

HE SERVANT



*Set my heart on fire!
A palm tree lit in a blaze
Makes next spring's ashes.*
— Thomas Bushnell

#228

Summer 2013

Publications from the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory

Publication	Description	Cost	Qty	Total
<i>Music of BSG</i>	Simplified Anglican Chants; full setting for Noonday including Psalmody with Gregorian tones for every day of the week; Compline, settings of <i>Phos</i> , <i>Magnificat</i> , and <i>Nunc</i> ; and music for Communion. 36 page booklet.	\$ 3.00		\$
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Total:				\$
<i>Name:</i>				
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Published quarterly. Address all inquiries concerning this publication to the Editor.

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REFLECTIONS OF A FOUNDER

This morning, for some unknown reason, I turned to my bookcase and pulled out the booklet *Francis de Sales, The Perfect Gentleman*. It is the life of this great saint, the humble founder of the Order of the Visitation. It is, in some ways, my own story—though I do not claim sainthood! I am often asked what it was like in 1969, at the founding of the Brotherhood, and what did I expect. I have no answer for that oft-asked question. Suffice it to say that I remember the evening was powerful and that there was an infusion of Salesian spirituality in me at the moment of making profession.

The book records how Francis tells Jane de Chantal, “My daughter, God has destined you to found an order in which the charity and meekness of Jesus Christ will reign.” When I think back to sitting with Sister Margaret Mary in the parlor at the Visitation Monastery in the Bronx, these words ring true. It is almost as if she (Margaret Mary) was channeling Jane de Chantal. I had not given this much consideration until this morning while reading this portion of the booklet. In some ways, I echoed Jane’s reply: “I am ready to obey.” Once again, an interesting twist is that the Order of the Visitation was formed to be in the world, working for the sick and the poor. That soon changed when the bishop required the sisters to be cloistered. The Brotherhood was founded as a group of musicians in the church, liturgical missionaries—so to speak. Again the parallel—we changed to become workers in the wider church—not just in liturgical matters but in all forms of service as “Servants of the servants of God.”

One of the things Francis de Sales said was that he would often handle delicate matters in the Order with “an iron hand in a velvet glove.” As the founder of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, I have often had to employ this technique. Let none think that an iron hand in a velvet glove is easy to wield. The weight is the same as is the exercise of authority, with or without the velvet glove.

There have been recent events in the life of this community that have caused the gloved hand to appear. The founder of the Society of Saint Paul, René Bozarth, was known to say, “When God calls a founder, he supplies the strength for the task.” I believe that I was given both the call and the strength by God when, in 1969, I said, “I do.”

The Gospel of Luke (9:62) records Jesus as saying, “No one, having put a hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” As you, our readers and friends, over the years and in recent times have seen and continue to see, there have been and are “velvet glove” moments. Know that, as with Francis de Sales, the perfect gentleman, the hand in the glove, though heavy, is necessary.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13

RTB

COMMUNITY NOTES

Spring Council Meeting 2013

The Brotherhood's Council held its Spring Meeting at the Saint Lawrence Retreat Center in Beacon, New York, where the Capuchin Friars warmly welcomed the Gregorian Council members. As always, this meeting held a hefty agenda, including the vote to accept Novice Richard Edward Helmer's request for first profession of vows. This was a joyous moment, made even more so by the fact that, once Council approved Richard Edward's request, the next 'hurdle' to be overcome—namely the polling of the professed brothers in his province—was immediately accomplished, since all of the professed members of Province 8 serve in various Council positions.

The Election of new officers for the community took place at this meeting, including: Robert James McLaughlin, Administrator; Blane Frederik van Pletzen-Rands, Director of Education; Ronald Augustine Fox, Representative to the National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities. In addition, the Board of Directors of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, Inc., was convened for the election of a new Vice President, and Robert James was unanimously chosen.

A major feature of each Spring Council Meeting is the approval of Outreach Grants. The following charitable organizations received approval for their grant requests:

- ☐ Fessenden Supportive Housing, Inc, in Yonkers, New York, which cares for men in addiction recovery;
- ☐ Saint James School, an educational institution serving inner-city Philadelphia, toward the support of a new directorial position;
- ☐ Trinity Episcopal Church of Hamburg, New York, toward the expenses of a vestry retreat;
- ☐ Saint Nicholas Episcopal Church, Pompano Beach, Florida, to expand their food ministry to their neighborhood; and
- ☐ Southside Abbey, in Chattanooga, a mission of the Diocese of East Tennessee, toward the support of their expanding worship program.

Through annual grants such as these, the Brotherhood — while not primarily a classical "charity" — supports our brothers in ministries in which they are personally involved or which they commend for such support.

Council also noted and accepted the departure of James Mahoney and Thomas Mark Liotta.

Joint NÆCC/CAROA Meeting

In what is believed to be the first such gathering, representatives of some twenty-nine Religious Orders and Christian Communities of The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada met in a joint session of the Conference of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas (CAROA) and the National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities (NÆCC) in April at the Dominican Sisters Siena Retreat Center in Racine, Wisconsin. Religious brothers and sisters from throughout the US,

Canada and Haiti were together from April 17 through April 20 at what was called the Superiors' Council and Leaders Meeting. Although CAROA and NÆCC met individually for group sharing, all worship, workshops, meals and social time were done together.

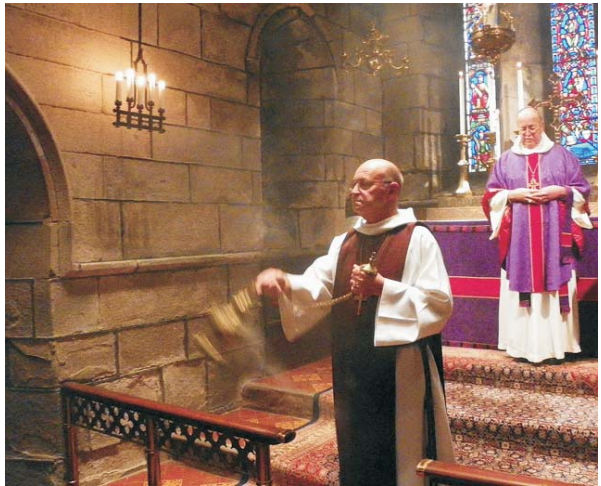
Ronald Augustine Fox, the Brotherhood's Director of Vocations, represented BSG at the gathering. He reported a true sharing of time together, with a spirit of cooperation and fellowship between the traditional orders and the contemporary communities. He had the opportunity to see many brothers and sisters from a number of communities that he has known through the years, along with meeting many for the first time.

Br Sean Sammon FMS, former Superior General of the Marist Brothers of the Schools (Roman) and currently Scholar in Residence at Marist College, Poughkeepsie, New York, conducted four workshops for those attending Wednesday through Friday. The general overview of his presentations, serious but with great touches of humor, included topics such as: life in community; the person in community life; stress and burnout; coping with genuinely difficult persons in community, in ministry and in the rest of life; where religious life has been, and where is it going? It was obvious that many of the challenges faced by religious in The Episcopal Church are no different from those facing brothers and sisters in the Roman Church today.

Attending as NÆCC observers for the first time were representatives of the Community of the Mother of Jesus, from Chicago; and Saint Hildegard's Community from Austin, Texas.

Province 2

The Lenten Provincial Retreat for Province 2 took place at Saint James the Less, Philadelphia, and at Saint James School. Members of the community, along with our Episcopal Visitor Rodney R Michel, two members of the Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis and local parishioners gathered for Evening Prayer and dinner at a local restaurant. The retreat on Saturday was led by the Rev Paul F Morrissey OSA, a Roman Augustinian priest well known for his writing and as a spiritual director. Fr Paul provided two sessions—one entitled Personal Spirituality and the other on



Robert James McLaughlin with Bishop Rodney in the sanctuary of Saint James the Less



Bishop Rodney with Millard Cook in the sacristy

The Spirituality of Sexuality—as he led the group on a fine exploration of spirituality as personal wholeness. The retreat day included the Daily Office and closed with mass in the church celebrated by Bishop Rodney and assisted by Gregorian Friars. For those who could stay over for Sunday morning, the weekend closed with the high mass at Saint Mark’s Episcopal Church in downtown Philadelphia. All who attended agreed that this was a wonderful occasion for focusing each brother’s Lenten observation.

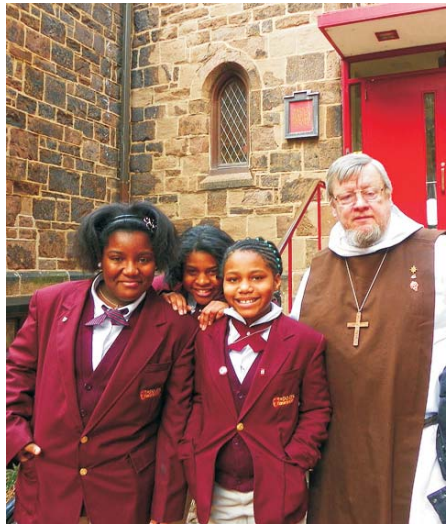
The Church of the Advent, Baltimore, celebrated the Feast of Saint Gregory the Great as part of its Lenten Program and Edward Munro preached. He spoke in part about Gregory and part about the history and ethos of BSG, and how they intersect with each other.

Stephen Storen represented the board of the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies at the annual gala of Lutheran Social Services of New York.

On April 9th Bishop Andrew ML Dietsche of New York made his first visit to Fessenden House in Yonkers, which Christopher Stephen Jenks termed “very successful.” The bishop was

genuinely impressed and, expressed keen interest in the work taking place there. Christopher Stephen reports, “He wants to raise our profile within the diocese and will be helping us with board development and expanding our base of support.” Bishop Dietsche also suggested ideas for expanding the facilities offered by Fessenden House, which gave Christopher Stephen and William Francis Jones—who staff and manage the ministry—cause for hope in an exciting future.

Continuing the tradition established a number of years ago, Bishop Dietsche invited the leadership of the religious communities serving in the diocese, together with their Episcopal Visitors, to a luncheon in Donegan Hall on the grounds of the Cathedral



Students from Saint James’ School with William Francis Jones



David John Battrick had the opportunity to meet and converse with Bishop Gene Robinson, who was visiting Australia in May.

Church of Saint John the Divine on April 10th. This annual event provides a welcome opportunity for diocesan leadership to better relate to those who live the religious life close at hand, and though Bishop Dietsche had attended this function in the past as Bishop Coadjutor of New York, this was his first time to host the meeting as diocesan. It provided an opportunity to update everyone on what each community is doing. Present were Br Robert Sevensky OHC, Superior of the Order of the Holy Cross; Sr Eleanor Francis CSJB, Superior of the Community of Saint John Baptist; the Community Council of the Community of the Holy Spirit: Srs

Catherine Grace, Heléna Marie and Faith Margaret CHS; Sr Ann Whittaker SSM, Sister-in-Charge of the Society of Saint Margaret's Neale House in lower Manhattan; Tobias Stanislas Haller representing BSG on behalf of the Minister General; Bishop David Joslin, Episcopal Visitor to SSM; James Teets, filling in for Bishop Michel, who was recovering from surgery. In addition to Bishop Dietsche and Assisting Bishop Andrew Smith, diocesan leadership was represented by Canons John Osgood (Ordinary), Constance Coles (Ministry), Patricia Mitchell (Christian Formation) and Deborah Tammerau (Transition). The conversation moved around the luncheon table as each person had the opportunity to say a few words about what was occupying him/her at the moment. Through such regular gatherings as this one, we can all give thanks that opportunities continue to present themselves for religious and diocesan leadership to deepen their fraternal friendships.

As noted above, Thomas Mark Liotta and James Mahoney departed the community in April, and Andrew Kellner and David Kasevich have withdrawn from postulancy. We wish them each and all Godspeed in their spiritual journeys.

Province 4

Ælfred Bernard Dean has been awarded the master's degree in social work from Valdosta State University in Georgia. Prior to the commencement exercises, Ælfred Bernard led the invocation at the awards ceremony recognizing the achievements of the graduate students in the discipline of social work. He was inducted into the Alpha Delta Mu honors society recognizing his outstanding scholarship in the field; the faculty also awarded Ælfred Bernard the Community Leadership Award for his work on behalf of students, faculty and field placements. He has been accepted as a postulant



Elfred Bernard Dean is seen posing with classmate, Biljana Drake, after being awarded a master's degree in social work from Valdosta State University in Georgia

for Holy Orders with the Diocese of Atlanta and will be attending The School of Theology of the University of the South in Sewanee. His vision is to combine ministry and social work in the service of the church.

Larry Walter Reich gave the invocation at a luncheon honoring National Crime Victims Rights Week at the 12th annual event at Saint Paul's Church, Chattanooga. After the luncheon he spoke with the County and City Mayors, Chief of Police, County Sheriff, several judges, the District Attorney General, and the United States Attorney (East District of Tennessee as well as other counties). He was invited to speak next year at the Nashville and Knoxville conferences of their observances of National Victims Rights, and at two churches in Chattanooga.

Mark Andrew Jones has received the call to become Rector of Saint Nicholas' Episcopal Church, Pompano Beach, Florida. He has served that parish for the past eighteen months as Priest-in-Charge, and Bishop Leo Frade informed him of this call and of the bishop's endorsement of it. Mark Andrew has accepted the call—many blessings all 'round!!

In March, Raymond Chance withdrew from the Brotherhood's postulancy. May our Lord continue to guide him in his spiritual journey.

Province 5

The Province 5 Lenten Retreat took place at Ignatius House, a Jesuit residence in Chicago, on Saturday, March 9th. The retreat facilitator was the Rev Juan Reed, who currently serves at the Church of Saints George and Matthias, Chicago. His topic was "Sabbath." Present for the retreat were Minister Provincial Nathanael Deward Rahm, Ronald Augustine Fox, Joseph Basil Gauss, Will Harpest and Francis Jonathan Bullock. After a light breakfast of scones made by Francis Jonathan and coffee furnished by the host Jesuits, the day began with Morning Prayer in the Ignatius House Chapel. About twenty-two Jesuits, all faculty members of Loyola University, reside at the house; this includes Fr Charlie Jurgensmeier SJ, who is Director of Music and Associate Professor of Music at Loyola. Fr Charlie was on hand to greet the Gregorians, with Fr Glen Chun SJ, who is vocation promoter and Minister of Ignatius House and Gonzaga House, another Jesuit community in the neighborhood.

In retreat, Fr Juan had the brothers write down ten things each person wishes he could do more of, and a lively discussion followed. The discussion continued throughout the morning, and led to questions/findings such as, "Are we working too

much?” and “Though the majority of us are working harder now than we did 20 years ago, we are not finding more happiness.” Noonday Prayer was sung in the Ignatius House Chapel, and lunch followed at a nearby Chicago favorite, Ann Sather’s, famous for their cinnamon rolls. Fr Juan celebrated the Holy Eucharist in the chapel, with the Jesuits furnishing hosts and wine. After a late afternoon break, the brothers met later at Will’s home for a great meatloaf dinner prepared by Will and Francis Jonathan.



Province 5 brothers with their retreat leader

Province 8

Postulant William VanDoren has shared the happy news that he has become engaged to be married! He and his fiancée, Florence, will be updating this news over the weeks and months ahead. In the meanwhile, our prayers and very best wishes hold them both up to God in thanksgiving!

In late April, William was confirmed in The Episcopal Church at Saint Stephen’s, Belvedere, the Diocese of California, by Bishop Retired John Thornton of Idaho.



Bishop Thornton confirms William VanDoren.

While confirmation is no longer required for full membership in The Episcopal Church, it is always to be encouraged, and our postulant is to be commended for undergoing this statement of commitment.

Thomas Bushnell spent a weekend with the Holy Cross brothers of Mount Calvary, at Saint Mary's Retreat Center. (The center was previously owned by the Sisters of the Holy Nativity, and the brothers have been there since the fire that destroyed Mount Calvary.) Thomas was inspired to write the haiku that appears on the cover of this issue.

From a Maundy Thursday Sermon

SAFE HARBOR

In these years that I have been with you here on this holy and mysterious night, I have always felt a deep sense of being safe and nurtured among you in this church, a church under the patronage of Blessed Francis of Assisi, the man who loved the poor. He didn't turn away from them, but held them safe in his arms.

Every day at the Community Kitchen, we witness things that most people cannot bear to look at, from which they turn away: hunger, sickness, madness, degradation, sorrow and loneliness.

But here, in this place, I have always felt tremendous love and acceptance and comfort. This is as it should be. Gathered here in this holy sanctuary, we bind our wounds and are healed; we eat and drink and we are filled; we look at one another and know that we are loved. God's presence is truly in this place, this safe harbor. And we return here again and again to find the sanctuary of his grace and mercy through the rituals and liturgy that has been handed down to us through the ages.

But God is at work tonight not only here, but also out there, outside the harbor, in the camps and abandoned buildings and cars and on the streets where his lost and broken children are sleeping. He offers sanctuary to them as well, not in a church, but in his arms.

On this night, we remember the last night of the earthly life of Jesus. He and the disciples have found sanctuary in a small secluded upper room, gathered for a meal. He has gathered them there for the final meal they will share together, and to give them the last and most important instructions of his ministry. There is a sense of urgency in his words to them; for already the wolves are howling at the door and conspiracy and betrayal is in the air, as tangible as the stench of sulphur. Downstairs, we can assume, there is a very nervous innkeeper who has allowed them the sanctuary of this place to conduct the final business. For Christ is already a wanted man, one being hunted down for the kill, to be captured before the night is out.

The scriptures tell us very little about this innkeeper, host, or whatever he was who opened the door and harbored them on this night. He is one of those people given little notice in the Bible, but I like to think of him as one of the faithful, one of the true believers of the Christ.

Tonight, let us search our heart and ask ourselves: Would we have harbored them? These were dangerous men in dangerous times. They were considered heretics and revolutionaries. They were homeless and poor. And Christ, the ring leader, was con-

sidered a criminal and thought by some to be in league with supernatural forces — which some said were evil.

So, honestly, would we have opened our door to them? Would we have harbored him? Would we have given them the use of our upper room?

Would you harbor me?

Would I harbor you?

Would you harbor me?

Would I harbor you?

Would you harbor a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew, a heretic, convict or spy?

Would you harbor a runaway woman, or child, a poet, a prophet, a king?

Would you harbor an exile, or a refugee,

a person living with AIDS?

Would you harbor a Harriet Tubman, a Sojourner Truth, a fugitive or a slave?

Would you harbor a Haitian, Korean or Czech, a lesbian or a gay?

Would you harbor me?

Would I harbor you?

Would you harbor me?

Would I harbor you?

In this safe harbor tonight, let us find sanctuary and love in this upper room. For Christ is here. He has come to wash our dirty feet, and to feed us our Passover supper and to give us the code to love.

And we, who are hungry and dirty and broken, are safe in his arms.

Amen.

Ron Fender



*The Last Supper, Gustav Schwab Memorial Window, Louis Comfort Tiffany, 1889
at Saint James Episcopal Church, Fordham, Bronx, New York*

INTERCESSIONS

For the Brotherhood

Episcopal Visitors *Sun*
 Rodney R Michel
Horace WB Donegan d 11.11.91
Paul Moore, jr d 5.1.03
Walter D Dennis d 3.30.03

Professed

Richard Thomas Biernacki
John Nidecker d 6.20.88
 James Teets
 Luke Anthony Nowicki
John Peter Clark d 2.25.94 *Mon*
 William Francis Jones
 Stephen Storen
Thomas Joseph Ross d 12.18.01
 Tobias Stanislas Haller
William Bunting d 10.12.88
 Edward Munro
Charles Kramer d 10.23.06
Bernard Fessenden d 8.10.93

Donovan Aidan Bowley *Tue*
Edward Riley d 9.15.05
 Christopher Stephen Jenks
 Ciarán Anthony DellaFera
Damian-Curtis Kellum d 10.9.07
 Richard John Lorino
 Ronald Augustine Fox
 Maurice John Grove
 Charles Edward LeClerc

Virgilio Fortuna *Wed*
 Gordon John Stanley
 Karekin Madteos Yarian
 William David Everett
 Thomas Bushnell
Patrick Ignatius Dickson d 7.20.05

Robert James McLaughlin
 Peter Budde
 John Henry Ernestine *Thu*
 Francis Sebastian Medina
 Ælred Bernard Dean
 Joseph Basil Gauss
 Mark Andrew Jones
 Richard Matthias
 William Henry Benefield
 Nathanael Deward Rahm
 Thomas Lawrence Greer

Enoch John Valentine *Fri*
 Ron Fender
Michael Elliott d 2.8.12
 David Luke Henton
 David John Battrick
 Will Harpest
 Bo Alexander Armstrong
 Francis Jonathan Bullock
 Blane Frederik van Pletzen-Rands
 James Patrick Hall
 Millard Cook

Novices

Richard Edward Helmer *Sat*
 Eric Shelley
 Larry Walter Reich

Postulant

William VanDoren

For Religious Communities

Sacramentine & Visitandine Nuns
 Society of the Atonement
 Order of Friars Minor
 Community of the Paraclete
 Companions of Saint Luke~
 Benedictine
 Community of Celebration
 Little Sisters of Saint Clare
 Anamchara Fellowship
 Anglican Order of Preachers
 Rivendell Community
 Sisters of Saint Gregory
 Third Order SSF

Worker Sisters & Brothers of the Holy Spirit

Camaldolese Benedictines

Society of Saint John the

Evangelist

Anglican Oblates of Saint

Benedict

Community of the Transfiguration

Order of Julian of Norwich

Order of the Holy Cross

Order of Saint Helena

Community of Saint John Baptist

Society of Saint Francis

For Ministries

Joseph Richey House

Fessenden Recovery Ministries

Baltimore Int'l Seafarers' Center

Saint Paul's Grayson St, San

Antonio

Aldersgate UMC Dobbs Ferry

Saint Christopher's, Kileen TX

Saint James, Austin

White Plains Hospital

The Community Kitchen

Cathedral of St John, Providence

For the Departed

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