



Current Projects

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Jeana Visel, OSB, has been working on an article comparing monastic customs, noting the shifts in practice reflected in three particular customs from her community in Ferdinand, Indiana—from 1957, 1964, and 1968.

•in addition to this study, she has also taught icon painting to seminarians, and has completed an icon of St. Mary Magdalene. She is also working on several studies related to a small full-figure icon of the Mother of God.

•Additionally, Jeana has been collaborating with Br. John Mark Falkenhain and Br. Joel Blaize to present a short online course on Gregorian Chant for the National Pastoral Musicians conference this summer.

Judith Valente, OblSB gave an online reflection on "Returning to Silence" in April for community members and Oblates registered for the "Being Benedictine in the 21st Century" conference. She is co-chair of that conference with Sister Linda Romey, OSB, which has been postponed until 2021.

•Judith was the featured speaker for the Zoom May meeting of the Oblates of Emmanuel Monastery, Lutherville,

•She is also completing a new book with co-author

Brother Paul Quenon, OCSO, of the Abbey of Gethsemani, and is part of the planning team for the June 2021 biennial conference of the International Thomas Merton Society.

Tom Piazza reports that he has "submitted an article for review by *ABR* on some possible variants of monastic life that might be viable in the future. This may require some revision before publication." He is also currently working on "an article about the metaphors used to describe the monastic life and how they may need to be updated in order to be more understandable to younger people today."

Samuel Torvend, OblSB Cand. writes "In late February, I traveled to Rome in order to do research in the Library of Sant' Anselmo and visit Subiaco, San Vincenzo al Volturno, Santa Maria a Farfa, and Monte Cassino. My research on early medieval monastic manuscripts and the visits to Subiaco (the Sacro Speco and Santa Scholastica) and San Vincenzo went well. San Vincenzo is a vast archaeological site of the largest Benedictine abbey during a two hundred year period. Research in the library and visits to the sites was in support of my sabbatical research project on early

monastic commitments to environmental stewardship in light of Roman imperial environmental degradation. Unfortunately, my time in Italy was cut short once the coronavirus entered Rome. I was unable to visit my former classmate, Fr. Gregory Polan, abbot primate, and study the landscapes surrounding Santa Maria a Farfa and Monte Cassino. Nonetheless, I have finished the first chapter in my sabbatical project book (early Christian resistance to imperial degradation of the earth) and am moving into the economic, environmental, political, and religious context in which Benedict left Rome for Subiaco.

Greg Peters, OblSB, submitted the manuscript for his book *Thomas à Kempis: His Life and Spiritual Theology* to the publisher in May. In June he is teaching a course at Nashotah House Theological Seminary entitled "Monastic Practices in the Parish."



San Vincenzo at Volturno



CURRENT PROJECTS CONT.

Hugh Feiss, OSB

writes: "I am working on *A Benedictine Reader 2, 1530-1930*, to which several of the members of this ABA section are generously contributing. 15 of 23 chapters are at a copy editor, so it should all be to the publishers (Cistercian Publications/Liturgical Press) by the end of the year. The first volume took 20 years, and this one is taking less than two, thanks to many friends and the pandemic. Currently I am also working on a talk for the zoom-meeting of ABA in July. It is entitled "Benedictine Time Travel," looking to the past to see ways into the future. I have written it once now, but it is way too long, and a bit boring, so I need to rewrite in a different way. It is projected to appear in German in *Erbe and Auftrag* (Beuron), but also in English somewhere."

"As there are craftsmen in the monastery, let them practice their craft with all humility"

RB 57



Abbey Woodworking

Aaron Raverty, OSB

has recently written two articles for his abbey's news magazine. The winter 2019 issue includes an article entitled "Minnesota 13" about what he calls "a potent distilled whiskey named for the seed corn in its manufacture." He goes on to say that it "was the 'spirit of choice' among many rural Stearns County, Minnesota, moonshining and bootlegging residents during the Prohibition years 1920–1933. Even monks from Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, who considered Prohibition nonsense," helped local farmers construct stills for producing MN13 and other potables, aiding farmers' bottom line in depressed economic times. Several Minneapolis companies have picked up on this legacy by distilling similar brews as part of their modern, manufacturing mandate

•A second article in the Spring 2020 edition is entitled "Abbey Woodworking." In his words: "Working with wood has been a hallmark of humanity since the beginning. After briefly reviewing historical background about abbey woodworking—its origins, locations, and personalities—this article describes how forest wood is transformed into a resource, explores the principles guiding the woodworking operation at Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville,

Minnesota, and showcases some of the diverse creations this Benedictine enterprise has spawned in recent years."

He has also published an article on the Refuge for World Truths, a multireligious heritage-scape adjacent to Crestone, Colorado. (See reference and link under "Publications.")

Timothy Joyce, OSB, writes that once again he is teaching the *Rule of Benedict* in their novitiate program. He is also involved in the community's discussions on the liminal nature of the monastery in the Covid-19 age and what the future of their monastic community might be.

Jacob Rieff reports the following: "My book of Dame Gertrude More's shorter works came out a few months ago, and an essay on sacred places, focusing on the Woodland effigy mounds of Wisconsin appeared in *Commonweal* (see "Publications" section). My forum (with Drs. Dan Anlezark and Karl Persson) on Old English scholarship and religion came out at the end of May as well. I'm currently working on two books: an edition of the longer meditations of Dame Gertrude More (with Dr. Emily Ransom) and an edition of the selected poems of an early Catholic Wisconsin writer/painter, Bernard Isaac Durward (with Dr. Tyler Farrell)."

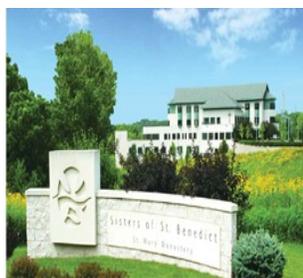
Edith Bogue, OSB

writes: "Here's a bit about the unusual bent my mo-

nastic explorations have taken in the last year or so. I am engaged in participant observation research with the Vineyard Church Movement. They are a charismatic evangelical denomination with a focus on drawing in the unchurched. Their rapid growth when many denominations were shrinking sparked my interest. I found that church planting is a natural offshoot of Vineyard culture and practice. They emphasize spiritual and personal growth and prepare people for a variety of leadership roles. They draw on a surprising number of Catholic sources. A small contemplative/monastic group is developing. This research contributed to two papers I gave at the Generative Communities Colloquia [in Atchison, KS]. It has also influenced my retreat ministry. I also mentored a related MA thesis through the Oblate School of Theology. It linked the spirituality of Vineyard founder John Wimber to church growth through its appeal to the postmodern mindset. Vineyard spirituality and practice offers models which could reinvigorate ongoing and initial monastic formation. It could inform the development of new expressions of the Benedictine charism.

Marianne Burkhard, OSB writes: "I am engaged in writing the history of my community, St. Mary Monastery, Nauvoo/Rock Island, Illinois [founded in 1874]. So far we only have a short brochure for our centennial in 1974 with lots of pictures.

CURRENT PROJECTS CONT.



St. Mary Monastery
Rock Island, Illinois

Though records of our early history are spotty, I am fascinated by what we do have. Answers to important questions at times come from sources that, at first, seem extraneous or peripheral. So it is 'detective work,' uncovering whatever details may shed more light on the larger lines of our community history."

Ephrem Hollermann, OSB has been invited to contribute to *A Benedictine Reader 2: 1530-1930*, being edited by Hugh Feiss, OSB, and forthcoming from Cistercian Publications/The Liturgical Press, 2021. Her piece will appear in the section on the 19th century under a tentative title, "The Post-Secularization Constitution

of St. Walburg Convent, Eichstätt, Bavaria (1846), and the first Constitution for Benedictine Sisters in the United States (1880)." An extended introduction followed by two representative primary texts from the 1846 and 1880 Constitutions will provide the historical context for the founding of the first Benedictine women's monasteries in North America.

PUBLICATIONS

Feiss, Hugh, OSB. "On Mysticism and Eschatology," in the *Oxford Handbook of Mystical Theology*. Oxford University Press (April 25, 2020).

_____ "A Thirst for Reflection," *Aim U.S.A.* 29:1 (2020), 5.

_____ "Christ in the Rule of St. Benedict: Relevance for Today." *ABR* 71:2 (June 2020), 122-142.

_____ Book Review: *A Companion to William of Saint Thierry*, ed. by F. Tyler Sergent. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2019, in *ABR* 71:1 (March 2020), 110-111.

McCarthy, Daniel, OSB. "A Gentle Light in Mourning: Fulfilling Christian Initiation and Life at Funerals." *Ecclesia Orans* 3:1 (2019), 89-119.

McGrane, Colleen Maura, OSB. Book Review: *The Letters of Blessed Maria Gabriella with the Notebooks of Mother Pia Gullini*, trans. By David Lavich. Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2019, in *ABR* 71:1 (March 2020), 112-114.

_____ Book Review: *Awesome Glory: Resurrection in Scripture, Liturgy, and Theology* by Jeremy Driscoll, OSB. Collegeville, MN: the Liturgical Press, 2019, in *ABR* 71:1 (March 2020), 116-117.

Norris, Kathleen, OLSB. Book Review: *Clothed in Language*, by Pauline Matarasso. Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2019, in *ABR* 71:2 (June 2020), 233-236.

Raverty, Aaron, OSB. "Abbey Woodworking." *Abbey Banner* 20:1 (Spring 2020), 14-16.

_____ "Minnesota 13." *Abbey Banner* 19:3 (Winter 2019-20), 22-24.

_____ "Religious Faith as Cultural Heritage at the Refuge for World Truths." *Religions* 11:4 (April 2020). <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/11/4/207>

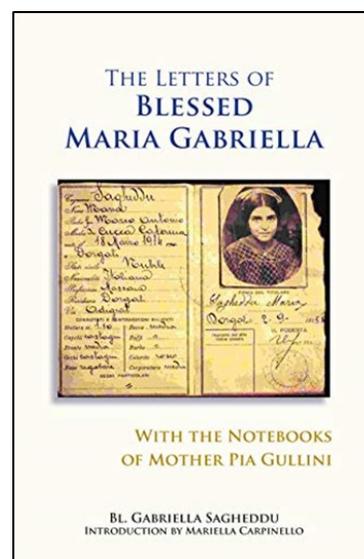
Richmond, Donald, OLSB. "Art and Asceticism," *Forward in Christ* (May 2020).

_____ "Art and Virtue," *Forward in Christ* (pending).

_____ "Catholic Enough?" *Forward in Christ* (March, 2020).

_____ "Enthronement," *The Valyermo Chronicle* (Winter 2020).

_____ "Revelation as Revelation," Advent reflections in *Taste and See*, A Canadian Anglican Magazine (pending).



"Add Blessed Maria Gabriella to the list of great monastic letter writers of the twentieth century like Merton and Leclercq. In this volume of her letters she emerges from the cloister with the clarity, sensitivity, and preciousness of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. One need not be a monastic to fall under her spell of love and devotion to both God and the monastic way of life."

—Mark Plaiss

Ryeff, Jacob, ObISB, editor and introduction, *Poems and Counsels on Prayer and Contemplation* (by Dame Gertrude More). Leominster, Herefordshire: Gracewing, Ltd., 2020.

_____ "To þæm stræcstum mynstermonna cynne ȝecyrren: Learning From Monastics on Either Side of a Millennium." *Religion & Old English Literature* 51:2 (2020).

_____ "Sacred Spaces: A Visit to Wisconsin's Man Mound." *Commonweal* (May 17, 2020).

Romey, Linda, OSB. "History Where Women's Achievements are the Norm, Not the Exception." *Global Sisters Report* (June 15, 2020) <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/religious-life/column/history-where-womens-achievements-are-norm-not-exception>

Visel, Jeana, OSB. "Courageous Conversations: Moving toward a Monasticism That Evangelizes." *ABR* 71:1 (March 2020), 54-74.

_____ Book Review: *A Course in Christian Mysticism: Thirteen Sessions with the Famous Trappist Monk*, by Thomas Merton, ed. by Jon M. Sweeney. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2017, in *ABR* 71:2 (June 2020), 229-230.

Upton, Julia, RSM. "The Use of It's Never Too Late Technology (iN1L) in Enhancing Well-Being Among the Elderly in a Residential Setting." *Journal of Women & Aging* (Summer, 2020).

Presentations

McCarthy, Daniel, OSB. "Profession Stone: Place of Self-transcendence," at "Engendering Conversation", Generative Communities Colloquium XI, Atchison, KS, Conversation VI, January 9-10, 2019. (Published in the *Benedictine Liber Annualis* of the English Benedictine Congregation, 2019, and in Dutch as "De professiesteen: plaats van zelf-transcendentie", *De Kovel* 62 (maart 2020).

_____ "Free Persons in Love," at "Engendering Conversation", Generative Communities Colloquium XI, Atchison KS, Conversation VI, January 9-10, 2019.

_____ "*Dominus providebit*, The Lord Will Provide: Developing Awareness of Mutual Vulnerability," at "Freeing Memories," Generative Communities Colloquium XII, Atchison, KS, Conversation VII, January 9-10, 2020.

_____ *Architecture for Liturgy* I, sponsored by the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, Rome, and the Archdiocese of Denver, held at the St. John Paul II Center, Denver, January, 20-24, 2020.

Valente, Judith, ObISB. "Thomas Merton: Contemplative Wisdom for the 21st Century," online retreat, Prairie woods Franciscan Spirituality Center in Iowa, May 2020.

_____ "Growing Community, Showing Hospitality in the New Normal," online reflection, Fireside Chats inter faith group.

Visel, Jeana, OSB, taught a segment on Benedictine women's monastic history for a course on "Consecrated Life and Religious Priesthood" at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, St. Meinrad, Indiana, Spring 2020.

Notice

Next MR Newsletter, October, 2020
Compiled and edited by Ephrem Hollermann, OSB
Saint Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, MN
Comments/suggestions welcomed
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2020 ABA Virtual Convention

July 17-18
"2020 Vision: Seeing the World in a Single Ray of Light"
See AMN, June 2020, for schedule

