

Some of the participants who enjoyed last year's Adult Study Week. Left to right: Dr. Kenneth Meyer, Betty Webb, Jutta Benfey, Dr. Bruno Benfey, Rev. David Schcider, Rev. Chuck Schmidt, Br. Raphael.

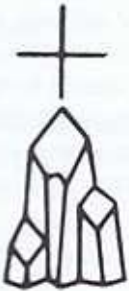


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Father Damasus and the Founding of Mount Saviour



As this Chronicle goes to press, Madeleva Roarke is completing the last chapter of her book: **Father Damasus and the Founding of Mount Saviour**. Fr. Damasus was working on his memoirs when he died in 1971. Madeleva has used his outline and letters as a basis for this biography. She traces Damasus' early life, the circumstances of his arrival in America and his struggle to establish a monastery in the tradition of Maria Laach, but freed to introduce aspects of the more ancient traditions of Benedictine monasticism.

Madeleva has commented that the sub-title should be "tales from the table." It is hard to believe that for twenty years this fall, she has been answering questions about the monastery during mealtimes at St Gertrude's. These questions have also been used as a guide to this story.

Father Damasus and the Founding of Mount Saviour will be sold through the Mt. Saviour Shop and by mail. It will cost \$20.00, plus 7% tax for New York residents. A \$2.00 shipping fee per book will be charged for mail orders. Our next mailing will contain an order form for the book.

J. MADELEVA ROARKE

MONASTIC STABILITY IN OUR CHANGING WORLD

As many of you know, monastics do not take the familiar vows of poverty, chastity and obedience but rather stability, conversion of life and obedience within a given monastic community. For us, this is really one promise and not three. We promise the gift of ourselves - our time, our talents and our energy - to a specific community of monastics by sharing their lot in life as they seek to respond to God's steadfast love.

For a moment I want to concentrate on the feature of stability. It is an unfamiliar "vow" and may seem old fashioned or even alien. In fact, it can serve for all of us as a basis for living this joyful season as we "look forward to holy Easter with joy and spiritual longing" as St Benedict urges us in his remarks on the observance of Lent.

Monastic stability is often confused with the cloister and enclosure. Stability relates primarily to persons and not simply to place. St Benedict's expression is "stabilitas in congregationem" that is "stability in the community" rather than stability in a certain place. Monastic stability is not an isolated ascetic feat like forever holding one's breath under water. It is rather that gradually acquired ability to stay in relationship with a loving God and trying-to-be loving conferees even though we are all sinners. Our first parents, so the story goes, tried to hide from God. Our spiritual ancestors at Sinai ran away when they heard God's thunderous voice. The Apostles melted away before the terror of the cross. And all of us at one time or another, have joined in the rout!

Stability is compatible with confusion and bewilderment - and with pain which is its not infrequent companion. Stability allows us to hear the voice of the Lord calling us to re-turn and not run away from God or ourselves. Our



Rt. Rev. Frank T. Griswold with Fr. Martin and Br. Alexis on Retreat before his Installation as XXV Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the USA.

personal trust in God and the members of the community gift us with the desire to be plunged into the life of the Risen Christ together with them. This may sound a bit idealistic but it is of a piece with what the Church means by sacramental marriage as well as that immersion in a community we come to in baptism.

Courageous perseverance characterizes the promise of stability and permeates our efforts of on-going conversion and obedience to God's Word. Lifelong stability thus enables our heart's desire to become very real. Stability, understood in this way is not only for monks. It is the gift of God's own steadfast loving kindness all of us are meant to possess. It is what the time of Lent-Easter-Ascension-Pentecost is all about.

Fr. Martin

The 3rd face from the right is that of Laszlo Ivanits. The Penn State students he and his wife, Linda, bring are the best prepared of the college groups who come on retreat each year.





A contemporary shot of Br. James Cronen in the midst of things. Pots and pans in this case. He is one of our fine cooks.

ADULT STUDY WEEK:: Vespers Sunday 7 June - 3 PM
Thursday 11 June.

Topic: Discipleship in Scripture, Benedict's Rule & Daily life.

The Guest Houses will be closed to enable participation in the monastic prayer and life as much as possible. Teaching and experience in the prayer of the Liturgy, Lectio Divina and Centering Prayer. Limited space on a first reservation first come basis. Cost \$200 all inclusive.

Please, remember us in
your prayer and, if possible,
also in your estate planning or will.
Our legal title is
**The Benedictine Foundation
of NY State.**

SUMMER PROGRAM for Catholic men age 21-35

This will be the 9th consecutive year of our live-in program which gives the opportunity to learn and deepen the Easter faith of the Church by living in a small monastic community.

TRIP ABROAD:

THIS YEAR IN JERUSALEM October 16 - 28, 1998

Includes Athens, Corinth and The Holy Land.

Fr James Kelly who has a Doctorate in Scripture and who studied several years in the Holy Land and Fr Martin plan to accompany the pilgrims. \$2200. For details write Holy Land Trip Mt Saviour 231 Monastery Road, Pine City NY 11487-9787 or call us (607) 734 1688. Fax 1689. e-mail msaviour@servtech.com

REGIONAL CONFERENCES:

Rochester NY date for the Conference is Saturday 2 May 98. Sisters of St Joseph Motherhouse. Notices have not gone out as yet.



Above: Oldie but questionably goodie is Br. Sebastian who turned 80 last November. he was looking towards it when this photo was taken.

Left: Welcomed as guests in our own home - this time by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester in our St. Joseph's Guest House. At the table on the right: Sr. Joan McDowell, ssj, Fr. Matthew Ekpo, Fr. Timothy Brennan, Br. Kevin Finn, fsc, Br. Stephen & Br. Alexis o

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Hospitality, for St Benedict, is to be based on faith in the divine presence encountered in the guest. He writes: "...one must adore Christ in them, for he is in fact the one who is received.". Hospitality, properly given or received, is an affirmation and proclamation of the person's union with the Risen Christ. We do not regard the guest as a window through whom we see Christ. Rather it is union with Christ that is acknowledged and proclaimed by both host and guest.

The first on the list are ourselves! It is a rare delight to a guest in one's own home. One Sunday there were no guests at St. Gertrude's Guest House since Madeleva was on vacation. Fr. Alfred LoPinto, a priest of the Brooklyn diocese, ended his 6 month sabbatical with us by cooking a 9 course Festive Roman Meal there. Festive in part, because leisurely: we didn't inhale our food in 15 minutes as we usually do. Fr. Al had been a blessing to us in many ways and his was an especially blessed leave taking!

Sister Fidelina Monzalvo Rendon who recently retired as Superior General of the Mexican Missionary Sisters of Christ the King spoke to us at some length on the religious and political situations where they serve. It was no surprise when we heard a few weeks later of the massacre of 45 women and children while they were praying for peace in Chiapas. Brs. John, Daniel, and Kurt of Weston Priory accompanied her. They had visited the sisters' convent in Chiapas last year.

Fr. Alexis Foyo OSB of Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside CA. arrived on December 11th for his sabbatical with us.

A few days later, Fr. Matthew Ekpo, a diocesan priest from Nigeria, came to experience monastic life. He intends to return there where he has 4 candidates as well as land and housing. His need is for a Benedictine monk or sister to help with the foundation for 2 years of so.

Our one winter storm so far caused the cancellation of a meeting Fr. Basil Pennington OCSO of St Joseph's Abbey was to attend here. Happily for us, Fr. Basil didn't know of the cancellation and spent several days with us. He gave conferences on Centering Prayer to the community and guests for which we are very grateful. More on Centering Prayer in a later Chronicle. I want to write about the hospitality some of the monks have received in just the past few months -and it is endless. It does prove that stability is not only about staying in one place.

Br. Luke's recent 1/2 day stay at St. Joseph's Hospital for a successful cataract operation reminds us of all their hospitality since they welcomed Fr. Placid when he came to take possession of the land for the monastery on 29 March 1951.



A Sunday "Kitchen Supper". Fr. Matthew, Fr. Basil Pennington & Msgr. Ronald Richardson in the background and Br. William & Fr. Martin in front.

Chuck and Connie Campbell welcomed Brs James Cronen and Gabriel when they attended Fr Ray Carey's Workshop in Philadelphia. Fr. Martin was warmly received at St Anselm's in Washington D.C. where he gave some conferences before the re-election of Abbot Aiden Shea. Rogers & Judy Reinicke have been his hosts for years at the Oblate meetings in NYC. Frank and Mary Ferrari provided an important stop-over on his way to the celebration of the election and installation of Richard Iaquir as Prior of Weston. Jim & Zoe Sitzman welcomed him, Rev. Han van den Blink and Dr. Mary Skinner in Potomac MD when they attended Rt. Rev. Frank Griswold's installation as Primatial Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the USA. Then it was the community of Prince of Peace Abbey who welcomed Fr. Martin and 50+ Abbots and Priors for the annual Benedictine Workshop. Tim and Maureen Rafael and Tom Ragan continued the blessings in sunny California. Last and by no means least, Alain and France Verley of Cazenovia cared for him so he could speak to James Krisher's class in Spirituality in Syracuse. To include all the welcomes Br. Bruno has received from family and friends order to deliver sheep products would take another edition of the Chronicle. Suffice it to say, we gratefully give our hospitality because we have received so much.



Left to right: Br. Pierre, Br. James Cronen, Chuck Campbell, Br. Gabriel and Joel Ziff at a recent Development Committee Meeting.