



modern rooms will help alleviate student overflow

VIVITE, VIANNY! TEMP DORMS! volunteers, phonathon and events win dorm support

The need for renovation of the Seminary College's physical plant became imperative at the beginning of this school year when enrollment jumped from 80 to 106, exceeding available dorm space. The overflow had to be temporarily housed on the third floor of the monastery while thanks to a generous benefactor, portable buildings were donated, and work on remodeling them to accommodate 15 students began. As often happens, this took longer than expected. Only after Christmas break was the new dorm ready, and 15 seniors and older students became residents of the Hannan Hall. Even with this addition, dorm occupancy is full. So providing for future needs had to be addressed, and fundraising begun.

After much work over the past year, the first part of the multi-phase, multi-million dollar master plan for physical facilities, that of the \$4.3 million for the renovation of Vianney Hall, is complete, thanks to the generous work, time, and dedication of our many friends. The work began last year with a group of 20 alumni working "in the field." These volunteers spent countless hours talking about the plan to about 101 other alumni and possible donors, and were able to secure pledges from generous contributions.

In the fall was held the Phonathon, an annual event of both the St. Ben Alumni Association and the student body. The Alumni Committee, chaired by Mr. Frank Morten, '69, began the calls, contacting about 160 donors. Their work was successful; they were able to secure 109 responses, over \$39,700. in pledges.

Later in the week, almost 100 students worked the phones each evening, with the goal of contacting the approximately 2000 known alumni. Their zeal was most productive; several alumni called their friends and classmates after they received their call, asking them to pledge.

Then on the weekend of 12-13 January, two events that generously benefited the Vianney Hall Renovation Fund were held. The first, in Lockport, LA, was organized, underwritten, and hosted by Ms. Charlotte Bollinger, a long-time friend of the Abbey and Seminary College. The sold-out crowd for the event was greeted by music presented by seminarian musicians. The festivities began with cocktails followed by dinner. Fr. Sean Duggan entertained with a piano recital before dessert was served and the evening ended.

The next night, an equally special event, this one arranged by Fr. Greg Fratt '94, was held in Morgan City, La. The sold-out group of St. Ben friends and supporters from that area enjoyed a social similar to the one in Lockport.

During the first semester, preparations for the renovation of Vianney Hall began. These included completely emptying the building, then having asbestos abatement done, and finally gutting the building. Now all is ready for the signing of contracts for the renovation itself, with completion of the project scheduled for Fall 2013.



Brian McNavish at a Guatemalan orphanage

COVER STORY: MISSION TRIPS students learn to minister to the Universal Church

During semester break, President-Rector Fr. Gregory Boquet and Mr. Matt Rousso, a Maryknoll lay missionary, again accompanied groups on a mission immersion experience to Esquipulas, Guatemala, providing, according to Fr. Gregory, "an opportunity for the senior seminarians to expand their vision and appreciate the multicultural dimensions of the Catholic Church."

While in Esquipulas, students visit chapels, schools, orphanages and clinics in the surrounding countryside and speak with persons who are helping the people in their struggles with poverty.

During the Thanksgiving holidays, Fr. Gregory, Fr. Jude and five seminarians participated in a mission trip to the St. Labre Catholic Indian Mission School in Ashland, Mont This trip provided a mission experience other than the one to Esquipulas, Guatemala. This program was started through the efforts of Tony Uceda, '09, the Director of Mission and Ministry there.

Finally, from 7-12 February, a group from Saint Catherine's Catholic Church in Atlanta invited their archdiocesan seminarians Jamie Ford, Alex Pina and Juan Pacheco, to Kingston, Jamaica. Their main mission was to help build a chapel on Mount Tabor for the Missionaries of the Poor. These missionaries are Catholic brothers and priests who minister to the poorest of the poor, in a way that recalls Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity.

DEO GRATIAS 2012:

community celebrates 70 years of profession

The 2012 Deo Gratias fundraisers were again successful. Both here on campus and in Baton Rouge, the seventh annual pair of events attracted many friends of the Abbey and Seminary College.

After Vespers with the monks in the Abbey Church on 27 October 2012, the Covington crowd of some 475 guests was welcomed by the Ed Barrett classical trio. Guests enjoyed an array of delicious food prepared by Chef John Folse and Company while viewing and bidding on items available for auction. Among these were many original artworks, a selection of religious antiquities, and a few historic pews from the Abbey Church. Guests were also entertained by seminarian musicians at the Sponsor event. The BRW Band led the dancing through the evening.

The Baton Rouge Deo Gratias, held at the Catholic Life Center, also began with Vespers, with Abbot Justin Brown presiding. Bishop Muench blessed the guests prior to dinner served by Chef Don Bergeron. The evening's emcee was Fr. Donald Blanchard, '63. Garret Twinning, Student Government Association President, spoke on seminary life. Each table was graciously hosted by a seminarian, and the seminarians' Covenant Seven band provided music for the evening.

The two events raised approximately \$200,000. Returns from these events help fund the Seminary College Gap Fund: the difference between tuition and the actual cost of educating seminarians.



Matt Hebert preparing to light the annual bonfire

THE 87TH ANNUAL BONFIRE Ravens reclaim trophy from Notre Dame

Tradition ruled the day—and the night—when the Saint Joseph Seminary Ravens met the Notre Dame Hunchbacks in their 87th annual bonfire/football game on 16 November, an especially joyful one for the Ravens who won the trophy with their 26-6 victory.

The day began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Andre Melancon, '06, during which a collection of \$900 was taken to help those suffering from Hurricane Sandy. Following this, Notre Dame President-Rector, Fr. James A. Wehner, opened the game with a prayer. J. P. Masterson was coach for the Ravens, and quarterback Blake Dubroc and receiver Jason Alleman were the team's leading players.

After evening prayer, an old-fashioned Cajun feast was served. Then all processed to the 34-foot high bonfire, a school-wide building project engineered by Rene Pellessier and Stephen Dolan.



LESSONS AND CAROLS

an Anglican tradition with a monastic twist

On 1 December, a service of Lessons and Carols directed by Schola Cantorum Director Colby McCurdy, (above: first seat, front row), was held in the Abbey Church as a prelude to the seminarians' Advent day of recollection.

The program was adapted to reflect a distinctly liturgical spirit with the inclusion of the "O Antiphons," the Proper Magnificat Antiphons for the last seven days of Advent. Congregational hymns, instrumental arrangements, and Gregorian chants were included, and seminarians read the Lessons.



the new faces of the Catholic Church in America

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE students honor the Empress of the Americas

On 8 December, the Seminary College students hosted a celebration in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of Latin America and of the Pro-Life Movement. The celebration was designed and lead by the Hispanic students of the seminary community.



The event included a performance of a play, "Las Apariciones de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe" (The Apparitions of our Lady of Guadalupe). During a procession from Benet Hall to the Abbey Church, the image of our Lady, a replica of the tilma in Mexico City, was carried: all in the procession bore lighted candles and prayed the rosary.



Auxiliary Bishop of Atlanta, the Most Rev. Luis Zarama, was celebrant of the Mass that followed, during which he preached a moving homily on love and on the tilma as a reminder of that love. During the Offertory, the faithful presented roses before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mass concluded with all standing in the nave to sing Las Mananitas, a serenade to Our Lady, a custom in Spanish-speaking countries. A social in the student refectory followed.



Br. Joseph Webre helped build Pennies for Bread

BR JOSEPH WEBRE 1940-2012 from the Office of the Abbot

Brother Joseph Leroy Webre, O.S.B., died on 24 September 2012. Son of the late Charles Webre and Inez Tassin Webre, Br. Joseph was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on 18 May 1940, and made his profession as a Benedictine monk on 29 August 1960.

For 52 years, Br. "Joe" lived out his commitment, generously serving the community wherever he was needed, in the dairy and kitchen, in car and grounds maintenance, on the farm, and lastly, in the bakery.

In October 1990, the Abbey began the Pennies for Bread program, providing loaves of bread 50 weeks a year to the needy through charitable organizations in the New Orleans area. Br. Joseph, one of the original bakery crew, became an integral part of this ministry. He baked and delivered bread to the poor neighborhoods of New Orleans for 18 years—like the mailman, in rain, hail, sleet and floods—becoming a friend and a welcome sight to the poor and homeless, literally feeding the Lord's sheep. In the same unpretentious way, Br. Joe served as usher every Sunday at 11 a.m. Mass, and was well-known and loved by many in the Covington community.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Br. Joseph was celebrated on Wednesday, 26 September 2012, followed by burial in the Abbey Cemetery. He is survived by siblings Fred Webre, Emory Webre, Judith Webre Livaudais, and Donald Webre.

+ PATRICK PUBLISHES BOOK

lessons on how to plan a reformed liturgy

Many St. Ben alumni from the 1970s through the 1990s will remember enjoying courses by Abbot Patrick Regan. Now they can review what they learned by reading his book, *Advent to Pentecost: Comparing Seasons in the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the Roman Rite*, published by Liturgical Press in October 2012.

The book, a distillation and concentration of his knowledge gleaned and shared over the years, both as a teacher of Liturgy and from preaching at the Triduum services, is an attempt to provide the catechesis which was largely lacking when the post-Conciliar Missal was introduced about 40 years ago. It contains a comparison of the prayers and prefaces, readings and rubrics, the calendar and the songs of the 1962 Missal with that of the Missal as it was revised after the Second Vatican Council. The result is an impressive demonstration of the splendor and superiority of the reformed Missal over its predecessor, as far as the liturgical year is concerned.

Abbot Patrick says that the book will be of particular interest to all ministers of the Church, especially those involved in planning liturgies. Catholics in general could use it as an introduction to the richness of the reformed liturgy.

At present Abbot Patrick is at the Pontifical Athenaeum of San Anselmo in Rome, where he is professor of liturgy and sacramental theology.



NECROLOGY

pray with us for those who have passed away

Joseph "Beau" Bossier, father of John Bossier, '77
Vernon J. Broussard Sr., '36
Angela M. Caruso-Campagna, sister of Salvatore "Sam" Caruso, '62

Donald Diboll, friend of the Abbey
James Doskey, '53
Dr. Francis Gary Fournet Jr, friend of the Abbey and past instructor

Rev. Msgr. Andrew Frey, '41
Joseph L. Giarrusso Jr., oblate
Stephen J. Gutierrez, Sr., '61

Jeanne Jacobi, wife of Lawrence Jacobi, II, '70
Rev. Msgr. Crosby W. Kern, '60
Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Koury, '44
Sr. Beverly Lartigue, sister of Fr. Pius Lartigue, O.S.B., '47, deceased

Rev. Msgr. Joseph O. Lorio, '48
Ferdinand E. Maestri, father of Rev. William Maestri, '73

Dr. Paul Naccari Jr., '49
Ricky P. Nuesslein, '75
Mary "Bunt" Percy, oblate
David Primeaux, '72

Raymond Raspino Sr., '50
Rudolph "Rudy" Schmidt, '61
Rev. Msgr. James B. Songy, '48
Anthony Tassin, '44
John Wildgen, friend of the Abbey

CORRECTION

it happens to the best of us...

In our last issue, we listed Thomas Smith, '65, in our necrology. Mr. Smith is alive and well. Our apologies.



MONK RUN: SAT 13 APRIL

all runners are invited to a race with a scenic view

a race on Saint Joseph Abbey campus
1 mile begins at 8 a.m., 5k begins at 8:30 a.m.
www.monkrun.com
monkrun@sjasc.edu
Diane Weiss: goweiss@bellsouth.net or 504 460-2991

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

93RD ALUMNI HOMECOMING

Easter Friday, 5 April
Registration begins at 3 p.m.
Please register early!
Easy registration by web:
www.sjasc.edu

SAINT BEN'S ALUMNI GOLF OPEN

Thursday, 2 May, 10 a.m.
Covington Country Club
\$100 by 26 April
Please pay in advance
More information: www.sjasc.edu

MORE INFORMATION

contact Vanessa Crouere | 985 867-2242 | vcrouere@sjasc.edu



Fr. Matthew Clark next to our burned computer rack



a section of our new rack, relocated to a safer place

SEMINARY FIRE: IT'S AN ILL WIND THAT BLOWS NO GOOD

our community testifies to God's providential care and the many thoughtful friends who helped during this time

On the morning of 26 September, at around 2:30, the seminary administration was alerted to a fire on the second floor of Pius X Hall. All students evacuated quickly, and there were no injuries. Although contained in the computer server room, the fire caused considerable smoke and soot damage, necessitating the relocation of the 64 students of the dorm area and the evacuation of the administrative, business, and development office areas.

Students returned to their rooms after two weeks, but the rest of the area had to be completely gutted and redone, and everything from the offices removed for cleaning. Personnel, including Fr. Gregory and his staff, "camped out" in various places on campus. Only in January was the work finished and all could move back into their offices.

We are grateful that things were not as bad as they could have been, and the fire is now a not-so-pleasant part of the past. We gratefully remember with prayers the many thoughtful friends who helped during this time.

But, as the old saying goes, "it's an ill wind that blows no good." This semester, our student enrollment increased significantly, straining our already insufficient internet connection. Online learning and teaching has become essential in the preparation of future priests, who will be challenged to use technology in their ministry. The need to upgrade our connection to fiber optics was pressing, but our remote location prohibited this, as the internet provider estimated extending lines across our river would cost \$40,000, a cost we would have to absorb.



IT Director Todd Russell surveys the network damage

And then the fire completely destroyed the computer server room, the heart of the seminary's technology services. Since everything had to be redone, this seemed the time to provide an internet system that would meet our needs. To this end, the Seminary Fire Fund was begun.

An article about this was posted on our website, students spread the news, and the Times-Picayune published an article on it. Contributions began to come in. WWL ran an unsolicited news item on the fire, which inspired so many people to give. Then, an anonymous donor offered a gift to the Fire Fund in memory of Rev. Don Scherer, challenging donors to match the \$20,000 with smaller donations. Donors, some 112 alumni, students, parents, and those who saw the newspaper article, exceeded the challenge.

The \$58,143 raised will make it possible for us finally to obtain the necessary bandwidth to meet the needs of an ever-increasing number of internet users. The excess will be used for technology maintenance and improvement. The project could begin in February and be completed in March.

It is especially significant that this has been made possible in large part in memory of Fr. Scherer, a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. who retired in the New Orleans Archdiocese. A multitalented man, Fr. Don was the first person in the United States to receive a doctorate degree in Computer Science. He was a full professor of Computer Science at both Seton Hall University and the Catholic University of America. As a professional educator, he would have been proud to have been of help in this area of need.

We would like to thank our supporters for their overwhelming and touching response to this appeal. It was quite unexpected, and as such, was a reminder to us of God's providential care of our community. Thank you again.

SACS VISITATION

thoughtful preparation = successful SACS visit

After a two year preparation and despite a hurricane and a fire, Saint Joseph Seminary College hosted its on-site visit for reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)—on time and with record success. The Seminary College passed all the mandatory core requirements and was asked to provide further documentation on the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and to continue tracking institutional effectiveness measures until the time of the final SACS ruling on accreditation in June 2013.

The visiting team arrived on 22 October, 2012. Team Chair, Dr. David Potts, President of Judson College in Marion, Alabama, introduced his team to faculty and staff the next day. Other opening remarks were made by Dr. Mark Smith, Vice-President of the SACS Commission on Colleges. Dr. Smith's role was to guide the visiting team through the application of SACS principles both during the on-site visit and throughout other parts of the reaffirmation process. He had visited the campus in July 2012 to facilitate our completion of the focus report, a report designed to answer questions asked by the readers of our preliminary report.

After a campus tour led by Jim Robeau, Director of Physical Plant, and Fr. Jude Israel, Dean of Students, the committee members began a series of small group and individual meetings with on-campus administrators and committees to delve further into the materials presented in the previous reports.

Our appreciation goes to all the on-site administrators, faculty, staff, and committee members whose work made the visitation such a success.



WE WELCOME REQUESTS
Your support makes our mission possible.
please contact Vanessa Crozier:
985 867-2242
vcrozier@sasc.edu

THE ABBEY GIFT SHOP
books, gifts and Catholic devotionals
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ABBOT'S LETTER

Abbot Justin Brown, OSB

This past August we welcomed back to the Abbey Fr. Michael Jung, who had been ministering outside the Abbey for 25 years, the last 16 years serving as chaplain at Baton Rouge General Hospital. In the same month we welcomed 105 seminarians, our largest enrollment in over 30 years. So during the fall semester 19 seminarians were housed in the monastery, and we were happy to welcome them to our home. Since returning for the new semester, they have settled in the new dorm, Hannan Hall. We will miss their presence in the monastery and the occasional outbursts of energy and laughter heard from their third floor quarters.

On a sunny, cool fall morning last October, we welcomed a film crew from PBS, who had arrived to film a segment of a four hour documentary on the Constitution in the everyday lives of Americans. Of course, we were chosen because of our legal battle over the direct sale of our St. Joseph Woodworks caskets to the public, whereby we invoke our right to do so under the protection of the 14th Amendment, which provides for economic liberty. Never did we imagine when we began our woodworking endeavor on 1 November 2007, that we would end up part of a national debate on free enterprise and constitutional law. The film crew enjoyed their stay and went back to various parts of the country with Abbey bread and Monk Soap.

Welcoming is one thing we do very much of here at the Abbey, from the hundreds of men and women who come to our Christian Life Center each year, to the many tour groups who visit the Abbey Church and Refectory to the countless individuals who cross the Bogue Falaya finding peace on our tranquil grounds. Our welcome goes even to those we do not see who quietly slip into the church for prayer and reflection and to those who come with grieving hearts to visit the graves of loved ones.

Welcoming others to the monastery is one of the pillars of monastic life. In Chapter 53 "The Reception of Guests", Saint Benedict writes, "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, for he himself will say, 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me.'" With the many people who visit the Abbey each day, Christ is truly present and we are blessed by his presence.

Justin

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.



RECTOR'S LETTER

President-Rector Gregory Boquet, OSB

The 2012-13 school year has been marked with many twists and turns. It all began with an unexpected enrollment of 106 seminarians, an enrollment that we have not seen since the 80's. This caused us to turn to the Abbey to address the housing shortage. With the approval of the monastic community, nineteen seminarians were housed in the monastery. This harkened back to the days when the seminary used to occupy a portion of the monastery.

Another twist occurred early in the semester with Hurricane Isaac, which necessitated the cancellation of a week of classes just as we were beginning the year. We had barely settled in again when a few weeks later there was a major twist, a fire in the computer server room. This led to the displacement of 64 residents of Pius X Hall who had to be housed in the monastery, retreat house, and at the Teresian Sisters for two weeks.

The final twist to occur during the fall semester was the welcoming of several members of a visiting team from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), one of the steps necessary in the reaffirmation of accreditation for the seminary college which takes place every ten years. This was especially difficult in light of the many challenges mentioned above.

However, we did very well, which points to a strength that was revealed through all the twists and turns that took place. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the challenges that we faced, the community was very strong. In my estimation, this is one of the best years that I can remember. The spirit of the student body is very high, the morale of the staff and faculty is very positive. I believe this points to a belief in the Lord's care for us, in ourselves, and in the valuable work in which all of us are engaged. All pulled together and were willing to get out of their comfort zones for the good of the whole. Now, we begin a new semester knowing that twists and turns may come, but God's help is always with us.

Gregory Boquet

Saint Joseph Seminary College Mission Statement
Saint Joseph Seminary College is a community of faith and learning in the liberal arts rooted in the Benedictine tradition that promotes the development of the whole person. The formation program fosters 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 and makes available its educational and other resources to the local community.