



Please take the call . . . with the ear of your heart

WHEN THE PHONE RINGS. . .

Saint Ben's on the line

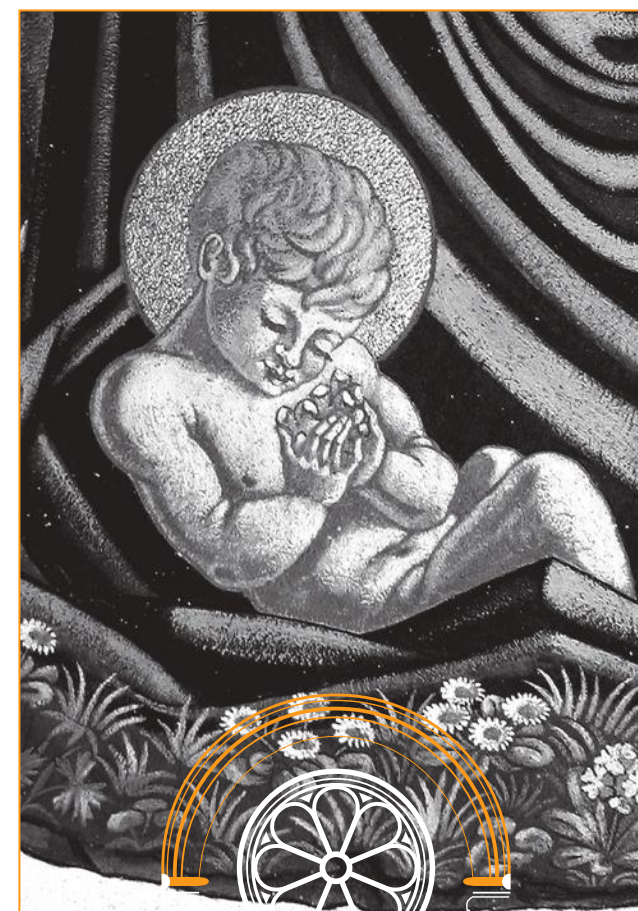
During the evenings of Thursday, 13 November through Saturday, 15 November, members of the St. Joseph Seminary College Alumni will hold their Eighth Annual Alumni Phone-a-thon.

Over the last few years, phone-a-thon proceeds have allowed us to successfully build St. Joseph Seminary College's endowments. Last year, President-Rector Fr. Gregory Boquet asked that monies collected go to support critically needed repairs and replacement of equipment here on campus. While much was accomplished, there is still work to be done. As the physical plant of our college ages, we must finance improvements to continue our tradition of educating future priests. We especially hope this year's efforts will increase the number of monthly donors to help with St. Ben's pressing needs.

For the first time, this year you may also contribute to the phone-a-thon via our web site at www.sjasc.edu. As always, your contribution is tax deductible.

If you would like additional information, or are considering a significant financial gift to the seminary college, you may contact Fr. Matthew Clark at 985 867-2245.

Without your help, the seminary could not continue its mission. We appreciate both your prayers and financial support.



ABBEY GIFT SHOP

Monday-Saturday 9-11 + 12-4
Sunday 12-2

75376 River Road, Covington
985 867-2227

JOYEUX NOËL



Br. Jude and candidate Brent Caffarel

CALL FOR ABBEY VOCATIONS

by Br. Jude Israel, OSB

The vocation office of St. Joseph Abbey has been very active this past year in helping men discern a vocation to monastic life. By offering various programs in the spring and summer, men have been able to live in the monastery and experience monasticism.

During Holy Week and in July just before the Solemnity of St. Benedict, the vocation office of the abbey hosted a come-and-see experience entitled, "Living the Monastic Identity." Participants in the program lived in the monastery for a week and fully participated in the life of the monastic community. This included attendance at all of the scheduled monastic hours—Vigils, Lauds, Vespers, and Compline—along with daily Mass. In addition, the participants were given conferences on monastic life, Benedictine spirituality, and a history of monasticism, and participated in various works of the abbey. Those who were here for Holy Week were able to share fully in the sacred Triduum and those who were here for the summer session were able to witness the solemn profession, on 11 July, of Brother Andrew Faraci. The "Living the Monastic Identity" program will be held again this year at Christmas, Holy Week, and in July before the Solemnity of St. Benedict.

These efforts of the vocation office have helped several young men discern their call to monastic life at St. Joseph Abbey. Presently, there are two men in the application process for admission to the abbey. If the admissions process goes successfully, they will begin a six-month postulancy in January. Additionally, there is presently one scholastic attending St. Joseph Seminary College. He will graduate in the spring and start the novitiate next summer. There are also other young men in various stages of discernment who are in contact with the vocations office. With the help of the Holy Spirit, hopefully there will be three, possibly four, young men beginning the novitiate next summer.

The vocations office also cooperates with diocesan vocation directors and vocation directors of other religious orders in hosting joint programs to help young people discern a call to religious life. These vocation directors are also present at the annual Abbey Youth Festival and are available to talk personally with the young people who are in attendance.

The abbey is asking all of its alumni, friends, and benefactors to pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire more young men to answer the call to monastic life as it is lived at St. Joseph Abbey. Further, we can all help the work of the vocations office by taking the risk and asking young men to consider a vocation to monastic life.

Let us all pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. And when you do, please remember the abbey in a special way.



Fr. Michael Jung, Br. Marian Flowers, Fr. Matthew Clark, Fr. Gregory Boquet and Fr. Séan Duggan

MEN OF BLESSING: THE ABBEY CELEBRATES FIVE JUBILEES

homily by Abbot Justin Brown, OSB

Recently I picked up a copy of a life of St. Benedict entitled *Man of Blessing*. I was struck by a quote next to the table of contents. It was not by St. Benedict, as one would expect, or by some other saint, but by the Roman orator Cicero. It read, "The finest and noblest character prefers a life of dedication to a life of self-indulgence." At a time when the human spirit is weakened by a culture that glorifies and promotes self-indulgence over dedication, these ancient words challenge us to live life at a level deeper than the superficial one we often encounter today.

This deeper life rooted in dedication is what Abram was called to in the first reading from *Genesis*. He encounters this fuller life the minute he accepts the Lord's invitation to leave all behind and to walk in His presence, to live a life directed not by one's self, but by the Lord. This deeper life of dedication is what Jesus calls his disciples to in the gospel. To live this life one must make sacrifices and sometimes these sacrifices are total, as the disciples are called to leave all behind in order to walk with Jesus.

St. Benedict models this life of dedication over self-indulgence. It was the very reason he left Rome to live the monastic life. It is the aim of his *Rule* as he envisions a life of total dedication to God through prayer and the offering of self in community. This is the life our jubilarians committed themselves to 60, 50 or 25 years ago.

In the lives of each of our jubilarians we see one who seeks to live the dedicated life. Along with their life of prayer and fraternity, each of these monks have given of themselves in so many and varied ways, each modeling uniquely the ideal of the dedicated life.

Fr. Michael, from the care of the abbey forest to the lofty heights of philosophy, to the dean of students office, various other positions of administration, parish ministry and now hospital chaplaincy, you have embraced all enthusiastically and faithfully. You continue to seek to live the dedicated life through your openness to grace and the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Br. Marian, from your early days on the abbey farm to many years in maintenance and car care, your life has been one of quiet, humble dedication and selflessness. In more recent years, you embraced infirmity with faith and patience, seeing in them a share in the sufferings of Christ. This is the dedicated life lived to the fullest.

Fr. Matthew, from your early days as seminary treasurer and wine cellarer to sub-prior, novice master and formation director, development director, military chaplain and now vice-rector, (and we cannot forget abbey organist) you have been generous and open to serve in any place needed. You bring to your life of dedication your kindness and good nature, which are special gifts.

Fr. Gregory, from your early days as grounds manager when you were often seen with a chainsaw in hand, or in a truck, or on the A-frame with Br. Gabriel at your side to point out inanimate and animate objects, to your years as assistant dean, physical plant director, prior and now rector-president of the seminary, you have modeled for us the dedicated life. You are always generous, always enthusiastic, always ready to work for the good of the abbey and seminary.

Fr. Séan, from seminary spiritual director to retreat minister, director of music, organist and composer, Latin instructor to music professor, you know what it means to live a life of dedication. In community you are generous and giving and your gentle and humble nature has been a special gift to us, along with the gift of music.

While I have highlighted a number of ways our jubilarians have lived a dedicated life, this is not to imply that what we *do* is the sole measure of our life, but rather it is who we *are* in the core of our being that truly matters.

Michael, Marian, Matthew, Gregory and Séan, on behalf of your brothers, I thank you for being unique examples of the dedicated life, but I thank you even more for the brotherly love and faith you share with us, as together we seek to live a dedicated life according to the *Rule of St. Benedict*, as we strive together to be Men of Blessing.



Brother Marian Charles Flowers, OSB

BR MARIAN: 1926-2008

from the Office of the Abbot

Brother Marian Charles Flowers, OSB, died at Tulane Medical Center Tuesday, 16 September following a lengthy illness. He was 82 years old.

Son of the late Joseph J. Flowers Sr., and Charlie Purcell Flowers, Br. Marian was born 25 August 1926, in Shreveport. He made his profession on 6 January 1958, and celebrated his Golden Jubilee of Monastic Profession in May of this year.

He is survived by his sister, Mrs. Ann Lowe of Shreveport, and a brother, Richard L. Flowers of Houston. His brothers Joseph J. Flowers and Louis S. Flowers, and a sister, Fannie Abramson, preceded him in death.

Br. Marian faithfully served in the maintenance department for many years and as physical plant director for four years. He was a source of inspiration to his brothers and friends who came to hear a good word.

May he rest in the beauty of God's love.



Father Francis John Sander, OSB

FR FRANCIS: 1926-2008

from the Office of the Abbot

Father Francis John Sander, OSB, died at North Oaks Medical Center in Hammond, La., on Sunday morning, 28 September 2008. Fr. Francis was 85 years old.

Son of the late Edward M. Sander and Mary F. Tabony, Fr. Francis was born in New Orleans on 27 March 1923. He made his profession on 25 August 1944, and was ordained as a priest on 7 June 1949.

His nephew Oceola Probst and his niece Elaine Castelen and great nephews Rusty Probst and Randy Probst survive him. His brother, Edward Sander and his sisters Elaine Sander and Adelaide Probst, both of New Orleans, preceded Fr. Francis in death.

He served as pastor at St. Peter Catholic Church in Covington from 1969-72 and at Saint Jane de Chantal in Abita Springs from 1972-94. Upon his retirement to the abbey, he ministered to those who came to him for counseling and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He was assigned chaplain to Our Lady Queen Contemplative Monastery in Tickfaw in May 2003, serving the Benedictine Sisters there until his death.



pray with us for those who have gone before us

NECROLOGY

marked with the sign of faith

Rev. Msgr. Charles F. Aucoin, '41
Dixon Barry, '82
Joseph B. Bennett, '51
Rev. Msgr. Joseph E. Bourgeois, '53
John Brady, friend
Henry Briggs Jr., friend
Annette Brown, friend
George Brown,

father of Abbot Justin Brown, OSB
Paul Callais, friend
Thomas Cassidy Jr., '45
Vivian Cavalier, mother of Fr. Robert Cavalier, '66
Andre "Mac" Charitat, '57
Rev. Msgr. Joseph L. Chotin, friend
Deacon Charles E. Coudrain, '52
Msgr. H. C. Paul Daigle, '41
Flo Dumesnil, friend
Caroline Erickson, mother of Kevin Erickson '82
Edward J. Fagot, '41
Ray Finley, friend
Mary P. Fortier, friend
Rev. Msgr. Emile J. Fossier, '38
Most Rev. Gerard L. Frey, DD, '32
George E. Gardiner Jr., '53
Betty Guillerman, friend
Delmar D. Gulick, Oblate
Rev. William J. Hewson '34
Rev. Jean M. Jammes, friend
George E. Joseph Jr., '65
Sr. Cyril Landry, O.Carm
Anthony Latino,

brother of Bishop Joseph N. Latino, '57
Deacon Joseph T. Lazo, oblate
Edwin J. Leonards, '46
Frederick W. May Jr., '57
Lloyd G. Mayer, '61
Dennis V. McCloskey, friend
John J. McNamara, '48
Judith Miranti, friend
Msgr. James Moragne, '64
Donald L. Peltier, friend
Marian Phillips, oblate
Arthur L. Porche, '57
Joseph J. Quartana, friend
M'Adele S. Read, oblate
John C. Rice, '47
Murdock Richard Jr., friend
Joseph C. Russo, '60
Arthur C. Schick, '54
Rev. Kenneth A. Smith, '56
Louis Smith Jr., friend
Carole Springman,
sister of Fr. Marian Larmann, OSB
George W. Stokes Sr., friend
Christopher P. Tinnerly, '89
Robert Charles Tuminello, friend
Harold M. Vesper, friend
Andre L. Villere Sr., oblate
James A. Wilde, '55





New students Amado Ramos and Daniel Root

NEW STUDENTS, NEW HOME

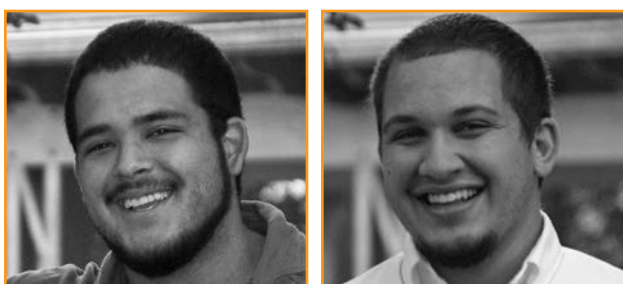
by Fr. Killian Tolg, OSB

It was Saturday, 16 August, and the clouds threatened to pour down rain on the 35 new students and their families as they arrived for orientation, but not a drop fell. The new guys would make up nearly half of the student body of 78 students and there was much to learn if they were to adapt to their new home.

Home! Their very idea and understanding of home was about to change as it had changed for the 43 returning students. Home was no longer just the diocese you study for, no longer just the state or country you grew up in. It now included a place where a group of men, who all responded to the same call, would live, learn and pray together in order to discern God's will for them. This solidarity and unity of purpose is an essential part of building a community amongst the wide-range of cultures present in the seminary.

We currently serve 18 dioceses in Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia and Texas. We added the dioceses of Victoria and Pensacola/Tallahassee this semester. The seminary has always been multicultural, and some of the countries represented here are Columbia, Venezuela, El Salvador, Mexico, Spain, Cuba, Vietnam and Uganda. This melting pot of cultures affords all the opportunity to be enriched by a variety of peoples, lifestyles and spirituality.

Both new and returning students were treated to some improvements made to our facilities. A few years ago, we began a steady renovation of



E.J. Gutierrez and Jared Cooke

the dorms that included new tiles, fresh paint and a new study area for the students. This summer the bathrooms were updated with new counters and fresh paint on the showers and floor. As we continue to expand the number of dioceses we serve, it is important to continually update our facilities so that we can accommodate more and more young men studying for the priesthood.

These men, if they are called and chosen, are future priests, and the Church needs and deserves well-formed people to minister to the vast array of cultures and needs. We are committed to forming and educating them, and we are encouraged to see more men stepping forward to answer the call. Those who sincerely seek to discern God's will for them always have a home here.



Josh Johnson, Anthony Mullek, Steve Hellman

PASTORAL FORMATION

by Katie Murphy

In his apostolic exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, John Paul II presented the need for seminarians to become "true shepherds of souls after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ." The bishops in their *Program for Priestly Formation* affirmed this aim by establishing norms to guide seminaries in developing pastoral programs capable of forming "true shepherds." Seminaries are to provide a program of pastoral activity, done in such a way that seminarians can see its relationship to their human, spiritual and academic formation.

St. Joseph Seminary College offers a four-year program of pastoral activity: ministry to the home, parish, multicultural and universal Church. Each year provides opportunities for skill development, discernment of strengths and weakness, and growth in understanding priestly ministry.

At their bishops' request, first-year students have on-campus assignments. They benefit the home church through their work in the library, student center and physical plant. While adjusting to seminary life, seminarians work to develop traits essential for a life of ministry: obedience, humility and accountability.

The parish community provides the second-year focus. Seminarians serve people present in every parish setting but with whom they may have little or no experience, such as the elderly, the dying and their caretakers. As they serve, seminarians grow to appreciate the challenges faced by the aging or those nearing the end of life.

Third-year seminarians serve the multicultural church in two local inner-city programs and the latino ministry in a nearby parish. Through their presence, they encounter people of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds and experience firsthand the consequences of racial disparity.

In addition, third-year seminarians participate in an urban awareness program at Hope House in New Orleans. Over a long weekend they grapple with issues of social justice at the ground level by meeting with people whose lives are impacted by these realities on a daily basis.

Final-year seminarians turn their attention to the universal church. In collaboration with Maryknoll, the seminary offers two mission experiences, Border Immersion and the Guatemala Mission Program. Both programs include six preparation and reflection sessions culminating in a presentation to the student body in April. By being immersed in a third-world culture, seminarians experience the lived reality of people's everyday struggles.

At the conclusion of a seminarian's time at St. Ben's he can feel secure in the knowledge that he is well on his way to becoming a "true shepherd of souls."



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.

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Saint Benedict, LA 70457



ABBOT'S LETTER

Abbot Justin Brown, OSB

On 11 July, the Solemnity of Saint Benedict, our Brother Andrew Faraci pronounced perpetual vows as a monk of Saint Joseph Abbey. At one point in the symbol-filled ceremony, Br. Andrew stood in the sanctuary with arms outstretched to sing three times the words of the Psalmist, "Accept me O, Lord as you have promised / that I may live / and let me not be put to shame in my hope," as found in chapter 58 of the *Rule of St. Benedict*. This act of total surrender to God based on hope in His love and mercy is at the heart of monastic profession and the foundation of monastic life. Hope is the life-giving virtue of our life.

At St. Joseph Abbey, we have reasons to hope. Our seminary has a high enrollment of gifted and dedicated young men, our Christian Life Center has a full schedule of retreats and a great reputation for Benedictine hospitality. Through your generosity, we are able to make ongoing improvements to our physical plant and aging buildings. One area in which we particularly find hope is that of vocations. Br. Jude Israel has been diligently working with several young men who are seriously interested in our way of life. Three of these men are scheduled to enter the monastery next year. Please continue to pray for vocations to our monastery and for these young men.

Because we find reasons to hope, we are planning for the future. This summer we engaged in a strategic planning process in order to adequately address the major issues facing our community, especially in the areas of finance, physical plant, vocations, community life and management. We are very fortunate to have Mr. Renny DeVille of Harris, Deville and Associates assist us in this process. The community has responded wholeheartedly and, even though we have significant challenges ahead of us, we have a firm foundation on which to build and strengths and resources from which to draw. These include, among others, you — our dedicated alumni, oblates and friends.

As we continue to face the future in hope, please keep us in your prayers and always be assured of ours. Together let us place our lives in the hands of God who does not disappoint us in our hope.

Justin



RECTOR'S LETTER

President-Rector Gregory Boquet, OSB

It has been said that there are three types of people in this world. First, people who make things happen. Second, people who watch things happen. Finally, people who wonder what happened. As we begin another school year, many of our students, I think, could fit into one of these three categories in one way or another. Some have come with the drive of knowing exactly what they want to accomplish during their time here at St. Ben's, especially those in their senior year. Those in their sophomore and junior year tend to watch a little bit more intently since they have learned what the expectations are in the formation program. It is the new arrivals that tend to fit into the category of saying "what happened?" They come full of hopes and dreams, but are not quite sure what is going to happen next in their journey toward priesthood.

As I come into my 11th year as president-rector, there are several phrases that our seminarians have come to associate with my conferences through the years. Often I will say things such as, "as you are a seminarian, so will you be as a priest," "you need to have passion," and "you need to be a man of integrity." When a seminarian seems to lack all of what I have just mentioned, one phrase that a few hear me say on rare occasions is, "When I worry about your vocation more than you worry about your vocation, then there is a problem." However, in the end it is our job to worry about his vocation. This often happens because a seminarian has lost his passion and needs to discern why this has occurred.

In fact, from the beginning of our existence as a monastery we were established to worry about the vocations of this region. The archbishop of New Orleans invited monks from Saint Meinrad Archabbey to found a seminary, since he was worried about the lack of native vocations in the Louisiana area. Throughout our history, we have been concerned with addressing the worries of our shortage of priests by helping to educate future leaders in the church. I must say that the majority of young men entering the seminary are endowed with considerable spirit and conviction, which gives me much hope for the future.

In the end, I am reassured that we have nothing to worry about, for I am convinced that as we find in the gospel regarding Mary and Martha, where Martha was worried about many things, but Mary chose the better part, our seminarians are a witness to Mary's example — choosing a life focused on a relationship with Christ by sitting at Jesus' feet during their time here in the seminary.

Gregory Boquet