



NORTH AMERICAN ABBOTS CONFERENCE HELD AT ABBEY

In February, the Abbey was honored to host 35 participants to the 2018 North American Abbots Workshop.

Among those in attendance were Abbot Primate Gregory Polan and Priore Mauritius Wilde of Sant'Anselmo in Rome. The abbots resided in the newly renovated Christian Life Center and dined in the Monks' Refectory.

Br. John Mark Falkenhain, a Benedictine monk of Saint Meinrad in Indiana who is well known for his work in the area of human development and formation for celibacy, was the presenter. The program included lectures as well as prayer and discussion among participants.



SAINT BENEDICT SOCIETY GATHERS AT SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY

On March 21st, Abbot Justin Brown and Fr. Gregory Boquet hosted members of the Saint Benedict Society for mass and lunch, during which they also inducted new members.

The Saint Benedict Society recognizes those who have graciously included the Abbey and Seminary College in their estate plans or who have contributed to an endowed fund.

To learn more about leaving a lasting legacy, visit www.saintjosephabbey.com/the-saint-benedict-society.

SAVE THE DATE

ABBEY ARTWORKS PRESENTS AN ARTIST'S RETREAT - August 20-24. Four days of peaceful, quiet painting on the grounds of the Abbey. Visit www.abbeyartworks.com for info.

DEO GRATIAS - Saturday, October 27. Fundraiser Gala benefitting the Seminary College. Visit www.sjasc.edu for details.

PERFORMANCE BY ORGANIST DERRICK MEADOR
Thursday, November 8, 7:30 p.m. Abbey Church. Free admission.

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY'S BELLA VOCE WOMEN'S CHOIR PRESENTS LAUDA - Wednesday, November 14, 7:30 p.m. Abbey Church. Free admission.

For up-to-date information about these and other events at SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY AND SEMINARY COLLEGE please visit our website at:

saintjosephabbey.com

/saintjosephabbeyseminary/

/saintjosephabbey/SJASC

/saintjosephabbey

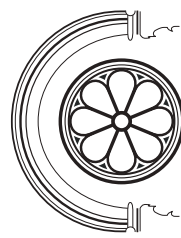
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THE ABBEY VOICE

Volume 40: Summer 2018

SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY
AND SEMINARY COLLEGE
75376 River Road
Saint Benedict, LA 70457



SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY + SEMINARY COLLEGE

Giving Opportunities

Your financial support is greatly appreciated.
Donations can be made online at:

helptheabbey.com

or by mail at:

Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College
Department of Institutional Advancement
75376 River Road

Saint Benedict, LA 70457

For information call: (985) 867-2264

or e-mail ddenoux@sjasc.edu



Your gift of time and talent is also welcomed.
Please consider joining our Volunteer Program.

For more information please contact:

Kathy Nastasi at (985) 867-2284 or knastasi@sjasc.edu

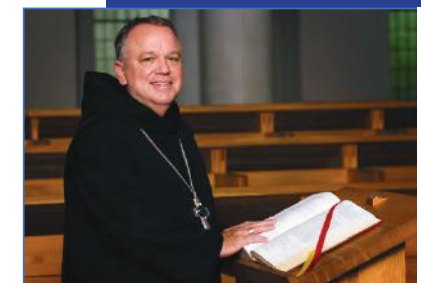


ABBNEY VOICE

VOLUME 40 • SUMMER 2018

The New Rouquette Library

ABBOT'S LETTER



Abbot Justin Brown, O.S.B.

In Chapter 53 of the Rule of Saint Benedict, Saint Benedict begins with these well-known words, "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ." Since in the guest one is to see Christ, then hospitality becomes an essential component to monastic life and a value to be embraced by every monk. Through hospitality we share the gifts that God has given us, especially the beauty of the Church's Liturgy and an environment that fosters prayer and spiritual renewal.

One of the losses we experienced in the aftermath of the Flood of 2016 was the loss of our ability to offer hospitality, especially with the loss of our guest rooms in the monastery and the complete loss of the Christian Life Center. Now with the restoration of the first floor of the monastery and the reopening of the Christian Life Center, we can once again offer a place for those seeking spiritual refreshment in a place of tranquility and peace. Many people tell us that the minute they cross the bridge onto the Abbey property they feel a sense of peace. It is that same peace that we want to share with others in a world where it is often missing.

Along with our monastery guest rooms and the Christian Life Center, we offer hospitality through opening our church each day to others, offering tours, and hosting various events such as Monk Run, Abbey Youth Festival, and the many programs of Abbey Art Works. To assist us in the ministry of hospitality, we plan in the upcoming renovation of Benet Hall to include a Visitor Center that will introduce guests to the various ministries and works of Saint Joseph Abbey and tell our long and rich story as well.

In the chapter in the Rule on Guests, Saint Benedict states matter-of-factly that monasteries are never without guests. This suggests how important hospitality was in the time of Benedict, as it is in our own time. We at Saint Joseph Abbey are blessed to have guests, to have many people who cross our bridge each day to share in the great treasure of monastic life. As they are enriched by our life, we are enriched by their lives, and we are honored to welcome you as Christ.

+ Justin Brown O.S.B.

RECTOR'S LETTER



President-Rector
Gregory Boquet, O.S.B.

As our summer continues here at the seminary, I am encouraged by the recent growth of our college and the accomplishments that have been made within our community. In May, Saint Joseph Seminary College graduated 38 young men, our largest class to date. Most all of the graduates will continue on with their study of theology at a major seminary. Our formation program is continuing to bear fruit and grow in substance as well.

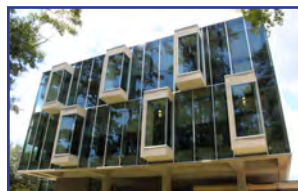
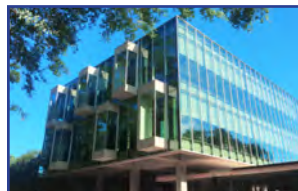
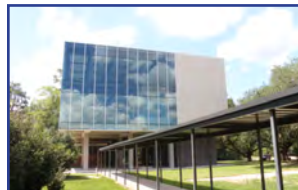
The Health and Wellness Program has been an important component of life at the seminary to which we are still committed and investing resources. It encompasses health education, cardio and weight training, and nutrition and weight management mentoring. Under the leadership of Fitness Advisor Brent Addison, the seminarians lost a total of 838 pounds this past year!

This summer, we continue to improve our campus facilities. Our newly built Rouquette Library is now complete and we moved into it at the end of June. We are continuing to renovate and improve our dormitories by painting walls, replacing floors and remodeling bathroom facilities. We are also thankful that the Alumni Association will be funding the installation of a sand volleyball court and a major refurbishment of the football field later this year. As you can see there is a great deal of energy and excitement on campus.

You are continually in our prayers and we give thanks that you are partnering with us, either financially or in prayer, to help continue this very valuable ministry of preparing young men for the priesthood.

J. Gregory Boquet O.S.B.

ROUQUETTE LIBRARY OPENS



Construction was recently completed on Rouquette Library, the first new building at Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College in more than half a century.

The three-story library, named after Father Adrien Rouquette, the first native-born Louisianian to be ordained to the priesthood, encompasses approximately 18,000 square feet to include space for a 35,000-volume book collection, support offices, collaboration clusters, computer stations, storage, tech centers, large and small conference rooms, and other service areas to support the operations.

The highlight of the new building is its user-centered design, which allows not only study and quiet spaces but also provides gathering spaces for groups, fostering interaction in social and collaborative ways. This approach gives seminarians the tools to engage creatively and critically with information contained in a multitude of formats available on campus in the library building and digitally across the globe.

"I want to thank Archbishop Gregory Aymond for his support of this project, made possible through the generosity of so many through the 'I Will Give You Shepherds Campaign.' I also want to recognize Bonnie Bess Wood, our library director. Her leadership during the planning and construction has been vital to the project's success. We couldn't have done it without her," said Fr. Gregory Boquet, President-Rector of the Seminary College.

Construction of the new library is essential to Saint Joseph's master plan to enhance its academic and formation programs. VergesRome Architects designed the library. Voelkel McWilliams Construction, LLC led the construction.

COMMUNITY GARDEN DRAWS PARALLELS TO PASTORAL WORK

Not long after his arrival to the Seminary College last summer, Assistant Dean of Students Fr. Sam Fontana and several seminarians resurrected the community garden, located near the Abbey Youth Festival field. Fr. Vic Messina started the garden several years ago, but it has remained fallow in recent years.

Fr. Sam, who came here from St. Joseph Parish in Rayne, La., is involved in all aspects of formation, including teaching philosophy classes and facilitating formation seminars and advising. He also works closely with President-Rector Fr. Gregory Boquet and Dean of Students Fr. Jonathan Wallis in the day-to-day operations of the college.

With the garden still in the early stages of the revamping process, the men had more space than they could cultivate at the time, so they planted over-winter covers of vetch, rye, peas, red clover, and mustard. The plan is to have continual cultivation with minimal tillage, and give some vegetables away in the process. Fr. Sam hopes to experiment with alfalfa, oats, and cowpeas this fall.

Although working in the garden gives Fr. Sam time to decompress each workday, the time spent there also provides some proper groundwork for the future pastoral work of the seminarians and presents opportunities to learn new skills and practice good stewardship.

"The garden is a good analogy for the spiritual life in general and pastoral work specifically: all growth takes time, patience, and much attention to small things. I try to encourage the men to notice what is happening in the garden before we get to work on anything. We are first observers and receivers of the place; otherwise, we might end up upsetting the natural order of things. And I remind them that we don't own any of this—that our goal is always to leave the soil better than when we found it, to leave it for others," Fr. Sam said.



Seminarian David Mannino '18 (standing) works in the garden with Fr. Sam Fontana.

Fr. Peter Hammett Celebrates 50th Jubilee

On May 25th, the monastic community at Saint Joseph Abbey celebrated a special mass in honor of fellow monk Fr. Peter Hammett, O.S.B., who celebrated the golden jubilee of his monastic profession.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Fr. Peter attended grammar school at Most Holy Name of Jesus and entered the high school seminary here in 1959. After spending the last two years of his philosophy studies at Notre Dame Seminary, he entered the novitiate in 1967, professing his monastic vows the following year. He was ordained a priest in 1972.

To see more photos from the mass, visit www.flickr.com/photos/saintjosephabbey/albums



ABBEY AND SEMINARY NEWS

FR. GREGORY CELEBRATES 20TH YEAR AS PRESIDENT-RECTOR

Fr. Gregory Boquet, O.S.B., has served in several capacities at Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College since his arrival as a monk in 1982: Monastery Prior, Director of Physical Plant, and Dean of Students in the Seminary College. But it's his current longstanding role as President-Rector that he and others remember most as he marks his 20th year in the role, the longest tenure of any seminary rector in the U.S.

Fr. Gregory had considered the priesthood beginning as a freshman in high school. He first stepped foot onto the Abbey grounds as a high school senior in April 1976, visiting with his Vocation Director from Houma-Thibodaux, which wasn't a diocese at the time.

"I fell in love with this place immediately. It seemed so remote and the beauty of the church and the mystique of the monks struck me," Fr. Gregory said.



It was also during this trip that Fr. Gregory first met Abbot Justin Brown, O.S.B., who, at 18 years old, was also interested in learning more about the Abbey.

"Looking back, my initial impressions were that Gregory was a sincere and genuine person. He was very easy to be with. We sort of hit it off at the beginning as friends. We were the only two on this trip from the Houma-Thibodaux area," Abbot Justin said.

In 1976, when he was just 18, Fr. Gregory returned as a seminarian and knew immediately he had made the right decision.

"When I came back as a seminarian, I was very happy, and I knew it was exactly what I should be doing. I missed my family, but was still happy to be here. Plus my parents were very supportive of my decision," Fr. Gregory added.

Following graduation, he attended Catholic University in Washington, D.C. for two years. He returned to the monastery in 1982 and entered the novitiate, taking his monastic vows the following year. Afterward, he resumed his theological studies at Notre Dame Seminary and was ordained a priest in 1988.

Now, at 60 years old, the seminary has changed dramatically.

"I think we had 55 seminarians in 1998 when I was named Rector. That was considered a decent enrollment, but through the years, it's grown steadily, especially since we've attracted dioceses outside Louisiana. I think my longevity in this role also gives bishops across the Gulf South confidence," Fr. Gregory said.

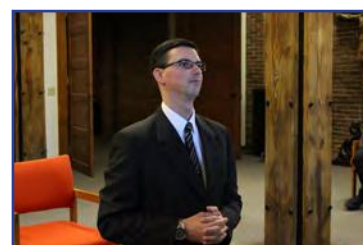
He welcomed a record 150 seminarians during the Fall 2016 semester, double the enrollment from just eight years ago. Enrollment remained steady in 2017 and is expected to rise again this fall, with about half of seminarians coming to St. Ben's from outside Louisiana.

Fr. Gregory's influence extends past the numbers though. His genuine interest in seeing the men succeed is exhibited by the development of an extensive human formation program, a new state of the art library, and an investment in faculty. All of this coupled with a small student/faculty ratio and the Benedictine influence has created a unique and valuable institution in the eyes of many young men aspiring to the priesthood.

"His real passion for the seminary and seminarians is obvious in everything he does. A special mark of his 20 years has been his fatherly care and example of faithfully living out the priesthood that he has given to the seminarians. When I first heard Pope Francis say the priest is supposed to smell of the sheep, Fr. Gregory came to mind. He has a very close and intimate connection not just with the seminarians, but also with all those he works with in the seminary," Abbot Justin added.

Although Fr. Gregory can't imagine being rector for another 20 years, he does think the role is still a good fit and enjoys the daily challenges. Recalling his visit to the Abbey as a teenager, he still can't believe he has been able to do his dream job for as long as he has.

"Meeting with the men, getting to journey with them, seeing how they respond to challenges and witnessing that evolution is very rewarding. I see a lot of these guys become very mature and good leaders. It is humbling to think that I have a part to play in their growth," Fr. Gregory said.



Abbey Welcomes Roberto Camargo into Novitiate

Congratulations to Brazilian native Roberto Camargo, who entered the novitiate in March during a private ceremony at the Abbey. Roberto's next year will be marked by a separation from the world and an acclimation to one's new life here.

"For a truly consistent spiritual development, the novitiate is the proper time for growing deep in self-knowledge. To know myself, to understand my feelings, to recognize my thoughts, even good and bad ones, is essential to begin in a true relationship with God and walk in the path of holiness," Roberto said.

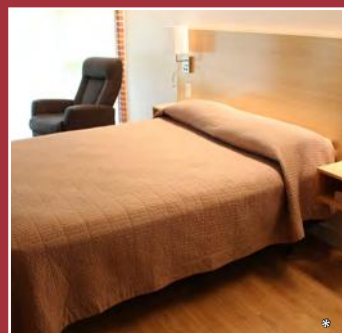
To see more photos from Roberto's novitiate ceremony, visit www.flickr.com/photos/saintjosephabbey/albums

RETREAT CENTER RE-OPENS FOLLOWING COMPLETE RENOVATION



CLC photos courtesy of Michael Palumbo. *Unless otherwise noted

The Christian Life Center re-opened in January after undergoing a \$3.9 million overhaul. Improvements include more spacious bedrooms, larger private bathrooms, and independent air conditioning / heating thermostats. The renovation was led by Blich Knevel Architects. Construction was performed by DonahueFavret Contractors, Inc.



The CLC is available to outside groups. For more information, visit www.saintjosephabbey.com/about-the-clc.

MILO, ARTIST WHO COLLABORATED WITH DOM GREGORY DE WIT, PASSES AWAY

Fr. Aelred Kavanagh, O.S.B., contributed to this article.

Artist François Emilio Piuze, commonly known as Milo, passed away in Geneva, Switzerland, last August. He was 93.

Milo was invited by Dom Gregory de Wit, O.S.B., to collaborate in the painting of the Abbey Church in 1950. de Wit's murals in the church and Monks' Refectory were completed over the course of a decade, and both were designated in 2007 in the National Register of Historic Places properties.

Milo painted a number of the saints in the nave of the church, and he made the ceramic Stations of the Cross. He also designed the bronze altar appointments for the Angele altar; the crucifix of that set now hangs in the oratory of the Seminary College. He also designed vestments, notably the white and blue Annunciation set and a green solemn set, as well as a chalice for Fr. Raphael Barousse, O.S.B.

"Milo was such a shy person, in contrast to the unrestrained and mercurial Dom Gregory, that, from the perspective of the Abbey, it is difficult to think of him on his own terms and not just in terms of Dom Gregory. What is known about him comes in great part from his association with Dom Gregory; otherwise, there is a scarcity of information about him," said Fr. Aelred Kavanagh, O.S.B.

While they worked together on many of the fifty-odd paintings, de Wit assigned some to Milo. Local oral and written sources give only a partial picture of the extent of Milo's solo work; according to information from Milo himself, given to Dr. Boyd Helm of Baton Rouge, Milo painted most of the female saints in the north aisle of the church and some of the male saints in the south aisle. Local tradition has it that Milo painted the clothing on the apostles high above the nave, while de Wit himself painted most of the faces.

After painting in the Abbey Church, Milo remained for a time in the U. S. Major bodies of his work are located at the monastery of the Discalced Carmelites of Lafayette and at Saint Aloysius Parish in Baton Rouge. Milo returned to his native Switzerland in 1970. May he rest in peace.

NECROLOGY

Please Help Us Pray For Family and Friends Who Have Passed on into Eternal Life

MSGR. ROBERT G. ANGELLE '50	RICHARD J. FERRY '57	REV. NICHOLAS P. PERICONE '92
REV. DONALD BAHLINGER '47	THOMAS A. GREVE	XUAN N. PHAM '80
FRANCIS P. "FRANK" BAROVECHIO, SR.	MARGARET GRIENER	DEACON FRANK WILLIAM RHODES, JR.
RAOUL JOSEPH BARRIOS, SR.	GEORGE HENRY GURTNER	FRED L. RITTLER
MELANIE BOQUET	AZELIA D'AQUIN HART	ADA MAE BECNEL RITZMANN
DONALD J. BROUSSARD '53	STERLING JOSEPH HEBERT, JR.	WILFRED "DEACON WIL" ROBICHAUX, JR. '62
CLIFFORD L. BROWN	JOY JOHNSON	JOSEPH WILLIAM "BILL" SHERAR
WALTON CAIRE	WILLIAM KENTZEL, JR.	REV. GEORGE HOWARD SIMON '51
MARY LOU CHRISTOVICH	DONALD E. LAGARDE, JR.	MARY LOUISE SIMON
DONNA THIELE CLEMENT	MARVIN VICTOR MARMANDE, SR.	STEPHEN STUMPF
SHERRY ANN ISRAEL COMEAUX	DEAN C. MCKEE	LEON STURCKEN '55
SUE JO CROCHET	RUBY M. MORTON	NANCY TAYLOR
MICHAEL A. DAIGLE	MARGARET MARY MULE'	REV. DAVID K. TEXADA '47
PATRICK DYKES	SUE NUNEZ	THERESA G. "TESSIE" TROSCLAIR



Milo (on left) works with Dom Gregory de Wit