

\$2.00

The Servant



162

Summer 1996

Publications from the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory

Publication	Description	Cost	Qty	Total
<i>Music of BSG</i>	Revised and enlarged. Simplified Anglican Chants; full settings for Noonday and Compline, settings of <i>O Gracious Light</i> , <i>Magnificat</i> , and <i>Nunc</i> ; and music for Communion. 24 page booklet.	\$ 2.00		\$
<i>The State of the Religious Life</i>	... in the Episcopal Church and elsewhere, including history, possibilities for renewal, and challenges. 64 page booklet.	\$ 5.00		\$
<i>God First: A Tithing Catechism</i>	Extensive history of the tithe, answers to frequent questions. Script for the award winning audio cassette. 24 page booklet.	\$ 2.00		\$
<i>What Bishops and Clergy Should Know about Religious Life</i>	A brief overview, with commentary on the canons governing religious communities in the Episcopal Church. 8 panel brochure; updated with changes from 1994 General Convention	Free with a self-addressed stamped envelope	(Limit 3 copies)	
<i>The Servant</i>	Meditations, poetry, and news of the community; published four times a year. Use this form to change your address, or add a friend to the mailing list.	\$ 8.00 per year		\$
			Total:	\$
<i>Name:</i>				
<i>Address:</i>				
<i>City</i>		<i>State</i>	<i>Zip</i>	

***Make all checks payable to:
The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory—Publications
and mail to:
The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory
Saint Augustine's House
2462 Webb Avenue
Bronx NY 10468-4802 USA***

The Servant

Copyright © 1996 The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, an Episcopal religious community. Published quarterly. Address all inquiries concerning this publication to the Editor. Superior General, Richard Thomas Biernacki Editor, Tobias Stanislas Haller

Founder's Forum Summer reflections

Both the church and the world have just been through a very intense and severe winter. The weather has kept us indoors and deprived of the sun. In the church, we have been focused on a courtroom, deprived of the Son. We have let so many things get in the way of the Light; we have been consumed with concerns which have little to do with the core message of Jesus.

The winter is past, and I see hope in the new shoots and flowers in our midst. Some would cultivate and weed the garden with such energy that the flowers would be injured in the process. I wonder what those ten bishops were doing for their dioceses while they were indicting Bishop Righter, and caught up in his trial? As shepherds, were their crooks pulling in sheep or legal briefs? Were the faithful being pastored and led, or enflamed or dismayed, depending on whether they agreed with their bishops or not? Look to the season: summer is with us. Will we nurture the new shoots or stamp them out? Will zeal



in weeding pull up the good grain, leaving nothing for the harvest? Are we wise enough to tell, in early leaf, the good from the bad? Do we have the eyes of angels? Anger and hate is killing the shoots of summer.

It is clearly time to move on. It is clearly time to enjoy and care for the garden. There are many new shoots appearing; let's nurture them. Let's move on to the real work of the church: that is our mission; that is our call.

Lo, the green blade rises; greet it with the smiling light of the sun. We are entrusted with each other, to care for one another. Read the Baptismal Covenant. Do we mean those words when we recite them at a baptism or confirmation? Do we *do* it? I wonder.

We are entering a time of testing. This church can make a difference; but we can only make a difference in love. We can only make that difference if we illustrate with real actions what we say in words. It is clearly time to move on. Join me.

RTB

Meeting the Community A high calling



Gordon John

I was born into a very Anglo-Catholic home—my grandparents' home in San Diego. My parents would “park” my brother and I at my grandparents when my dad was assigned to a Navy base overseas. My earliest memory is of “Father” appearing in black cassock and fereola to bless the house with holy water and refill the holy water fonts in the doorways. I even went to an Anglican parochial school, where the sisters beat knowledge into us; and they were deadly accurate with chalk erasers, too. One of them told my grandmother, “Mrs. Stanley, I remember your son George. And I must say, Gordon is very different; he’s so mischievous!” Grandmother likes to remind me of this occasionally, even now.

Since my grandfather served on the vestry continuously for thirty years, it was destined that I would become an altar server. While the liturgies at All Saints were unbelievably long and complicated, they were a great foundation for the Anglican faith. When I was in the Air Force, I used to attend Roman Catholic Mass if no Episcopal services were available. The celebrant would ask if any of the servicemen present had been altar boys. Quite regularly I would serve the Mass, and always got compliments from the priests. Of course, they didn't know I was Episcopalian.

As I have moved around the country for my work in printing and graphic arts production, I've been active in every Anglo-Catholic

parish I joined. Because of my early training in altar service, I usually ended up Master of Acolytes, training servers and keeping schedules and services going. When I moved to Minneapolis in 1979, I helped reform the local chapter of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament at Gethsemane Church. The CBS has a very active chapter at Church of the Ascension in Chicago. So when I was transferred to Chicago in 1981, I joined Ascension and spent ten years on their altar as subdeacon.

A few years ago I moved my membership to Saint Peter's, my neighborhood parish. They have a need for trained people, and I feel my work there is a reflection of my voca-



Gordon John assists the Rev James Dunkerly at a wedding earlier this year.

tion in the Brotherhood. I've certainly learned some new skills at Saint Peter's, like cooking for groups, selling used books, sorting rummage (which the English rector calls "jumble"), and cleaning and ironing service linen, a difficult task!

My association with the Brotherhood has given me an opportunity to focus on what's

really important. Living a rule, while an act of discipline, is a freeing experience, too. You can sort out your values and test your assumptions against something truer and more permanent than yourself. All you have to say is: *Soli Deo Gloria!*

A summer meditation All-natural

When I go shopping, I have become a label reader. I want to buy all-natural products. Natural ingredients are popular these days. Things like oat bran, wheat fiber, fruit, and eggs are included in many products. However, I also find ingredients like these: soy protein isolate, enzyme modified cheese, and an abundance of artificial flavors and colors. Life these days is full of imitations, in the foods we eat, and in the principles we cherish. A careful reading of Scripture, guided by the Spirit, help us to separate the true ingredients of life from the imitations.

In Isaiah 45, the Lord says to his anointed, Cyrus, "I will go before you and level mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name." In this passage God provides miracles to prove his presence as the creator of all things. It is only right that we give thanks for our blessings. Most of us have been blessed so abundantly with miracles that we take them for granted. The fact that each one of us is here today is a blessing. To be here, you had to get out of bed, shower and dress, and walk or ride to church. The bed you got out of is a blessing. The cleanliness that is your routine is a rare

gift in our world. Being able to walk is a valuable treasure that all people do not have. The very fact that each of us is alive and able is a remarkable blessing. It is so easy to take blessings for granted.

From these the Lord's words through Isaiah, it would seem logical to conclude that it is extraordinary, tangible gifts that are signs of God's presence with us. It is so easy to make success in the world our measure of the blessings of God. God must love me because I draw a six figure income. God must love me because I drive a Mercedes Benz. God must love me because I am young and beautiful. God must love me because I am doing very well. But if that conclusion is true, where are we when things are not so good, not so perfect, not so prosperous. What does God think of us when the blessing of wealth and ease of living are not present. I work for Community Medical Center's hospice program. As I work with terminal patients, I often hear the question, "Why is God punishing me? Why aren't the mountains being leveled for me and the treasures hidden in darkness being given to *me*? Why has God deserted me?" These questions are asked by wonderful people who have accomplished many things. Have they done something wrong or evil or bad to deserve life-threatening and life-destroying illness? Is God punish-

ing them for something incomprehensible? If blessings are God's gifts for the good we do, then logic would follow that illness or financial problems are God's way of getting even with us.

Jesus avoids this trap of logic. In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 22, Jesus is confronted by Pharisees who try to trick him. They exploit the fact that the Israelites felt deserted by God because they were ruled by the oppressive Romans who collected high taxes. The Pharisees hoped to discredit Jesus' message that God is Love and that God's kingdom is present by asking Jesus an unanswerable question. If Jesus says it is appropriate to pay taxes to Caesar, he will be siding with Israel's oppressor. If he says Israel should not pay taxes, he will be guilty of treason against Rome. They try to draw Jesus into the misconception that military success and prosperity are the signs of God's love. The Pharisees want the people to measure God's presence by whether their tax rate feels fair. Jesus never answers their question on its own terms. Instead, Jesus puts the question into perspective. Jesus says, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

God, whose perspective is all of eternity, views things very differently from us—who are looking at things from one particular moment. A similar difference in perspective exists between a child and an adult. When my children were very little, as dinner-time approached and they began to feel hungry, they would want me to fix them a snack. I, who was busy making dinner, did not want to do that, of course. Children do not understand adult perspectives. They could not understand that filling up on cookies just before dinner would ruin their appetites for the nutritious food their bodies needed. The instant relieving of hunger pangs would short

change them of a greater value. The fact that there was a greater value to be had did not change their feelings of suffering due to growing hunger pangs. In the same way, we adults tend to be childish about spiritual values.



Last night my son Adam was telling me about a chapel program that one of his favorite teachers had done. She had a container which represented the student, and she had some grains of dry rice which she told them represented all the changeable things in their lives such as good food, good grades, summer vacations, good health, lots of friends, lots of toys, etc. She also had some walnuts which she said represented the eternal things that God's presence gives us: the spiritual blessing of qualities such as patience, kindness, gentleness, and truth. First she showed the students that if they filled the container with the things of this world, that all the rice would fit nicely into the container with out any problems. She then tried to add the walnuts, but the walnuts could not fit into the container in the leftover space. However, when she put the walnuts into the container first, there was plenty of room in the container for all of the rice. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt 6.33) Our lives are so similar to this illustration. It is easy to claim for our lives the blessings that we want to be God's gifts to us. In claiming the blessings, we often neglect the source. We fill our experience with rice, and don't leave enough room for the wal-

nuts. If instead we set our attention to accomplishing spiritual discernment, meaningful prayer, and faithful charity, there will be plenty of room for all the prosperity we will ever need. Adam has never forgotten this illustration of spiritual truth!

In 1 Thessalonians 1, Paul tells us to be imitators of the Lord. By this he does not mean for us to be fakes, like imitation choco-

late, or to be imitation-sweet like saccharin. What we Christians are called to be is full of grace and truth, seeking first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. That is putting the walnuts of life into the container first, just as Jesus did.

Clare

Here and there with the community Community notes

Council

Council's extensive Spring agenda included approval of requests for life profession from **Richard John**, **Ronald Augustine**, and **Maurice John**, and the requests of novices **Karekin Madteos** and **Robert Michael** to make their first profession—concerning which the Chapter is currently being polled. Two women were interviewed for admission to the postulancy of the Companion Sisterhood: Mrs **Barbara B Dunne** of the Diocese of Washington and Deacon **Karen R Kleimann**, an Associate from the Diocese of Albany. Both were approved and will attend Annual Convocation in July as postulants-prospective. The Education Committee, chaired by **Francis Andrew**, continued working on a major revision of the formation program, and approved grants from the Brother John E Nidecker Memorial Continuing Education Fund in response to applications from members of the community. During the Council session, **Thaddeus David** was granted release from his vows, and **Christian** was granted a year's leave-of-absence leading to his release from the community to make private vows to his bishop.

Another action by Council calls for special mention, the decision to terminate the work

of the Brotherhood Vestment Exchange. As a part of his process toward release from vows, **Christian** resigned as director earlier this year. He had taken over this position from Br **John Nidecker**, who founded the Exchange in 1976 and relinquished it due to other commitments in 1978. **Christian's** leadership since then brought the Exchange to international prominence, gathering chancel furnishings from altar guilds, religious houses, and individuals across the United States and distributing them around the world on request. During its nineteen year history the Brotherhood Vestment Exchange provided numerous overseas bishops with episcopal vestments; countless clergy in war-torn or impoverished provinces of the Anglican Communion with the symbols of their office; supported parishes facing the emotional devastation of fire damage or natural disaster with the implements to regain confidence in their future; and supplied newly-formed mission congregations with the means to worship God with the dignity that typifies Anglicanism. **John** and **Christian** were very special people in this ministry, and they possessed talents not common to most of us. After a long and careful study of the situation, Council faced the reality that there simply was no one with the special skills needed to



Associate Ellen H Poisson gives a Lenten meditation on pilgrimage.

continue this ministry. This decision is an important illustration of the community's ethos—rather than attempting to fit a predefined mold based on the past, or identifying the charism of the community with some particular form of work, the Gregorian spirit (derived in large part from

the flexible and pastoral wisdom of our patron, Gregory the Great) seeks instead to focus on and enable the ministries that actually exist. The sense of not being tied to a particular ministry is freeing, and so we close one chapter in the Brotherhood's history with thanks to God for the opportunity to serve the Body of Christ in this particular way and for a time, and thanks also to the numerous parishes, cathedrals, religious communities, and individuals who contributed so generously to this ministry over the years. We will continue to distribute existing inventory until it is gone, but we will not be able to accept further donations. Requests for existing inventory or other correspondence relative to the Brotherhood Vestment Exchange should be addressed to:

Br Francis Andrew Phillips, BSG
 Fessenden House
 236 Warburton Avenue
 Yonkers NY 10701-2226 USA

Province II

John Michael Haney has withdrawn from the novitiate; he plans to explore other experiences of religious life.

Province II

The commemoration of the Patronal Festival on March 12th began this quarter with a bang (as much as was appropriate during Lent!). At the Chapel of Christ the Lord at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, **Francis Andrew** preached on Saint Gregory the Great at the noon eucharist, with the Rev Dr John Docker, staff officer for ministry development, as celebrant. That evening a number of friars, sisters and Associates gathered at Saint Bartholomew's Church, White Plains, for a festive service of Evening Prayer and Holy Communion. **Richard Thomas** contributed his skills at the organ console, with **James** as officiant and the Rev Lynne J Dawson McQuade, associate at Saint Bartholomew's, as celebrant. In place of a sermon there was time for silent or spoken reflections, and Lynne McQuade and **James** both contributed perspectives on the life of Gregory and his important legacy to the church.

William Francis traveled to London in the spring for two weeks, and he found ample opportunity to visit the churches and cathedrals central to Anglican history, some of which were Saint Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Southwiche Cathedral, Saint Mary le Bow, Saint James Piccadilly, Saint Martin in the Fields, Saint Mary le Strand, and just to keep his itinerary well-balanced, Westminster Cathedral (RC)!

James was also on the road in his role as diocesan linkage representative from the Presiding Bishop's staff to the Dioceses of Eau Claire and Fond du Lac, visiting both and accompanying a national Executive Council

member. He traveled to Eau Claire with Mrs Judith G Conley and their time there included a meeting with Bishop William C Wantland and the diocesan leadership and visits to the Friendship Program at Christ Church, La-Crosse, which provides citizenship training to Hmong refugees; the diocesan camp and conference center at Bundy Hall in Menomonie; the Lac Courte Orielles Ojibwe Reservation's alcohol and drug abuse treatment center; and Christ Church Cathedral's shelter for homeless families, a large ecumenical project shared among 20 churches in Eau Claire. A few days later **James** was in the Diocese of Fond du Lac accompanying Bishop C Christopher Epting of Iowa at a similar meeting with Bishop Russell E Jacobus and his diocesan leadership in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Richard Thomas is linkage representative to the Diocese of Western Louisiana and he visited there with Executive Council member Ms Toni Gilbert. The consultation focused on visits with clergy and lay leadership from two parts of the diocese, with meetings taking place in Lafayette and Alexandria. Several projects were visited, including Southern Mutual Help, which assists small communities in skills-building and community development, and The Well, a major homeless program sponsored by the Church Army and directed by Capt Carlos Russo, CA. This was **Richard Thomas'** third visit to the diocese and there was much opportunity to renew friendships and make new ones, especially with Bishop Robert Hargrove and Canon John Moloney. The next weekend, in his capacity as deputy registrar of the Episcopal Church, Richard Thomas participated in the consecration of the Rt Rev Robert Duncan as Bishop Coadjutor of Pittsburgh. He spent considerable time with the Very Rev George Werner, Dean of Trinity Cathedral and vice-president of the House of Deputies. Many



The Rev Lynn B Harrington and parishioners at Saint John's, South Salem, enjoy lunch during the Lenten day of recollection.

friends of the Brotherhood were present, notable among them being Bishop Alexander Stewart, retired of Western Massachusetts. **Richard Thomas** was also able to have a brief conversation with Mother Catherine Grace, ASSP, and Fr Edward Schmidt, OSB, a solitary at All Saints' Convent, Catonsville, Maryland. In May he made another linkage visit, this time to the Diocese of West Virginia with Mr John Harrison of the Executive Council, and about a week later he returned to Charleston for the regular meeting of the Executive Council.

In May **James** was traveling again, this time replacing colleagues who were unable to schedule time for their linkage visits due to other commitments. He joined Toni Gilbert in a trip to the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, staying at the home of Bishop and Mrs A Heath Light (twice, as it turned out, as their homebound flight was canceled!). Bishop Light organized a meeting of the diocesan leadership to take place at the Monacan Indian Reservation in the Blue Ridge Mountains; the meeting was well attended

and a number of opportunities to discuss the religious life presented themselves. Monacan Chief Kenneth Branham spoke about the tribe's history, about the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia's recent donation of seven acres of land to the tribe (most of the tribe members are Episcopalians), and escorted the group on a tour of the mission church and the almost-completed building site of a new tribal museum and library. Following the meeting the two visitors went in separate directions: Ms Gilbert to see the ministry at Saint John's, Lynchburg, and **James** to visit the Robert E Lee Memorial Church, Lexington, whose rector, the Rev R David Cox, has been a long-time acquaintance and correspondent through **James**' work in world mission. A number of activities had been planned for his visit, including a dinner in his honor at which Episcopalian students at the nearby Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute would speak about the parish's ministry to the schools; addressing the congregation and assisting at both services on Sunday morning; giving a lecture to the adult confirmation class between services on the Episcopal Church's activities in world mission and Anglican relations—and, of course, on the religious life; and attending a luncheon meeting of the parish's Outreach and Gadsden Committees, contributing suggestions and counsel about the logistics of international grant applications and accounting and funds transfer. This visit took place in the full bloom of springtime and the landscape was as beautiful as the people were welcoming and hospitable.

About ten days later **James** traveled to the Diocese of Arizona with Mrs Virginia Paul of the Executive Council to make a three-day visit with the diocesan leadership in Phoenix. They had a good conversation with Bishop

Robert Shahan, Canon to the Ordinary Rebecca McClain, and the diocesan office staff; toured the cathedral; visited the ministries for infants and young children, and for people recovering from alcohol and drug-related illnesses; and attended the Ascension Day eucharist in the cathedral's chapel. At over 100 degrees, there was not much interest in spending time outdoors, but **James** was pleased to see a new (to him) part of the country and, as always, to see the church in action, to talk with local clergy and lay leaders about the ministries which excite them, and to say a word about the religious life in the Episcopal Church—and especially the Brotherhood and Companion Sisterhood of Saint Gregory.

Province II's provincial, **Richard John**, organized a Lenten Day of Recollection which combined the efforts of his parish, Saint John's, South Salem, New York, with those of the friars, sisters and Associates of the province. The Rev Lynn B Harrington, rector of Saint John's, and **Richard John** welcomed parishioners and province members to a day of quiet Lenten reflection, punctuated with meditations by **Tobias Stanislas**, Associate Dr **Ellen H Poisson** and parishioner Laurie Wiegand; lunch and refreshments were provided by the parish.

Two of our friars on the ordination track both received good news this quarter. The bishop and standing committee of the Diocese of Los Angeles have approved **Francis Andrew** as a candidate for the diaconate, and the bishop and standing committee of the Diocese of New York have approved **Tobias Stanislas** as a candidate for the priesthood.

A sad note in the life of Province II, and the community as a whole, is the closing of the Blessed Sacrament Monastery. Members of the province were invited to attend the last

public service in the monastery's chapel in late May. We have had a long and warm relationship with the Sacramentines for at least the last 15 years; some of our friars and sisters today wear habit rosaries given as gifts to our community when the Sacramentines ceased to wear them. The order was founded in France in 1639 and their history includes martyrdom during the French Revolution, and expulsion from France early in this century (under the anticlerical laws) when the order came to America. Blessed Sacrament Monastery opened in Yonkers in 1922, where they have maintained perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, along with a girls' high school and their wonderful ministry of hospitality. The nuns will move to temporary accommodations in Warwick, New York, while their search for a permanent monastery continues. Our prayer is for their strength during this time of transition and we look forward to seeing them happy and ensconced in their new home very soon.

Helen Orwig Hines, wife of the Rt Rev John E Hines, XXII Presiding Bishop, died in Texas in mid-May and the Episcopal Church commemorated her passing with a memorial service at the Chapel of Christ the Lord at the Episcopal Church Center. The celebrant was Presiding Bishop Edmond L Browning, the preacher was Bishop of Newark John S Spong, and **James** assisted as subdeacon. This was a very solemn service and Bishop Spong spoke eloquently of Mrs Hines' lifetime of service and dedication to the church and to her illustrious husband. Few dry eyes

could be seen among the congregation assembled. Also present in the procession were Bishops Walter D Dennis, Jack M McKelvey, Charlie F McNutt, Orris G Walker and Don A Wimberly, and the congregation included Bishop Frank S Cerveny of the Church Pension Group and Archbishop Robert G A Okine of West Africa and Bishops William H Folwell and Edward W Neufville of Liberia, who were attending meetings in the building that day.

Michael David exhibited his angel graphics (reported on in issue #159) in the Orville J Hanchey Gallery at Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana. He was quoted as saying, "I don't want to step on anyone's toes, but I hope no one sees anything they would call 'cutsey' in these drawings. I hope that in my angels you can see a spiritual depth, a mysticism." In some of



the angel graphics he uses the eraser as much as the graphite, which produces an eerie, transparent effect. **Michael David** enjoyed a trip to Spain, shepherding students through such unforgettable experiences as Holy Week in Madrid. He made a special remembrance of the community in Seville, at the altar of Saint Gregory. He found the blend of Moorish and Renaissance architecture dazzling, and we will no doubt see the influences of this rich experience in his continuing graphic work. On returning, he took part in a performance of the Fauré *Requiem*.

Tobias Stanislas served as subdeacon at his sister Mary Beth's wedding to Dante G Beretta at Grace and Saint Peter's, Baltimore.

Province III

Edward and his wife Barbara visited **Lillian-Marie** and her husband Vito in the Diocese of Central Florida, attending the eucharist at her parish, Saint Barnabas, Deland. There was a reception afterwards attended by members of the parish and her rector, the Rev Don Lyons. **Lillian-Marie** has just finished a six-month course and has been consecrated into the Order of Saint Luke, a healing ministry in the Episcopal Church. She recently attended a function in Orlando at which the Rev Al Durance was a speaker, and took part in a conference at Canterbury Retreat Center in Oviedo. She herself spoke to a gathering on the issue of “Piety” and how it relates to religious life. + + + **Luke Anthony** continues his Sunday School teaching ministry in Pennsylvania.

Province V

The Most Rev and Rt Hon Dr George L Carey, the 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury, visited the Diocese of Chicago during the seventh week of Easter. He presided and preached at the eucharist at Saint James Cathedral, which was attended by nearly 800. Bishop of

A story of pilgrimage

With us in the wilderness

Sometimes we do things that really don't make sense. For example, my speaking to you today. When Br Richard John called to ask me do this two weeks ago, I had every reason to say no. I had prepared a talk for our Advent quiet day last year (which was snowed out) but I didn't have anything prepared that was appropriate for Lent. I have never preached or given a meditation before. I'm in the midst of moving the NYPL. I've just started a new ministry—and I could have come up with some more excuses as well.

Chicago Frank T Griswold and Suffragan Bishop William W Wiedrich, along with Dean Rev Todd D Smelser processed to the entrance of the cathedral where they received the archbishop at the start of the eucharist. The three bishops, one in each aisle, sprinkled the congregation with baptismal water as a sign and reminder of baptism into the risen life of the Risen Christ. In the evening, Dean Smelser officiated and the archbishop preached at another overflowing crowd at a service of worship for the evening. **Ronald Augustine** attended the eucharist and he and **Gordon John** both attended the evening service. The visit also gave the two Chicago friars an opportunity to see former Chicago resident Canon James Rosenthal, Director of Communications for the Anglican Communion, and known by many BSG friars.

Associates

Welcome to new Associates **Michael S Parenti** of Amityville, New York, and **Mark L Raper** of Nampa Idaho. We're also very happy to report that **Wiley “Jack” Merryman** is on the road to recovery after recent surgery.

And Richard John didn't make me feel guilty or feel that I should do it. Rather he has asked several times, “Are you sure you're OK with this?”

But when he asked, even though it made no sense, I knew that I would do it. I knew that, in spite of my fear and in spite of knowing that I was facing something very new, I still knew that I would do it.

Perhaps it was because I felt like I was wandering into a new wilderness, that a recent Old Testament reading particularly ap-

pealed to me as a text. As you may remember, the Israelites are wandering in the wilderness; they had camped and had no water. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" (Exodus 17)

They had left slavery in Egypt, following Moses, to find a new life. We are told that they had been traveling for at least two months in the wilderness; they had already faced thirst and then hunger, and now again they were without a source of water. Their immediate need was great, and they tested God, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

In spite of all of the signs of God's mercy up until then, each time they faced hardship, they questioned. The Israelites turned to blame Moses and to test God in their thirst. The bad old days didn't seem so bad after all, in retrospect, since at least they had had enough to eat and drink. Their situation was indeed serious: to be without water in the wilderness for any length of time was to face certain death.

In their immediate concern for food and drink, they had lost sight of their goal; they felt abandoned and unsupported. They began to wonder if this expedition was such a good idea after all; they wavered in their acceptance of Moses' leadership and in their faith.

In thinking about their experience, I was reminded of a trip I took many years ago. During the time that I lived in Iran, I traveled with some family members from Teheran, where we lived, to Bandar Abbas in the very south of the country on the Persian Gulf. To get there, we drove for several days through the wilderness. Because it is so dry and there

are long distances between places to find food and drink, it was especially important to have water with us in the car and to stop whenever we had the opportunity to replenish our supply.

████████████████████
We can go
forward,
confident that
there will be
welcome and
comfort
to meet us
████████████████████

The wilderness itself wasn't empty and barren, as I had expected, but fantastic in its variety. The landscape changed from completely flat, to rolling hills, to impossibly lumpy mountains. There were vast stretches where we didn't see anyone at all. In the middle of flat, dusty plains, sometimes we came upon villages with round huts made from the same earth surrounding them so that they looked like they had bubbled up out of the ground. They seemed to be completely integrated with the surrounding environment.

The wilderness was not at all what I expected it to be, but ever changing, vast, surprising, sometimes without life and sometimes full of people, animals, vegetation. These people had been there for centuries and lived in a precarious harmony with their surroundings. What seemed strange and desolate to me, was for them a home. It was also a harsh life, with danger and hardship, poverty and isolation.

We faced challenges during the trip: it was a long drive; sometimes we didn't see another car or person for hours; sometimes we

weren't even sure if we were on the road. We faced the possibility of a breakdown far from sources of food and water.

There were no McDonald's along the way. We stopped at small village restaurants when we could. One time we were in a village where there were no public restaurants, so we stopped at a woman's home. She boiled water for us and we sat on the rug on the ground in front of her tiny house to eat cheese and bread and to drink tea. She had a door, one window, one chest for all her belongings, one room. I have never seen anyone live so simply before. This place that to me seemed such a wilderness, to her was her life and her world.

I had never before been so far from "civilization." At times we were miles and miles from anyone else. I had never felt such solitude. I have never been in such a truly wild place before. And yet we were welcomed into a stranger's simple home. I learned later that this is a custom of Middle Eastern cultures: travelers in the wilderness are always made welcome; in the desert it is a matter of life and death.

When we go into the wilderness, we leave what is comfortable and known; we leave an environment we can control at least somewhat and that we have conformed to our needs. We face known and unknown dangers. Sometimes we find ourselves in the wilderness and are not sure how we got there. Sometimes we go forward against all logic, but we know, somehow, that it is time to do so and that we will survive and that we will find comfort and the welcome of a stranger.

As I thought more about this, I realized why these meditations are important for me right now. For one, I will, God willing, be entering postulancy this summer: even though I have waited and prayed about taking this step for many months and even years, still I have

some fear of what the changes in my life will be and how I will change in the process.

The sisters are facing major changes as CSSG moves towards independence. We move forward, not knowing what an independent Sisterhood will look like or how it will support us, but we still go forward with hope and faith and joy.

In the wilderness, there are dangers: we may lose the basics of survival, we may lose our way, we may be abandoned, we may lose control, we ourselves may change.

Although it's much more comfortable to stay where we are, there are some times in our lives when we know that we must go on and staying where we are is no longer possible.

In our Lenten meditations, we can be alert to the possibilities of going into the "wilderness." A time in the wilderness may be difficult, but it can also be a precious time for inner reflection and for challenge to our assumptions.

§ We can go forward, not to find what we expect, but to be challenged in ways that we least expect;

§ We acknowledge our fear but have faith we will not be tested beyond our strength;

§ We are clear in our purpose and goals, and strong in our faith, so we will not lose our way;

§ We can go forward, confident that there will be welcome and comfort to meet us;

§ We go in the knowledge and surety of God's love and presence in the face of all danger;

§ We go into the wilderness not just with water that will quench our thirst, but knowing that we are blessed with the divine gift of living water that will sustain us forever.

Ellen H Poisson, a/BSG

Intercessions

The Brotherhood & Companion Sisterhood

Episcopal Visitor *Sun*
Walter D Dennis

Episcopal Visitors Emeriti
Horace WB Donegan d 11.11.91
Paul Moore, jr

Life Professed
Richard Thomas Biernacki
John Nidecker d 6.20.88
James Teets
Christian Williams

Luke Anthony Nowicki *Mon*
John Peter Clark d 2.25.94
William Francis Jones
Stephen Storen
Thomas Joseph Ross
Tobias Stanislas Haller
William Bunting d 10.12.88

Edward Munro *Tue*
Charles Kramer
Bernard Fessenden d 8.10.93
Donovan Aidan Bowley
Michael David Elvestrøm
Edward Ramón Riley
Christopher Stephen Jenks

Ciarán Anthony DellaFera *Wed*
William Edward Orce
Damian-Curtis Kellum

Annual Professed
Clare Connell
Richard John Lorino
Ronald Augustine Fox
Maurice John Grove

Charles Edward LeClerc *Thu*
Francis Andrew Phillips
Andrew Fortuna
Elizabeth Mary Burke
Gordon John Stanley
Lillian-Marie DiMicco
Helen Bernice Lovell

Novices
Karekin Madteos Yarian
Robert Michael Burnham *Fri*
Susanna Bede Caroselli
Alban Patrick Thompson

Postulants
Alec David Juan McLure
J Stephen Moss
William David Everett *Sat*
Michael I Bushnell
Thomas J Liotta
James J Mahoney

Associates

Cecil Berges d 10.16.90 *Sun*
Marion Pierce d 12.26.91
Helen Marie Joyce, VHM
Robert Macon
Grosvenor Calkins, jr
Jeff Emmett
Richard A Belanger d 11.21.94
Joseph di Mauro, SA
Catherine W Sturm
Mary Helen Clare

Maryann Wolff *Mon*
Joseph F O'Day
Stephen D Montgomery
Fidel Flores
Karl W Fry
Brendan W Nugent, TSSF
Sheila Gould
Earl Christian
Lawrence LeRoy David

Kenneth Staples d 10.6.92 *Tue*
David Smith
William R Munroe
Wendell Allen
Elizabeth J Holton d 8.27.93
Roland "Randy" RR Pryor
Grant Walsh
Mary Virginia Clement Haney
Karen R Kleinmann
Jeffery L Benson

M Eugene Ellis *Wed*
Mark Harris
Enrique Antonio Illarze
Dennis W Pattey
John A Bell
Gerard F Beritela
Perry L Conley
Ethel B "Ettye" Hurley
Wilhelmina Barton

Raymond E Barton *Thu*
Gabriel McGovern
Amy M Barron
Leopold Frade
Diana D Frade
Robin Stephanie Steele
Ulric Van den Berghe
Carol Gwynn Hays
James David Walley
David Benzshawel

Roberta R M^cKay *Fri*
Theresa Allan
Glenn R Charlton
Betsy Kardos
Ellen H Poisson
David Burton
Timothy Lundy
Wiley W "Jack" Merryman
David A Dean
Albert O Cantwell *Sat*
Anthony Galati

Graham Thomas Prosser
Philip L Hewitt
Michael S Parenti
Mark L Raper
& The Friends of the Brotherhood

Postulants-Pro prospective
Philip J Kuhn, Ellen H Poisson, Donald
P Dickson, Karen R Kleinmann &
Barbara B Dunne

Religious Communities

Sacramentine & Visitandine Nuns
Society of the Atonement
Order of Agapé & Reconciliation
Camaldolese Benedictines
Society of Saint John the Evangelist

For healing

Damian-Curtis Kellum, BSG
William Edward Orce, BSG
Clare Connell, CSSG
For all who live with HIV/AIDS
Ernestine Elizabeth Burke
Cheryl Gerlach
Michael Ritchie
Richard Haines
Brendan W Nugent, TSSF, a/BSG
Richard S O Chang
David Jacobsen
Stephen Long
Barbara Munro
Orris G Walker, jr
Wiley W "Jack" Merryman

Departed

Charlotte B Morgan
J Norman Hall
George T Koerner
Henry N Fukui
Donald L Garfield
Ruby Caroselli
Laureni LeClerc
Pjeter Zefi Velovic
Craig Douglas
J Robert Barrett
Clayton Dean Hochhalter
John Schwartz
Kiah Carter
Mark Francis, SSF
Yolanda Cosentino
Andy Holowiak
Gail Dobert
Luisa Lynn Garcia
Jeanne Vetter
Mark Emory Graham
Tim Sullivan
Matthew P Bigliardi
Charles J Ryan

more

Intentions

The Decade of Evangelism
Joseph Richey House
Saint Gregory's Retreat Center
Brother Bernard Fessenden House
Baltimore International
Seafarers' Center
Tobias Stanislas Haller, BSG
Thaddeus Williams
Christian Williams, BSG
Anthony J Bondi, jr
Stephen Moss, p/BSG
Tom Edwards
Elizabeth & Mark Grove
Carol Spangenberg
Sandy & Margy Zabriski
Dale Klitzke
William Borgen, Lawrence David,
Glenn Charlton, John-Albert Moseley,
Douglas Christie, John Calabrese,
Scott Shenkman, Stephen Baker,
Timothy J Morris

Thanksgiving

John A Andrews and the parish of
Christ Church of Ramapo
The births of Alexandria May Grove and
Jacqueline Corbett

The marriage of Mary Beth Haller and
Dante G Beretta, jr
Joyce & Ahmed El Kateeb and their
twins Zachary & Noah
Walter Righter

Where there's a will

You can assist and further the ministries of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory by remembering us in your will. If you choose to do so, the following form of wording is appropriate:

I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory, Inc., a New York State not-for-profit corporation, with a present address of 82 Prospect Street, White Plains NY 10606-3499, and its successors for ever \$_____ and / or _____ percent of my estate to be used in such a manner as determined by its Directors.

Time Value Publication
Address Correction Requested

The Servant #162
Summer 1996

The Brotherhood of Saint Gregory
Saint Bartholomew's Church
82 Prospect Street
White Plains NY 10606-3499 USA