



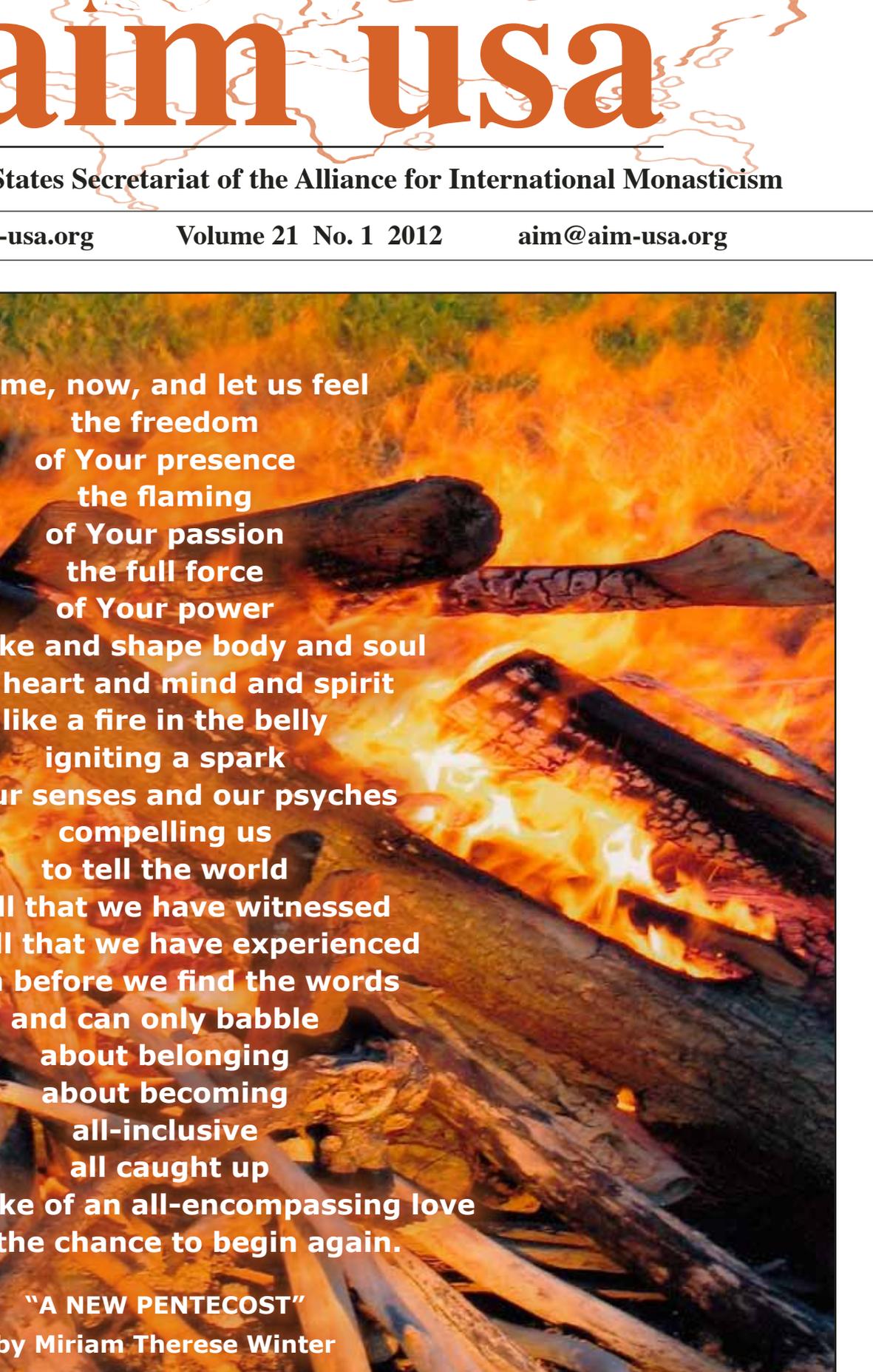
aim usa

The United States Secretariat of the Alliance for International Monasticism

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**Come, now, and let us feel
the freedom
of Your presence
the flaming
of Your passion
the full force
of Your power
to shake and shape body and soul
and heart and mind and spirit
like a fire in the belly
igniting a spark
in our senses and our psyches
compelling us
to tell the world
of all that we have witnessed
and all that we have experienced
even before we find the words
and can only babble
about belonging
about becoming
all-inclusive
all caught up
in the wake of an all-encompassing love
and the chance to begin again.**

"A NEW PENTECOST"

by Miriam Therese Winter

AIM USA 2012 LENTEN APPEAL

Thanks to a generous response to the Lenten appeal \$25,000 was raised for the mission monasteries. We are especially grateful for the increased oblate involvement and support. We are able to fund special projects for:

- **Benedictine monks in India**—the purchase and installation of toilets in the new school

- **Benedictine monks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

—the purchase of a new stove and rust-proof cooking pots

- **Cistercian monks and sisters in Latin America**—seven monasteries will send formation staff to the REMILA conference in Chile.



Dear friends at AIM USA,

I have been informed that AIM has donated 4,500 Euros to help defray the costs of a course for formators of the Latin American Region of the OCSO, in Quilvo, that is to be conducted by Abbot Bernardo Olivera of Azul.

In my own name and that of the whole region I want to express my appreciation to you and all those who contributed to make this donation possible. These courses take place every two years and represent an important help to our formators, and therefore to all our communities, and to the new people who are under their care.

Again, thanks. Keep us in your prayers.
Fr. Plácido Álvarez, OCSO., President of REMILA
Titular Prior of Nuestra Señora
de Los Andes, Venezuela

We extend sympathy to the communities of two men who were significant leaders in the development of AIM. They both died on March 17, 2012.

Father Marie Bernard de Soos, OSB, died at his monastery in Dourgnes, France. He served as Secretary General of AIM International, Vanves, France from 1982 to 1997. During these 15 years of service he worked diligently on behalf of the young monasteries in developing countries and was instrumental in promoting the *AIM Monastic Bulletin* as a medium of exchange and dialogue between the individual monasteries and AIM International.

Abbot Jerome Luke Rigby, OSB, first abbot of Saint Louis Abbey, Missouri, was born in England and became a monk of Ampleforth Abbey in 1941. In 1955 he came to the U.S. and was a founding monk of Saint Louis Priory where he was elected abbot in 1989. Abbot Luke served on the first Board of Trustees of the AIM USA Secretariat from 1986-1992. He oversaw the incorporation of AIM USA as a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization.

CAMALDOLI CELEBRATES FIRST MILLENNIUM

Camaldolese Benedictines are commemorating the 1,000th anniversary of the foundation of their motherhouse in Camaldì, Italy, where St. Romuald encouraged the vocation of some monks to live in solitude as hermits. In recent years, the motherhouse has become a center for ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN TO BECOME SAINT AND DOCTOR

The Vatican Insider reported that in October 2012, the Holy Father will canonize Abbess Hildegard of Bingen, OSB (1098-1179) and proclaim her a Doctor of the Church. “Hildegard’s story attests to the cultural vitality of female monasteries at that time and helps to undo certain prejudices about the Middle Ages. She was a nun, theologian, botanist, musician; she is considered the first woman composer of Christian history.” Of the Church’s 33 doctors, only three are women: Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, and Thérèse of Lisieux—the first two proclaimed by Pope Paul VI in 1970, the last by John Paul II in 1997.



Additional 2011 Monastery to Monastery Members

- Marmion Abbey, Aurora, IL
- Saint Benedict Monastery, Bristow, VA
- St. Walburga Monastery, Elizabeth, NJ
- St. Scholastica Monastery, Fort Smith, AR
- Our Lady of the Annunciation, Hulbert, OK
- Benedictine Abbey of Newark, Newark, NJ
- St. Gertrude Monastery, Ridgely, MD
- St. Benedict’s Monastery, Snowmas, CO
- St. Anselm’s Abbey, Washington, DC
- Sacred Heart Monastery, Yankton, SD

To see any issue of the AIM USA newsletter in full color go to our website: www.aim-usa.org



Our 16-minute DVD on the works of AIM, especially the USA secretariat, is available at no cost, to groups and individuals. If interested, please call, write or email us.



Meet a Mission Monastery

Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles— Cuernavaca, Mexico

Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles sits on a hill above the city of Cuernavaca. In the distance the rare landscape sculptures in what appears to be a primeval volcanic garden. The slope was shaped some fifteen thousand years ago by lava flows. Off to the east one can see the live volcano Popocatepetl. In ancient times indigenous peoples built their temples and pyramids on these crags. During the summer months this peaceful scene is transformed almost daily into a pyrotechnic display of electrical storms that the Indians attributed to the hyperactive storm-god Tlaloc and other warring deities. Here the newly arrived Hernán Cortés discovered a land of eternal springtime; here he built sugar refineries and government headquarters. Here the Spaniards dismantled the pyramids and built a sprawling Franciscan complex and churches to baptize the local population.

In this village, at the invitation of Bishop Sergio Mendez, in 1966, Mount Angel monks founded the monastery of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles.

The founding monks arrived from Mount Angel Abbey under the capable stewardship of Prior Ambrose, doctor of theology from the University of Fribourg and rector of Mount Angel Major Seminary. In the beginning the diocesan seminary of Cuernavaca was our apostolate. In those early days of the planting of Benedictine life in Mexico, monks and neighbors of the monastery formed cooperatives in the village to improve the living conditions and benefit the local population which at that time had no paved streets and minimal water, sewage and electrical installations.

When the diocesan seminary closed in 1974 the dormitory rooms were modified to guest quarters and the monks began to build a monastery up the hill from the guesthouse. They had terraced most of the inhospitable acreage and with a little water from the well converted the tract into truck farming, avocado orchards, and raising cows, pigs, poultry. The present monastery complex was built at that time and consists of a monastery wing (eight cells), a warehouse building which houses nine monks, the kitchen, the refectory, and library. Prior Louis Charvet built the beautiful circular chapel and reception area in 1989-91.

Benedictine monastic life was foreign to Latin America, except in Brazil, until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Other religious orders and congregations provided missionaries, evangelists, medical personnel, and teachers for the schools, hospitals, clinics and parishes, but the monastic life for men is a recent innovation for the Church of Mexico. In the past seventy years monks from six different communities in Spain, France, Italy, and the United States have founded monasteries on Mexican soil, some of which have failed. Even as the monastic life of an individual community takes shape, the observance is conditioned in relation to the culture and the people around. Our response to the needs of the local Church focuses our energy and resources on liturgical prayer, hospitality,

retreats, manual labor, study, and teaching.

A guesthouse, bookstore, honey, avocados, and orchards provide the monastery of Los Ángeles with financial footing, always shaky due to the unstable national economy. The pioneer generation is realistic about the present and optimistic toward the future. Our tentative beginnings have not been without birth pangs in a region where monasticism is still in its formative stages. Yet the monastic vocation holds a particular attraction to young people in Mexico and each year, out of the several who knock on our door, some few enter. At present the roster of ten monks in solemn vows is complemented by one novice and five in temporary profession—we are sixteen monks in all.

The demographic profile of the monastery is revealing. Praying and working together, with struggle and hope, are Mexican monks from Chihuahua in the north, Veracruz on the east coast, the maritime states of Guerrero and Nayarit on the west, and Ciudad Carmen in the extreme south; Brother Pablo is from Nicaragua, Brother Damián from El Salvador, and the prior from the United States. Ours is a young community, the median age of the monks being forty. Our place in

the Swiss American Congregation stamps the community with a set of monastic values such as discipline, the cloister, silence, and apostolic life. The horarium, with the midday meal at 2 p.m., and the diet, are Mexican in flavor.

The small patch of land could support a community of between twenty and twenty-five monks. Depending on the direction of the community and its human resources, we could offer a modest service to the diocese in the form of teaching, spiritual direction, retreats, and the guesthouse apostolate. The guesthouse is occupied throughout the year, especially on weekends.

The monastery of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles in the central highlands of Mexico lives in the present contentious political environment of our country and looks to the future with hope. Our beginnings have not been without difficulty in a region where monasticism is still taking shape as Benedictine and Cistercian



monastics engender a religious life that glorifies God and serves the Church and the Mexican population.

Gracias to AIM and the AIM-USA secretariat for your generous help to the monasteries in the Benedictine and Cistercian tradition the world over.

Sustaining Momentum in Monastic Life in Asia

This is an edited version of the presentation given at the 50th anniversary celebration of AIM International by M. Irene Dabalus, OSB, PHILIPPINES

CONGRATULATIONS are in order on the Golden Jubilee of the Foundation of A.I.M., formerly called “Aid for Implantation of Monasteries,” later “Aid for International Monasteries” and now “Alliance for International Monasticism.”

AIM was launched by the vision of the Congress of Benedictine Abbots assembled in Rome in 1959. With Abbot Primate Benno Gut at the helm, the abbots resolved to create “a center of information and coordination for the implantation of monasticism in mission lands.” Abbot Benno encouraged the staffing of a secretariat in Vanves, France. Through 50 years AIM has brought the ideals and tradition of monasticism to countless communities, first in Africa, then in Latin America and Asia and back to Europe and America in a worldwide sweep.

AIM’s mission statement is to bring “growth and development” to monastic communities worldwide. I see this growth and development as a ministry of *Sustaining Momentum in Monastic Life Worldwide in Africa, Latin America and Asia and the rest of the continents through international collaboration.*

I see this reflected in the history of AIM from its beginnings in 1959 as it changed names in significant periods of its history; fanned out from Africa to all continents at present; harnessed its energies towards a variety of services and skills in material and spiritual projects; and firmed up its leadership and membership organs globally.

From 1997-2007 alone there were 103 new monastic foundations flourishing under the “patronage” of AIM—Trappists 12; Cistercians 7; and Benedictines 84. What a growth! These new and young monastic communities, I am convinced, are a stabilizing and life-giving force in the Church and in the countries where they thrive at present.

AIM now serves to coordinate over 450 monastic communities in all continents with an average of about ten new foundations each year. Unluckily, the decrease in the number of monks and nuns in many large monasteries continues unabated.

In its 50 years AIM has indeed sustained its momentum towards collaboration, both materially and pastorally, in marvelous ways, judging from its records of achievement.

I would like to believe that so much has been achieved due to three characteristics that can be deduced from the data reported there.

AIM had, first of all, the zeal:

TO INNOVATE RELENTLESSLY in making monasticism the project for international collaboration. During the past 50 years AIM has encouraged initiatives for firming up the monastic tradition in countries far and near, such as in Tanzania, and the Ukraine, Congo

and the Dominican Republic, Romania and Nigeria, Nicaragua and Ecuador, Mexico and the Czech Republic, not to mention the countries of Europe. The steady influence of AIM backed up these monasteries in their journey towards a strong monastic identity with both financial and formative resources.

Then,

TO EMPATHIZE WITH AND MINISTER TO GROWING YOUNG MONASTIC COMMUNITIES in their areas of need and development. In Asia, the home of ancient cultures and living faiths, the existence of these monastic communities points to their rich unfolding but also to their struggles to survive as a minority presence in a politically conflictual environment, such as Vietnam or India. In my country which is a predominantly Catholic country, their growth can go unhampered as vocations continue to flock to monasteries living in solitude or engaged in apostolic service in the local Church. However, the scourge of poverty has hindered vocations and convents, especially those of women, from pursuing the monastic tradition, with a modicum of security and ease. Here is where AIM has lent us support in effective though unobtrusive ways. This is especially true in the formation of young members, in income-generating projects for the poor cloisters, and in the training of young leaders. In my case in Tagaytay, our RB studies have left their mark on both men and women monastics who have gone through the “school of the Rule” through exegesis and the reading of the primary sources of the Rule.

And finally,

TO ANIMATE MONASTICS to go for an imaginative but reality-oriented approach to renewal in a Church “in ferment,” and in a “world in upheaval.” I can cite the visionary efforts of launching the “movements” of Benedictines of East Asia and Oceania (BEAO), the Benedictine-Cistercian Monastic Institute, the Asian Benedictine Women of the Philippines (ABWP) in different meetings in Asia. AIM has supported such groups to create a consciousness of communion and peace among themselves and to share spiritual experiences with the world.

This is a rich field for historians to explore, but for now the compelling idea for me is to presage, like Cassandra of old, the meaning and moment of this AIM jubilee for the next 50 years. What is the meaning and promise of this jubilee moment? It means a **kairos** at this stage of the journey - the unique opportunity to increase momentum for monastic growth and development wherever the Lord sows his seeds – in both young and old forms of monastic life.

I am interested in giving AIM a challenge as it enters into the second half of this century, because AIM is such a quality institution with a moral power to bring about a paradigm change in monastic life worldwide.

So, what is AIM’s contribution to monastic presence and renewal in the marketplace of liberal post-modern values? How can AIM secure its momentum in a world “in upheaval,” in a “Church in ferment”?

These situations include the dramatic events going on around us in their threatening and inexorable march towards a predictable moral downgrade. In the words of Sven Giegold, the “Green Representative” to the Europe-Parliament, the multiple “crises” which face us today can be reduced to these three:

THE CLIMATIC AND RESOURCE CRISIS (devastation of creation, climate change and destruction of the multiplicity of species and resources),

THE JUSTICE CRISIS (growth of social inequality, the basic social rights are ever more difficult to ensure),

THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS (global markets but no global economic politics, lacking control of global undesirable development, among others due to problems of distribution).

Giegold is convinced that this world situation cannot be dealt with by piecemeal action on the part of good and influential individuals but only by common and internationally orchestrated action directed towards a change of paradigms in Church and society. He believes that “all these crises have their common origin in the paradigm of ‘*growth*’ which permeates all global thinking like a measuring instrument for progress and development and for ‘*more, more, more*’ of money, consumption, gain, and technological advancement.”

I am interested in giving AIM a challenge for its work of shaping the unfolding future of monastic communities as it moves towards its centennial.

To begin with, AIM, like every ministry, must have a force greater than the resistance against it. It must be single-minded in its innovative drive:

TO EFFECT A PARADIGM CHANGE

—that includes a scientific grasp of the economic world in which we live and its dynamics, including the model of a society that we want.

—that includes a manner of using goods which is satisfied with what is needed from the environment and not more than what is needed so that in justice others too may live.

—that includes the practical will to use energy which is renewable energy in our age, as well as the political will to exercise our global responsibility to bring about a “conscious, fair and ecological purchase and consumption” in accord with the dignity of all human beings and their humane working conditions.

TO HELP ACHIEVE CREDIBILITY AND RELEVANCE FOR MONASTIC LIFE

—that includes intensive renewal in Benedictine spirituality.

- Root spirituality in an in-depth study of the Word of God and the Rule.
- Re-imagine the fundamentals of monastic life and expression in today’s world.
- Build life around the liturgy – Eucharist and Opus Dei and Lectio Divina as the source of the energy and power of the ministry.

—that includes inculturating the profession of stability, conversatio

and obedience

- Balance culture and the life of poverty, celibacy and obedience.
- Critique the not-so-simple life style of communities set amidst a population of poor people on a subsistence minimum in developing countries.

TO STEER TOWARDS PROMOTING A MULTI-CULTURAL/INTERCULTURAL CENOBITIC FORMATION IN MONASTIC COMMUNITIES

—that includes a sound theology.

- Ground the formators and those being formed in biblical exegesis, fundamental theology and pastoral ministry.
- Develop their historical consciousness.

—that includes a deep spirituality.

- Steep them in contemplative mindfulness.
- Give them skills in the three “Ds”: dialogue, discernment and disposition for service.
- Lead them to spiritual wholeness and global awareness.

—that includes formation for a life of **communio**.

- Direct them to the conviction of their call to the coenobium.
- Show them **communio** as Benedictine in substance as well as the appropriate and urgent response to globalized “economism,” fundamentalism, and hedonism rampant in our day.

In conclusion I would like to reiterate what I once said before persons endowed with authority as you are in this AIM body. It is important that our gaze take in a broad sweep of reality that goes beyond our own institutions. Let us open up to the bigger frame of the outside world “ad gentes” and “inter gentes” and gain a vision and perspective that stretch our imagination beyond our proximate goals to the frontiers of the universe, to the universal Kingdom of God.

M. Irene Dabalus, OSB
St. Scholastica’s Center of Spirituality
Barangay, Iruhin West
4120 Tagaytay, Philippines

*I am interested
in giving AIM a challenge
for its work of shaping
the unfolding future
of monastic communities
as it moves towards its centennial.*

Meet a North American Community

St. Joseph's Abbey— Spencer, MA

Located in the hilly woodlands of south central Massachusetts, Saint Joseph's Abbey is a cloistered Roman Catholic monastery of the Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance, popularly known as Trappists. Within the enclosure of the monastery we live a life wholly ordered to contemplation, dedicating ourselves to the praise and worship of God. Following Saint Benedict's Rule for Monasteries we monks live a life of solitude and silence, assiduous prayer, joyful penance, and work.

The Cistercian Order began as a reform of Benedictine monasticism as it was lived in the eleventh century in France. Early in 1098 the abbot Saint Robert with a group of twenty-one monks set out from the celebrated monastery of Molesme to found a new monastery, LaTrappe, where they hoped to live more faithfully according to the Rule of Saint Benedict. In 1113 they were joined by a group of young Burgundian noblemen, under the leadership of the one who was destined to become the Order's most famous son, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.

During the French Revolution, a group of Cistercians from La Trappe came to North America in order to ensure the continuation of

the Trappist monastic witness. Eventually the monks were called back to France, but by chance one monk was left behind in Nova Scotia. He began the foundation of Petit Clairvaux in Tracadie, Nova Scotia in 1819. The community took root but disaster struck, as twice the monastic buildings were destroyed by fire in 1892 and again in 1896. By the end of the nineteenth century, with the community's buildings and morale in disrepair, it was clear that Petit Clairvaux needed to move if it were to have any hope of achieving permanence.

By 1899 the monastery moved from eastern Nova Scotia to Rhode Island. The small community, accompanied by their livestock, arrived in New England in the summer of 1900. Their new home was a tract of some three hundred stony acres in Lonsdale, Rhode Island; the monastery was called Our Lady of the Valley.

The monks were diligent and resourceful as they began once again to build a new monastery. For the next fifty years, their progress was slow but deliberate. Then on March 21, 1950, the Feast of Saint Benedict, the monks were reminded once again that the ways of God are not our ways. The abbey was ravaged by fire. And once again the community, numbering one hundred and forty persons, was homeless.

By 1949 the community had purchased a large agricultural property in Spencer, Massachusetts. The disastrous 1950 fire merely accelerated the community's projected move. The monks set to work adapting the farm buildings for monastic purposes. On December 23, 1950, eighty monks took possession of Saint Joseph's Abbey in Spencer. Even amidst many challenges the growth of the community has continued through the years.

Our monastic observance is entirely directed to bringing us to a deeper personal love for the Lord Jesus. And a typical day in the



monastery unfolds with a balanced rhythm of prayer and work. We rise before dawn in prayerful vigil for the Rising Sun, Jesus the Lord. This is followed by silent prayer and *lectio divina*, the prayerful pondering of the Scriptures. At sunrise we chant the office of Lauds, our morning song of praise and then celebrate the Eucharist.

By 9 am the brethren are at their various tasks. Manual labor has always enjoyed special esteem in the Cistercian tradition because it

gives the monk the opportunity to follow in Christ's footsteps and to share in the divine work of creation and redemption. Our work provides for our own livelihood and for our care of the poor. Here at Spencer in addition to taking care of the cleaning and cooking chores for the community, we operate two industries in which most of the monks participate. At Trappist Preserves we produce and package jams and jellies. And at the Holy Rood Guild, in collaboration with gifted local tailors, we design and create liturgical vesture. We pause during work to pray the brief Office of Tierce together in the work place.

Sext and lunch are followed by a brief opportunity for rest; None is sung at 2 and then work resumes for a couple of hours. Again there is an interval for quiet prayer or exercise. Vespers ends the day, our chanted evening prayer of praise and thanksgiving. After a light supper and time for *lectio divina*, we gather for

Compline ending with the chanting of the *Salve Regina* to the Virgin Mary who is never far from our hearts.

Hospitality has always been an important part of the monastic tradition. Liturgy is the principal means by which we extend Christian and monastic hospitality to our guests. Our retreat house of eleven rooms closely conforms to the atmosphere of the monastery. The retreat experience here at Spencer offers a generous amount of time for private prayer, reading and contemplative quiet.

The community of Spencer sees itself as an expression of the mystery of the Church, where nothing is preferred to the love of Christ in praise of the Father's glory. By fidelity to our monastic way, living a life that is ordinary, obscure and laborious with its own hidden mode of apostolic fruitfulness, we seek to perform a service for God's people and the whole human race.



Letters—Worth Noting...Worth Quoting

BOOKS

Thank you for the books we received recently—both the Spanish and the English. The books for the children are very useful for the religion classes at the primary school in our compound.

There are 3 Argentinian sisters here so they are grateful for the Spanish books and I'm using the English books in trying to teach them English.

We shall keep the donors in our prayers.

Sister Fidelis Jardiel, OSB
Monasterio de la Transfiguracion
Los Toldos, Argentina

We received the box of books and it is a real treasure trove, an extraordinarily rich collection of books. The books are a valuable addition to our monastic library. I want to thank everybody at AIM and everyone who contributed the books.

Lambert Doerr, OSB
Abbot Emeritus
St. Benedict's Abbey
Peramiho, Tanzania



Abbot Anastasius Reider and Brother Damian Msangawale in the carpentry shop at Peramiho, Tanzania.

A few days ago we received the wonderful box of books. The books were in good condition even though it looked as if the box had been opened somewhere along the way. We especially appreciated the books on Benedictine spirituality and those by S. Joan Chittister. Though it was late for Lent, some of us took the books for Lenten reading.

Sending books is an invaluable service to the monasteries where we do not have the possibility of purchasing a single monastic book in any of the book shops.

We thank you very much and pray for all who have contributed to make this precious box possible.
Sister Isabel Manukusummpil, OSB
Arunodaya Ashram
Virajpet, India

Thank you for remembering us once again with a box of books for St. Scholastica's Center of Spirituality. The books are invaluable for our library and resource center. Priests, sisters and lay people come

MASS STIPENDS

We deeply appreciate the money you sent us for mass stipends. The masses will be offered for the donors' intentions. We will use the money to help the poor around us. Our monastery is situated in the midst of the poor so they are always knocking on our door. Some have no money for their hospital bills. Some want to begin to start a small business while others have no food.

Most of the time we were not able to meet their requests because of our own poverty. So we are most grateful for your generosity.

Fr. Ogechukwu Ibe, OCSO
Our Lady of the Holy Cross Cistercian Monastery
Delta State, Nigeria

We thankfully received the check you sent us for mass stipends. The masses are being said in our chapel for the intentions of those who donated the money for masses.

We use the mass stipends for the formation of our young brothers in the monastery. We have nearly 25 priests and we receive very few mass stipends so we really appreciate any you can send us.

Fr. Xavier Thakarappillil, OSB
Asirvanam Benedictine Monastery
Bangalore, India

to our library to read the books during their seminars and retreats.
Sister Irene Dabalus, OSB
Missionary Benedictine Sisters
Tagaytay, Philippines

The books you sent to St. Benedict's School of Nursing are so good. The community is so happy to have more books to read. Thank you for all the support and encouragement you give to each and every community.

Sr. Vianny Hirudayaraj, OSB
Adaiyur, Tiruvannamalai, India



Sisters Jincy Moses and Evangeline Kalist working in the convent garden.



Benedict saw the entire world in a single ray of light. (Dialogues)

The sights and sounds of Pentecost--flames of fire, rushing wind and the breath of God--flood our liturgies as the Easter season culminates in this great feast. The confusion and division resulting from the Tower of Babel is reversed as large crowds of people who spoke many languages heard the apostles speak in tongues that all understood. The Spirit made—and continues to make—such understanding possible. Fearful disciples are transformed into courageous witnesses. The Spirit energizes us to take the message of good news to the ends of the earth, breaking through boundaries of race, ethnicity, class and gender.

The Spirit continues to call us to unity and inclusiveness, to recognize the essential oneness of all creation and to break down barriers that separate. The Spirit's transforming power sets loose a new creation, embracing the richness of diversity and disrupting our self-righteousness and complacency. Pentecost calls us to find new ways to witness to the good news of God's all encompassing love.

M. Irene Dabalus, in her presentation at the AIM International meeting (see p.4-5), spoke of the growth of new, young monasteries as life-giving forces in the Church and the world. She challenged monastics to bring about a paradigm change in the face of the multiple crises which face us today: "to stretch our imagination beyond our proximate goals to the frontiers of the universe, to the universal kingdom of God." It sounds a lot like the command of Jesus: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have taught you."

Let us be open to the all-consuming fire as we pray the words of Miriam Therese Winter:

*“Spirit of the living God,
You know where to find us
and precisely how to reach us,
engendering Pentecost anew
as You blow to bits again and again
our precious presuppositions
in order to pave a path
here and now
for a radically new creation
in Spirit and in truth.”*

Come, Spirit, Come !

Stephanie Schmidt, OSB

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