

Winter 2018

# MOUNT *Angel Letter*



*The wood of the cross has  
brought joy to the world.*

(Good Friday Antiphon)



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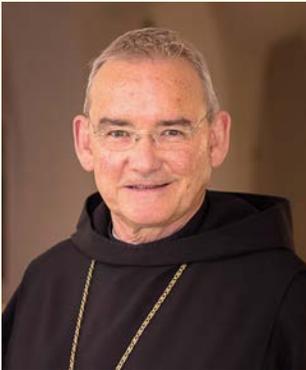
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Editor: Theresa Myers

## Dear Friends



Just a few days ago we began the season of Lent by receiving ashes on our foreheads and being encouraged to: “Repent, and believe in the Gospel.”

For Catholics, Lent is a time of penance and fasting. It’s a time to make a conscious effort to help our neighbors in need and to repent of our bad habits. For us monks, our Holy Father St. Benedict says: “The life of a monk ought to be a continuous Lent.”

St. Benedict recognizes, though, that most of us don’t have the strength and discipline to live every day as if it were Lent. So he advises us to “add to the usual measure of our service something by way of private prayer and abstinence from food or drink so that each of us will have something above the assigned measure to offer God of his own will with the joy of the Holy Spirit.”

In this issue of Mount Angel Letter, we want to share with you some of the ways we monks carry out this advice. One of the most beautiful and humbling customs for us is the practice of *Bona Opera* (“Good Works”). According to the direction of St. Benedict, each monk presents to the Abbot the good works he intends to do as penance during Lent. In the story on pages 5 to 7, several of the monks share their reflections about penance in the monastery.

Here at Mount Angel, we enter into the story of Christ’s passion and death in a particularly meaningful way when we venerate the Cross on Good Friday. Among our relics at the Abbey, we are blessed to have what is believed to be a fragment of the true cross. This is kept within a small case set into a large wooden reliquary shaped in the form of a cross (shown on the cover). During the Good Friday liturgy, it is a special moment when we proclaim: “Behold the wood of the cross!” In solemn procession, we approach and venerate that holy relic.

Your penance may well look different from that of the monks. One thing we all can do is to share our intention with some trusted friend or family member, asking for help to stick with it. Remember, while we practice penance and devote more time to silence and prayer, we don’t go around with gloomy faces and pretend that we don’t know that Jesus is risen from the dead. Not at all! We recognize that through sharing in the passion and death of our Savior, we may more fully and joyfully share in his Resurrection.

Lent is in fact preparation for Easter. St. Benedict says as much in the chapter of the Holy Rule where he speaks of Lent. He says our Lenten practices “help us to look forward to Holy Easter with joy and spiritual longing.”

God bless you,

+ Jeremy Driscoll, OSB

The Right Reverend Jeremy Driscoll, O.S.B.  
Abbot and Chancellor  
Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary

# Monks' Corner



## SWISS ABBOT VISITS MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY

The monks of Mount Angel Abbey had the pleasure of hosting Abbot Christian Meyer, the 59th Abbot of Engelberg, Switzerland, for a few days last September. The mother Abbey of Mount Angel, Engelberg sent Fathers Adelhelm Odermatt and Nicholas Frei in 1882 to found a new monastery in Oregon.

It was the first visit of an abbot from Engelberg in many decades and the community and Abbot Christian made the most of it. The evening of his arrival happened to be the height of Oktoberfest in the neighboring town of Mt. Angel. Both Abbot Christian and Abbot Jeremy had dinner at the beer festival,

in the *Weingarten* hosted by the local Benedictine parish, St. Mary's. Following dinner the two abbots exchanged cheerful toasts with the hundreds of guests.

During his visit, Abbot Christian was welcomed by the entire hilltop community of monks, seminarians and staff, and was even accompanied by two seminarians, John Mosier and John Mueller, dressed as Swiss Guards. Two Pontifical Masses and other special liturgies were celebrated during his stay, as well as a large reception that featured Swiss-themed appetizers, libations, and entertainment by a group of Swiss musicians.



*The pectoral cross, worn by Abbot Jeremy in the photo at top (left), was a gift from the abbot of Engelberg to the first abbot of Mount Angel Abbey in 1904.*



*Br. Cyril Drnjevic, Fr. Ralph Recker, and Fr. John Paul Le enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation together in the monastery kitchenette.*



## Star Wars Carries On Tradition of Epic Tales

For fans of the epic cinematic series Star Wars, there is little need to explain that the story line is as old as mankind. It resonates deep in the viewer's psyche as it relates the struggle between the potential for good and evil present in each person. It's reminiscent of other great epic tales told throughout history. The comparison comes naturally to Br. Alcuin Walch, O.S.B., who works among the medieval manuscripts found in the Abbey's Aalto library. In a special exhibit that he is creating in the library's Rare Books room, visitors can see the fascinating juxtaposition between the wizened Yoda and the menacing Darth Vader of Star Wars and the battle between good and evil found in such classic works as Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Homer's *Odyssey*. The library is open to visitors Monday through Saturday; for information, see [www.mountangelabbey.org/abbey-library](http://www.mountangelabbey.org/abbey-library).

## COME AND SEE

The feast of St. Joseph, March 19, is especially beloved by the monks of Mount Angel Abbey. It has long been the annual date when new postulants arrive on the hilltop to begin discerning a vocation to the monastic life. For many, the feast marks the beginning of a life dedicated to seeking "the things that are above."

Throughout the year, the monks end each day with a prayer to St. Joseph for an increase in monastic vocations. The prayers are effective. Nearly half of the community's 55 members are young monks who arrived on the hilltop fewer than 10 years ago. This March, Fr. Odo Recker, the vocation director, expects to welcome at least four new postulants into the community.

Discernment begins well before a man first dons the habit. An inquirer may first send an email or text message to Fr. Odo. Next he may be invited to the Abbey for a discernment retreat. In 2018, three such retreats are scheduled: March 16-18; July 20-22; and November 16-18. The retreats are open to men 18 to 45 years old and are free of charge.

If you or a young man you know is interested in learning more about the monastic life at Mount Angel Abbey, please email Fr. Odo at [odo.recker@mtangel.edu](mailto:odo.recker@mtangel.edu) or visit the website at [www.mountangelabbey.org/vocations](http://www.mountangelabbey.org/vocations).



## RAISING THE BENEDICTINE BREWERY AND TAPROOM

Last fall, the monks of Mount Angel Abbey were joined by crews of professional timber framers and scores of seminarians and friends to assemble and “raise” the brewery’s timber frame.

The Benedictine Brewery and Taproom, situated on the south-facing hillside of the Abbey, is where the monks will brew the Abbey’s craft beer and sell and serve their wares to friends and visitors. The site faces fields of hops grown on Abbey land.

Benedictines dedicate their lives to a daily rhythm of work and prayer, which means every bottle of beer is brewed for the glory of God. Of course, the monks also hope each bottle will contribute to the Abbey’s long-term sustainability and will attract new friends to learn about Benedictine values and spirituality. Every aspect of the enterprise is shaped by the monks, from the beer recipes to the use of Abbey tree farm wood for the timber frame structure, signage, and furniture.

The Brewery and Taproom are scheduled to open in mid-2018. Cases of the Benedictine Brewery ales, Black Habit and Saint Benedict, are now available periodically in the Abbey’s Bookstore and Coffee Shop.



## GUESTHOUSE RENOVATION LAYS GROUNDWORK

The first phase of the Saint Benedict Guesthouse and Retreat Center renovation and expansion is now complete. Much of this preliminary phase is hidden infrastructure, but we are happy to have the new central utility building, re-routed gas, sewer and electrical lines with transformer, new fire hydrants and excavation complete for the building expansion. Any day now, we should begin to see the new Guesthouse addition rise with its turn-around and arrival lobby. Thanks be to God!

– Fr. Pius X Harding, Guest Master



*Visit the Abbey’s website at [www.mountangelabbey.org](http://www.mountangelabbey.org) and click on the Guesthouse Renovation link to follow construction progress.*



## LENT IN THE MONASTERY

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Every day of the year the monks of Mount Angel Abbey follow the Rule of St. Benedict. They observe silence much of the time. They eat simple meals. They wake up early in the morning and assemble for prayer five times throughout each day. They wear habits and submit in all things to the abbot, bound by the vow of obedience to the man who represents Christ to their community.

Yet, when asked how the season of Lent differs from the rest of the year, the monks respond with eagerness for a period of deeper discipline. According to Prior Vincent Trujillo, “Lent is a very solemn, austere time. It’s reflected in the schedule, in the food, in the liturgy, in our time together.”

During Lent, the monks forgo their usual hour of recreation after dinner on Wednesdays and Fridays, and meals are even more simple than usual. But the real “work” of Lent happens within each monk, with what St. Benedict calls the *Bona Opera*, or “good works.”

Each monk receives a slip of paper in his mailbox before Lent. On it, he writes the things he intends to do as a Lenten penance or good work. He also writes down what book he intends to read during Lent. He turns his paper in to the abbot who reviews and signs it. This is an ancient custom that dates back 1,500 years, to the Rule of St. Benedict, which says: “Whatever is undertaken [for Lent] without the permission of the spiritual father will be reckoned as presumption and vainglory, not deserving a reward. Therefore, everything must be done with the abbot’s approval.” (Rule 49:9-10)

This solemn exchange declares and confirms the monk’s intention to do some good work for Lent. For Subprior William Hammelman, a senior monk who spent many years working in the seminary, the *Bona Opera* unfolds in the larger context of the Lenten liturgy.

Every aspect of the liturgy during Lent is noticeably different, he observes. “The Psalms stay the same but the



antiphons are different. We hear, ‘I am your God, and you are my people’ over and over. The idea of covenant has always struck me as so strong. And so much of the Old Testament that we read during Lent is about calling the people back to God. Repent and return to God. This is the basic Benedictine vow of conversion. It never stops; it’s a constant throughout life.”

Lent is not just a time of personal conversion, Fr. William adds, but even more it’s a time to draw closer to community, to help build up the community, to live the monastic way of life better. During his years as a pastor, he witnessed his parishioners’ desire to do better and to draw closer to God. He said he likes to recommend that people keep Lent simple, practical and positive.

For example, Lent doesn’t have to be about giving things up. Sacrifice is vital, says Fr. William. But it’s more important to focus on doing positive things. Instead of giving up sugar, try to give a compliment to someone every day. Go and visit your grandmother in the nursing home each week. Or write a letter to someone you haven’t seen in awhile.

As we consider our Lenten *Bona Opera*, though, Fr. William reminds us that Lent is first and foremost a preparation for Easter. “Lent,” says Fr. William, “helps us



*Among the relics at the Abbey, there is what is believed to be a fragment of the true cross. It is kept in a small case set into a large wooden reliquary shaped in the form of a cross (shown here and on the cover). During the Good Friday liturgy, the monks approach and venerate that holy relic.*

to feel and know the presence of God more concretely. We celebrate the Resurrection and share in a new life with God, with our brothers and neighbors.”

With Lent to help guide their formation as junior monks, Fr. William’s younger brothers echo his clarity. Br. Timothy Kalange, one of the junior monks, says that it’s not always our choice what to give up or what to take on as a penance. Sometimes life chooses that for us, he says. “We get sick, or someone close to us dies. These difficult things happen and they aren’t things that we choose.” Lent is a way to deliberately, joyfully conform one’s life to Christ in both good times and more difficult times.

“In coming to the monastery,” says junior monk Br. Israel Sanchez, “the whole of our lives is centered on the death





to self and the rising with Christ. I recognize that what was previously done just in Lent is now my whole life. St. Benedict tells us that the life of a monk at all times and seasons should be the observance of Lent.”

“People look at the monks as [living] a hidden life and want to know what we do,” says Br. Israel. “But there is also a hiddenness among the monks ourselves. There is a beautiful, active, lively life in God that each monk has that is sort of hidden from the rest of the brothers. Hidden from the men he lives with, that he works with,

that he eats and prays with. So the Lenten season is a time of turning into that hiddenness. The expectation is that, even while the monk is doing the exterior practices, that secret, hidden life in God is also being cultivated.”

Br. Bede Ramos, a junior monk, views Easter “as a big hope, the culmination of what I’ve done during Lent. But you must live Resurrection all throughout life, not just one day of the year.”

Br. Timothy agrees. “Lent reminds us,” he says, “that Jesus is going to return at the end of time and bring us to him. He can rise in our hearts.”

– Theresa Myers

## A Family *Bona Opera*

To create a family *Bona Opera*, invite each person to write down one positive behavior to do during Lent. Some ideas include:

- Decide on a time each week when the family will sit down and read together. Hint: turn off devices with social media during this time!
- Keep a gratitude journal. Before dinner or at bedtime, have each person write one thing they are grateful for that day.
- Designate five minutes each day that your family will spend together in prayer. Use a simple book of prayers or read short passages from Scripture if it’s helpful. If your parish has Stations of the Cross during Lent, go once or twice as a family.

## A Lenten Booklist

*Seventy-Four Tools for Good Living: Reflections on the Fourth Chapter of Benedict’s Rule*  
Michael Casey

*Humility Rules: Saint Benedict’s 12-Step Guide to Genuine Self-Esteem*  
J. Augustine Wetta, O.S.B.

*Opening to God: Lectio Divina and Life as Prayer*  
David G. Benner

*Lent and Easter Wisdom from Thomas Merton: Daily Scripture and Prayers, Together with Thomas Merton’s Own Words*  
Compiled by Jonathan Montaldo

*Interior Castle*  
St. Teresa of Avila

*Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity*  
Ronald Rolheiser

*Humility Matters for Practicing the Spiritual Life*  
Mary Margaret Funk, O.S.B.

*The Spirituality of Imperfection*  
Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham

# Formation

NEWS ABOUT MOUNT ANGEL SEMINARY



## MONK'S MINISTRY HARMONIZES FAITH AND SCIENCE

Mount Angel Seminary students are getting lessons in the deepest meaning of science and creation from science professor Br. Louis de Montfort Nguyen, O.S.B.

The medical doctor-turned-Benedictine brother has been a member of the Mount Angel monastic community since 2011.

He came to the United States with his parents from Vietnam when he was 5 years old and grew up in southern California. He always loved math and science in school, and when it came time to choose a college major, he debated between engineering and medicine. He decided on medicine because he felt he could make more of an impact.

Even with all his education, he wasn't expecting to be a teacher in the seminary. But an unexpected opportunity came when the Associate Professor of Math and Science went on sabbatical. Br. Louis found himself diving back into college biology and other sciences. Those studies, along with meditations on Scripture, especially Genesis, led him to probe deeper into the meaning of creation.

It was a spark that God planted, he said.

Then Msgr. Joseph Betschart, president-rector of the seminary, sent Br. Louis an email with information about an application for a grant, funded by the Templeton

Foundation, to teach about science and faith. Oh, and the deadline was three days away.

Br. Louis, now an Adjunct Professor of Science, said that he already had ideas in motion. He spent the next couple of days doing research, organizing his thoughts, and then submitted his proposal.



It was approved.

Now, he's developing and teaching courses for both undergraduate and graduate level seminarians to integrate science and faith.

"Modern science is slowly revealing the mystery of creation to us. Science is a gift from God, given to us so that we can understand more about his creation," Br. Louis said.

## Faith and the Universe

One scientific tool that came through the Templeton grants was a Celestron NexStar 8 SE telescope, which was featured in a hilltop stargazing event last September.

“The universe is an amazing place,” Br. Louis said. “Especially on earth and especially life. There is so much beauty to it, so much complexity, but at the same time there’s order in nature.”

Another astronomical event was the transit of the total eclipse last August. Br. Louis gave a public lecture titled, “Solar Eclipse: A Natural Wonder of the Universe and a Cosmic Wedding Gift from Heaven,” which is intimately connected to the Science and Theology of Creation Series being offered in the seminary and one that may blossom into a larger project available to the general public.

Br. Louis sees his courses as a way to help students at the seminary learn the language of science in a context of faith. “Scientific literacy is critical in our age,” he said. “That’s why any seminary education should have that focus if we want to be successful missionaries to the world.”

– Jan Bear

## About the Templeton Grants

The Templeton Foundation was established in 2005 to support Judeo-Christian faith-based ministries and institutions. Mount Angel’s grants came through an initiative of John Carroll University, funded by the Templeton Foundation.

Mount Angel has received two \$10,000 grants to support these endeavors:

- 2015: In the Image of God: Toward an Adequate Anthropology of the Person as the Image of the Divine.
- 2016: Science: A Theology of Creation.

In December 2017, Br. Louis received a renewal grant of \$4,000 to offer Science: A Theology of Creation again in the fall of 2018.

## SCIENCE AND FAITH SYMPOSIUM

Each year the seminary holds symposia, which introduce seminarians to the ideas of visiting scholars. In late October, guest speaker Br. Guy Consolmagno, S.J., presented a Faith and Science Symposium, made possible through the planning of Br. Louis Nguyen, and grant money awarded by the Templeton Foundation for Br. Louis’ Faith and Science initiative. Br. Guy is the Director of the Vatican Observatory and focused his presentations on the questions: “Does science need God?” “Is the Big Bang compatible with a creator God?” “What is life?” and, “Would extraterrestrials need to be baptized?”



## ELEVEN CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS

The church of Mount Angel Abbey reverberated with the sounds of the full seminary choir and pipe organ for a concelebrated Mass of Candidacy for Holy Orders last October. Those admitted as candidates include: Benjamin Bray of the Archdiocese of Seattle; Viane Ilimalaota of the Diocese of Samoa-Pago Pago; Stephen Kenyon and Kurt Ziehlke of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon; Nathan Lopez and Timothy Meurer of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe; Dean Marshall and Steven Wood of the Diocese of Sacramento; John Mosier of the Diocese of Boise; and Raymond Philip Napuli and Michael O’Connor of the Diocese of San Diego. They were joined for the celebration by their bishops or diocesan vocation directors. The principal celebrant was the Most Rev. Alexander K. Sample of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon.



## SEMINARY BENEFIT DINNER 2017

*“It’s a wonderful life!”* That was the conclusion of Deacon Nathan Dail (above) as he spoke to a gathering of nearly 1,200 guests at the annual Seminary Benefit Dinner held November 5 in Portland.

Deacon Nathan, studying at Mount Angel Seminary for the Diocese of Boise, explained that he had once planned to write and produce films, and had always been inspired by the classic, *“It’s a Wonderful Life.”* Comparing his own vocational journey with the life of the film’s protagonist, George Bailey, Deacon Nathan explained how he, too, ultimately chose “to live a wonderful life, to be a man full of so many hopes and dreams, who became a light for so many, because he allowed his dreams to be sacrificed for the good of others.” The life of a priest, said Deacon Nathan, is also a life sacrificed for others, in unity with the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

The fundraising dinner was the largest ever and raised more than \$1 million, helping to close the \$1.3 million gap between the actual cost of operating the seminary and what Mount Angel receives from dioceses in tuition and fees each year.



## ABBOT PETER FINDS NEW SPIRITUAL FOCUS IN REFUGEE CAMPS

Homelessness took on new meaning for Abbot Peter Eberle, O.S.B., when he participated last spring in a trip with Catholic Relief Services to refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. The experience continues to resonate with Abbot Peter during this Lenten season.

for future priests and those who help form them.

“CRS wants priests to know what CRS does so they can pass it on to their parishioners,” Abbot Peter said. “Mount Angel Seminary has benefited from that, and hopefully

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*“For me, it was not just their poverty but the fact that they are human beings like you and me... who want more than anything to go back to their homes.”*

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The one-week trip was part of an ongoing collaboration between Catholic Relief Services and U.S. seminaries, including Mount Angel. Each summer CRS invites representatives of seminaries to visit places around the world where the organization puts Catholic social teaching into practice every day. It is a valuable part of spiritual formation

CRS has, too. Josué Jimenez, a seminarian from San Diego, and I went on the trip, along with representatives from three other seminaries and CRS staff.”

In Jordan, the group visited a sprawling, ramshackle camp near the Lebanese town of Zahlé, located in the Beqaa Valley. The camp



*Iraqi men take a break from making furniture at a United Nations refugee camp in Jordan. The camp was one of the stops on the CRS trip last spring and an example of the Iraqi Livelihoods Project, teaching new skills to men and women confined to refugee camps.*

housed Iraqi refugees who had to flee from the oil fields in Iraq where they were working when ISIS forces approached.

“They had about 24 hours to get out, if that much,” Abbot Peter explained. “So they came with nothing, and they can’t work in Jordan due to the laws of the country. But CRS came to the camp and is teaching the men to make furniture. The women learn to make soap.”

Abbot Peter was struck not only by the abject poverty of the refugees but also by “the fact that they have nothing to do and nowhere to go. Both Lebanon and Jordan, to their credit, take the refugees in, but the people are in camps, and can’t leave to go out and work.

“For me, it was not just their poverty but the fact that they are human beings like you and me. They do not pose any danger as revolutionaries or guerrilla warriors. They are just simple people who want more than anything to go back to their homes.”

Another camp they visited while in Lebanon was filled with women and children from Syria. Abbot Peter heard stories from women whose husbands had been killed, and others who had been abandoned, yet somehow were able to get themselves and their children to the Lebanon border where they hoped to find safe haven.



*Abbot Peter (front row, left) and seminarian Josué Jimenez (middle, back), stand on Mount Nebo with a group sponsored by Catholic Relief Services. The west bank of the Jordan, near Jericho, is in the background.*

“It’s a tale of human suffering,” he said. “Horrendous.”

Abbot Peter said part of the spiritual impact for him was how these encounters with “ordinary people” in desperate need brought the Beatitudes to life and prompted a greater concern for local issues.

“Every Monday night (at the seminary) we have conferences, which focus on human and spiritual development. We decided to focus on the Beatitudes for our spiritual conferences and try to connect them with Catholic social teaching. That is an outgrowth of our being connected to CRS. Through CRS we have also gotten in touch with some local issues. Many Somalian refugees have come to Salem, for example, and there is a local ecumenical welcoming committee.”

The trip has also given Abbot Peter a renewed focus on the poor during Lent.

“We are called to almsgiving in Lent so giving to those causes where CRS is, that is a good way to give alms to people who are really in need.”

– Steve Ritchie

# Fellowship

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## NEWS FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

### FROM “CHERRY MOON” TO MONSIGNOR

Monsignor Lambert Luna '78 was still early in his studies at Mount Angel Seminary over four decades ago when he was blessed with an unforgettable nickname. It was bestowed by then-Fr. Bonaventure Zerr, O.S.B., in his Introduction to Theology class.

“Bonaventure is, as they say in the Hispanic tradition, my *Padrino*, my godfather,” Luna said. “He gave me my name.” During a discussion of the early theologian Origen, the future abbot called on Luna in class and said, “Lambert Luna, Cherry Moon. I can see this beautiful cake in the shape of a full moon with silver frosting and bright red Lambert cherries on it.” After the laughter subsided, he added, “What do you know about Origen, Cherry Moon?”

The name stuck, Luna said, at least during his time at Mount Angel. Now, he says, most people in his parish address him as “Father, excuse me, *Monsignor* Luna.”

Such humor is typical of Msgr. Luna. He has served for 40 years in New Mexico, where he was raised, and is now pastor of St. Joseph on the Rio Grande. He formerly served as Vicar General for the archdiocese and was elevated to Monsignor in 2008.

“I’m a has-been,” Msgr. Luna wisecracked. “When Archbishop Wester came in he asked me if I wanted to stay in the position [of Vicar General], and I said, ‘Not really.’ So the Archbishop created a new position – Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Affairs – and appointed



me. It’s a great title, but no one knows what it means, other than the Archbishop.”

Over the years, Msgr. Luna has kept in close contact with Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary. “I certainly enjoy being back at Mount Angel when I return for personal retreats ... the bell rings, and I go to the chapel for prayer. It’s always great to see the people.”

One of those people is his old classmate, Abbot Jeremy Driscoll, O.S.B. Luna said he fondly remembers “a memorable day in Rome” when both happened to be there and had the chance to catch up, do a little sightseeing, and enjoy pizza and beer together.

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe currently has 14 men studying for the priesthood at Mount Angel Seminary, a significant increase over the group of five students that arrived from New Mexico in the 1970’s, which included Luna.

Luna said he supports the Seminary both out of gratitude for the

formation he received and out of thanksgiving for the men who are called and formed for the priesthood today.

“I received much, and the little bit I can give out of my means is just a small way of paying back the immense gifts I received. Many of the monks I knew in my days there are now in the cemetery. But it gladdens my heart that God is still calling men to the monastic way of life. To see that gives hope. We know that we have not labored in vain and the Church will go on.”

– Steve Ritchie



### Can you help?

Music is an important part of life at Mount Angel and the seminary is in need of good quality pianos for the music program. There is a particular need for smaller sized uprights, baby grands, or even electric pianos to be used in the practice rooms. If you have one to be considered as a donation, please contact us at 503-845-3030 for more information.

# Generosity

NEWS FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



## FR. RICHARD KEOLKER ON LENT

When Fr. Richard Keolker was a seminarian studying in Rome, he fell ill and needed to return home for treatment and rest. His problem was that, while he had a plane ticket, he was flat broke.

Hesitant to start his long journey without a penny to his name, he shared his plight with P. Francis Murphy, a staff member who later became an auxiliary bishop in Baltimore. Murphy immediately gave him \$50, a healthy sum for the early 1960s. When the grateful seminarian stammered out his thanks and said he wasn't sure when he would be able to repay Murphy, he was told, "It's alright. When you get fifty bucks ahead, and someone needs some money, you just pay that person and you will be paying me back."

Fr. Keolker chuckled at the memory, and said, "I've been paying back that \$50 for the last 55 years! The wretch! He must have known that."

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*Conversion of life is what Lent is all about.*

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Ordained in the Diocese of Yakima, Washington, Fr. Keolker celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination in 2013. During his 26-plus year tenure at Mount Angel Seminary, Fr. Keolker has aided many a seminarian in need. Although the engaging priest is no longer teaching, he continues to serve as a spiritual

director to 30 seminarians, with whom he meets individually every two weeks.

When asked about his thoughts on how best to practice our faith during Lent, Fr. Keolker was quick to share some insights:

"One of the advantages we have here at Mount Angel are the Benedictines," he said. "Benedict was all about living out the conversion of life daily." He adds that conversion of life is what Lent is about. "Our job during Lent is to review our life and pay fresh attention to conversion of life."

He noted the monastic practice of each monk submitting his *Bona Opera*, or "good works" to the Abbot prior to Lent. Although we associate Lent with penitential practices, he said, "Lent is fundamentally about good works."

Good works, he adds, may do more than acts of penance to aid us in conversion of life. "Penance is all about me, me, me. But if we are focused on good works, then we are outward directed and about positive things." And who knows? As Fr. Keolker learned from Bishop Murphy, we may inspire someone to pay forward our good works for the rest of his life.

– Steve Ritchie



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## Save the Dates!

*Among all the great events each year at Mount Angel Abbey, don't miss these two summer festivals.*

## SAINT BENEDICT FESTIVAL

MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY

The Saint Benedict Festival, July 7 at the Abbey, is all about sharing friendship, fun and prayer with the monastic community of Mount Angel.

The event begins with Noon Prayer in the Abbey church and continues until Vespers at 4 p.m. In between, guests enjoy a fresh, locally sourced picnic on the Abbey lawn, monk-crafted Benedictine Brewery beers, and local Willamette Valley wines. The day includes guided tours of the monastery, booths with monastic crafts and history, live music, and lawn games.

For ticket information for this adults-only festival, call 503-845-3030 or see [www.mountangelabbey.org/sbf-2018](http://www.mountangelabbey.org/sbf-2018).



Since 1971, friends and fans have arrived at the Abbey to revel in three summer evenings devoted to classical music. Each night, following Vespers and a recital in the church, guests enjoy a picnic supper on the Abbey lawn, with fine wines and Benedictine Brewery beer, followed by the main-event concert in Damian Center.

The 2018 Bach Festival is July 25-27, featuring performances by: Ludovica Mosca, piano; Yegor Dyachkov, cello, and Jean Saulnier, piano; and the Pentaedre, quintet.

General admission is \$55 per night. For tickets and more information, call 503-845-3030 or see [www.mountangelabbey.org/bach](http://www.mountangelabbey.org/bach)

## Join the monks of Mount Angel Abbey for the Liturgy of the Hours

### WEEKDAYS

Vigils: 5:20 a.m.  
Lauds: 6:30 a.m.  
Holy Eucharist: 8:00 a.m.  
Midday Prayer: Noon  
Vespers: 5:20 p.m.  
Compline: 7:30 p.m.

### SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

Vigils: 7:30 p.m. (Saturday)  
Lauds: 6:40 a.m.  
Holy Eucharist: 9:00 a.m.  
Midday Prayer: Noon  
Vespers: 5:20 p.m.  
Compline: 8:00 p.m.



*Fr. Paschal Cheline, O.S.B., 1936 – 2015*

## If a monk, spiritual director or teacher has changed your life ...

If mentors at Mount Angel have challenged you or a loved one to grow in new ways or opened doors to God, please consider planning a gift or bequest to honor them. That way, others will have life-changing opportunities as well.

**For information, contact Susan Gallagher at 503-845-3077 or [susan.gallagher@mtangel.edu](mailto:susan.gallagher@mtangel.edu).**

*Please note, when writing your will, our legal title and address is:  
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