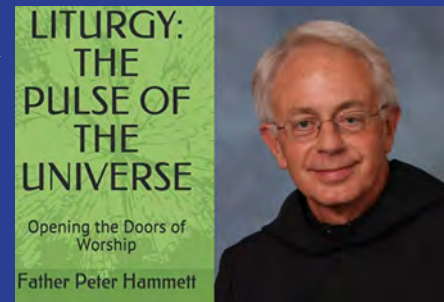


## FR. PETER HAMMETT PUBLISHES NEW BOOK

Fr. Peter Hammett, O.S.B., who has been a Saint Joseph Abbey monk for more than half a century, continues to keep a steady stream of projects in the pipeline.

Last fall, Fr. Peter published "Liturgy: The Pulse of the Universe - Opening the Doors of Worship." In the book, Fr. Peter seeks to open the door to a deeper understanding of the inner meaning and dynamics of the Liturgy and the other sacraments. The reflections explore the nature of symbol and the necessity of ritual. The book is available for purchase at Amazon.com.



Fr. Peter is also putting the finishing touches on a new collection of writings of the late Abbot Patrick Regan, O.S.B., the fourth abbot of Saint Joseph Abbey, who passed away in 2017. The Abbot left behind 43 published articles and 15 major talks, many about the Paschal Mystery and preparing for & celebrating Lent.

Finally, Fr. Peter has been visiting men and women incarcerated at St. Tammany Parish Jail in Covington, hearing confessions, and saying mass twice a month. The endeavor is part of the incarceration ministry of St. Peter's Catholic Church in Covington.

"It's quite a wonderful experience. My goal is to engage with the inmates as much as possible. We often talk about their families and the difficulty of being away from them. I think just being present, just being an extra set of ears, means so much to them during this time in their lives," Fr. Peter said.



## WILLWOODS RETREATS PROVIDE MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

Since 1978, the Faith & Marriage Apostolate of the Willwoods Community has been dedicated to promoting the sacramentality of marriage and providing married couples with various opportunities for growth, enrichment, and support. One particular way that this is accomplished is through offering retreats specifically designed for married couples.

On a Willwoods Married Couples Retreat, spouses have an excellent opportunity to break away from the struggles and tasks of the daily routine and spend quality time rejuvenating and enriching their marriage through inspiring presentations from speaker couples, private couple time, individual prayer time, Reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration and the celebration of the Mass. Through God's grace, couples walk away with a renewed strength and a more profound commitment to God and each other. Below are just some of the comments couples have made about their experience on a Willwoods Retreat:

*"All married couples should attend. It filled my heart with something so powerful! I'm so glad we came! I think my husband and I are better people for coming."*

*"Just a great overall experience to bring a married couple closer together and closer to God and their faith."*

*"Overall, it was great! I can't wait to come again. It helped me to refocus on the importance of working on our relationship and ways to enhance our love for each other and God."*

For more information or to register, contact Jason Angelette at 504-830-3716, Jason@FaithandMarriage.org, or visit [www.FaithandMarriage.org](http://www.FaithandMarriage.org). A suggested donation of \$300 per couple is requested but not required. Scholarships are available.

## SAVE THE DATE

**DEO GRATIAS** - October 17, 2020. Proceeds benefit the Seminary College and will go toward the formation and education of the next generation of Church leaders in the Gulf South region.

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

[saintjosephabbey.com](http://saintjosephabbey.com)

/saintjosephabbeyseminary

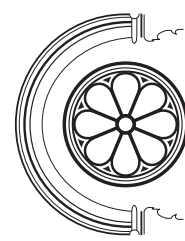
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Scan this QR code to see additional photos from this issue of Abbey Voice.



**SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY + SEMINARY COLLEGE**

Individuals like you are the foundation of our community. Know that the Monks of the Abbey carry you and your loved ones in our hearts and prayers.

Saint Joseph, pray for us. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.

-Abbot Justin Brown, O.S.B.



## Giving Opportunities

Your financial support is greatly appreciated.

Donations can be made online at:

[www.saintjosephabbey.com/donate](http://www.saintjosephabbey.com/donate)  
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](mailto:ddenoux@sjasc.edu)

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

For more information, please contact:

**Scott Wallace at (985) 867-2235 or [swallace@sjasc.edu](mailto:swallace@sjasc.edu)**

## THE ABBEY VOICE

Volume 43: Spring 2020

SAINT JOSEPH ABBEY

AND SEMINARY COLLEGE

75376 River Road

Saint Benedict, LA 70457

# ABBEEY VOICE

VOLUME 43 • SPRING 2020

A ROBIN RED BREAST FACING EAST IN A MONASTERY FRONT-YARD CREPE MYRTLE. PHOTO BY FR. AUGUSTINE FOLEY, O.S.B.

## ABBOT'S LETTER



Abbot Justin Brown, O.S.B.

Since the 15th century, the Feast Day of Saint Joseph has been celebrated on March 19. A particular devotion to Saint Joseph stems from a famous miracle in Sicily which led to the tradition known as *la tavola di San Giuseppe* (Table of Saint Joseph).

According to the tradition, a great famine struck the island of Sicily due to a drought. The villagers prayed to their beloved Saint Joseph for protection and relief and pledged if the rain returned they would hold a special feast to honor Saint Joseph. Miraculously, the rain started to fall, and when the harvest came, the people of Sicily prepared a wonderful feast of Thanksgiving.

It is not difficult to imagine how Saint Joseph became a powerful intercessor and wonder-worker as one looks back on what little we know of him in the scripture – He was a man of deeds and not words, and he was faithful. He was formed by the same Hebrew scripture we read during Lent – which calls us to a Godly way of life, to obey God's commands, to walk in his ways, to offer him the sacrifice He desires – a humble and contrite heart. It was this teaching from the Law and the Prophets that formed and molded the righteous man Joseph. In the infancy narrative in the Gospel of Matthew, we see Saint Joseph as a model of faith, trust and obedience even in the face of uncertainty. His is a mystical journey as he walks in what Saint John Paul called the "luminous darkness." He truly embodies the words of the Prophet Jeremiah we heard in the second week of Lent, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord. He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream; its leaves stay green. In the year of drought, it shows no distress but still bears fruits."

In the Gospel of Matthew there are key moments when Saint Joseph, that faithful tree, bore fruit even in the midst of a deep spiritual and emotional drought. He could have quietly divorced Mary, taking the easy way out, thinking only of himself and avoiding the journey into "luminous darkness." He could have said no to a mystery that he did not understand and certainly felt unworthy of its invitation. God invites him to utter with his whole being a personal yet silent, yes, a yes that will echo throughout eternity, a yes like that of his beloved virgin spouse. Theirs would be the human response God seeks, unfolding the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption.

**Each of us, like Joseph, are faced with times of spiritual and emotional drought, times of uncertainty and distress, of fear and of doubt, a time in which the human family presently finds itself. These times call forth a new and deeper response of trust and hope in the Lord, thus stretching the roots of our hearts to the living waters of spirit and of grace. Then we, like Saint Joseph, will hear God's messenger say to us, "Be not afraid, rise up and do what he commands."**

**Saint Joseph pray for us, and pray for the entire human family. Pray Christ rain on our drought the water of His mercy.**  
*-Homily by Abbot Justin Brown, O.S.B. from Thursday, March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph.*

*+ Justin Brown O.S.B.*

## RECTOR'S LETTER



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

As we welcomed this spring season of renewal and the start of our semester, I paused for a moment of reflection on our mission here at the Seminary College. We are a community of faith rooted in the Benedictine tradition, which promotes learning in the liberal arts and development of the whole person. The fruits of our purpose and mission are the formation of men for the priesthood, and we work tirelessly all semester towards this goal. As we approached our mid-semester break, we were confronted by a never-before experienced pandemic that has gripped the entire world, COVID-19. The administration and I knew that we would have to adjust to comply with all that is being asked of the citizens of the world to fight the virus, and tough decisions would have to be made - all the while keeping in mind our mission. All the actions taken have been in the best interest of the seminarians, and our work to educate and edify our men for the priesthood continues, albeit through online classes and distance learning.

During the Christmas break, three groups of nine seminarians and two members of our formation staff set off to different cities to propagate our mission of service – Laredo, Tex., Chicago, Ill., and Escapulas, Guatemala. Each experience was unique to the seminarians, and the reports were as varied as the men themselves. We were not disappointed by what we heard! I'd love to share a few of their stories with you.

A young man from Texas who went to minister in Laredo was touched by the reality of the situation along our border with Mexico. He states, "The mission immersion helped me hear the cries of the Church of Laredo. The experience gave a human face to a 'political' problem. It is no longer an 'issue' because it's many people's 'story'." He is able to understand the true face of Christ and his call to emulate this for all humankind. Another seminarian from southeast Louisiana reflected on his trip to the inner city of Chicago. "Through Mission in Chicago, I gained a wider scope of the needs of the church in the US. I also learned something about myself...that I am a mission. God is working in me and transforming me just as much as a missionary is on mission. It is a lifelong process of conversion." He is able to articulate his formational growth and show his understanding that, yes, this is a lifelong process. And, finally, one young man from Georgia makes the following observation about his experience in Escapulas, Guatemala, "The Mission Trip showed me what poverty actually is and that amidst that poverty, there is a faith that is stronger than a lot of the faith I encounter in the states." These are just three examples that show the impact of the culmination of our formation program on the men of Saint Joseph Seminary College. I have great faith that, even with the interruption of the normalcy of our formation program, the seniors and underclassmen of Saint Joseph Seminary College are well-prepared to endure all that will be asked of them in times of great uncertainty.

The experiences and stories above are only a few examples of why I confidently say that we will persevere and our purpose and our mission will be achieved, even during these difficult and uncertain circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity that you help to provide for our seminarians through your time, donations, and dedication to Saint Joseph Seminary College. Your prayers are needed now more than ever for the wellbeing of our men, our country, and our world. I remain inspired by our Class of 2020 and know that the men reflect the values of our past classes who have gone on to extend our purpose and mission to all they serve in Jesus Christ's name, especially in the trying times we now face.

*J. Gregory Boquet, O.S.B.*

## MISSION TRIP BRINGS SEMINARIANS TO CHICAGO

During a mission trip to Chicago over Christmas break, nine seminarians and two faculty members visited the Mission of Our Lady of the Angels.

The Mission assists one of the most impoverished regions of Chicago, the West Humboldt Park area.

In addition to helping with their food pantry, the seminarians installed 80 much-needed light fixtures and ran hundreds of feet of electrical conduit.

This trip was made possible by the generosity of the Knights of Columbus Louisiana State Council, which raised funds for the Seminary's mission trips to Chicago, Laredo, and Guatemala. Earlier this semester, the Knights donated \$20,000 to the Seminary College from their annual statewide raffle.



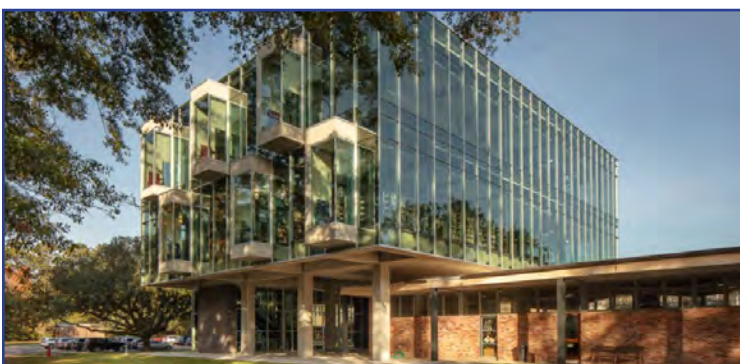
## CONGRATS TO THE RAVENS, WHO DEFEATED NOTRE DAME SEMINARY 20-0 DURING THE ANNUAL BONFIRE FOOTBALL GAME LAST FALL!



## ROUQUETTE LIBRARY RECEIVES AWARD OF MERIT

The new Rouquette Library at Saint Joseph Seminary College was the recipient of the American Institute of Architects Louisiana Design Award of Merit at the AIA LA '19 Conference on Architecture in Baton Rouge. Congrats to Steve Rome at VergesRome Architects for his work on this monumental project!

Rouquette was one of 11 winning projects selected from nearly 70 entries in seven categories.



# ABBEY AND SEMINARY NEWS

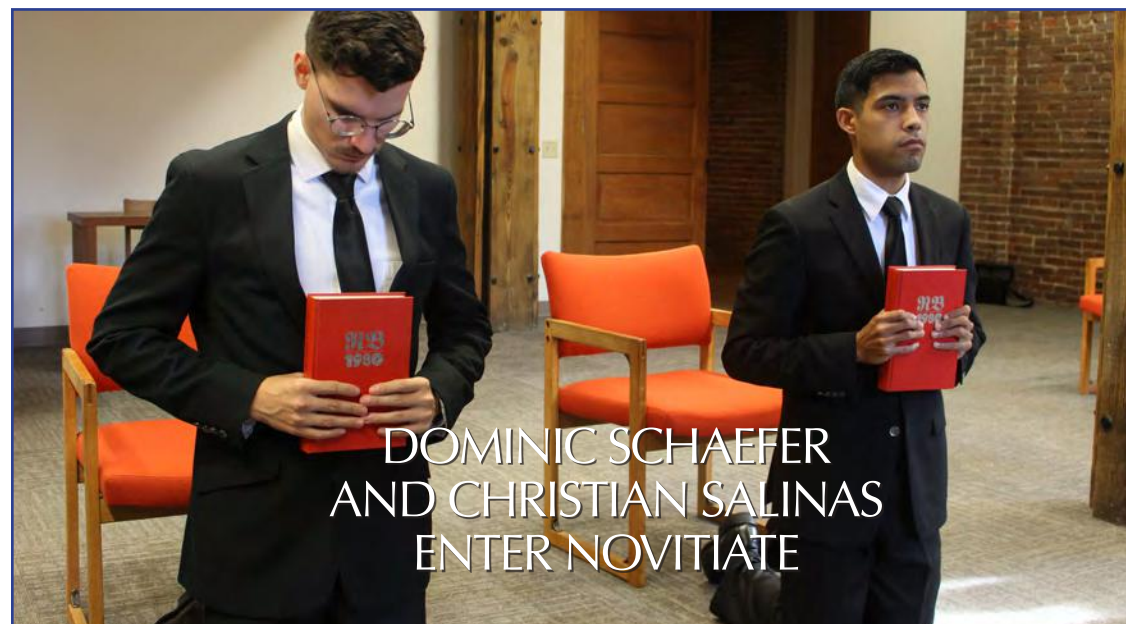


BR. COLUMBA & BR. JOSEPH TAKE FIRST VOWS



During Vespers on the evening of September 14th, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, two novices took their first vows in the Abbey Church, committing themselves to three years as Benedictine monks at the Abbey.

Congratulations to Cody, who will now be known as Br. Columba Cody Cotton, and Alex (with beard), who will now be known as Br. Joseph Alex Boucher. To see more photos, scan the QR code in this issue with your phone or visit flickr.com/photos/saintjosephabbey/albums.



DOMINIC SCHAEFER AND CHRISTIAN SALINAS ENTER NOVITIATE



On the same day, in addition to the two new men who took temporary vows, the monastic community at the Abbey also welcomed Dominic Schaefer (left) and Christian Salinas into the Novitiate.

For the next year, leading up to their first vows, both men will immerse themselves in the monastery, contributing to the life of the community in prayer and work (Ora et Labora).

## LONGEST SERVING VOLUNTEERS AT ABBEY REMINISCE ON LAST 20 YEARS



Mal Phillippi and Charlotte Seeger

If you have ever stopped by the Abbey Gift Shop on a Tuesday or Thursday, chances are you may have received assistance from volunteers Mal Phillippi and Charlotte Seeger. Volunteers at the Gift Shop for many years, both aren't exactly sure for how long. But they do agree that they each started on the same day more than 20 years ago, which currently makes them the longest-serving volunteers at the Abbey.

Friends since 1986, both Mal and Charlotte have connections to the Abbey that precede their time as volunteers. Mal and her husband Steven became friends with Abbey monk Fr. Thomas Perrier (deceased), who served as an altar boy at their wedding in the 1960s. Mal and Steven eventually would attend Fr. Thomas' ordination in 1979, and their connection to the Abbey has continued to grow. Charlotte remembers Saint Joseph's as a child, serving as a camper and then counselor at nearby St. Gertrude Convent from where she and her friends would often ride horses down to the river at the Abbey. Abbot Columban used to visit the girls camp often and even gave Charlotte her first Benedictine medal.

Mal's and Charlotte's relationship with the Abbey also parallels a friendship they have shared. Both of their husbands were engineers, and the group often spent time together through their church parish.

Before her "retirement" from the Abbey last year, Yvette O'Rourke was at that time the longest standing volunteer, having served 28 years at the Abbey. Coincidentally enough, Yvette was the one who recruited Charlotte and Mal to volunteer in the Gift Shop. At the time, Mal and her husband were retiring, so it seemed like a great opportunity to keep busy at a place she loved.

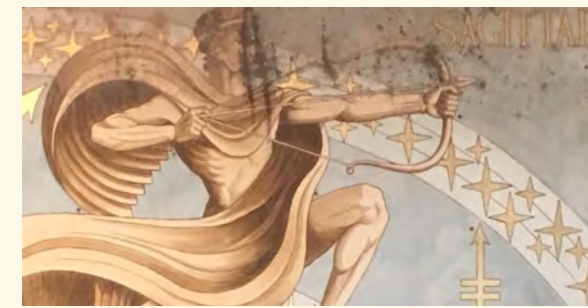
"When we retired it made me realize that you keep growing, and the Abbey's Gift Shop is as much a ministry to me as my time volunteering at the Food Bank in Covington. It's not just selling stuff; rather, it is sharing God with people. You meet really interesting people which is a blessing," Mal said.

In addition to volunteering, Charlotte has been a Benedictine Oblate for many years. Through this ministry, she met another Oblate, Fred, whom she would later marry, after her first husband passed away. They have been married for five years now.

When asked what she would say to someone who is interested in giving their time as an Abbey volunteer, Charlotte stresses flexibility and kindness.

"You have to be personable and want to talk and guide people. A lot of times it is making suggestions for gifts for happy occasions. Alternatively, many people who come through may not just be celebrating a life event, but they sometimes have been in crisis. Whether it's someone dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, COVID-19, or a death in the family, it's important to help them no matter what may be happening in their life," Charlotte said.

Many thanks to Mal and Charlotte for their generosity to the Abbey, 20 years and counting!



Before and after restoration photos of one of the ceiling panels in the Monks' Refectory. To view more photos, scan the QR code in this issue with your phone or visit flickr.com/photos/saintjosephabbey/albums.

## MONASTIC REFECTORY CEILING RECEIVES RESTORATION

Last summer, approximately 70 murals painted in the 1940s by the world-renowned artist and Benedictine, Dom Gregory de Wit, were painstakingly restored in the Monks' Refectory at Saint Joseph Abbey.

Over time, the murals were damaged by water intrusion from the roof and moisture that had accumulated from two natural disasters, Hurricane Katrina and the March 2016 flood.

Craig Crawford of Crawford Restoration in New Orleans completed the work with painting conservators Catherine Rogers of Charleston, South Carolina, and Maho Yoshi Rawa of Chicago, Illinois. Crawford also helped restore the murals in the Abbey Church about 20 years ago. Funding for last summer's project was provided by generous contributions from the Abbey's 2018 Christmas appeal.

In 1946, Abbot Columban Thuis commissioned Dom Gregory to execute a series of original murals, and the Dutch monk lived and worked at the Abbey for 10 years as he created the murals with specially treated paints that could withstand the humid climate.

## ARTIST RETREAT COMING TO ABBEY THIS AUGUST

Saint Joseph Abbey Art Works is inviting painters of any medium to its next Artist Retreat for several days of peaceful, quiet painting on the grounds of the Abbey. The retreat takes place August 24-28, 2020.

Registration includes private room & bath plus meals in the Abbey's Retreat Center. Work at your own pace and develop your own imagery. Enjoy meeting and sharing art and ideas with other artists. This retreat is for independent artistic development and is not recommended for beginner artists. No formal painting instruction will be given. For more information (including any changes to this event due to the COVID-19 pandemic), visit [www.saintjosephabbey.com/artist-retreat](http://www.saintjosephabbey.com/artist-retreat) or contact Billie Bourgeois at [bbour498@gmail.com](mailto:bbour498@gmail.com) or 225-276-5424.



## NECROLOGY

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

BR. LEE BARKER, S.C.	PAUL C. FREDERICK '51	WADE R. OLSEN, SR.
REV. MSGR. ALBERT GEORGE BERGERON '56	MSGR. L. EARL GAUTHREUX '50	MARY "MOONEY" ZATARAIN O'NEILL
CHRISTOPHER THOMAS BRADLEY	BERNICE GUIDRY	J. GRANT PICHON '58
BETTY BAROUSSE BRIGGS	JOAN WALET HARTSON	DAVID JOSEPH PIERSON '70
GUELDA MUÑOZ CLARK	DONALD FELIX HEBERT '45	CYSTON ALLEN SAUCIER
JOHN JOSEPH CLARK, III '71	NORMA FOLEY LADNER	ROLLA FRANCIS SCHWARTZ, III
PATRICIA V. "PATSY" COUDRAIN	URBAN GILBERT LARROQUE, JR.	GARY STEPHEN SENAC
LEV MAGRUDER DAWSON, JR. '58	FRANK LEVY	DR. COURTNEY JOHN STROEBEL, SR.
AUDREY STOUTE DUHON	THOMAS N. LENNOX	WARREN GERARD TROXCLAIR
CALVIN JOHN DUHON	ANNE BARRINGTON KING LEVERT	PAUL PATRICK TUSA '57
RUTH ECKERSON DUPRE	OTIS JAMES "MIKE" MAZOUÉ '70	EVELLA ABNEY VIMEN
JOYCE PETIT FONTAINE	BEATRICE GAUPP MESTAYER	NOLA LUCCIONI WOLSCH
	JOSEPH W. OBERFELL	