Current Projects

Aaron Raverty, OSB

Aaron Raverty, OSB has been invited by the convener of the Anthropology of Tourism section of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) to submit an article dealing with the topic of faith and heritage in the multi-religious site in Crestone, CO where he did research for his book a few years ago. [Refuge in Crestone: A Sanctuary for Interreligious Dialogue]. Aaron has also published a couple of articles in the Abbey Banner, a publication of St. John’s Abbey in Collegeville. About the article on the Red Lake Mission in northern Minnesota, he writes that it “bespeaks missionary fervor for the Ojibwe beginning in the mid-nineteenth century.” The article reviews “the groundwork laid by intrepid early missionaries, Saint John’s Abbey monks, and sisters from Saint Benedict’s Monastery in St. Joseph, Minnesota, and their enduring establishment of a Benedictine boarding school and Christian witness amid the trials and privations of pioneer evangelization.” In the second article he writes about the first onsite abbey church built in 1879. “As part of the quadrangle, it was Romanesque and configured as a Latin cross.” The article details its construction, consecration (1882), and subsequent deconstruction and reemergence as the Great Hall in the wake of building the current Breuer-designed Saint John’s Abbey and University Church. In process is a third article on the topic of the St. John’s bells. Wearing his anthropology “hat,” Aaron has published an article on ancestor veneration in Benedictine monasticism. This article, he says, is on how “Catholic monasteries enlist formal and informal means of recalling their predecessors to mind. After reviewing the research domain of ancestor veneration in the anthropology of religion, this investigation foregrounds Benedictine monasticism generally, then specifically the Abbey of Saint John the Baptist in Collegeville, Minnesota, USA, emphasizing liturgical/ritual associations, shrines, relics, storytelling/reminiscing, the communion of saints, and the memorial and organizational properties of monastic cemeteries.” Please see the citations for these articles on p. 3 of this newsletter.

Jean Visel, OSB

Jean Visel, OSB writes: “This summer I am teaching a course for the Graduate Theology Program at Saint Meinrad on Benedictine Spirituality. I also am working on a chapter for a book on spiritual direction throughout history, to be edited by Dr. Robert Alvis [Academic Dean, St. Meinrad Seminary]. My chapter will be on the desert fathers and mothers and spiritual direction. I am also completing a commission for two large icons of SS. Peter and Paul, to be blessed and installed in the seminary chapel at Saint Meinrad in early October. And to balance things out, I am helping present two week-long workshops on chant.”

Samuel Torvend, new to ABA, is a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia (Seattle), and an oblate candidate with St John’s Abbey, Collegeville. He is a professor of church history at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA where he teaches courses in early Christian ascetic movements, medieval monasticism, and medieval women reformers and mystics. He also serves as associate priest for adult formation at Christ Church Parish in Tacoma. He writes as follows: “I am happy to report that I will be working throughout 2019-2020 on a sabbatical project that focuses on early monastic contributions to environmental conservation and sustainability. This work will entail research at St. John’s Abbey and University Library.
and the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library in the Fall. I will also be spending time in central Italy in the late winter of 2020 examining monastic sites that have been designated or proposed as World Heritage sites for their care of land, water sources, forests, gardens, and fields: St. Scholastica in Subiaco, Monte Cassino, San Vincenzo al Volturno, and the Farfa Abbey.”

**Rev. Donald Richmond, OblSB** has two articles awaiting publication—one on the topic of “Monastic Counseling,” and the other on “Raising Saints.”

**Tom Piazza** is currently working on membership trends in the African monasteries of Benedictine men in addition to a statistical overview of the Confederation from 1880 to the present. His article on membership trends in the American Cassinese and the Swiss American Congregations of Benedictine men appeared in the June 2019 issue of ABR (Citation, p. 3).

**Greg Peters** is editing a special issue of *Religions* entitled “Exploring the Future of Christian Monasticisms” and continues to work on a new book entitled *Thomas à Kempis: His Life and Spiritual Theology*. This September he will be in residence at Pusey House, Oxford, working with nineteenth-century Anglican monastic archives. He has also been appointed Visiting Scholar at St. Edmund’s College, Cambridge, beginning on October 1, 2019.

**Hugh Feiss, OSB** has had two huge projects published which he edited and contributed to: *Victorine Texts in Translation: Vol. 7, Sermons for the Liturgical Year*, and *A Benedictine Reader*, 530-1530 (See citations on p. 3).

Hugh writes: “The ABA Session at Kalamazoo was a good one. Members of the researchers section can read about it in the latest issue of the American Monastic Newsletter. S. Colleen Maura and I both contributed papers, along with a PhD student from Oxford, who gave an outstanding paper on St. Anselm’s prayers to the saints. I am continuing to study how Benedictines thought about Christ, trying to weigh the influence that the RB had on their approach to Him. In 2020 the ABA section at Kalamazoo will be, if accepted, about how medieval Benedictines thought and practiced humility and whether it was good for them. We also hope to have a roundtable on using the Benedictine Reader in teaching. I’d love to hear from anyone interested in taking part in either session. My current project is to finish Victorine Texts in Translation, vol. 10, On the Sacraments. It is very close to finished, and should be to the publishers before the October newsletter.”

**Virginia Jung, OSB**, archivist at St. Scholastica Monastery, Chicago, has engaged in an exciting project with students from DePaul University. They are creating a “Story Map,” representing the schools where the sisters from her monastery have served as educators. She writes: “The researchers, so far, are myself as archivist, the two students who got it started (Taylor Armbruster and Anna Rose McGoldrick), in collaboration with several sisters, alumnae, former faculty & oblates...It is a work in progress but we are pleased with it thus far... Eventually, we hope to make it interactive, soliciting more input from alumni and other map users.”

**Jerome Oetgen** from Arlington, VA, reports that he is working on two projects: “The first is a book-length continuation (volume 2) of my institutional history of Saint Vincent Archabbev, *Mission to America* (Catholic University Press, 2000). Volume 1, *Mission to America*, covered the period 1846 to 1963 of Saint Vincent’s history. The second volume is tentatively titled *Always Forward: A History of Saint Vincent Archabbev*, 1963-2020. I hope to have this project completed by February 2020. A second project is an essay about the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine abbot and homilist Ælfric of Eynsham, tentatively titled “Ælfric of Eynsham’s Monastic Usage,” which draws on Ælfric’s extensive homiletic writings and focuses on his monastic observance. [This project] seems to have a life of its own.”

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**Rest in Peace, Dear Terrence**

1936-2019

“In Terrence Kardong’s many contributions to the explication of and commentary on St. Benedict’s Rule, we have always found the sharp and well-worded wisdom that opens the Rule and the human heart to the truth of each other.”

—Shawn Carruth, OSB

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**A Benedictine Reader**

530-1530

Hugh Feiss, OSB, Robert B. Roger, and Maeve M. O'Brien


Publications cont.


Presentations


Hollermann, Ephrem, OSB. “And God Said That It Was Good: Honoring the Benedictine Sisters of Virginia” [History of the pioneer sisters in Richmond, VA, founded in 1868, and the move to Bristow, VA, in 1901] on the occasion of the community’s 150th Anniversary year, March 16, 2019.

“...A Grandmother’s Legacy: The History of St. Walburg Abbey, Eichstätt, Bavaria,” to faculty and staff participants of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University, in preparation for the May 2019 European Heritage Tour, April 2, 2019.

Congratulations, Sister Colleen Maura McGrane, OSB on your recent appointment as editor of *The American Benedictine Review*. Thank you for this important service!

Notice

Next MR Newsletter, October 2019
Compiled and edited by Ephrem Hollermann, OSB
Saint Benedict’s Monastery, St. Joseph, MN
Comments/suggestions welcomed
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2020 ABA Convention
July 16-19
Benedictine College
Atchison, Kansas