

The Servant



#263

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Where there's a will

You can assist and further the ministries of the Brotherhood of Saint Gregory by remembering the community 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 and its successors for ever \$_____ and / or _____ percent of my estate to be used in such a manner as determined by its Directors.



The Brotherhood joins the people of God in praying for peace in Ukraine. The sunflower on the cover of this issue of *The Servant* is the national flower of Ukraine, and symbolizes hope. The icon sketch to the left was drawn by Tobias Stanislas Haller, based on the classical icon of the Mother of God of Vladimir, also known as the Mother of God of Tenderness, and the Mother of God of Kyiv. In this version, the Ukrainian colors feature in the background.

Stones and Easter and us

Setting up Twelve Stones (twelve מצבות *matzevot* — standing stones) was a common form of marking a spectacular religious event in the days of the kingdom of Judah before the time of Josiah (Deuteronomy 27:1–8).

I think, for me, the rolling of the stone at the tomb of Jesus is the powerful symbol of the day — Easter Day! Stones. The word *stone* is found 192 times in the Bible (and in the plural 178 times) and the word *rock* 119 times (*rocks* 23 times). Like so many physical objects, these are used both literally and figuratively. There are numerous instances in Scripture in which Deity is pictured in some kind of stone image. How many times have we heard, “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” Stones are part of our imagery of support.

Some years ago, our late and much loved brother Ron Fender was on a private retreat in the mountains of Chattanooga. Each day he sat at a stream collecting particular stones. In one of these “quiet times” he asked — what can I bring back for Brother Richard Thomas? What he gave me is a cross — made of those stones over which he prayed each day. He called it a sign of “a spectacular religious event in the days of retreat.”

I share it here — and leave you with my prayer that you too, may find comfort and peace in the same way as Brother Ron. Meditate, if you will, on these stones, this cross.



RTB

Here and there with the Brothers

Community Notes

The January Gathering for the Rites of the Brotherhood

As 2021 approached its close, Minister General Richard Thomas Biernacki (the Diocese of New Jersey) called for a special meeting of the Council of the Brotherhood in order to discuss the effects of the Omicron variant of the SARS-CoV2 virus, and its impact on the COVID pandemic, especially upon our plans for holding Winter Convocation 2022 at a retreat center on Long Island in January. Council convened via Zoom with all present, and after discussion, it was decided that it would be prudent not to hold that convocation, which would draw our membership together from across the country and internationally by air travel, thus subjecting our brothers to long flights and potentially



The January gathering

long periods of exposure — during those flights and in waiting rooms in the various airports — prior to and during travel. This decision was not taken lightly, especially given that two of our number had already been approved for profession and reception at rites set to take place during Winter Convocation.

Both of our members awaiting the rites live in Province 3 — Jason Peter Seta of Pennsylvania (about to make first profession of annual vows) and William Edward Gallop Jr of Southwestern Virginia (who would take the name Mychal Joseph on entering the novitiate) — and so does the Director of Postulants and Novices — Tobias Stanislas Haller from Maryland — as well as William Edward's Mentor — Peter Budde of Southwestern Virginia. Edward Munro of Maryland — both members' Minister Provincial — would also be a sponsor for first profession and reception into the novitiate, so Council decided to turn the matter over to the Province to make a decision and plan to accomplish these important tasks. The Minister General appointed Edward to represent him as officiant for the rites, however they would be held. As in the early decades of the Brotherhood, one option was to celebrate these rites in one or each of their home parishes. Other possibilities were on the table, and the members of Province 3 held a meeting in order to explore them.



Thomas assists Jason Peter with his cincture.

The Province members decided that a true mini-Convocation was in order, rather than an ad hoc gathering at a parish. A site was quickly arranged by Administrator Eric Shelley (Southwestern Virginia): Saint Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, where Province 3 had held numerous provincial retreats. The Seminary staff worked with Eric to arrange

for arrival on Wednesday afternoon, January 19th, and departure late the following day. In addition to all members of Province 3, Thomas Bushnell (New York), the community's Director of Education, was invited to preach the sermon at the Holy Eucharist on the 20th, and Director of Vocations Ronald Augustine Fox (Chicago) was invited to serve as thurifer at that liturgy. Due



Sponsors present Jason Peter to Minister Provincial Edward.

attention was paid to the diocesan guidelines that all present be fully vaccinated and boosted and wear masks when gathered.

In typical BSG style, the opening event of the schedule for this gathering was dinner, and the closing event was lunch on the following day.



Jason Peter makes his first vows...



...and signs the instrument of profession.

In between, all members enjoyed the Daily Office on both days and the Eucharist on Thursday, which featured the Brotherhood's rites; all liturgies took place in the seminary's beautiful Chapel of Saint Charles Borromeo. A number of family and friends of the two brothers making

new commitments were able to attend, bearing in mind the restrictions placed on gatherings due to the ever-present virus.

Province 3

Both Jason Peter and Mychal Joseph celebrated their new status on their return to their home parishes, as part of the Sunday liturgy, using a short liturgical form assembled for that purpose. (This seems like such a



Peter and Tobias Stanislas present [then] William Edward as a candidate for reception as a novice.

good idea that we expect before long it will become a norm in the Rites of the Brotherhood.)



...and Peter and Thomas assist in clothing him as a novice.

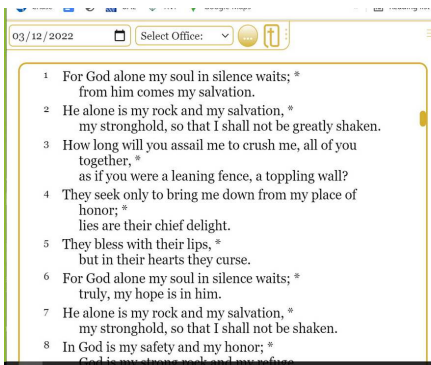
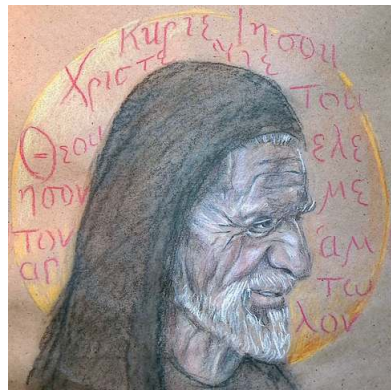


Edward receives Mychal Joseph...

⊕ Tobias Stanislas' drawing of an ascetic desert monk (below) appeared in the spring exhibition of The Episcopal Church and the Visual Arts. Entitled, "On the Pilgrim's Way," the drawing shows the monk with a nimbus consisting of the words of the Jesus Prayer.

Province 5

Brothers gathered on Zoom on the Feast of Gregory the Great for conversation and Morning Prayer. Minister Provincial Nathanael Deward Rahm (Chicago), and Brothers Ronald Augustine Fox (Chicago), Gordon John Stanley (Chicago & SW FL), Joseph Basil Gauss (Chicago), and Francis Jonathan Bullock (Indianapolis) were all able to attend. After brief social time, Gordon John officiated at Morning Prayer. Ronald Augustine and Joseph Basil attended the 10:00 am Healing Mass at



Morning Prayer via Zoom



their parish, Church of the Atonement. The rector, the Very Rev Erika Takacs, dispensed with the usual Lenten FERIA and commemorated Saint Gregory, where she offered a fine homily extolling his virtues and those of the Brotherhood.

✠ Ronald Augustine has been accepted by the Graduate School of Theology at the University of Redlands to San Francisco Theological Seminary's Certificate in Trauma & Spiritual Care program. The interim dean wrote, "Our candidate review considers individual application materials as well as program capacity in making ultimate admissions decisions. Your application was a strong representation of the potential we seek in successful students and professionals. Congratulations on behalf of the faculty, administration, and the entire community." He will start the program in October 2022, with prayers and heartfelt congratulations from all of his brothers, too!

Province West

On January 22nd David Benedict Hedges (Arizona) attended a profession liturgy at Saint Andrew's Tucson, with the Benedictine Canons community. Sister Kate made her vows to Prior Chad-Joseph Sundin of the Community of Saint Mary of the Annunciation in Tempe, and he gave her the name "Lawrence." Bishop Jennifer Reddall read a document establishing the Community of Saint Hildegarde of Bingen, and celebrated the Eucharist. Afterwards David Benedict gave Sr Kate Lawrence the congratulations of the Brotherhood and assured her of our prayers for her.

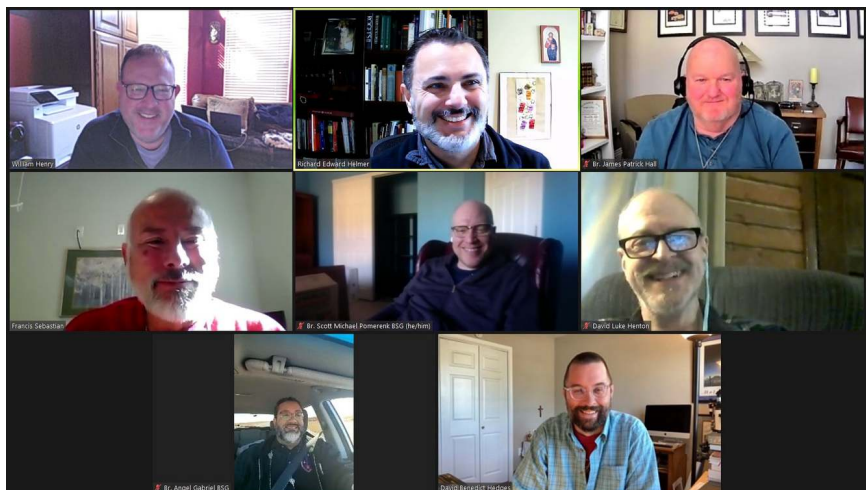
✠ On Saint Valentine's Day James Patrick Hall reported that his ongoing ministry effort — Rocky Mountain Refuge for End of Life Care, in Denver, Colorado — opened. He

serves as the executive director of this new ministry, providing housing, support, and hospice care to people experiencing homelessness in the Denver area. It offers a dignified alternative to dying alone on the street for those with terminal illness. For a closer look, please visit lazarusgate.org. *Westworld*, a Denver newspaper, announced that Rocky Mountain Refuge received their first hospice guest on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd. James Patrick joined one of his board members in an interview on a local Denver TV station.



Dana Cooper and James Patrick at work in Rocky Mountain Refuge (photo: Katie Warnke, Westworld)

✠ Angel Gabriel Roque is working to good effect in the Diocese of the Rio Grande (New Mexico) in his ministry as Diocesan Missioner for Youth and Young Adults. He works with youth groups, youth ministers, and campus ministries, creating formation programs and directing camp ministries for the diocese and beyond.



✠ Province West met via Zoom for an informal Lenten retreat on the patronal Feast of Saint Gregory the Great. Each brother was able to share what was going on in their life currently during the afternoon meeting and the retreat ended with Evening Prayer and a blessing from David Benedict, from his parish in Tucson. Originally, the Province had hoped to gather in Tucson in person but at the time of final planning COVID infections were too high to risk it. The brothers hope to gather in person in the Fall 2022 for a full weekend together.

A reflection on a having enough

Living Poverty

I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. — Philippians 4:12

My father's most strongly held criticism of me was that I was "happy being poor." He didn't realize that although poverty could be very difficult, it also brought with it a certain contentedness that can't be experienced when you can have all of the things that you want.

I'd like to tell you a story about a Whopper and two cigarettes.



Back in the mid 90s, I was living homeless in Seattle. Seattle is and has always been a very hard place to be homeless. The weather is dangerous when you don't have shelter, and good shelter is hard to find. Seattle in the 90s was much worse in many ways than it is today. What we now call "hostile architecture" was everywhere in those days.

For a while, I had an old abandoned van to sleep in. I can't tell you what a blessing this was. It was down a hill in an industrial area hidden from view. Nobody knew about it. I only found it by accident when I was in an area that other homeless people stayed out of. They avoided the place because of the reputation of a certain security guard. He was known to handcuff homeless people to an old bulldozer and savagely torture them. I personally knew some of his victims and had seen the wounds inflicted both on their bodies and their minds. This was a really bad guy. I went down there hoping that he would catch me. I had a plan to stop him and I figured that even if I got caught after the fact, I'd have a warm place to live for a few years in prison.

I didn't find him (he may have moved on to another job or maybe he left to avoid paying for his crimes), but I did find the van. It was an old Ford from the 60s or 70s and it was lodged between two big gravel piles. You couldn't see it from the road or from the bridge, but through the van's small round window, you could see the Seattle skyline. The van had no wheels and the engine was missing, but it was a dry place to sleep in Seattle and it offered privacy and security due to its location. I had to keep the doors closed with little pieces of rope and a length of 2x4 lumber.

While I had that van, it was glorious!

Eventually (after a couple of months), people figured out that the guard wasn't there anymore and the place got too crowded and dangerous. I would probably have had to kill to keep my van and I didn't think it was worth that, so I left for another part of the city. But while I had that van, it was glorious! Now in those days, Burger King sold the Whopper for 99¢ and if you went to any convenience store in the ghetto, they would sell single cigarettes out of a coffee cup for a quarter. That meant that for \$1.50, I could have a Whopper and two cigarettes. I would take them back to my van and eat the Whopper and smoke one of the cigarettes. I would then go to sleep, keeping the second cigarette for when I woke up. It was so wonderful! I remember thinking that this is God providing for my needs. I had a dry home, food and a couple of cigarettes for a buck fifty. I could always find \$1.50 on the sidewalk or bum it from someone. Sometimes I had enough money for more, but I always could get myself a Whopper and two cigarettes. It was my loaves and fishes.

I no longer smoke, but every once in a while I go to Burger King and eat a Whopper. It always brings a smile to my face, and a tear to my eye. It's still my favorite fast food meal because of the memories of pure joy that it brings back.

Mychal Joseph Gallop

