

# ON THE HILL

FALL 2016 • VOL. 55:4

## Family Ties in the Seminary



## Monte Cassino Restoration Begins

## Monks Profess Vows

Cover: Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, teaches a weekend course on the Creed to Graduate Theology students.



*Saint Meinrad*



# ON THE HILL

FALL 2016 • VOL. 55:4

## FEATURES

- 2-4 ..... Monastery News
- 5 ..... Monte Cassino Shrine
- 6 ..... Student Profile
- 7 ..... Fr. Cletus Miller, OSB, Obituary
- 8-9 ..... New School Year
- 10-11 ..... New Overseers

## ALUMNI

- 12-13 ..... Alumni Reunion Photos
- 14-15 ..... Alumni Eternal and News
- 16 ..... Day of Service 2017

*On the Hill* is published four times a year by Saint Meinrad Archabbey and Seminary and School of Theology. The newsletter is also available online at: [www.saintmeinrad.edu/onthehill](http://www.saintmeinrad.edu/onthehill)

Editor: ..... Mary Jeanne Schumacher  
Copywriters: ..... Krista Hall & Tammy Schuetter

Send changes of address and comments to:  
The Editor, The Development Office, Saint Meinrad Archabbey and Seminary & School of Theology,  
200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, IN 47577, (812) 357-6501 • Fax (812) 357-6759, [news@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:news@saintmeinrad.edu)  
[www.saintmeinrad.edu](http://www.saintmeinrad.edu), © 2016, Saint Meinrad Archabbey



Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, following his abbatial blessing on July 26. Find more photos at <http://saint-meinrad.smugmug.com>

## Monastery News

# Monk professes first vows at Saint Meinrad



Br. Kolbe Wolniakowski

Novice Tony Wolniakowski, OSB, professed his temporary vows as a Benedictine monk in a ceremony on August 6, 2016, at Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

He has completed his novitiate, a year of prayer and study of the Benedictine way of life. As is the custom during the profession of vows, he was given a religious name. He will now be known as Br. Kolbe.

Br. Kolbe, 29, is a native of Lansing, MI. Most recently, he worked for the State of

Michigan as an insurance complaint analyst in the Department of Insurance and Financial Services.

After graduating from Pewamo-Westphalia High School in Westphalia, MI, he earned an associate degree from Lansing Community College in 2009 and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Northwood University in 2010.

He was a member of St. Joseph Parish in Pewamo, MI, where he volunteered as a faith formation teacher.

Temporary vows are typically for three years. This period offers an opportunity for the monk and the monastic community to determine whether monastic life is, indeed, the right vocation for this individual. ✚

## Sign up for the e-newsletter

If you'd like to receive brief updates on what's happening at Saint Meinrad, you can sign up for a free e-newsletter. Every few weeks, you will receive a newsletter in your email's inbox.

To sign up, go to the "Newsletters" link on the front page of the website: [www.saintmeinrad.edu](http://www.saintmeinrad.edu). Or, send an email to [news@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:news@saintmeinrad.edu)

## Five monks celebrate 60 years of monastic professions



▲ *Jubilarians celebrating their anniversaries of monastic profession are, from left: Fr. Timothy Sweeney, Fr. Denis Quinkert, Fr. Lambert Reilly, Br. Andrew Zimmermann and Fr. Meinrad Brune.*

The Benedictine monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey celebrated the 60-year jubilee of monastic profession for five of their confreres on July 31, 2016.

Honored were Fr. Lambert Reilly, Fr. Denis Quinkert, Br. Andrew Zimmermann, Fr. Timothy Sweeney and Fr. Meinrad Brune.

**Fr. Lambert** is a native of Pittsburgh, PA. He made his profession of vows on August 15, 1956, and was ordained a priest on September 20, 1959.

He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Vincent College, Latrobe, PA, in 1955. He also holds Master of Divinity and Master of Religious Education degrees from Saint Meinrad School of Theology, as well as a Master of Science in Education from Duquesne University. In addition, he did graduate studies at The Catholic University of America, Georgetown University, University of Evansville and Arkansas State University.

Fr. Lambert served as the archabbot of the monastic community from 1995 to

2004. He then returned to his work of preaching and giving retreats. For more than 40 years, Fr. Lambert has been a retreat director and speaker on issues of spirituality and prayer.

Fr. Lambert also taught Latin and education courses at Saint Meinrad College, Mount Sacred Heart College in Hamden, CT, and Penn State University. In addition, he served as principal of St. Elizabeth High School in Pittsburgh and as a consultant to the Diocese of Peoria's Office of Education.

He also has assisted in parishes, worked in public relations, and served as guest master, assistant oblate director, assistant to the novice master and pro-prior. He is the author of two books, *Because There Is Jesus* and *Latin Sayings for Spiritual Growth*.

**Fr. Denis** is a native of New Albany, IN. In 1950, he came to Saint Meinrad to study at St. Placid Hall, a high school for those interested in becoming a brother. He joined the Benedictine monastery at Blue Cloud Abbey in Marvin, SD, in 1954. He professed his vows on February 10, 1956.

Fr. Denis worked on the abbey farm, helped with the construction of the monastery and farm buildings, and served as a prefect at the Indian schools staffed by Blue Cloud Abbey.

He later studied theology at Pope John XXIII Seminary in Weston, MA, and was ordained a priest on May 25, 1976. He served as a pastor at Ft. Totten, North Dakota, and at Wagner and Milbank in South Dakota, as well as at St. Paul Parish in Marty, SD. He also served as a chaplain to the Benedictine sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery and the students of Mount Marty College in Yankton, SD.

Fr. Denis was elected abbot of Blue Cloud two times, serving from 1986 to 1991 and again from 2009 until the abbey closed in 2012. At that time, he joined the Saint Meinrad community.

He serves as a commuting chaplain for Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, IN, and assists with transportation at Saint Meinrad.

**Br. Andrew** was born in Richmond, VA. He made his profession of vows as a Benedictine monk on March 11, 1956.

He worked in the monastery tailor shop until he was sent to assist at Saint Meinrad's priory in Peru in November 1963. Seventeen years later, Br. Andrew returned to Saint Meinrad to work in the business office and mailroom/duplicating office.

From 1992-96, he worked in the monastery's vestry and transportation offices. Br. Andrew then served in Guatemala at Marmion Abbey's foundation from 1996-2004. He now works at the Guadalupe Center in Huntingburg, IN.

**Fr. Timothy** is a native of Indianapolis, IN, and he made his profession of vows on August 15, 1956. He was ordained a priest on May 7, 1961. He has a licentiate in sacred theology from Pontifical

*Continued on p. 4*

*continued from p. 3*

International Institute of St. Anselm, Rome, and a licentiate in philosophy from Institute Catholique, Paris.

He taught in Saint Meinrad College for 10 years. From 1975-78, he was prior (second in leadership) of the Archabbey. On June 2, 1978, he was elected archabbot of Saint Meinrad and served in that role for 17 years.

Fr. Timothy served as administrator of two parishes following his tenure as archabbot. Then from 1996-2005, he was pastor of Parish of the Immaculate, Owensboro, KY. From 2006 to 2009, he served as pastor of St. Paul Parish, Tell City, IN.

Currently, he is administrator of St. Isidore and St. Martin parishes in nearby Perry County. He also serves as archivist for Saint Meinrad and for the Swiss-American Congregation.

**Fr. Meinrad** grew up in Indianapolis, IN. He made his profession of vows on August 15, 1956, and was ordained a priest on May 7, 1961. He has a Master of Arts degree from Butler University, a bachelor of sacred theology from The Catholic University of America and completed his theological training at Saint Meinrad School of Theology.

Following ordination, Fr. Meinrad taught in Saint Meinrad High School and College for 16 years. For the next seven years, he served as pastor at St. Meinrad Parish, St. Meinrad, IN, and St. Mary Parish, Huntingburg, IN.

In 1984, he began work in Saint Meinrad's Development Office as an associate director and then as alumni director for nine years. He has served in his current position as director of the Benedictine Oblate Program since 1995.✠

# Smugmug

*For more photos of  
Saint Meinrad events, visit:*

<http://saint-meinrad.smugmug.com>

## Monks profess solemn vows



▲ *From left, Brothers Peduru Fonseka, James Jensen and William Sprauer prepare to make their solemn vows on August 15.*

Three men professed solemn vows as Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in a ceremony on August 15, 2016, in the Archabbey Church.

Becoming full members of the Saint Meinrad community were Br. Peduru Fonseka, OSB, Br. James Jensen, OSB, and Br. William Sprauer, OSB.

**Br. Peduru**, 33, is a native of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He was a member of Our Lady of Fatima Church in Battaramulla and attended St. Joseph's College in Colombo, both in Sri Lanka.

In 2008, he earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of South Alabama in Mobile. He then worked as a structural engineer at Barter & Associates Inc. in Mobile, until joining the monastery in 2011.

He is in his third year of priesthood studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology and assists with the Benedictine Oblate Program. He also gives retreats and guided tours at Saint Meinrad.

**Br. James**, 33, is a native of Iowa City, IA, where he was a member of St. Mary's Parish and attended Regina Catholic Education Center.

He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Iowa and a master's in accounting science

from Northern Illinois University. He passed the Certified Public Accountant exam and worked in corporate finance before coming to Saint Meinrad.

In 2015, he earned a Master of Arts in Catholic philosophical studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. He works as an administrative assistant for Saint Meinrad's "One Bread, One Cup" program and works in the Development Office.

**Br. William**, 32, is from Piqua, OH, and attended Piqua High School. He became a Catholic in 2008 and was a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Centerville, OH.

He is a 2006 graduate of Ohio University with a bachelor's degree in computer science and has more than five years of professional software development experience. He earned a Master of Arts in Catholic philosophical studies from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in May.

He works in the Office of Monastery Vocations, gives retreats and is studying theology at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

In professing solemn vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life and stability in the community at Saint Meinrad, they become full and permanent members of the Benedictine community. ✠

# Monte Cassino Shrine: Renewing a Sacred Place



▲ *Work has begun to restore the 146-year-old Monte Cassino Shrine, which honors the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

A small shrine honoring Mary, the mother of Jesus, has welcomed pilgrims to a hilltop near Saint Meinrad Archabbey for almost 150 years.

The devotion to this sacred place goes back to the mid-19th century. The wooded hilltop was first marked as a special place by monks and students in 1857, when they attached an image of Our Lady to an oak tree. In 1866, a small frame building was constructed. That was replaced by the current sandstone chapel with its stained glass windows, which was dedicated in 1870.

Prayers for Mary's intercession have led to various reports of cures and healings. In fact, a novena to Our Lady of Monte Cassino is credited for saving the town from a smallpox epidemic in 1871. However, the shrine is best known as a quiet, peaceful place for prayer and reflection.

Today, pilgrims continue to visit the shrine regularly. On the Sundays in May and October, the shrine is the site of a popular rosary pilgrimage.

## Restoring the Shrine

Weather and time have taken a toll on Monte Cassino Shrine. Recently, a generous benefactor stepped forward to lead the effort to stabilize the original sandstone structure, beautify the grounds, and make needed repairs and improvements.

The project will be conducted in several phases. This summer, work began to reinforce and stabilize the building and tuck point the exterior. Because the chapel is not air conditioned or ventilated, a heating, ventilation and air conditioning system is planned. This will enhance the comfort of visitors and keep the painted walls, woodwork and artwork from deteriorating.

The new landscaping will include the addition of a prayer garden and a sandstone front patio with benches, which will be especially convenient for the rosary pilgrimages.

## Join the Project

You're invited to join the project to restore this Marian shrine by making a gift or reserving a brick paver that will be installed near the prayer garden at Monte Cassino Shrine.

An inscribed brick paver can honor a loved one or commemorate a special occasion, such as a birthday or anniversary.

Each 4" by 8" brick paver can be reserved with a gift of \$200. The paver has three lines for the inscription, with up to 16 characters per line, including spaces and punctuation. Messages are subject to approval by Saint Meinrad.

To learn more about the Monte Cassino Shrine Project, make a gift or reserve a brick paver, visit our website: [www.saintmeinrad.org/shrine](http://www.saintmeinrad.org/shrine). ✚

## Monks' Personals

**Fr. Brendan Moss** completed a Master of Arts in religious education from Felician University in New Jersey on May 14. He also completed his first year as president-rector at Conception Seminary College in Conception, MO.

**Br. James Jensen** has been appointed as assistant sacristan and as a member of the Abbey Press Advisory Board.

**Br. William Sprauer** has been appointed coordinator of vocations media for the Office of Monastery Vocations.

**Fr. Anthony Vinson** attended the 60th Biennial Convention of the Delta Chi Fraternity in Louisville, KY, on July 27-31, where he presented a session on "Fraternal Correction: Leading with the Basic Expectations as a Guide" and had the distinction of serving as the convention sergeant-at-arms.

**Fr. Tobias Colgan** and **Br. Zachary Wilberding** have been elected to serve two-year terms on the Abbot's Council. **Fr. Denis Robinson** and **Fr. Christian Raab** were elected to serve one-year terms.

**Fr. Tobias Colgan, Fr. Louis Hacker, Fr. Adrian Burke, Br. Zachary Wilberding** and **Br. William Sprauer** have become members of the Task Force on the Customary Committee. **Fr. Prior John McMullen** joined the committee as an auditor.

**Archabbot Kurt Stasiak** traveled to Rome for the quadrennial Congress of Abbots in September. Pope Francis spoke to the Congress on September 8 and a new abbot primate, Abbot Gregory Polan of Conception Abbey, was elected. ✚

## [Meet the Student]

# Deacon Ryan McCandless

**Diocese:** Diocese of Salina

**Hometown:** Wichita, KS

**Q.** *What attracted you to priesthood?*

Being raised in a Catholic home and seeing my parents model a joyful, fruitful and mercy-filled marriage, I really wanted the same thing for myself. My attempts at pursuing marriage in different relationships would culminate, not in failure, but in an ever-greater pursuit of how God really wanted me to live my life.

Priesthood became attractive to me when I was given the opportunity to come into a deeper understanding of Christ and the gift of Himself in the Eucharist during Mass. God allowed me to see, through his merciful love, that I am called to leadership and sacrifice, and that I can have a life that is filled with joy and many fruits by being a priest.

**Q.** *Who or what influenced you to begin study for the priesthood?*

When I look back and think of who influenced me to begin my studies for the priesthood, I always point to Fr. Keith Weber. He was the chaplain at St. Isidore's Catholic Campus Center at Kansas State University, where I attended college. What he did was walk with me so that I could have a clearer idea of God's vision for me.

It was Fr. Keith I went to after experiencing a profound realization during the service on Good Friday of 2009. As the priest lay prostrate on the ground before the cross, I began to ponder the fact that, had I gone to seminary after high school, I would have been that priest

lying on the ground. It was through quiet prayer and reflection, even before that moment, that I believe paved the way for me to see and hear God speak to my heart in such a profound manner.

**Q.** *What were you doing before you came to the seminary?*

Before seminary, I attended Kansas State University and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in drawing. During that time, I was also working for a local grocery store. After graduation, I had moved up into a position of leadership with that company. When I left there in 2010, I was working on completing my 12th year with the company.

**Q.** *Favorite saint and why?*

Over the years, there have been saints who have piqued my interest at particular times, but my favorite saint is St. Maria Goretti. I believe that this little saint made me her project. It was through her intercession that a couple I had never met before prayed for me and the surety of my priesthood. Exactly a year later, she nudged me during a retreat, which prompted me to learn more about her. She is called the Saint of Mercy for forgiving the man who took her life.

**Q.** *Favorite Scripture verse and why?*

Though there are many translations out there, the breviary offers this line from Psalm 100:4: "Go within his gates, giving thanks." It's a great reminder that God is shepherding us daily and He will lead us into the safety of his gates. Each Mass that



I go to is an entering within those gates and an offering of my gratitude for God's wonderful gifts.

**Q.** *Hobbies?*

My typical list includes painting, drawing, singing and listening to music. I also like to keep up with Royals baseball and Kansas State University football. I used to do a lot of collecting of things like baseball cards, Star Wars action figures, baseball hats, amid other stuff, but since coming to the seminary, I've been collecting mostly books from classes.

**Q.** *What aspect of seminary life has been most rewarding?*

The aspects of seminary life that are rewarding are those ones where I've come to know myself better through the different people I meet. There are so many different opportunities within seminary to learn so much about the faith, but it's seeing it lived out in my peers, those at my ministry sites and the formation staff. To tap into their knowledge and conviction of their life with God has been an invaluable gift that is very unique to seminary living.

**Q.** *What aspect of seminary life has been most challenging?*

The challenging aspect of seminary life is the growing pains of a sinner who doesn't

always feel like moving and progressing beyond the comfort of the old ways of living. Persevering and being motivated is something that comes from within. It's in prayer that one finds this out. Even knowing this, it is still difficult to get moving toward prayer. It's a daily commitment, and the grind is worth it when you have people and God behind you.

**Q.** *Best advice you've heard in seminary?*

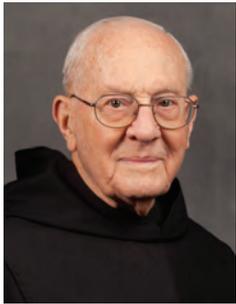
Study, but not just the books all the time. Sometimes it is tempting to get stuck in

my room and just study everything to a "T." This can get in the way of some really good education that can happen with fraternity. I've learned more about St. Thomas Aquinas from my brother seminarians over a beer than from stuffing my nose in the *Summa* all night long.

**Q.** *Other comments?*

When I came to Saint Meinrad, it opened up a new chapter in my life of transitions from place to place. Although I am looking forward to transitioning into the priestly life in my diocese, I know that I will deeply miss this place. ✚

## Fr. Cletus Miller, OSB, dies at the age of 98



*Fr. Cletus Miller, OSB*

Fr. Cletus Miller, OSB, monk and priest of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, died on August 25, 2016, in the monastery infirmary.

He was 98 and a jubilarian of both profession and ordination.

Surviving are nieces.

Born in Evansville, IN, on August 17, 1918, he was given the name Elmer Matthew at his baptism. He attended grade school at St. Benedict's Parish School and entered the minor seminary at Saint Meinrad in 1933.

Fr. Cletus was invested as a novice of Saint Meinrad on August 6, 1938, professed his simple vows on August 7, 1939, and his solemn vows on February 4, 1943. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 30, 1944.

In February 1945, Fr. Cletus began his first assignment in the missions, serving as prefect at Immaculate Conception Mission in Stephan, SD. He moved on to St. Michael Mission in St. Michael, ND, for five years before becoming, in 1950, a founding member of the Blue Cloud

monastery at Marvin, SD. In 1953, Fr. Cletus began a 10-year assignment at St. Paul Mission in Marty, SD, where he worked as prefect and a field missionary.

In 1963, Fr. Cletus returned to Blue Cloud Abbey, where over the next five years he served as brother instructor, vestiarius, house prefect, guest master and assistant infirmarian.

In 1968, he returned to St. Paul Mission in Marty as shop supervisor, before returning to Blue Cloud a short time later and resuming his duties there as guest master. In 1971, he was appointed the superior at Stephan and remained there six years.

In 1981, Fr. Cletus accepted an assignment to Blue Cloud's Resurrection Priory in Guatemala, where he served for 28 years. He was chaplain for the cloistered Carmelite nuns in Coban, helped with parochial work, was a confessor for many of the clergy in the Coban area, and served as treasurer for the community.

In November 2012, Fr. Cletus returned to Saint Meinrad after Blue Cloud Abbey closed.

The funeral Mass was held August 29, with burial in the Archabbey Cemetery. ✚

## EVENTS ON THE HILL

**October 29**

*Abbot Martin Marty Guild Day of Recollection*

**November 4-6**

*Guest House Retreat: "Mysterious Meister Eckhart" by Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB*

**November 8-10**

*Guest House Retreat: "The End-Purpose of Creation and Our Role in its History according to St. Paul" by Fr. Colman Grabert, OSB*

**November 11-13**

*Guest House Retreat: "The Francis Effect: A Study of Two Characters" by Fr. Noël Mueller, OSB*

**November 18-20**

*Guest House Retreat: "Living a Blessed Life" by Br. Zachary Wilberding, OSB*

**December 16-18**

*Guest House Retreat: "Spiritual Themes in the Gospel of Luke" by Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB*

**February 7**

*Black History Lecture, speaker to be announced*

**February 10-12**

*Guest House Retreat: "Almost Paradise" by Fr. Noël Mueller, OSB.*

**March 9-12**

*Guest House Retreat: "Praying the Psalms in the Office" by Fr. Jeremy King, OSB*

**March 17-19**

*Guest House Retreat: "Contemplative Living" by Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB*

**March 24-26**

*Guest House Retreat: "I am with You Always, Even to the End of the World: The Sacraments of the Church" by Fr. Vincent Tobin, OSB*

For more information, call (812) 357-6611 or visit our website [www.saintmeinrad.org](http://www.saintmeinrad.org)

# Fall classes begin

## Family ties in the seminary



▲ *New seminarian, Nick Koepfel, receives help moving in on August 19. Nick's cousin Deacon Joseph Stoverink, not pictured, is studying at Saint Meinrad also.*

The halls of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology are full again with students as the fall semester gets under way. Last year, the monastery took over some of the school's spaces during their renovation, but with the work complete, the monks have moved back into the monastery.

"It's good to have everybody together again in one building," says Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, president-rector of the Seminary and School of Theology.

The fall semester opened with 123 seminarians. Thirty-six of those seminarians are new to Saint Meinrad. Fr. Denis explains the school's maximum capacity is 130. Last fall's enrollment came in at 119 seminarians.

This year, students represent 27 dioceses and 11 religious communities. There are 17 monks enrolled in the seminary.

Last year, there were 14 religious order students from seven communities. Fr. Denis explains that the jump in number is associated with an increase in monastic vocations. Saint Meinrad will be

developing a program this year specifically for monastic seminarians.

The seminary community represents 16 countries of origin, with 36 students being born in countries outside the U.S. and one student who is a first-generation American on at least one side of his family.

The Graduate Theology Program is beginning the fall semester with six full-time students, 52 part-time and eight non-degree. There are a total of 66 Graduate Theology students enrolled, compared to 82 who were enrolled last fall.

In the Permanent Deacon Program, there are 123 deacon candidates enrolled this fall from 10 dioceses. Last year, there were 185 candidates representing 12 dioceses.

One trend Fr. Denis has noticed in seminary enrollment is the degree of differences in the demographics of seminarians. There are young men coming from college seminary in their early 20s, the pre-theologians or philosophy graduates who tend to be a little older and the older candidates who are pursuing the priesthood as a second career.

"There are a lot of folks from different worlds, different backgrounds coming together in this one place," says Fr. Denis. "I think it makes for a very lively and healthy community. To have this mixture of folks who live, work and pray together in this environment is a great blessing."

One unique element of this year's seminary community is that there are six seminarians with family ties. There are two sets of brothers and a set of cousins studying for the priesthood. Deacon Joseph Stoverink and Nick Koepfel are studying for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. They are first cousins who credit their strong Catholic faith in part to their grandma.

"She and our grandfather really instilled the faith well in their children," says Joseph. "My father has always been an example of faith to me and I know he learned it in his childhood."

Joseph's father is also a student of Saint Meinrad, studying to be a deacon in the Permanent Deacon Program.

Joseph is in his last year of seminary at Saint Meinrad and Nick is entering first theology this fall. Although they will likely spend only one year together at Saint Meinrad, they say it's nice to have a brother seminarian with that extra connection, that family bond.

"We come from a similar culture, so we can understand each other in that way," explains Joseph. "When I'm home, I know Nick is there and he can relate to what I'm experiencing in seminary. And it's someone I can pray evening prayer with."

Brothers Connor and Peyton Plessala agree that having a family member at Saint Meinrad helps with living the seminary life when away from the Hill.

"There's always that sense of accountability," says Connor. "And the idea that you're never alone. We're together in this. We're mutually supporting each other. We're in the trenches together, shoulder to shoulder."

Connor and Peyton are new to Saint Meinrad this year, studying for the Archdiocese of Mobile and entering first theology.

Peyton plays the role of older brother by one year, but Connor entered seminary first. They say there was sort of a role reversal that took place because Peyton grew up experiencing things first. Connor had two years of seminary experience before Peyton entered.

“I had to play the little brother in a sense,” says Peyton.

“I was able to help Peyton in a way he’s always been able to help me,” explains Connor.

This year, they are entering the same class in a new place together and feel like they are on the same level.

The brothers come from a close family that ate dinner together every night, went to Catholic school and attended Mass every Sunday. They say their parents never talked to them about the priesthood as a vocation. They just encouraged them to do what makes them happy and be good moral people.

“They raised us to be good people and the Holy Spirit took care of the rest,” says Peyton.

Joe and Patrick Friend are brothers studying for the Archdiocese of Little Rock. Joe is new to Saint Meinrad this



▲ Brothers Connor, from left, and Peyton Plessala and Patrick and Joe Friend gather in the UnStable for the pizza cook-off in September.

year, entering first theology, and Patrick is in third theology.

“The only thing better than having one Friend is having two Friends,” jokes Fr. Denis about the brothers.

They have a similar situation as the Plessala brothers, where Patrick is five years older than Joe, but Joe entered seminary first.

“I am one of the few older brothers who can truly say that his younger brother is his hero,” says Patrick.

The brothers have a strong relationship, but Joe says going through priesthood formation together has closed the five-year age gap some.

“Every year we grow closer,” says Joe. “Seminary pries you open, makes you deal with your flaws and accept your gifts. Growing as our own persons individually helps us develop a close relationship because we are healthier, we know ourselves better and we’re able to put ourselves out there in a more intimate way.”

“Not only do we have that common link of being family, but also a love for Christ, a Christian life and the priesthood,” continues Patrick. “Our relationship feels like it’s so much more interjected with the love of Christ.” ✝



▲ Dan Kolb, director of the Archabbey Library, gives new seminarians a tour of the rare book room during spirituality week in August.

A promotional graphic for a podcast or video series. The top half features the title 'ECHOES FROM THE BELL TOWER' in white and red text on a dark background. To the right of the text is a stylized white silhouette of a church with two bell towers. Below the title, the name 'Saint Meinrad' is written in a white script font. The bottom half of the graphic has a black background with the text 'NEW EPISODE AIRING IN DECEMBER' in large, bold, white and red letters. At the very bottom, the website address 'www.saintmeinrad.edu/echoes' is written in white.

# Members join Saint Meinrad Board of Overseers

The Board of Overseers welcomes four new members, along with three returning members and an emeritus member, to the advisory board for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

The board advises President-Rector Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, on matters related to the school's programs and performance and addresses strategic questions related to the future of the school. Each member serves a three-year term.

The new members are Fr. Anthony Chandler, Fr. Christopher House, Jacob Kraft and Fr. Andrew Syberg.

Returning members are Sister Jane Becker, OSB, Judge Cecile Blau and Bonnie Graham; the emeritus member is J. Robert Shine.



*Fr. Anthony Chandler*

**Fr. Anthony Chandler** is pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in LaGrange, KY. He graduated from Saint Meinrad College and earned a baccalaureate in sacred theology

from The Catholic University of America in 1989 and a master's in business administration from the University of Maryland in 1993.

He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Louisville in 1989. In addition to serving in parishes, he was vice-chancellor at the Archdiocese for Military Services USA in Washington, D.C., parochial vicar at St. Martha Church and chaplain at St. Xavier High School, both in Louisville.

He is the defender of the bond for the Louisville Metropolitan Tribunal and a member of the Priest Pastoral Council, the Priest Compensation Committee, the Archdiocesan Planning Commission, the Catholic Schools Athletics Board and the Archdiocesan Newspaper Editorial Board.



*Fr. Christopher House*

**Fr. Christopher House** was ordained a priest in 2002 for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. He serves as chancellor of the diocese and pastor of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

He is also the director of the Department for Canonical and Pastoral Services, director of the Office for the Diaconate, judge for the Diocesan Tribunal, and section prior for the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

He graduated from Saint Meinrad College in 1998. He received his Master of Divinity degree in 2002 and a licentiate of sacred theology in 2003 from the University of Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary. He earned a licentiate in canon law from The Catholic University of America in 2015.



*Jacob Kraft*

**Jacob Kraft** is a monument salesman and funeral consultant at Generations Monuments and Memorials in New Albany, IN. He is a former college intern in Saint Meinrad's "One Bread, One

Cup" summer liturgical leadership program.

He graduated from Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville, IN, in 2010. He then earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Marian University in 2014.

Jacob and his wife, Katie, are the parents of one daughter. They are members of Holy Family Parish, where Jacob has

served as a lector, Eucharistic minister and as chairman of the Stewardship Committee.



*Fr. Andrew Syberg*

**Fr. Andrew Syberg** was ordained a priest in 2015 for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He currently serves as associate pastor at St. Bartholomew Catholic Church in Columbus.

He graduated from Roncalli High School in Indianapolis in 2001. In 2007, he received his bachelor's degree from Purdue University.

He earned a Master of Arts degree in 2010 and a Master of Divinity in 2015, both from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.



*Sr. Jane Becker, OSB*

**Sr. Jane Becker, OSB**, is the subprioress of Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, IN. She professed her perpetual vows in August 1971. She is a clinical psychologist and

an adjunct staff member of Saint Luke Center, Louisville, KY.

She is a former instructor in psychology at Saint Meinrad College. She also worked at Saint Meinrad School of Theology as associate dean of students and staff psychologist. For three years, she served as director of the schools' Student Counseling Services.

She earned her bachelor's degree from Ursuline College in 1968. In 1971 and 1974, respectively, she earned a Master of Science and PhD from St. Louis University.

She previously served on the Board of Overseers from 2004-2010.



*Judge Cecile Blau*

**Judge Cecile Blau** retired in 2009 from her second six-year term as judge of Clark Superior Court II in Jeffersonville, IN. She now serves as a senior judge.

She earned a degree in education from Northern Illinois University in 1966, a master's degree in physical education from Indiana University in 1969, and a doctor of jurisprudence from the University of Louisville in 1975. She practiced law with Stites and Harbison before taking the bench in Clark County in 1997.

She has been active in a number of community and civic organizations. She has three children and seven grandchildren and is a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Jeffersonville. She previously served on the Board of Overseers for 12 years.



*Bonnie Graham*

**Bonnie Graham** and her husband Beeb (Robert C. Graham III) reside in Washington, IN. They are members of Our Lady of Hope Parish, where Bonnie serves as a lay reader and

Eucharistic minister.

She earned a bachelor's degree from Newton College in Newton, MA, and dedicates her time to volunteer work. Her charitable activities include past chair of the Saint Meinrad Campaign Cabinet, chair of the Development Committee for the Catholic Education Endowment Board (Washington, IN), member of the Diocese of Evansville Review Board, and member of a special fund raising committee for the Washington (IN) Catholic Schools.

She has four children and seven grandchildren. She previously served on the Board of Overseers for 18 years.



*J. Robert Shine*

**J. Robert Shine** is a Certified Public Accountant and chairman of Monroe Shine and Co. Inc. in New Albany, IN. He is a member and past president of the Indiana CPA

Society and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

He is a senior counselor of the Dean's Advisory Council of the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University. He serves on the Abbey Press Board of Advisors and the Endowment Committee and Audit Committee of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. He is on the Board of Advisors of Providence Retirement Home and involved with the New Albany Rotary Club.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana University. In 1985, he received the Distinguished Entrepreneur Award from the Indiana University School of Business. Indiana University has honored him as a Distinguished Alumnus and with an honorary Doctor of Law degree. He received the Chancellor's Medallion from Indiana University Southeast in 1995.

He joined the Board of Overseers in 1995 and served 18 years. ✝

## Abbey Caskets to host Longest Night prayer service

Abbey Caskets, a work of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, will host a Service of the Longest Night on Saturday, December 17, at 6 p.m. Central Time in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guest House Chapel.

Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB, will lead prayer and Scripture that acknowledges those who mourn or struggle with loss during the holiday season. Everyone is welcome. Light refreshments will follow.

RSVP requested, but not required, for planning purposes. Email [jkeller@abbeycaskets.com](mailto:jkeller@abbeycaskets.com) or call (800) 987-7380. ✝

 **Like us on Facebook**



▲ *Members of the Saint Meinrad Board of Overseers who completed their terms this summer are, from left, Charlie Gardner, Mary Schaffner, Sr. Jane Will, OSB, and Fr. Bill Fichteman.*

# Alumni Reunion 2016



*Photos, beginning at top left: Kyle Kramer gives a conference on the papal encyclical Laudato Si on Tuesday afternoon.*

*Fr. Nick Rice receives the Distinguished Alumnus Award on Tuesday of the reunion.*

*Fr. Bob Groher, left, and Fr. Jerry O'Shea, right, talk with Fr. Phil Przybyla before Fr. Denis Robinson's Day of Recollection on Monday.*

*Deacon Greg Clodi prays during the reunion Mass.*

*Janet Werne, associate director of alumni relations, checks in reunion guests on Monday.*

# Alumni Reunion 2016



*Photos, beginning at top left: 293 guests attended the Alumni Reunion this year.*

*Gregory Ernstberger and Duane Schaefer high-fived during the reunion golf tournament at Christmas Lake Golf Course.*

*Sherry Weddell gives a conference on Forming Intentional Disciples during Tuesday of the reunion.*

*Ken Miller, center, listens to Fr. Denis Robinson's Day of Recollection on Monday.*

Mark your calendar: the 2017 Alumni Reunion is scheduled for July 30-August 2.

## ALUMNI ETERNAL

**Fr. John J. Butler O'54 ('50-54)**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, died on June 7, 2016.

**Mr. Justin M. Darr O'81 ('73-75)**, of Sanford, NC, died on January 1, 2016.

**Mr. Anthony V. Funari O'63 ('52-57)**, of Los Angeles, CA, died on June 16, 2016.

**Mr. Henry L. "Hank" Govert O'61 ('55-56)**, of Olympia, WA, and Lake County, IN, died on July 20, 2016.

**Fr. Albert J. Hartlage Jr. O'56 ('52-56)**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, died on June 6, 2016.

**Mr. Robert A. Hirsch O'52 ('41-43)**, of Evansville, IN, died on July 4, 2016.

**Mr. A. Thomas Kurker O'66 ('54-56)**, of Westfield, IN, died on July 17, 2016.

**Mr. Raymond (Larry) Nilles O'65 ('54-58)**, of Sandwich, IL, died on May 31, 2016.

**Mr. Earl O'Connor O'55 ('44-45)**, of Indianapolis, IN, died on May 26, 2016.

**Fr. H. Anthony "Tony" Olges O'70 ('64-70); '00**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, died on July 2, 2016.

**Mr. Thomas M. O'Malley O'69 ('57-59)**, of Chicago, IL, died on August 18, 2016. ✚

**Deacon Raoul Ouellette PD'08 ('04-08)**, of Lexington, KY, died on March 14, 2016.

**Mr. Anthony Puntarelli O'52 ('41-43)**, of Greenwood, IN, died on July 30, 2016.

**Fr. Patric Riley O'81 ('73-81)**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS, died on June 12, 2016.

**Mr. Ralph J. Schepers SPH ('53-55)**, of Long Beach, CA, died on May 19, 2016.

**Fr. Daniel P. Smith T'99 ('93-99)**, a priest of the Diocese of Venice, FL, died on June 20, 2016.

**Mr. Gary L. Smith O'74 ('62-67)**, of Louisville, KY, died on January 24, 2005.

**Mr. Robert Vonnahmen O'56 ('53-56)**, of Swansea, IL, died on May 8, 2016.

**Mr. C. Roger Williams O'54 ('50-52)**, of Louisville, KY, died on November 22, 2003.

**Mr. Gary Ziegler MTS '08 ('05-08)**, of Freetown, IN, died on August 19, 2016.

✚ - Member of The Einsiedeln Society

**A key to the initials behind the names of alumni:**

**C:** College

**GTP:** Graduate Theology Programs

**HS:** High School

**MAT:** Master of Arts (Theology)

**MAPT:** Master of Arts (Pastoral Theology)

**MTS:** Master in Theological Studies

**O:** Ordination

**PD:** Permanent Deacon Formation Program

**S:** Sabbaticant

**SPH:** St. Placid Hall

**SS:** Summer Session

**T:** Theology ✚

## Online Store

*Visit the Scholar Shop's online store*

<http://store.saintmeinrad.edu>

Shop our website for the latest books from Saint Meinrad authors, clothing and other items.

## Alumni Board slate approved

**Five alumni have been approved for a second term on the Saint Meinrad Alumni Association Board of Directors.**

**Fr. Joseph L. Ziliak, O'62 ('50-58)**, a retired priest of the Diocese of Evansville, IN; **Dr. Lanny K. Hollis, C'80 ('76-80) and T'86 ('82-86)**, an educator within the Diocese of Cleveland, OH, for the past 25-plus years; **Fr. Michael Williams T'97 ('90-97, '01)**, chaplain at the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Campus Center at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green; **Betsy Dunman, MTS'01 ('94-01)**, the director of lifelong formation at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Louisville, KY; and **Fr. Alan Carter, T'13 ('07-13)**, vocations director for the Diocese of Lexington and pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Danville, KY. ✚

## Save the Date!

**October 19, 2016**

Jasper and Lincoln Hills Area Alumni & Friends Dinner

**October 25, 2016**

Toledo Alumni & Friends Dinner

**November 17, 2016**

Theology After Hours in Louisville, KY

**March 11, 2017**

Saint Meinrad Day of Service

**March 23, 2017**

Pittsburgh Alumni & Friends Dinner

**July 30-August 2, 2017**

89<sup>th</sup> Annual Alumni Reunion

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Fr. Romain Botta, OSB, T'12 ('07-12)** was elected abbot of Monastere de l'Incarnation, Togo, West Africa, on August 10. The monastery has become an abbey and will be known as Abbey de l'Incarnation d'Agbang.

**Fr. Mark G. Boyer O'76 ('72-76)**, of Springfield, MO, has published three new books in 2016. They are: *An Abecedarian of Animal Spirit Guides: Spiritual Growth through Reflections on Creatures*, *Overcome with Paschal Joy: Chanting through Lent and Easter – Daily Reflections with Familiar Hymns*, and *Taking Leave of Your Home: Moving in the Peace of Christ*.

**Fr. Jerry Byrd T'12 ('06-12)** and **Fr. Aaron Jenkins T'08 ('03-08)** were featured in an article in the diocesan newspaper *The Criterion* for their use of art in their ministry. Both designed paschal candles for their parishes, and Fr. Byrd has designed and sewn vestments for himself and others. He leads St. Mary Parish in North Vernon, IN, and St. Ann and St. Joseph Parishes in Jennings County. Fr. Jenkins is pastor of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield, IN.

**Mr. Dan Conway O'75 ('67-75)**, of Louisville, KY, has written his third novel about Msgr. Salvatore E. Turiddu, *Father Turiddu and the Polar Vortex*.

**Fr. James Finder SS'90 ('87-89; '91)** is pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in Argyle, MO, and will celebrate his 25th anniversary of ordination on October 12.

**Mr. Scott M. Fitzgerald MA'04 ('02-04)** was appointed director of music and formation renewal ministries at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Waukee, IA.

**Fr. Adam Mauman T'10 ('05; '09-10)**, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Peru, IN, was featured in an article in the diocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Moment*, about his work with calligraphy and its connection to prayer.

**Br. Dustin Hungerford, OCarm, MA'14 ('11-13)**, of Louisville, KY, joined the Chicago Province Carmelites on June 9, 2016.

**Sr. Mary Beth Klingel, SP, S ('05-06)**, of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN, was elected to the general council of the Sisters of Providence. She was installed on September 10, 2016.

**Fr. J. Ronald Knott O'70 ('64-70)**, of Louisville, KY, has published a Vietnamese translation of his book, *The Spiritual Leadership of a Parish Priest*:

*On Being Good and Good at It*. It had previously been translated into Spanish.

**Mrs. Angela M.S. Peach MTS'11 ('06-10)** and her husband are the parents of a son, John Thomas, born March 31, 2016. She serves as director of children's religious education, adult spiritual/faith formation and RCIA at St. Edward Parish in Nashville, TN.

**Mr. Pitt G. Thome**, of Rockville, MD, has written a book about his uncle, *Journey of a Country Soul: The Life and Ministry of Monsignor Felix N. Pitt O'20 ('11-15)*. The monsignor (1894-1971) was a 1915 graduate of Saint Meinrad College who eventually became Kentucky's preeminent Catholic educator in the 20th century.

**Mr. Paul Stokell C'95 ('92-95; '99; '02-03)** attended the Divine Renovation conference on parish revitalization in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in June. He is director of adult faith formation and Christian initiation at St. John Neumann Parish in Sunbury, OH, and an adjunct theology faculty member at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus. He lives in Galena with his wife Kim and three children. ✚

## Alumni Annual Giving Program funds school operations

The Alumni Annual Giving Program is under way for 2016-17. Saint Meinrad is again relying on the generosity of its alumni to provide support for the Seminary and School of Theology's unrestricted annual fund.

"The generosity of our alumni is one of our greatest blessings," says Duane Schaefer, director of development. "And they can be proud of the work they help make possible.

"Like all educational institutions, Saint Meinrad depends on its alumni to help fund its ongoing programs."

Through annual gifts, alumni make possible classroom instruction, spiritual formation, ministry opportunities, upkeep of buildings and grounds, guest lectures and many other day-to-day operations.

Alumni whose gifts qualify will receive this year's premium, a burgundy and white duffel bag imprinted with the Saint Meinrad Alumni logo. The bag has a zippered main compartment, along with a full-front slip pocket and a water bottle pocket.



Alumni can qualify for the duffel bag by making a gift of \$200 or more or by making a first-time gift of \$100 or more. ✚



*Saint Meinrad*

200 Hill Drive  
St. Meinrad, IN 47577

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit #3  
St. Meinrad, IN

**Return Service Requested**

## Projects needed for Saint Meinrad Day of Service



▲ *Saint Meinrad Day of Service participants peel potatoes at the St. Vincent de Paul Open Hand Kitchen in Louisville, KY.*

Plans are under way for the fourth annual Saint Meinrad Day of Service to be held Saturday, March 11, 2017. The event, organized by the Alumni Office in partnership with the Alumni Association Board of Directors, is open to all alumni and friends of Saint Meinrad.

“For over 50 years, Saint Meinrad students have volunteered in various capacities through the Cooperative Action for Community Development (CACD) program. The Saint Meinrad Day of Service is an opportunity for our alumni and friends to continue this tradition of service – a chance to pray together, socialize together, and encourage one another in order to strengthen their local communities,” says Christian Mocek, director of alumni

relations. “We are now looking for volunteers who are willing to organize a project in their city.”

Currently, six locations are confirmed for next year: Evansville, IN; Saint Meinrad, IN; Indianapolis, IN; New Albany, IN; Louisville, KY; and Kankakee, IL. And several more site leaders are making plans for their cities.

“I’d like to see 15 projects on March 11,” says Mocek. Last year was the largest Saint Meinrad Day of Service with 121 alumni and friends taking part in nine locations across the country. In total, volunteers worked over 700 hours in service to their local communities at soup kitchens, food banks, public parks, community centers and local neighborhoods.

The Alumni Office has developed a toolkit to help site coordinators plan a project in their area. It includes a planning timeline, a step-by-step description of the duties of a site coordinator, frequently asked questions and other useful information. The toolkit is available on the alumni website: <http://alumni.saintmeinrad.edu/dayofservice>.

Mocek suggests talking to local classmates and friends to solicit ideas for a local non-profit or church that might be a good site for a Saint Meinrad Day of Service project. “Site coordinators have found that connecting with organizations where an alumnus is actively involved as a staff member or volunteer to be very helpful. Also, don’t hesitate to reach out to former site coordinators for advice when planning a project.”

The Alumni Office is accepting new projects until December. Volunteer registration for the Day of Service will open January 1, 2017, on the alumni website.

To learn more about the Day of Service or how to organize a project for March 11, 2017, email Christian Mocek at [cmocek@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:cmocek@saintmeinrad.edu) or call (812) 357-6501. You can also find details on the webpage: <http://alumni.saintmeinrad.edu/dayofservice>. ✚