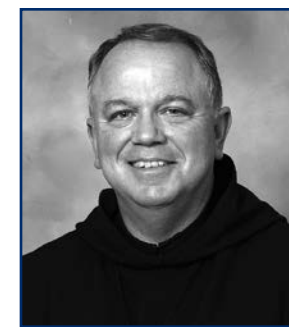
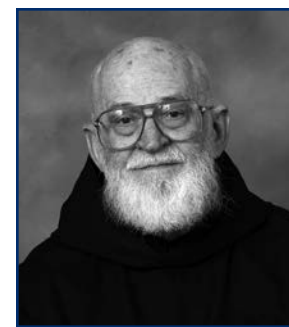
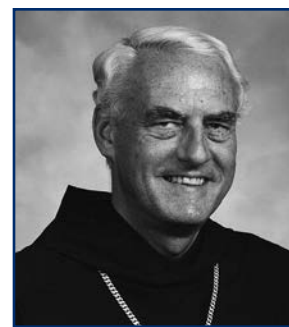
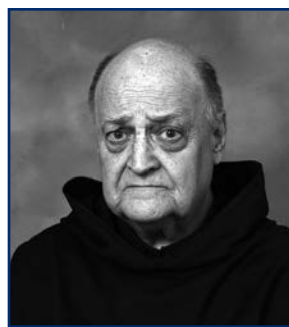




Brian Landry at 2009 Alumni Homecoming Mass



John Labrise, Br. Jude, and Dustin Bernard



Br. Michael Langlois, Abbot Patrick Regan, Fr. Ambrose Wathen and Abbot Justin Brown



ALUMNI NOTES

Save the dates and register online!

90th Annual Homecoming
Easter Friday, 9 April 2010
3 p.m. registration

Golf Tournament
Thursday, 20 May, 10 a.m. tee-off
Covington Country Club

First Annual Acadian Homecoming
Friday, 23 April
Our Lady of Wisdom
University of Louisiana-Lafayette
Vespers at 6 p.m.; supper follows

register and pay on the web
www.sjasc.edu
or call the Development Office
985 867-2242

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

DEO GRATIAS 2010

COVINGTON
30 October
Follows 6 p.m. vespers – 11 p.m.
Saint Joseph Abbey + Seminary College
Saint Benedict, LA
This is our on-campus premier fundraiser for the seminary college. We'll have great food, music for all and wonderful raffle and auction items. It will be a night you definitely don't want to miss.

BATON ROUGE
Sunday, 24 October
Follows 6 p.m. vespers – 11 p.m.
Catholic Life Center
Baton Rouge, LA
This is our fifth anniversary Baton Rouge celebration supporting our seminary college. We'll have a delicious buffet supper, a Schola performance and raffle and auction items.

[more information](#)
Event tickets: \$75 per person
Sponsorship opportunities available
contact Vanessa Crouere
985 867-2242
vcrouere@sjasc.edu

CALL FOR ABBEY VOCATIONS

by Br. Jude Israel

The fourth of October 2009 saw the beginning of the novitiate for two men at Saint Joseph Abbey: Dustin Bernard of Carencro, La., and John Labrise of Wexford, Penn. Dustin and John were accepted into the novitiate in a private ceremony held in the monastery chapter room.

Dustin, 24 years old, spent three years in Saint Joseph Seminary College, first as a seminarian for the diocese of Lafayette, then as a student for the abbey at the beginning of the 2008 school year.

John, 45 years old, holds degrees from Saint Vincent's College in Latrobe, the Pontifical College Josephinum in Ohio, and Bowling Green University in Ohio. John began discerning a vocation to Saint Joseph Abbey in January 2009.

In addition to Novice Dustin and Novice John, other young men are in various stages of the discernment process for the abbey, with one new candidate expected to arrive in January and possibly two other candidates arriving at the beginning of the summer.

To aid young men in the discernment process for the abbey, three "come and see" events are scheduled this year. Entitled "Living the Monastic Identity," the program enables participants to live, work, and pray with the monastic community for a week, as well as provide them with a glimpse of monastic life as it is lived at Saint Joseph. The program will be held during the first week of January, then during Holy Week, and finally, the week immediately preceding the Solemnity of Saint Benedict this summer. Part of the "Living the Monastic Identity" program will include conferences on various aspects of monastic life and spirituality. Also included in the program is an introduction to lectio divina, the monastic form of private prayer. Anyone interested in participating in the program is asked to contact Br. Jude Israel, O.S.B., vocation director.

Our alumni and friends can also help in the vocation efforts of the abbey. We ask all to pray that the Lord will continue to call young men to follow the monastic life according to Saint Benedict as it is lived here and that they may have the courage to respond to that call. Additionally, we ask our friends and alumni who are eligible to consider the call to monastic life, so that we may continue the work which was begun here more than a century ago.

JOURNEYS THROUGH GRACE: THE ABBEY MARKS FOUR JUBILEES

homily by Abbot Justin Brown, OSB

The journey motif is found throughout scripture, from the journey of Abraham we heard in our first reading, to Israel's journey in the desert, to the journey of Elijah to Mt. Horeb, to the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. In these stories, the journey calls one to leave behind a way of life in order to live another fuller and richer life. It calls for sacrifice, a letting go of the secure and familiar to walk in the mysterious and often times unclear ways of God. This journey calls us to walk on a path not of our own making, but by faith, promising a blessing not always visible along the way. We have no idea of where it will lead us, but if God is the one summoning us to walk, we can be sure it will lead to him and to a life transformed and recreated.

Throughout the *Rule*, Saint Benedict makes reference to monastic life as a journey, a journey to everlasting life. When the journey gets hard, we must never forget the verse we sang three times at our profession, and the verse we will sing again today, "Accept me, O Lord as you have promised, that I may live; and let me not be put to shame in my hope." It is this hope which has sustained us for 60, 50, and 25 years!

Sixty years ago on Easter Sunday, Brother Michael made his first profession of vows in this church, a place that has been an integral part of his life. After more than fifty years as sacristan, a work to which he gave his whole heart, Br. Michael graciously gave up this beloved service because of failing health. He now enjoys an even more beloved service — being here in the community, participating faithfully in the daily liturgy and in community life, supporting and encouraging young and old alike with his characteristic humor. Br. Michael, thank you for your years of service in the sacristy. They have been legendary; but thank you most of all for your faithful witness to monastic life and for your deep love for the community.

Fifty years ago on 21 August, Abbot Patrick and Father Ambrose professed first vows, not in the Abbey Church, which was undergoing its first major renovation, but in the senior study hall. It seems an appropriate place now, for study and the love of learning would shape and define their monastic journey. Both would earn doctorate degrees: Abbot Patrick in Liturgy from the Institute Catholique in Paris, and Father Ambrose in Theology from the University of Ottawa in Canada.

Both would make significant contributions to the Church and to the Benedictine Confederation in their respective areas of liturgy and monastic studies, publishing articles in scholarly journals and giving lectures all over the world.

In 1982, Abbot Patrick was elected fourth abbot of our community, an office he faithfully carried out for 19 years, with 12 of those serving also as abbot president of the Swiss-American

Congregation of Benedictine Monks. Now he has returned to the classroom with his characteristic energy and enthusiasm, this time at the Benedictine University in Rome. Abbot Patrick, thank you for the grace-filled journey that has been your life in this community these 50 years; for the profound influence you have had on its very heart — the liturgy; and for your pastoral care and concern as abbot. Your continued enthusiasm and zeal for teaching and writing on the liturgy inspires us all.

Monks and nuns from around the world have benefitted greatly from the teaching and wisdom of Fr. Ambrose. For ten years during the 1970s and '80s, he taught monastic studies at Saint Anselmo in Rome, and over the years has given many retreats and conferences on *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Upon his return in 1985, he taught once again in our seminary, later serving as academic dean and rector. He also served the community as formation director, and now as sacristan, abbey librarian, tailor, and candle maker. While Fr. Ambrose is a man of many talents and has used them well, he has really only wanted to do one thing: to quietly live the monastic life of prayer, study, and work, and that is what he does today. Fr. Ambrose, thank you for all your service to the community, but thank you especially for being the monk you are, faithfully witnessing to a life that is all we could ever want.

Finally, for me, the junior of the group, I am filled with a tremendous sense of God's goodness and love as I reflect on the last 25 years, a goodness and love made visible for me in this community. I am grateful to God for the gift of a monastic vocation. It is a precious gift and I pray for the grace to cherish it more and to continue faithfully on the journey I have begun. I still have a way to go! While I am grateful to all of you, my brothers, for your loving support and mindful too, of the support of those who have completed the journey and now cheer us on, I would like to mention some confreres by name.

Thank you, Fr. Aelred, my Novice Master and Formation Director, for your patience and wisdom and for your faithful support. To my companions in formation, Gregory, Matthew, and Seán, who share with me memories and experiences of a formative time, thank you for a fraternal friendship that endures. And to Abbot Patrick, who was my abbot most of these 25 years, I am grateful for the support and encouragement you gave me, and which I still experience to this day.

My gratitude and heartfelt thoughts extend to the good parents God gave me and who are here in spirit; and to family and friends who have been for me goodness personified. In 25 years I have come to know one thing is certain: "Truly all is grace!"

ABBAY ARCHIVES REVIEWED

by Charles Nolan, Archivist

(As retired archivist of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, we find Mr. Nolan especially qualified to catalogue our archives. The abbey extends our warmest thanks for his volunteer efforts. - ed.)

The archives of Saint Joseph Abbey house records dating back to the 19th century. These include more than the historical records of the abbey, the seminary, and the many ministries served from here. Among other items are local climatology reports, records of the local postmaster (a monk!), an early New York scrapbook of Father Joseph Rummel, the future archbishop of New Orleans, and a remarkable artifact collection gathered by Fr. Dominic Braud.

In September 2008, at Fr. Jonathan DeFrance's request, a major review and reorganization of the archives was undertaken. An initial survey of the two archives rooms resulted in a 70-page report listing more than 1,500 items. Additional storage units were purchased and each shelf or drawer was assigned a numeric location and clearly labeled.

The principal records of individual monks, abbots, publications, etc. were grouped in specific sections, but numerous additions were scattered throughout the two rooms. Personnel records were the first to be reorganized. The records of 489 men who form or formed the community of Saint Joseph Abbey up through 1 September 2009, were combined into a single file and arranged by surname. Using Fr. Timothy Burnett's "Monks List" as a base, an electronic guide to these records was created. The abbots' papers were then reorganized into 47 boxes, Abbot David Melancon's papers alone occupy 31 boxes.

The scattered abbey and seminary publications provided a unique challenge, for no complete inventory existed. More than 20 copies of some volumes or issues were found; none, of others. Two complete sets of each issue (where available) were created and shelved together. A complete inventory of existing publications was prepared and extra issues were set aside for use by the abbey or seminary.

A file of newspaper special editions and articles was created and arranged. With only a small number of items processed, the file already has more than 110 references. The next major processing task is reorganizing the numerous records of the Swiss-American Benedictine Congregation.

To document new items placed in the archives, an accession file was created. To date, 74 items have been transferred using this file.

To provide additional records storage space, a room for more recent photographs is being prepared near the abbey library. The storage room for Fr. Dominic's artifacts will be reorganized and include additional space.

NECROLOGY

pray with us for those who have passed away

Valerie Arnoult, friend of the abbey
Fr. George Balderrama, '62
Earline Cheramie, mother of Rev. Lonnie Cheramie, '96
Judy Copping, wife of Gary Copping, '91
George F. Dillenkoffer Jr., '61
Roberta S. Dugas, friend of the abbey
Thomas H. Doussan Sr., brother of Msgr. Douglas Doussan, '54
Dr. Frederick Grieshaber, uncle of Abbot Justin Joseph H. Killeen, friend of the abbey
Margaret Laborde, friend of the abbey
Miriam Launey, mother of Sonny Launey, '64
Robley D. Laurent Jr., '64
Charles J. LeBlanc, '44
James Kern, father of Msgr. Crosby Kern, '60
Elaine Maestri, mother of Fr. William Maestri, '73
Deborah Elizabeth Mason, wife of Robert J. Mason, '71
Kerri Massari, '63
Arthur Middleton, friend of the abbey
Camille Rachal, friend of the abbey
Fr. Jules Speyrer, '40
Evelyn Valladares, mother of Fr. Alex Valladares, '94
Virginia De La Vega, friend of the abbey
Anselm Wetzka, '45



Fr. Thomas Eugene Perrier, OSB

FR THOMAS: 1952-2009

from the Office of the Abbot

Father Thomas Eugene Perrier, O.S.B., monk of Saint Joseph Abbey in Saint Benedict, La., died at the abbey on 26 October 2009. He was 56 years old.

Son of the late Eugene Perrier and Myrtle Weathers, Fr. Thomas was born 4 December 1952 in New Orleans. He made his profession as a Benedictine monk of Saint Joseph Abbey on 10 July 1975. He was ordained to the priesthood 5 January 1980. He is survived by his sisters, Sister Rochelle Perrier, M.S.C., and Sister Christine Perrier, M.S.C.

Fr. Thomas served as director of Camp Abbey, professor in Saint Joseph Seminary College, novice master and director of the Christian Life Center.

Fr. Thomas' body was received at Saint Joseph Abbey on Thursday, 29 October at 5:15 p.m., followed by the singing of Vespers. The funeral Vigil was held at 7:15 p.m. in the Abbey Church. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Friday, 30 October at 11:15 a.m. at Saint Joseph Abbey, followed by burial in the Abbey Cemetery.



seminarians Greg Gerhart and Martin Siebold

SCHOOL-WIDE RETREAT

by Brad Doyle, Baton Rouge Diocese

Every year the school-wide retreat gives the seminary community a taste of what it will encounter throughout the fall semester. We call it the "school-wide retreat" because it involves all of the students, and it has always been an important part of the fall semester, for it sets the tone of the year, allows new men to meet the returning students, and gives the senior class a chance to establish themselves as the school's leadership. But maybe most importantly, it forms a community around a central goal: formation for the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

So, on Friday, 11 September to Sunday, 13 September 2009, the entire school packed up their essentials and headed to the beautiful Tickfaw State Park, which the seminary has been frequenting for the past two years. It is a beautiful testament to the geography of South Louisiana and has surely given the seminarians from other states a crash course in dealing with our wildlife; especially the raccoons, which launched a full-scale attack on our dinner leftovers. But on a more serious note, Tickfaw does offer many walking trails and other places for silent prayer and reflection conducive to a retreat.

The centerpiece of the retreat was "The Good Shepherd," which the seniors chose because of this "Year of the Priest" that the Holy Father has named. For Christ, the good shepherd is the best example of a priest, and if we are to be priests, we must be in intimate communion with Christ the Priest, Christ the Shepherd. So, throughout the weekend, seniors gave conferences all revolving around Christ and his example as a good shepherd. Punctuated by prayer and the celebration of the Holy Mass throughout, the weekend was formative and fruitful for all.

Every school-wide retreat is unique and brings new experiences because every year is marked by a new community of men studying for the priesthood at St. Ben's. However, as many alumni know, there is much that is retained from year to year. In fact, it is this sense of rooted tradition and community that is so priceless to St. Ben's. Looking back, it is clear that this year's retreat fostered this timeless tradition of community and set a firm direction for the rest of the year.

In this "Year of the Priest," we, the seminarians, thank all of the Abbey's surrounding community for their prayer and support. May we all find joy in waiting for our coming Lord this Advent season, and with the guiding example of Christ, the Good Shepherd, may we look forward to a second semester as good as the first.



seminarian Brad Doyle

PASTORAL FORMATION

by Katie Murphy

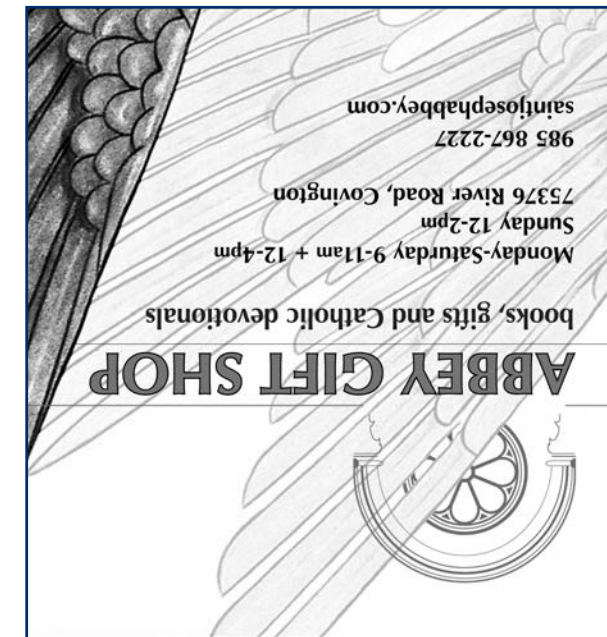
For the 14 seminarians who volunteered with Habitat for Humanity on 26 September, the day offered more than they had anticipated. Up in time for 6:30 a.m. Mass and morning prayer, they arrived at Habitat's Mandeville Restore at 8 a.m., were assigned to their work crews and headed out for a full day of building.

Arriving at the worksite, the seminarians saw five new houses about to be dedicated and the families who would transform them into homes. Unlike previous volunteer days, when they contributed to the construction of a house but never saw it finished, this time they participated in the dedication of completed structures and heard firsthand what it means to people to have a house of their own.

Another "first" was the opportunity to work side-by-side with the gentleman whose house they were helping to build. Older, unable to work for extended periods of time and without family in the area, Mr. Gilbert stayed with the seminarians as long as he was able. By the end of the day they had accumulated 104 of the mandatory 400 "sweat equity" hours Mr. Gilbert needed to contribute to the building of his home.

Reflecting on their experience, words like community, hope, diversity, appreciation and transformation surfaced. One seminarian spoke of his amazement at seeing a woman head up a construction crew and how listening to the story of a new homeowner gave him "the energy to work harder." Other seminarians commented on the positive impact Habitat's building efforts were having on the neighborhood crime rate and the satisfaction they felt in knowing they were making a difference in people's lives. One seminarian pointed out how this opportunity taught them "to be more aware of poverty." He acknowledged that this is something those who "come from upper, middle or lower middle class" backgrounds can sometimes forget.

Habitat gave seminarians a face, name and story to connect to the complicated issues of poverty. In the words of Richard J. Goldstone, a South African judge, such an experience "shows the human side of suffering and gives a voice to victims so they are not lost among the statistics."



THE ABBEY VOICE
volume 28: spring 2010
Saint Joseph Abbey + Seminary College
Saint Benedict, LA 70457

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ABBOT'S LETTER

Abbot Justin Brown, OSB

As we begin the New Year 2010, we at the Abbey, like many of you, pause for a moment to look back on the past year.

For us the year began in sadness with the death of Father Dominic on 1 January and ended in sadness with the sudden death of Fr. Thomas at the end of October. While we and many of you grieve the death of these beloved monks, who touched the lives and hearts of many, we are full of gratitude for their lives of goodness and love and for all the gifts they shared with us.

Last year, we continued to witness an increase in the number of seminarians and in the number of young men visiting the seminary expressing interest in the priesthood. In response to this interest, our newly-completed strategic plan has addressed the issues of the seminary physical plant, which is showing signs of age and is in need of updating in order to address the present and future needs of a seminary college and formation program.

In the past year, we have seen an increase in the number of people making retreats at the Abbey Christian Life Center. Thanks to the dedicated and loving service of Fr. Thomas over the past 14 years, the ministry of the Christian Life Center has expanded with new groups, including weekend Marriage Retreats sponsored by the Willwoods Community. We look forward to future growth and development under the direction of Deacon Mark Coudrain.

In the morning of 4 October, the Solemnity of the Dedication of the Abbey Church, the community received two novices. Over the past years several young men have expressed interest in monastic life, and in this new year Brother Jude is working diligently, planning new ways to reach possible candidates for monastic life. The whole community is becoming more aware of its role in praying for and promoting vocations. I ask you to join us in prayer for vocations and for our young monks in formation.

Throughout the year, we have been touched by your generosity and support, especially in this time of economic crisis. We are grateful for your participation in the life and mission of the abbey and seminary, and we assure you of our continued prayers.

Justin



RECTOR'S LETTER

President-Rector Gregory Boquet, OSB

The old saying "fortune favors the brave" could be applied to the seminarians who arrived on campus this fall. As we come to the end of the semester, this refrain could be used to describe the tenor of the school year thus far.

Our seminarians were challenged in many areas of formation and they responded enthusiastically. I say this because this semester was the first time that we implemented a stricter dress code, and even though it met with a little resistance at first, the young men embraced what was expected.

In addition, more focus was given to formation workshops and activities that pushed our seminarians to even greater discernment toward the path of the priesthood. The academic curriculum was enhanced with the addition of new faculty and staff, which challenged our seminarians to greater intellectual conversion.

In a word, I would like to say that our seminarians responded bravely to what was placed before them, and as a result, many blessings were bestowed upon us this semester, which could be interpreted as good fortune.

This reached a climax in our annual celebration of Bonfire Day, when our seminarians won, for the third year in a row, the football game against our rival, Notre Dame Seminary. God has indeed blessed us with spirited young men and I am confident that the Church will be in good hands. I reflected after that great win how fortunate we are to have such good men studying at St. Ben's.

J. Boquet

Saint Joseph Abbey Mission Statement

The mission of Saint Joseph Abbey is to foster Benedictine monastic life by embodying a communal life of sacrifice through prayer and work, serving Christ in each other, the Church, and all people.

Saint Joseph Seminary College Mission Statement

Saint Joseph Seminary College is a community of faith and learning, rooted in the Benedictine tradition, that promotes the development of the whole person. Its academic and formation programs foster the commitment of seminarians to the Roman Catholic priesthood in accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Program of Priestly Formation. The Seminary College also supports preparation for service in lay ministries through the Religious Studies Institute, and makes available its educational and other resources to the local community.