for Mount Saviour in the World Wide Web. Last December, I succeeded in writing a simple home page to get some exposure and make our way of life known to those who browse this new medium. We surprised many friends and we were surprised to hear from various folks who had questions related to our life style or to the guest house. The home page is easily accessible by typing MOUNT SAVIOUR in one of the search engines (such as Yahoo). You will find the schedule, our mission statement and informations related to the guest house, the summer program and the farm. The Chronicle and monthly news will appear before the printer can have them ready. Some links will allow you to get in touch with other monasteries or monastic topics. You can contact the monks through the E-mail address and I make a print-out for the specific person who will answer in his own way. Msaviour@gnn.com  
Our home page URL:  
[Http://members.gnn.com/msaviour/mts.htm](http://members.gnn.com/msaviour/mts.htm)

Br. Pierre

### **Recommended Reading by Fr Martin**

*Towards Greater Understanding. Essays in Honor of John Cardinal O'Connor* edited by Dr Anthony Cernera. \$14.95

The title aptly describes the book. Essays by Joseph Cardinal Bernadine, Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, William Cardinal Keeler, Rabbi Jack Bemporad, President Chaim Herzog, Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, Elie Wiesel and others give a history of Jewish-Catholic relationship and how each party sees itself-and the other!

*A House Divided. The parting of the ways between Synagogue and Church* by Fr Vincent Martin OSB \$11.95 This book is also a great help towards greater understanding of how Christians and Jews understand differently what the God we both believe in is revealing to us.

*The Real Jesus. The misguided quest for the historical Jesus and the truth of the Traditional Gospels* by Luke Timothy Johnson \$22

Catholic unfamiliarity with Scripture is proverbial. In these days of media hype, it is more incumbent on us than ever to know the limits and meaning of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Art of Biblical Narrative* by Robert Alter. \$13.50. This has long been a favorite of mine. Biblical narrative is an art form. It is not Channel 9 Live Action News. We miss the news if we can not recognize the art! *The Wisdom Literature.* Kathleen O'Connor \$12.95. Happily more is being written about the Wisdom traditions in Scripture. Both lay and monastic life draw heavily from this aspect of God's revelation and our search for life.

*By Way of the Heart.* Wilkie Au SJ \$10.95 How often does our faith really affect our daily decisions? This is very very good.

*Urgings of the Heart.* Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon. \$14.95 I haven't read this one yet, but I will.

*The Music of Silence.* Br David Steindl-Rast. CD & paper-bound book \$22 and Hard Cover \$15. This is a companion to the very popular CD Chant, with very fine insights on the Prayer of the Hours.

Consider a Tour of Venice, Florence and Rome with friends of Mt Saviour, May 5-16 or 18 in 1997. We will stay in Padua with day trips to Venice and in Siena with day trips to Florence. This gives the flavor of smaller Italian towns and the warmth and hospitality of the people. It is also a lot quieter and less expensive. Send a letter of intent if you are interested.

Our mailing address has been changed to 231 Monastery Road and we may not receive your letters as the automated letter machines go into operation. Our local Post Office asks our help in this. Please make a note of our new address.

If the person to whom this Chronicle is addressed has moved or is deceased or wants to be removed from our mailing list, please return the mailing label.



Our Br Sebastian, shown here in this 1942 photograph with his father, had just received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant and was about to become one of the original officers of E Company, 39th Infantry Regiment, Ninth Infantry Division. Br Sebastian's experiences in WWII will be given more space in a future Chronicle. He was badly wounded at El Guettar in North Africa but re-joined the 39th Infantry a year later. He was wounded again while near St Lo and rendered hors de combat at Mortain while involved in closing the Falaise Gap. We are grateful for his service record at Mt Saviour as well as his service to our country.