

Spring 2012

For family, friends, and alumni of Cistercian Preparatory School

CISTERCIAN PREPARATORY SCHOOL CONTINUUM

PASSING THE TORCH

Cistercian's final Hungarian form master,
Fr. Bernard, ends an era with the Class of 2012

Fr. Bernard Marton
with nearly all of the
48 members of the
Class of 2012





THE BAG CARRIED BY FR. BERNARD MARTON DURING HIS ESCAPE FROM HUNGARY IN 1956.

Reminders of our Hungarian heritage

Cistercian's new entrance building will feature a spacious and elegant reception area, sick rooms, chapel and confessional, offices for form masters, a conference room, and more. But perhaps as important as all of those, the new building will provide an archive display and celebrate the school's history and the Hungarian roots of the founding monks.



50th
anniversary

C A M P A I G N

The final phase

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**CISTERCIAN
PREPARATORY
SCHOOL**

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- Dr. Robert J. Henderson
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- Peter P. Smith '74
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Exploring the depth of our blessings

At our 50th year, we are challenged to build upon them

Celebrating a 50th anniversary causes us to look back, giving thanks, and to look forward with our hopes for the future. Each of the articles in this issue of *The Continuum* helps us do just that.



Letter from the headmaster
Fr. Peter Verhalen '73

The note on the abbatial election on February 15 looks back to three abbots I have known – Fr. Abbot Denis, Fr. Abbot Anselm, and Fr. Abbot Wendelin in Zirc.

With their prayers and guidance, I hope that Dallas' third (and its first American) abbot will continue the tradition of faith in a loving God so movingly represented by Abbot Wendelin.

Our feature on the gift of the Abbey Church, weaves this fascinating history together with the call to live up to the demands of the building – that Cistercian remain rooted in this place, faithful to

her Hungarian traditions, reliant on the alumni, and committed to supporting the faith of the larger community through its own life of prayer.

Finally, our cover story by David Stewart '74 and the essay by Smokey Briggs '84 both highlight the service of Fr. Bernard, the last of the Hungarian form masters. I expect that the many young monks – Texas-born to a large extent – will learn to foster in their own way that sense of freedom Smokey speaks of.

We pray that they may foster the sense of vocation, of serving God at every turn of our lives, as Fr. Bernard did when he first fled Hungary in 1956 and then entered the monastery, and then afterward when he accepted the call to educate and form the boys in the Prep School, whether in one of his many classes as form master or as headmaster.

Our elders at Cistercian have blessed us abundantly over the last 50 years.

I hope this issue of *The Continuum* gives you more insight into those blessings, and challenges you to follow their example.

Volume 39, number 1

In this issue



A quiet place in the clouds 8

Alumni were inspired to do something special for the monks

By David E. Stewart



Colin Stone remembered 14

Departments

- News & Notes 4-7
- Sports 20
- Class Notes 21-22
- Afterthoughts by Smokey Briggs 23
- On Prayer by Fr. Roch Kereszty 24

Cover photography by Jim Reisch

Passing the torch 15

Cistercian's final Hungarian form master, Fr. Bernard, ends an era with the Class of 2012

By David E. Stewart



Cistercian Preparatory School was founded with the aim of preparing talented boys for the colleges of their choice by challenging their minds with excellent academic programs, molding their character through the values of Catholic education, and offering them guidance with both understanding and discipline. Cistercian Preparatory School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission and education policies, financial aid programs, athletic programs, and other activities.

Fr. Abbot Peter's lineage

Fr. Abbot Peter follows in a line of abbots whose actions set the stage for an American abbot in the tradition of Zirc.

Abbot Denis stands out as having the most important influence on the new abbot.

But it all started with Abbot Wendelin Endrédi who, at the behest of Fr. Louis



Abbot Wendelin Endrédi (1938 - 1950)

Lekai, began sending monks to the US in 1946.

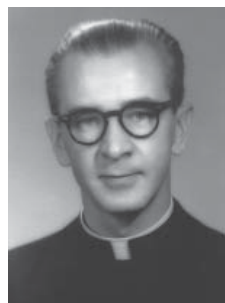
In October 1950, Abbot Wendelin was arrested and charged with sending members abroad.

He was tortured and held under solitary confinement until 1956.

"God allowed

me to meet Abbot Wendelin in Hungary in 1972," said Abbot Peter. "He impressed me at that meeting as a kind, loving man, attentive to the other rather than one who dwelt on the unimaginable sufferings of his own life."

Abbot Peter was far better acquainted with Abbot Anselm, who served as superior of the exiled Hungarian monks until 1988.



Abbot Anselm Nagy (1963 - 1988)

He was elected abbot in 1963, when the monastery was elevated to the status of an abbey.

"Abbot Anselm suffered through the very hard years of founding this monastery," noted Abbot Peter, "and welcomed Fr. Gregory and me as novices in 1975."

"He and Fr. Louis are my private patron saints to whom I pray daily for the Cistercian Abbey Our Lady of Dallas."

"I think of those two monks as men who worked so hard to establish the abbey, our work at UD, and the school."



Abbot Sixtus Dékány from the Abbey of Zirc (center) presided over the election and installation of Fr. Abbot Peter Verhalen '73 on Wednesday, February 15. He succeeds Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy (right) whose work since 1988 has brought the community health and prosperity.

THE THIRD ABBOT OF OUR LADY OF DALLAS

Fr. Abbot Peter's installation culminates the work of his Hungarian predecessors

Fr. Peter Verhalen's tenure as Abbot of the Cistercian Abbey Our Lady of Dallas began with characteristic modesty and efficiency.

"I am very grateful for the support and patience everyone has shown," said Fr. Abbot Peter, who has balanced expectations of his election with a hectic year as headmaster of the school. "I am only now coming to realize – and I'm sure there's much, much more to learn – what the abbot really does."

Immediately, the abbot began forming the Abbot's Council and appointing various officers within the monastery as well as his successor as headmaster. (Fr. Paul McCormick, assistant headmaster, immediately took over the day-to-day duties of running the school.)

"Abbot Denis worked hard for decades to finish the task begun by the first generation of Hungarian monks," Abbot Peter said, "especially Fr. Abbot Anselm and Fr. Louis."

"With his vision, strength of will, and talent," he added, "Abbot Denis has brought the abbey and school to a degree of material and spiritual health and happiness that could hardly have been imagined years ago."

The first American abbot's love and respect for the Cistercian Order was nourished by the year he spent as a junior at the secondary school run by the Cistercian Abbey of Schlierbach in Austria.

The new abbot received well wishes from dozens and dozens of former classmates, alumni, alumni parents, parents, and friends. A formal, public Benediction of the new abbot will be scheduled during the week after Easter.



CAREER PATH

1973
Valedictorian
Cistercian Prep School

1975
Novice
Cistercian Abbey

1981
Ordained a priest
Cistercian Abbey

1996 - 2012
Headmaster
Cistercian Prep School

1991 - 2012
Prior
Cistercian Abbey

75 The mandatory retirement age for the abbot as set by the constitution of the Abbey of Zirc. Abbot Denis turned 75 in June 2011.

6 Number of American monks in the Cistercian Abbey at the turn of the century. Today, 17 American monks call the abbey home.

DAVEY O'BRIEN AWARD

Squiers wins scholar-athlete honor

Will Squiers '12 became the school's third winner of the Davey O'Brien High School Scholarship Award, which honors outstanding scholar-athletes.

Squiers follows in the path of **Robert Schoenvogel '96** and



Will Squiers accepts the Davey O'Brien Award from David O'Brien, Jr. on January 17.

Jack Squiers '08, Will's brother. Cistercian is the only school to have had three winners of this award, which has been awarded since 1986

Squiers, who wins a \$20,000 scholarship with the award, is a National Merit Semifinalist and National AP Scholar. On the Headmaster's Honor Roll every semester, he played football, baseball and soccer.

Squiers, who plays select baseball, is also an accomplished pianist and self-taught guitarist. He volunteers for the Special Olympics, and was elected to the Cistercian Community Service Council.

MUSIC COMPOSITION

Hartman '12 seeks career in music & film

Students and teachers at the BraveArt film festival received a peek at the work and passion of **Kyle Hartman '12** as they watched a four-minute short film he created and scored.



Kyle Hartman '12 hopes to score music for movies and television.

With aspirations to score music for movies and television, Hartman has sought admission to the some of the top music composition schools in the country.

He currently has his eyes on the SMU Meadows School of the Arts, where he has been accepted by the very selective music composition program.

He also has been accepted to several other selective music programs.

He will wait to hear from one other prestigious school of music before making a final decision.



Ikenna Nwafor '12, the most highly recruited athlete in school history, at signing day, Feb. 1.

DIVISION I FOOTBALL SIGNEE

Nwafor '12 to play for Stanford

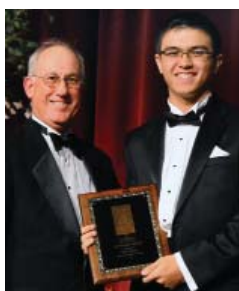
At a class party, his classmates sang "Happy Signing Day" to **Ikenna Nwafor '12**, who committed to Stanford.

"Thank you for your support, for playing with me, and for putting up with the distractions," said the 6'5" 300 lbs. Nwafor, who plans to study pre-med.

Prior to Feb. 1, coaches from around the country made the trek to Cistercian to visit with the 35th-best defensive tackle prospect in the nation (as ranked by Scout.com).

CATHOLIC FOUNDATION

Kim '13 wins Scholar's Award



Paul Kim '13 receives the award as the diocese's outstanding junior.

Paul Kim '13 was recognized by the Catholic Foundation as the diocese's outstanding high school junior.

Kim spent part of last summer bringing medical imaging technology to Africa and saving the lives of thousands of young

mothers. A top student, he credits his Catholic faith and specifically his study of Pope John Paul II for his desire to help the less fortunate.

Past winners of the award include **Michael Greenfield '99, Juan Muldoon '05, and Vincent Zimmern '06.**

CLASS 2012 CASTS A WIDE NET FOR COLLEGES

The Class of 2012, the largest in school history, can also claim to have applied to the largest number of colleges in school history.

"This group has sought out a very diverse set of colleges," said Janet Bucher-Long.

In all, members of the class have applied to 122 different institutions.

"There is no herding instinct with this class," Bucher-Long commented.

"The kids know themselves and they are looking for colleges that fit," she added.

QUIZ BOWLERS MOVE UP IN THE NATIONAL RANKS

Cistercian's nationally ranked Academic Quiz Bowl "A" team won the fourth annual St. Mark's Invitational on March 3.

In a nail-biter, Cistercian's foursome of **Ian Hunley '12, Vimal Kunduri '13, Colin Nadarajah '13, and Mitchell Weldon '13** defeated LASA (Liberal Arts & Sciences Academy / Austin), the nation's fourth-ranked team.

3 Number of Davey O'Brien Award winners from Cistercian. They are Will Squiers '12, Jack Squiers '08 (Will's brother), and Robert Schoenvogel '96.

15 Rank of the Cistercian Academic Quiz Bowl 'A' Team by the high school quiz bowl rankings (hsqbrank.wordpress.com). The team's ranking will rise after their March 4 victory.

50th ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN Gifts large and small have reduced goal to \$700,000

A year ago, donors contributed enough to retire the debt on the land purchase.



Joel Fontenot

A year later, only \$700,000 remains to reach the goal of \$15 million, which will set in motion the construction of the new entrance building.

“We have been gratified by the support of donors large and small who have stepped up in the past year,” said **Joel Fontenot**, who has spearheaded the campaign.

“In May, the 50th Anniversary Campaign will conclude,” Fontenot added. “It will have accomplished its goal of preparing the school for another 50 years.”



Pope Benedict greets Br. Stephen Gregg '01 after Vespers on December 31, 2011, at which Br. Stephen sang the general intercessions.

Br. Stephen sings at St. Peter's

Singing talent has helped propel **Br. Stephen Gregg '01** into the spotlight at St. Peter's Basilica. At the Vespers to close the year on Dec. 31, 2011, Br. Stephen sang the general intercessions.

On Epiphany, January 6, 2012, Br. Stephen sang the annual “Announcement of the Date of Easter” after the Gospel and served at the altar during the Eucharist.



Sam McGraw '12 and Ethan Noel '12 perform at the new-look coffeehouse on February 26.

BraveArt's New Look

Abbreviated arts festival still packs some punch

BraveArt, fashioned by **Tom Pruitt** in 1996, took on a new look this year under the leadership of **Peter Saliga**.

This year, Thursday was not used to visit a museum. Through the fine arts initiative, each class will use that day independently on a fine arts field study that relates to subject matter they are studying.

The festivities instead began on Thursday night with an evening devoted to film. Two outstanding student short films (four minutes each) by **Kyle Hartman '12** and by **Stephen Hoeffler '13** were shown and followed by a discussion session. Then Chris Medaille introduced *The King's Speech* and led a discussion afterward.

Friday's workshop day was tweaked by adding more performance-oriented opportunities such as theater, choral, and percussion sessions.

To cap off the day's workshops, an hour-long student showcase gave the groups the chance to perform what they had learned.

On Saturday night, the coffeehouse spotlight was cast on visual arts as well as the traditional line-up of musical acts.

The night's activities started with the visual arts exhibition. Awards for the exhibition were announced during intermission of the coffeehouse. **Matthew Lancaster '13** won first prize.



Stuart Leach '12 performs at coffeehouse.

REMODELING CUTS ENERGY BILL

Tim Parker '90,

director of facilities, reported that the school's energy usage has declined an average of approximately 12 percent since the remodeling of the Upper and Middle School buildings in 2010 and 2011.

SITTON RUNS FOR THE STATE HOUSE

Ryan Sitton '93

finds himself in a hotly contested race to become the Republican candidate for State Representative from District 24 (southside of Houston).

Sitton, son of Cistercian chemistry teacher Betty Sitton, is one of three Republicans vying for the seat opened when the incumbent announced his run for the State Senate.

Sitton is campaigning as the “job creation” candidate.

Sitton started his own company, Pinnacle, an engineering and technology company serving the energy and petrochemical industries. Since its inception, Pinnacle has experienced sustained growth, surpassing 100 employees.

2 Number of months left in the 50th Anniversary Campaign. The school expects to have raised \$15 million by May, the largest campaign in school history by far.

8 The number of hours cut from BraveArt weekend to allow for day-long field studies in which Forms attend cultural events that relate to subjects they are studying.



(Top) Tom Lewis '73 and wife Dr. Cathy Schanzer enjoy Fr. Peter's introduction. (Above) Fr. Peter presents Lewis with the Jim and Lynn Moroney Award.



Bob Haaser holds his new diploma, which names him as an Honorary Alumnus of Cistercian Prep School.



MIDDLE SONS Many members of the Class of 2006 showed up to support their form master at the Jim and Lynn Moroney Award Dinner. Haaser served as form master of the Classes of 1992 and 2006, and currently serves as form master of the Class of '14.

2012 JIM AND LYNN MORONEY AWARD DINNER

Haaser and Lewis '73 combine for memorable night

The 2012 Jim and Lynn Moroney Award Dinner at the Park City Club on January 28 will long be remembered.

The night set a record for attendance with 265 guests, a tribute to honorees **Bob Haaser '12 (Honorary)** and **Tom Lewis '73**.

Greg Novinski '81, head of the Upper School, introduced Haaser, the school's second Honorary Alumnus (**Rodney Walter** won the first such distinction in 2009).

Among those who have made an impact during the school's first 50 years, Novinski suggested that Haaser stands out for "his expectation of the transformational power of the School."

Having worn so many hats over his 42 years — including coach, form master, and admissions director — Haaser became "the face of Cistercian" and a "personification of the School's mission."

"I am only now," Haaser remarked in accepting the honor, "beginning to recognize the pervasive impact of the Cistercian community on me."

"I'm happy, honored, and humbled to be bound in such a powerful way to all of you here tonight and to the extended Cistercian community."

Fr. Peter Verhalen '73 introduced Tom Lewis with a story from last August when

Tom saw a homeless man on a Memphis street corner. Lewis did not "avert his eyes."

Instead, he listened to his story. Within a few days, Lewis had raised enough money to fly the man to his estranged father in Seattle and provide a nice nest egg to help provide for his care.

Lewis is familiar to many younger Cistercian alumni for the African garb he wears when he and wife Dr. Cathy Schanzer invite students to their eye clinic in Serabu, Sierra Leone. They have hosted three Cistercian alumni/students in Serabu and last year established a scholarship to make it an annual opportunity.

In accepting the Jim and Lynn Moroney Award, Lewis reflected on the ups and downs of his business and personal life, one in which his faith, his wife, the people of Sierra Leone, and the Cistercians have served as beacons.

"The people of Sierra Leone have taught us how to let go of this material world, the value of a simple life, the true relationship with God."

But it is the "unconditional love that Fr. Roch, my form master, showed us every day," that he remembers most.

"These men lived and showed us unconditional love whether we deserved it or not. Thank you."

2 The number of faculty members who have been honored as "Honorary Alumnus" of the school. They are Rodney J. Walter and Bob Haaser.

2 The number of members from the Class of 1973 who have won the Jim and Lynn Moroney Award: Tom Lewis '73 and in 2002, Fr. Peter Verhalen '73.

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE ABBEY CHURCH

a quiet place in the clouds

*In 1990, alumni were inspired to do
something special for the monks*

BY DAVID EXALL STEWART

Now was falling on New Year's Day 1990 in Minturn, Colorado (not far from Vail). Sitting with his family at Mass, Jere Thompson '74 drank in the charm of St. Patrick's Catholic Church, which was built in 1913. As he contemplated the conviction and courage it must have taken to build the sturdy wooden structure in this small mining town, he was struck.

"It's time for us to build Cistercian a chapel," Thompson thought.

"It was a real strong feeling," he remembered.

"There was no hesitation and no fear. I immediately turned to thinking about a plan."

Thompson and classmate Jim Moroney '74, both 33 years old, had led the campaign to raise funds for the Science Building six years earlier. They could do it again. The Andres family had been involved in the construction of the Science Building. They could do it again, this time with 32-year-old Wade Andres '75 leading the way under the banner of the newly formed Andres Construction.

On his return to Dallas, Thompson couldn't wait to share the idea with his form master, Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy.

"Unless we build a church," Thompson emphasized, "the school won't continue to be for the next generation what it has been for us."

Thompson then laid out the plan: alumni would raise the funds,

an alumnus would build it, and an alumnus (Fr. Peter Verhalen '73) would say Mass in it.

"I experienced the joy of receiving a true gift," the abbot remembered. He had been dreaming of a church to attract vocations, but did not know how it could be possible.

A crucial piece of the puzzle, however, was still missing. During the planning and construction of the Science Building, Thompson and Moroney had come to understand the importance of smooth communication with the architect. They agreed that a significant project like the church required an architect who understood Cistercian, and the Cistercians.

Thompson recalled a story in the Spring 1989 *Continuum* written by Peter Smith '74. The headline read, "Cunningham excels as innovative architect."

Amidst a bustling lunch crowd at the old Dixie House on McKinney Avenue, Thompson and Smith met Gary "Corky" Cunningham '72.

"We didn't know much about Gary's work at that point," Thompson admitted. In fact, the pair had seen little of the 35-year-old architect since he graduated from Cistercian.

"But we knew," added Thompson, "we wanted an alumnus to be our architect."

When Cunningham enthusiastically agreed, an interview was scheduled with Abbot Denis.



“After just an hour,” recalled the abbot, “I knew that Gary was eager and had the right ideas about the process and project.” The abbot then set up a meeting with the community of monks to present the alumni’s idea for the church and their architect.

“They were caught totally by surprise,” remembered the abbot. “The alumni of the school were proposing a gift we had not even asked for, most never hoped for, and many never considered even possible.” The community enthusiastically approved the idea and the architect.

So now, with his team of alumni assembled, Thompson turned his attention to more big issues: How would they pay for it and what shape would it take?

Provisionally, the alumni’s proposed gift inspired a similarly unexpected gift from Lynn Northrup (grandfather of J.D. Northrup ’96 and Robert Northrup ’00), who agreed to underwrite limestone for the project from his quarry in West Texas. The gift changed everything.

“We could not have even dreamed of a church built of stone without this gift,” insisted the abbot.

Nevertheless, the design process seemed to have bogged down at a November 1990 meeting of the building committee in Cunningham’s conference room, located in the choir loft of an abandoned church near downtown. The design (and the relationship between Abbot Denis and Cunningham) was not progressing as hoped.

“Gary and Fr. Denis were having trouble coming to agreement on some key issues,” recalled Wade Andres.

“What you guys need to do,” Andres said, “is go to Europe and see some of these ancient chapels.”

The abbot and the architect arrived at the General House in Rome on New Year’s Eve 1991, weary but unable to sleep much. The Italians were celebrating the occasion by exploding fireworks well into the first several hours of 1992. Cunningham likened that first night in his 8’ x 12’ cell with one small window — his first tactile experience with monastic life — to a “Twilight Zone” episode.

The next morning, Abbot Denis brought Cunningham to the office of Abbot General Polycarp Zakar. Both men lit up a warm, lively conversation, mostly in Hungarian. Fr. Polycarp had served as Br. Denis’ superior (and all of the Hungarian brothers) after his escape from Hungary in 1956.

For these two Hungarian abbots — men whose talents and scholarship had sent them to the tops of their respective organizations — this was a moment to cherish. Cunningham could sense the pride and joy they felt for each other’s current endeavors. With the

fall of the Soviet Union, the abbot general was orchestrating the re-opening of the Abbey of Zirc. And with the maturation of the American branch, the newly elected abbot in Texas was working with his architect on a church there that would honor the Cistercian Order’s oldest architectural traditions.

The abbot general brought out what was apparently a Hungarian delicacy (perhaps pig’s feet) to honor the occasion, and which Cunningham, in the interest of building relationships, nibbled judiciously.

Then the pair visited the first two stops on the architectural itinerary Abbot Denis planned — outstanding Italian examples of Cistercian architecture from the 12th and 13th century that lay just 80 miles southeast of Rome — the Cistercian Abbey of Fossanova and the Cistercian Abbey of Casamari, located about 20 miles apart.

“Their uniform geometry and simplicity were stunning,” recalled Abbot Denis. Both admired the way light entered the churches through the windows.

Each featured a rose window on their façade. Cunningham insisted the rose window was not original and suggested that it must have been added later. On this point, the abbot disagreed. (Later, the debate over the rose window at Fossanova was settled by a historian. It was indeed an addition and architecturally not part of the early Romanesque style.)

The next stop was Vienna, where the pair traveled to the Abbey of Heiligenkreuz (“Holy Cross”), which was founded in 1133, and is the oldest continuously occupied Cistercian monastery in the world.

The Romanesque façade, nave, and transept were dedicated in 1187; they are considered Austria’s most famous examples of this austere style. Nuns then drove Abbot Denis and Cunningham to the Abbey of Lilienfeld before heading to Hungary. It was in Hungary, not surprisingly, that the trip reached its emotional and architectural highs.

The first few destinations in Hungary were not designed to enlighten Cunningham’s understanding of 900-year-old Cistercian architecture. But they proved no less important.

After checking in at the Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma, where the abbot received his high school education between 1950 and 1954, the pair was struck by how empty the facility appeared. Neither visitors nor monks could be spotted anywhere. The abbot began leading Cunningham on a tour of the church when a staff member notified the pair that the community was gathered for the election of a new abbot. There was, however, one monk who was too ill to participate in the election. That monk, Fr. Mike [Mee – keh] Jámbor, hoped they



The Northrups’ gift of the limestone changed everything.

would drop by the infirmary for a visit.

Fr. Mike had taught the abbot French at Pannonhalma and for the young Farkasfalvy, it had “developed into a true relationship with an intellectual mentor. Fr. Mike respected and loved me unselfishly.” He was the last friend that Br. Denis visited on his way to the Austrian border as he escaped Hungary in 1956.

The sight of his dear teacher brought tears to the eyes of the abbot. Unable to sit up, Fr. Mike greeted the abbot warmly, and engaged the visitors in conversation about their trip and their impressions.

While the abbot was clearly moved, Cunningham was feeling something too; a tug that was bringing him closer to understanding the immutable relationship between monks and their students, no matter their respective ages.

At Zirc, just 20 miles south of Pannonhalma, Cunningham witnessed another kind of testament to longevity and survivability. The Abbey of Zirc, which the Soviets had taken over in October 1950, was full of activity when the pair from Dallas arrived. For the first time in 40 years, the Cistercians were taking back their church and were in the first stages of making it their own once again.

Fr. Denis and Cunningham had the opportunity to visit with another very old monk. Fr. Vilmos (William) Szabó, an ornithologist now near the end of his life, was an old friend and novice mate of Abbot Anselm. His knowledge of Dallas and his interest in the project fascinated Cunningham.

Like Abbot Polycarp, Fr. Mike, Fr. Guido, and others, Fr. William was keenly interested in the church project, Abbot Denis, and Cunningham. They spoke little of themselves and wanted to know only how they could help.

Cunningham was beginning to conclude that the simplicity and strength of the 12th century Romanesque architecture reflected the selflessness and longevity of the relationships monks have with those around them.

“It dawned on me,” Cunningham said, “that those relationships I had with the monks – they were like the relationships I had with my parents – they weren’t going to fade.”

“I learned that I couldn’t assume that I knew who the monks were,” Cunningham added. “They helped me come to terms with where I came from as a Cistercian student and they helped me understand what is truly special about the monks.”

The encounters were giving Cunningham “a whole different take on this thing.”

From Zirc, they traveled to Budapest, where Abbot Denis stayed with his sister and Cunningham rested in a nearby hotel. The following day, a Cistercian named Fr. Konrád drove them two hours or so northeast of Budapest.

By this, the final leg of their architectural journey together, the easy and trusting relationship between the abbot and the architect had fully bloomed. For six days, they had talked non-stop, discussing European history, Cistercian history, Benedictine history, monasticism, architecture and much more.

Cunningham had also felt the silence of the Cistercians, lived (for a few days) the rhythm of monastic life, and sensed the light as it crept across church floors between morning and evening prayers. He had witnessed privileged moments between Abbot Denis and his former superior, a beloved mentor, an old friend of Abbot Anselm, his sister, and many of his friends.

He had seen the Cistercians moving back into their abbey in Zirc.

The next stop, BÉlapátfalva (about 100 miles from the Ukrainian border), was purported to be the most well-preserved 13th century Cistercian church in Hungary.

The road leading north from Eger to this tiny village can be beautiful, winding through wine country and then straddling the Bükk National Forest. But on this foggy January day, the roads were wet and the going slow, making the drive longer than expected.

“I felt a little nervous,” remembered Cunningham of their arrival, “like I did on my first day walking around the Irving campus, which was still a muddy, wet job site.”

“At both places, I sensed a quiet, desolate place in nature.”

The abbey that had once adjoined the church at BÉlapátfalva fell into ruins in the 16th century. To add to the feeling of desolation, the visitors found the 13th century church locked. They appeared to be out of luck.

Fr. Konrád went searching to find someone with a key, but first scrounged up a ladder so that Cunningham could take a look through the windows and crawl around the roof.

The chapel quickly impressed the architect as “a serious precedent for the chapel. It had been dismantled and rebuilt, yet it still captured an attitude – a quiet place in the clouds.”

The scale, Cunningham decided, fit in nicely with the site in Irving. He was intrigued by the alternating rows of grey and red stones at the main entry (similar to the entry at Fossanova).

When Fr. Konrád found keys, they toured the nave where the pews, made of baltic birch, left an impression.

As with many of the other examples of 12th and 13th century Cistercian architecture, the church in BÉlapátfalva featured a rose window. Once again, Cunningham believed the rose window was not original. The abbot concurred.



Bringing light into the chapel would be as important in the 20th century as it was in the 12th.

Upon the return of the abbot and the architect, Thompson was eager for a design to help with the fund-raising efforts. The abbot counseled patience. “Some things,” he suggested, “just have to evolve over time.”

There was one more trip — this one to West Texas — that Cunningham wanted to take before getting down to work. He wanted to see the stone for himself.

The trip included a hair-raising plane ride from San Antonio followed by snake shooting and beer drinking on a ranch near Midland. It was a far cry from the decorum of the European trip, but the limestone, and a brand new tool to cut and extract the blocks, excited Cunningham.

“When I came back,” he said, “I knew what I was going to do.”

Months before, Abbot Denis had provided Cunningham with many books related to church building. A Vatican II document stated three primary tenets: honesty, craftsmanship, and humility. Cunningham’s design would embody all three, freshly inspired by his experiences in Europe.

“Can you think,” Cunningham remembered mulling to himself, “about a building that will last 800 years?”

“It must have,” he decided, “an attitude that will last.”

“It was about understanding that the building’s physicality was not driven by the physical,” he suggested, “What makes the building very important is the monks.”

As the design came together — fashioned not with a limestone

vener, but actually built using huge limestone blocks — Cunningham understood that it would be historically important, especially in the context of North Texas. “How many buildings are built this way?” he asked.

“It has the weights and dimensions of the pyramids,” he said of the blocks that measure 2’ x 3’ x 6’ and weigh 2½ tons.

To give the monks a sense of the inside of the chapel, Cunningham’s team built a model of a scale that fit over the monks’ heads “like a lampshade.” The model created a comical scene, but effectively communicated the feel of the design.

True to his convictions, Cunningham did not include a rose window. Some monks were disappointed.

“It’s about the importance of the Romanesque era,” Cunningham explained to the community of monks. “It’s about a total humility in which all light is kept colorless.”

“A rose window is not in keeping with who you are,” he emphasized. “You’re about being focused and the commitment to work.”

“Gary was incredibly good at selling his point of view,” remembered Abbot Denis.

The conservative appearance of the design concerned some of the monks, but Cunningham assured them that the building would be thoroughly modern from a construction perspective.

“In those discussions, the monks gave me the respect of their equal,” Cunningham remembered, “and I could feel their love and trust.”



The Abbey Church as photographed after its completion in May 1992.



By the time construction began in August 1991, the architect and the builder were feeling the pressure. Cunningham’s vision of an ancient design constructed in modern-day America would require thoughtful planning, on-the-fly improvising, and old-fashioned craftsmanship. It would test the talents of all to execute the unusual design within the budget, on schedule, and to the satisfaction of their former teachers and fellow alumni.

“It was a very emotional project for everyone,” remembered Wade Andres. “It was a big deal for Gary, for our career (Andres Construction), and for the alumni who raised the money. The budget was tight.”

Building the church with load-bearing stone walls was both medieval and novel, but it created a problem: nobody had any experience with this form of construction.

Cunningham and Andres went to West Texas to learn as much as they could about the stones.

“Understanding how the stone was going to be cut, affected the way Gary stacked it on the building for a logical sequence,” said Andres. “We even went out and measured the stone to ensure they would fit together, grouped the darker stones (weathered by lying nearer the surface), and put them in sequence for delivery.”

Part of the building’s unique character would be defined by the banding of darker and lighter stones as well as by the craggy edges of the limestone that Cunningham refused to chisel into a smooth surface. He opted instead to show the stone’s “insides” that were exposed when they were split with drills.

“Gary, don’t you think that some of those edges are sticking out too far?” Abbot Denis asked during October as the stones began to arrive. “Don’t you have to make some modifications?”

“Let’s just wait until they are on top of each other,” Cunningham suggested.

The stones were assembled by a team of brick masons (unaccustomed to such large “bricks”) who used one-inch of a



Twenty years later, the church continues to grow as a source of pride for (l-r) Gary Cunningham '72, Wade Andres '75, Jere Thompson '74, and Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy.

special Type-S mortar that matched the limestone's load-bearing capacity. They would accomplish the job of laying the 427 stones in just two months, two months ahead of schedule.

"Wade was young and very focused," Cunningham remembered. "We all struggled. We made it demanding. But Andres hired the right subs for the limestone and concrete work. They got it done for peanuts."

The roof would be a different matter.

"There was a lot of collaboration with the glass guys and the wood guys," Cunningham laughed. "We fought all the time." One of the workers for the roof subcontractors confided to Abbot Denis, "Your architect is nuts."

Of all the tricks in the church's architecture, the roof steals the show by surprising visitors with the amount and array of "honest" lighting it creates, and how this light plays off the natural elements, especially the "insides" of the limestone walls.

While Romanesque architects found ingenious ways to bring

light into their churches, Cunningham's roof design draws one's eyes up in wonder.

"When I first walked in the completed church," recalled Abbot Denis, "I felt as if the ceiling was about to float away. Then I looked again and I felt like it was about to fall on me."

With just weeks to go before the consecration, craftsmen (including one of Cunningham's former architects) cut and assembled the pews inside the church. They are made of Baltic birch imported from a location about 100 miles from Bélapátfalva.

On May 10, 1992, Thompson and Moroney (chairmen of the building committee) joined Cunningham and Andres to present the key of the building to Bishop Charles Grahmann and Abbot Denis.

The event, along with the names of the major donors, were commemorated with, appropriately enough, the slab of marble that had served as the altar from the old chapel inside the monastery. The text reads, "This church was built for the Cistercian Abbey and School by parents and students past and present under the leadership of the alumni."

As we approach the 20th anniversary of that day, the simple majesty of the Abbey Church has grown. The limestone blocks have aged and weathered, giving the structure the appearance of a church nearly as old as its medieval design. Inside, the church glows as brightly as that idea born in Colorado in 1990.

Thompson's epiphany at Mass on New Year's Day seemed important then. It was time to build a church to reward the monks who had sacrificed so much for the school. A church was needed to attract young men to the abbey so that the school could continue to be run by the Cistercians for decades to come.

Alumni would raise the money, an alumnus would design it, an alumnus would build it, and alumnus would say Mass in it.

Back in 1992, the chapel demonstrated to all the monks that the school had turned the corner. Their sacrifices had paid off. Debate in the abbey over the school's value was now moot.

But with each passing year, the importance of the church seems to have grown as more and more baptisms, weddings, and funerals take place there.

Recently, of course, ordinations have become quite popular.

The conviction and commitment of the men most directly responsible for funding, designing, and erecting this jewel are reflected nowadays in proud smiles.

"It was a rare alignment of the planets, providence," said Cunningham about the church as he gathered with Abbot Denis, Thompson, and Andres for a photo. "You have to have a lot of things aligned for a project to turn out this well."

"Jere's plan was for the alumni to take a very active role in this project," he added. "That helped align everything. His plan was not about ego, but about knowing that guys who went to Cistercian would have the ability, the relationship with the Cistercians, and the desire to do it right for their teachers and peers."

"What other architect," Thompson laughed, "would have traveled to Europe for six days with Fr. Denis?"

And from a longer view, the church testifies to the ideals, courage, and determination of the Cistercian Order, especially the monks from the Abbey of Zirc who were forced to flee their homeland to ensure the survival of their tradition.

The church will for centuries stand in tribute to the sacrifices they made and to the homeland they left behind.

The Cistercian community suffered the tragic and unexpected loss of junior Colin Taylor Stone '13 in a car accident on the evening of November 29, 2011. Colin was mourned by his classmates in Form VII and the whole Upper School the following day with a Mass in the Abbey Church celebrated by Fr. Peter Verhalen, headmaster, and Fr. Paul McCormick, Colin's form master.

On December 5, the faculty, students, and numerous parents of the Cistercian Upper School joined the Stone family and an overflow crowd for a memorial service at the Park Cities Presbyterian Church.

Colin was also remembered in a poignant way at the annual "Ring Ceremony" on December 16, where he was to receive his senior ring. Below are excerpts from Fr. Paul's remarks at the memorial service and Jess Clay's at the Ring Ceremony.

Excerpts from remarks by Fr. Paul

Colin's was a life both so typical in some regards, but so utterly atypical in others. Typical, in that he arrived at Cistercian at the beginning of the sixth grade filled with so much of that same pre-pubescent zeal, energy, and naiveté that is expected for the age. Colin had such a tremendous smile that day, one that I and so many others would soon grow accustomed to expect...and would look for when we ourselves needed to smile.

But, what was most "atypical" in my first encounter with Colin was that unlike so many other young people coming into a new and strange place for the first time... it was clear from the start that Colin had an unusual self-confidence and was absolutely ready to simply jump in and to embrace the entire Cistercian experience....and do so whole-heartedly – which I would later come to learn, was the way that he would embrace each and every new interest and experience in his life.

And given this tremendous propensity for throwing himself fully into things, and given his amazing natural gifts and personal passion for art, for writing and for music... all on top of his especially keen intellect...it was here in these fields (much, much more than in grades) that Colin discovered the instruments both for experiencing recreation and success and for bonding even more closely with his peers and with his teachers.

But, the arts were also the tools he would employ for coping with and for expressing deep personal insights and struggles.

So many young people have similar skills and interests as

Colin in pursuing artistic and musical endeavors, but what made Colin particularly remarkable, for me and for so many others, is that this young man had seemingly already in his very young years acquired something significant, mature, and powerful to say and about which he would often write, paint, play, sing, and also speak. (Please go to the Cistercian website to read the remainder of these remarks.)

Excerpts from remarks by Jess Clay '13

Often, the Ring Ceremony serves as a formal pep rally of sorts, which makes a class laugh and in so doing brings them together. This year's ceremony comes at a time when a somber tone might seem more fitting, as our class was recently brought closer together not by laughter, but by tears.

Though it's true these last few weeks have been a time of tremendous pain for our Form and for the entire Cistercian community, it's also true that we are in a season of hope. And I hope that in watching how our class remembered and learned about an individual, we have realized how it is we might remember and learn about our Form.

For of all the lessons learned these last few weeks, one stands out in my mind, and that is that one of the best ways to heal, to teach, to affirm, and to inspire is by telling stories.

In pondering the stories of our Form, I realized that the one great story of the Class of 2013 is a tale of transition — transition from old to new, from youth to adolescence, from triumph to tragedy to triumph once again.

I bring these rings which now rest before us, because, in so many ways, the rings represent our Form.

The rings signify the full circle to which our class has nearly come. But I believe it is the centerpiece of the ring which best represents our class.

The centerpiece of the ring takes one of two forms. The first is that of a plain black stone, which reflects light off the ring. It is indicative of the darkness we have known, but even more so of the light we have shared, with ourselves and with others; and it is also an immovable stone which calls to mind a Stone which we have lost.

The stone, in effect, completes the ring, binding the ring together, connecting two sides to make a whole. Our experience has also taught us a strength we must retain and teach to others, while being supported by them.

For sometimes the ring supports the stone as much as the stone completes the ring.



COLIN TAYLOR STONE '13
1995 - 2011



PASSING THE TORCH

Cistercian's final Hungarian form master, Fr. Bernard, ends an era with the Class of 2012

By David Exall Stewart

On Saturday night, May 19, 2012, the 48th and final diploma of the night will be handed to Luke Tomaso '12, bringing to a close the commencement of the school's 50th year.

It will conclude a half century in which Hungarian refugees fought long odds to preserve the teaching traditions of the Cistercian Abbey of Zirc on the North Texas prairie.

It will conclude a half century in which Hungarian refugees fought long odds to preserve the teaching traditions of the Cistercian Abbey of Zirc on the North Texas prairie.

After this commencement, the Hungarian character of the school's founding years will begin to fade. No longer will Cistercian students be shaped by form masters whose escape from tyranny expressed their tenacious love for freedom.

It will be a moment to celebrate the success, hard work, and sacrifice of the Hungarian Cistercians who will see their work carried on by committed American monks and lay faculty members.

For one marathon runner, it will be another finish line crossed, but not an end. For like all form masters, while their administrative duties are terminated at graduation, their relationships continue to flourish.

The Class of 2012 is the sixth class that Fr. Bernard Marton has shepherded through the school in his 39-year career as a form master that started in 1968 (with a two-year and a three-year break in the nineties).

Fittingly, familiar Cistercian family names pop up throughout its roster. Some echo through the decades, like Moroney and Tomaso. Others belong to faculty (or former faculty) members, like Novinski,

Newcomb, and Leach. A full eleven of the 48 can look up to older brothers who graduated before them.

Only a few first-borns dot the list.

Remarkably, not one student has suffered through a divorce.

And, no surprise here, they are talented and smart. (Several are featured on page 5.)

That can be intimidating to form masters. But having served five previous classes, Fr. Bernard had learned a few things.

One was that the dramatic and multi-faceted story of his escape from Hungary was best shared in First Form, while the boys' minds were pliable, and their hormones still dormant.

"Fr. Bernard told us the whole story, each chapter in a separate form master period," said Alex Relihan '12. "He told what it was like to leave his house, cross borders illegally."

They had the opportunity to see and touch the sweater, bag, St. Anthony statue, and cigarettes that accompanied him on the adventure (see sidebar on page 16).

Over the years, he shared other stories.

He talked about the girls who caught his eye and the time he broke his nose.

Fr. Bernard shared memories of his days at Jesuit, where his senior picture still hangs outside the gymnasium. (He is easy to spot.)

They would learn of his impatience and his perseverance, his meter stick and his marathons.

"There is a very positive attitude that emanates from him," said Shane Macedonio '12, student government president (and the

entrepreneur behind the “Hungry Hawk” card.)

“He is a role model in living out a life in a way that helps others,” he added. “That’s really what he is doing as form master. He is an inspiration.”

The empty desk belonging to Stuart Leach in the Form VI classroom after Thanksgiving break surprised all of his classmates and Fr. Bernard.

“He didn’t tell any of his friends that he was leaving,” Alex Relihan remembered. “It was sad to lose him.”

“I didn’t even know I was leaving when I left school for Thanksgiving,” Leach said. “I wanted to have all my ducks in a row before leaving, but that wasn’t going to happen.”

However, all in the class were aware that Leach had been unhappy for some time, especially with the school’s few outlets for those with musical ambitions. And they had seen how it had begun to impact his grades and his relationships with teachers and his form master.

“Looking back,” he said, “I should have left after 8th grade. Everybody was just exhausted with me. As a result, there was a surprising amount of resignation about my leaving.”

“It was very hard,” Leach said. “Communication stopped. It hurt our whole family. I guess no one knew what to say and they didn’t know if we wanted to hear from them.”

“A number of guys in the class continued to come to see me perform,” he said. “I was really grateful for that. It meant a lot to me. But there was very little communication.”

“I was devastated.”

“Stuart had barricaded himself in a façade of rejection,” Fr. Bernard reflected, “that I was not able to penetrate or understand.”

“I wanted him to stay the course, but I could not give up on my principles.”

“I would have to allow him to practically drown. He would have to save himself.”

The entire episode ached even more due to the close connections

Giving Georgie the chance to escape

Just before dawn on November 20, 1956, the yellow light of a streetlamp illuminated a lonely figure on a village square near Budapest, Hungary.

Peering down one street and then the other, 15-year-old Anthony Gyuri (“Georgie”) Marton chuckled for an instant. The youngest (by 10 years) of five children, he had been overly protected by his mother for nearly all of his life. Days before, his mother had refused to allow him to venture out toward Budapest for fear he might run into trouble from the returning Soviet troops.

That was before the family came to terms with the reality of life after the failed October Revolution in Hungary, and the dismal implications of a Soviet regime intent on exacting revenge. Life would be very hard here for as long as anyone dare imagine. They wanted something better for their Georgie. They wanted Georgie to flee the country.

With rumors that the Soviets were tightening a circle around the city to prevent further escapes, time was of the essence. The family hurriedly hatched a plan that hinged on a young couple, who were friends of his brother Laci. The young couple planned to escape on November 20 and Laci had their word that they would take Georgie under their wing.

“The final words of approval had to come from my mother,” Fr. Bernard Marton wrote in his memoirs. In a voice full of conviction, she told her youngest, “Son, go and find your brother in America” (referring to his oldest brother Pityu, Fr. Henry Marton). For the next several hours, Georgie was peppered with stories, alibis, and covers to offer the authorities in case he was captured. Should he arrive safely in Austria, he would send a message over Radio Free Europe, “pot maker sends word that everything is okay.”

Early the next morning, Georgie dressed carefully, selecting his brown corduroys, heavy blue jacket, and brown beret. He went to confession and served Mass.

Then he tucked the slip of paper with his brother’s American address on it in the bandage around his sore ankle (determined to swallow it if captured).

After exchanging frantic good-byes with his family, he was off to the square, where he stood alone. The sum total of his belongs he carried under his arm in a bag fashioned from a fireman’s hose (courtesy of his brother).

Not long after 7 am under the light of the streetlamp, Georgie knowingly approached the first couple who fit the description he’d received. They would accompany him and act as “guardian angels” for the next 48 hours.

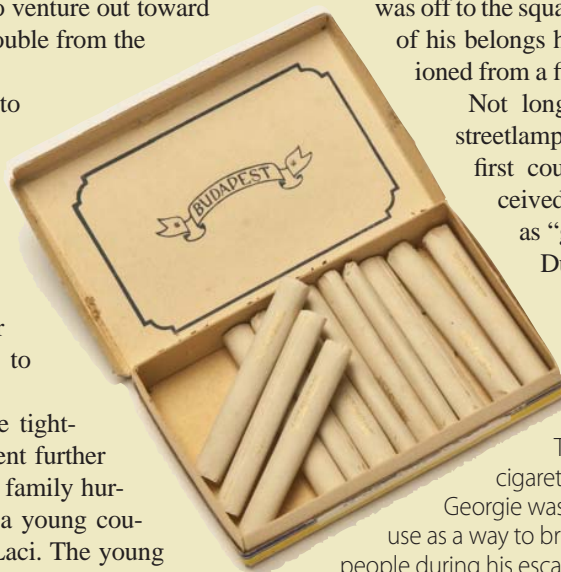
During those dangerous hours they made their escape from the grip of the Soviet State. It would take him another 13 months to make his way to New York to meet his brother, but none of it would have been possible without that couple in the square.

“What I didn’t know — and was not to learn about for some nine years,” wrote Fr. Bernard Marton years later in his account of the events, “was that with my

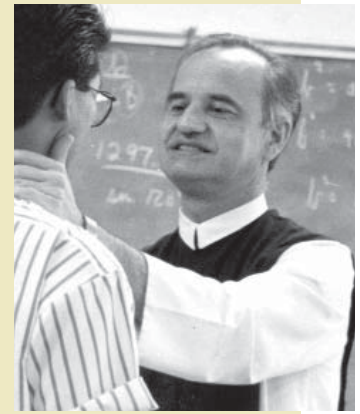
very first independent step, I teamed up with the wrong couple; my brother’s friends had a change of heart overnight and decided that it was too risky to chance the escape that late.”

The couple who served as his “guardian angels,” who had made his escape possible, had had no idea who Georgie was when he approached them on the square that morning. But they had seen something in this teen, in the way he had addressed them, in his desire to strive for a better life.

So they gave him a chance.



The cigarettes Georgie was to use as a way to bribe people during his escape.



1959



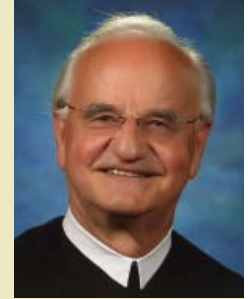
1963

Fr. Bernard Marton through the years

Top center: The Marton family reunited in Austria during the summer of 1964: Fr. Bernard (second from left) with (l-r) sister Magda, Mrs. Marton, Mr. Marton, Fr. Henry, and brother László ("Laci").



1987



2009

between Fr. Bernard and Leach's father, Jonathan Leach. Fr. Bernard, then headmaster, had hired Leach to teach at Cistercian, where he would stay for 10 years between 1989 and 1999. He would return again in the 2000s to direct dramas.

Leach continued his sophomore year after Thanksgiving break at Coppell High School.

“He could have just said, ‘It will not work out,’” remembered Ödi (“Eddy”) Örszik ’12 of the man everyone in his family in Slovakia calls “Uncle Georgie.” Fr. Bernard had traveled to his town just north of the Hungarian border to visit family (Örszik is the grandson of Fr. Bernard’s cousin). He also was scouting destinations for a trip he was planning for the following summer with members of his form.

“Eddy (16 years old at the time) caught my eye,” recalled Fr. Bernard who had seen the boy occasionally over the years. “He told me he had been studying books on American colleges and he had his eye set on Harvard.” He was the same age as his class back at Cistercian.

Was there a chance the young man might be able to attend school in the US, wondered Örszik’s father, a cardiologist? Fr. Bernard could serve as his guardian angel.

With Opening Ceremonies for the 2010-11 school year just weeks away and Cistercian hardly prepared for a foreign exchange student, the idea of the young man’s attending school in Irving seemed far fetched. But Fr. Bernard had seen something in this boy.

The Class of 2012 would come to see it, too.

“It was really strange at first,” recalled Luke Tomaso. “We hadn’t had a new kid since freshman year. Then to have this kid come in for junior year who spoke decent English, from Hungary, well, we were all shy at first, asking awkward questions like, ‘What do you like to do in your free time?’”

“People came together to welcome him and families opened their homes because they liked him,” said Relihan, who became close friends with the new student and whose family has hosted Eddy for a number of quarters (along with the Carrs, Squiers, Saads, and Springers).

Örszik, who had studied English for just three years (his third language), dove into Cistercian’s Form VII curriculum without fear, refusing to take short cuts or accept failure. He worked long hours and enthusiastically accepted the help of students like Will Squiers ’12, who offered to help fill in gaps.

His hard work persuaded Greg Novinski ’82 and Peter Saliga to accommodate him, arranging for a tutor to be on call for math and allowing essay questions to be taken orally in history class.

Even football didn’t intimidate Örszik.

“Honestly,” Örszik laughed, “my football was about trying to survive without breaking my arm.” He did have the chance to run the ball for about 30 yards and a first down. “I was so happy when somebody tackled me.”

“Eddy had some trouble understanding teachers when they talked fast,” Tomaso pointed out, “and he hadn’t taken Algebra II, so he was behind in math.”

“But when report cards came out,” he said, “his GPA was well

“The most amazing thing happened after [Fr. Bernard] began. There was total silence.”

— Luke Tomaso ’12

We are the back cover of the first 50 years of Cistercian history, the last class to take our roots directly from Hungary (and a Hungarian)."

— Luke Tomaso '12

above the class average. Pretty astounding."

"We threw a birthday party for him since he hates birthday parties," Tomaso remembered. "We invited girls from different schools. He had a pretty good time. It meant a lot to him."

"The class had kind of formed around him."

"Eddy came at the perfect time," said best friend Relihan. "He created a little diversity. He offered a refreshing perspective. He taught us how to make new friends."

After a rocky sophomore year, the class was coming together. At the overnight junior retreat in February 2011, members of the class spoke out and reflected on how far relations within the class had come.

Everyone in the class and the form master officially agreed, the Class of 2012 had gelled.

In early May, 2011, Fr. Bernard called for a joint Form Master's period in the small lecture hall. "Normally, we don't have the two sides together because it gets too loud," explained Relihan. "So we knew that this must be big news."

"We could see from Fr. Bernard's expression," he remembered as they entered the room, "that he was solemn."

"I received a letter," Fr. Bernard began, "from a former classmate." He immediately had everyone's attention.

"The most amazing thing happened after he began," Tomaso said. "There was total silence. That is very unusual for our class."

The former classmate wrote how he missed being with his brothers and wanted to come back.

"As Fr. Bernard read the letter," Relihan said, "it didn't cross my mind who it was." He was on the edge of his seat.

The former classmate asked the class to accept him back.

"It was such an emotional letter that Fr. Bernard teared up," Tomaso remembered. "Lots of my classmates felt the same way, and were tearing up."

He finally read the name of the former classmate: Stuart Leach.

After a brief pause, "everyone stood up and applauded," said Tomaso. "We were overjoyed that we'd get Stuart back, the only kid we lost in high school."

"Stuart is one of the funnier guys," Relihan commented. "It's great to have his voice, his talent, and charisma back."

Almost immediately after the applause died down at the form master's period, Leach began receiving text messages and voice mails from his brothers, congratulating him.

Leach, who had been devastated by the lack of communication with his brothers since his departure, was gratified by their response.

"I really missed my brothers."



like to tell the escape story to all my classes in Form I so they can connect to the flesh and blood of the events that otherwise they know only through history and books," emphasized Fr. Bernard. And he tried to offer each of his classes from 1977, 1984, 1987, 1994, and 2004 the chance to travel with him when they were older to Europe to see the places for themselves.

Despite the difficulties of trying to manage the proportions of such a large class (and the associated liabilities), Fr. Bernard worked tirelessly to ensure that his class, his final class, would be the beneficiary of his first-hand knowledge.

"I feel like our class is part of the founding years," Tomaso suggested. "We are the back cover of the first 50 years of Cistercian history, the last class to take our roots directly from Hungary (and a Hungarian)."

On June 10, 2011, 24 members of the class (and four chaperones),



left Dallas on a journey that Fr. Bernard called “Roots and Roads.”

He would take the group to the birthplace of the Cistercians in Cîteaux, France, through Switzerland, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary. It would be “Fr. Bernard’s special tour.”

“Fr. Bernard knows our origins, he knows our life in Texas,” pointed out Tomaso. “It was special to go back to where he was from and explore and experience what is so familiar to him.”

In addition to a lot of monastery hopping, Fr. Bernard showed them No. 60 Andrassy Street.

Here at the Soviet’s secret police headquarters on October 29, 1950, Abbot Wendelin Endrédy was brought and tortured for 18 hours. The interrogator spoke of the 24 members of the Order abroad. He would remain in prison until 1956.

But perhaps the most special stop took place in Austria, at the Cistercian Abbey of Stams, where Fr. Bernard said his First Mass on July 30, 1967.

Twenty-four members of the Class of 2012 traveled with Fr. Bernard to Europe over the summer of 2011. Here, they pose with their leader in front of Soviet-era public art at Statue Park in Budapest.

“On that day,” Fr. Bernard said in his homily, “my family was allowed to come out of Hungary to attend. And they were standing right there where you are standing right now.”

“My brother stood right next to me at this very same altar.”

“Guys,” he said, “you are my family now.”

“Fr. Bernard has taught us what it means to be men,” insisted Leach. “Never too stern or too flippant, he exemplifies the wisdom of Solomon in Ecclesiastes. He shows us there is a time for everything, so we must enjoy the present.”

Editor’s note: Eddy Örszik has applied to 16 colleges, including Harvard University.



Robert Erickson '14 lays it in during the narrow loss to All Saints in the first round at SPC.

BASKETBALL

Just a matter of inches held the Hawks back at SPC

Despite having to play without senior posts **Ikenna Nwafor '12** (knee injury) and **Forrest Rahn '12** (mononucleosis), the Hawks felt that they had as good a chance as anybody to take home the Division-II basketball trophy at SPC.

But the first round game against All Saints came down to a matter of inches when, with four seconds remaining, a jumper from **Matthew Merrick '15** landed just short.

"The kids played an outstanding game," Lee said. "It was back and forth all the way."

Peter Thompson '13 led the Hawks in scoring in the game with 17 points while freshman Merrick threw in 13.

After the disappointing loss, Cistercian went on to defeat St. Stephens and John Cooper.

For the season, Thompson led the team in scoring, shooting 60 percent from his post position. Rahn ranked as the team's second leading scorer and leading rebounder.

Matthew Imaizumi '13 ran the offense from his point guard position where he led the team in steals and assists.

Merrick, the first freshman to earn significant minutes in memory, averaged over 10 points per game and led the team in 3-point shooting.

SWIMMING

AquaHawk swim to a best-ever second place SPC finish

The AquaHawks placed second at the SPC Swimming and Diving Championships for the first time in team history.

The result was powered by the outstanding performance of Cistercian's relay teams.

In the 200 yd. medley relay, **Andrew Jacob '13**, **Sam McGraw '12**, **Christopher Vernino '13**, and **Aidan McLaughlin '12** swam to a third place finish.

The 200 freestyle relay team of McLaughlin, **Davis Benn '15**, **Jake Watters '13**, McGraw placed second.

Finally, in the 400 freestyle relay, the team of McLaughlin, Benn, Watters, and **Josh Fontenot '12** earned second place.

All three performances set school records and gave the team a big boost.

Individually, virtually every one of the Hawk's 22 swimmers ended his season with a personal best (PB).

The team's most spectacular event saw Watters take first place in the 500 yard freestyle, while Benn swam to a third-place finish.

In the 200 yard freestyle, Watters placed second and Benn fifth. In the 200 yd. Individual Medley, Vernino

placed seventh. In the 50 yard freestyle, McLaughlin placed third. In the 100 yard butterfly, Vernino placed seventh.

Divers **Jake Shimek '13**, **Jess Clay '13**, and **Lucas Skaras '13** placed third, fourth, and fifth, respectively, in the 11-dive program.

Congratulations to Swim Coach Doug Moyse and his wife on their new baby.



The 200 yard freestyle relay team placed second at SPC. (l-r) Davis Benn '15, Aidan McLaughlin '12, Sam McGraw '12, Jake Watters '13.

SOCCER

Hawks fall to top seed in overtime of second-round SPC match



Luke Tomaso '12 in action against Greenhill at SPC.

January was not kind to last year's Division-II champs who lost four SPC counter games in 2012 by one goal.

The season's highlight came a week prior to SPC when the Hawks handled Greenhill 3-0.

"We had solid midfield play by **Luke Tomaso '12**, and the **Rutledge brothers, Blake '12** and **Kyle '15**," said Coach JP Walsh. "Defensively, **George Joseph '12** and **John Newcomb '12** were outstanding."

The Hawks won the first game at the SPC tournament 2-0 over St. Stephens on goals by **Antanas Madhavapeddy '13** and **Shane Macedonio '12**. **Austin Burns '12** kept the defense organized, and **Nico Artz '12** made a tremendous penalty kick save to secure the shutout.

Later that day, the team played the top seed, Greenhill, to a 0-0 tie in regulation play, but fell in overtime.

"The boys worked hard all season and played every team tough," said Walsh.

2 Place the AquaHawks placed at the SPC Swimming and Diving Championships in February. It is the best finish in team history.

1 The goal differential between St. Mark's, the eventual D-I champion soccer team and Cistercian in their late season game. The Hawks fell in the final five minutes after a great game from keeper Nico Artz '12.

'70

Charlie Williams
cwilliams@blalack.com
 Emily and **Charlie**

Williams presided over the weddings of daughters Betsy and Mary this past August and January respectively, after the wedding of daughter Anna previously. They are now destitute and accepting donations.

'72

Gary Cunningham
gary.cunningham@cunninghamarchitects.com
40th reunion in June '12

'74

Jim Bloodgood
jblood6014@aol.com
Paul Kurilecz visited the

School in December and walked around the new buildings as well as reminisced about the old buildings with an old friend, Fr. Peter '73. Paul was on campus to deliver six laptops donated to the School by his employer, Atmos Energy.

'77

Pat Thompson
thompsn3@sbcglobal.net
35th reunion in June '12

'82

Andrew Roberts
andrew@sloanandroberts.com
30th reunion in June '12

Brad Sissom is now Vice President of Engineering at Ascentia Imaging.

'87

Chris Rakowitz
rakowitz@yahoo.com
25th reunion in June '12

'92

Justin Lannen
jlannen@sbcglobal.net
20th reunion in June '12

'97

Matthew F. Nevitt
mfnevvit@yahoo.com
15th reunion in June '12

'99

Bobby Hoyt
thefan25@hotmail.com

Robert Reid delivered his first of six babies as a medical student on January 6, 2012.



'00

Brent Hogan
brenthogan@aol.com

Brent Hogan just started work as a Senior Financial Analyst at Stream Energy.

Clayton Long took his 2nd trip to Sierra Leone, West Africa, in October with the non-profit H.O.W. (Helping Others Worldwide). **Jonathan Purcell** moved back to Dallas in July. He will be finishing his Emergency Medicine residency in June 2012, and will then be doing an ultrasound fellowship (essentially he works half time in the ER and half time doing ultrasound stuff) for 1 year at UT Southwestern/Parkland, then he hopes to continue working at Parkland in the ER. **Jonathan Reinemund** joined Leprino Foods in Denver, CO. It's a large, privately-held, family-owned mozzarella cheese company that is building out a marketing department. **Laurent Spamer** finished his MBA at Duke about a year ago and moved back to Dallas to work as the GM for a wine importer called Misa Imports. As a side project, he and Joseph Saliba have started a custom medical uniform company, TailorMed. It's been a very entrepreneurial project as they launched it in the fall of 2011. Essentially, they have developed a website that will allow users to select fabric, style, pockets, and measurements of their scrubs and see a virtual mannequin that previews their design. The website is called TailorMedScrubs.com. Between Laurent's fulltime job and his side job, he has only little time left for his girlfriend of three years who is in med-school and has very little spare time as well.

'02

Barry McCain
barry@barrymccain.com
10th reunion in June '12

Debbie and **Jamie Holland** welcomed a new daughter, Theresa Marie Holland on September 18th, 2011. Jamie is currently a second year pediatrics resident in Stanford Pediatrics at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital.

'03

Mukund Ramkumar
mukund.ramkumar@gmail.com
Chris Sakowski graduated from UT

Medical Branch, Galveston, on June 4, 2011. He began his 5-year residency in orthopedics at Los Angeles County and USC Medical Center, Los Angeles, the end of June. He has little time as he works 12-hour plus days and/or nights but he is enjoying immensely the learning experience.

'05

Sean Moroney
sean.w.moroney@gmail.com
Al Hernandez is spending this

semester in Canada studying at the Faculty of Law at McGill University. He is taking some European Union law classes at the Faculty to prepare me for the LLM he will be completing in Paris and he is also taking three separate French classes around McGill. He hopes that the combination of the French classes, the conversations that he has with French colleagues, and reading French everyday around Montreal will help him gain the level of French fluency he will need to live in Paris. He also continues to work on the Portuguese that he has already learned since he is planning to spend part

PASSING

GEORGE L. AKIN '76

George Leighton Dahl Akin '76 died unexpectedly of a heart attack on Sunday, November 27, 2011, fifteen days before his 53rd birthday. He attended Emory University, the University of Texas in Austin, and the University of Texas in Arlington where he graduated in 1986 with a B.S. in geology. He later earned a M.B.A. also from U.T. Arlington. Akin lived in University Park. He is survived by his daughters Rachel and Christine, and former wife Patricia (all in California) as well as his parents (in Dallas) and sisters.

of the summer in Lisbon working for the United States Government. Although it is still a bit early, he is starting to think about life after law school. If any alumni or class parents have thoughts on legal jobs that will enable him to use French, Portuguese, and Spanish on a daily or weekly basis, he would love to hear from them. **Andres Ruzo** reports that recently his research team (Sofia Ruzo, media and outreach, **Peter Koutsogeorgas**, film and editing, and Andres himself) received news that their proposal was accepted, and that they will be receiving a grant to film a documentary that will eventually be presented for review by National Geographic. National Geographic released this on their website <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/bios/andres-ruzo>. He wants to thank all for their prayers and support along the way.

'07

Kyle Welch
kyle.v.welch@gmail.com
5th reunion in June '12

Will Arbery had a one-act put on in October at the Abingdon Theatre Company, and another one this February at Hearth Gods, both in Manhattan. The Washington, D.C. Magazine The Professional is also publishing a short story of his called "Wrassler." **Tom Davey** graduated from SMU in December and is exploring graduate programs for biology. **H.T. Flanagan** will be attending law school at the University of Pennsylvania starting in the fall of 2012. In doing so, he is proud to continue his tour of America's most dangerous cities. **Kerr Friedman** got married in August and is thoroughly enjoying the married life. He and Julie live in Austin while Kerr is completing his master's in finance from Texas A&M. And speaking of weddings, **Stephen Fox** officially became the second member of the class to get engaged. He proposed to Irina in December, and they are looking to get married in the fall of 2012. Stephen is also moving from NYC back to DFW in order to pursue a job or master's degree in engineering. **Pat Gargan** is finishing up his final year at the Naval Academy. Upon graduation in the spring, he will move to Charleston, South Carolina for nuclear power school as he prepares to serve on

Class Notes

submarines. **Alden Harris** is working for United Commercial Realty in Dallas and enjoying the grown-up life in DFW. **James Hinckley** recently moved to Stamford, Connecticut where he is working for GE Capital in their Financial Management Program. He also passed the first part of the CFA Exam, so he is now studying for the next section. And yes, he is still really, really tall. Somehow, he is even taller than **Hunter Lockhart**, who is pursuing a master's degree at Rice University in subsurface geology. His particular area of research interest is reservoir characterization. Yet, he is still confused by the fact that dumping desks is not socially acceptable in graduate school. Who knew? **Mark Ratway** is working in DFW and has found some time to pick up painting once again. He is going to display some of his pieces in a gallery in March. **Konrad Stoick** is working as a strategic sourcing analyst in Temecula, California as part of his rotational program with Abbott Vascular. He is also continuing to post debatably funny videos on Youtube primarily for his own entertainment. Some things never change. **Warner Sallman** is working in Hong Kong for Kobre & Kim LLP, a

boutique financial litigation firm. Work has been keeping him pretty busy so far, but he is looking forward to traveling around Asia when he gets the chance. **John Packer Stevenson** is serving as a mission leader for Saint Paul's Outreach for the next two years doing campus ministry at Texas State and leading a household of men. In his own words, "Fr. Greg never saw it coming." **Erik Tanner** is living in Houston, where he works as an administrator in the political science department at Rice. In the meantime, he is also recording an album. **Stephen Wang** is attending law school at Duke, and is finally able to live his dream as a Cameron Crazy. **Matt Walther** graduated with an engineering degree from the University of Southern California in December and has made his way back to the Lone Star State. **Kyle Welch** is working as an audit assistant in Chicago for Deloitte & Touche. He has been enjoying the fact that Chicago is essentially Notre Dame 2.0, but he sees himself returning to Texas in the next few years. The class of 2007 also has some future doctors amongst its members – **Michael Montoya** and Alex Tong are attending med school at Wake Forest and Case Western

respectively. **Steve Riela** has been completing a master's in health administration and has had several interviews for med schools in Texas. **Zach Edgerton** is finishing up his psychology degree at UT in Austin. He has been working as an intern for an electrophysiologist as he prepares for the MCAT and med school applications. But the award for coolest and most adventurous post-college experience has to go to **Nathan Helms**, who is teaching at a Catholic school in Iraq. He is living in a town of approximately 30,000 people called Ankawa, where he has experienced lots of amusing anecdotes – many of which are not meant for publication. He is helping the school establish an international baccalaureate curriculum and plans to return after a year so that he can attend graduate school.

'09

Paul DiFiore
paul@difiores.com

T.J. Alcalá traveled to Belize with a Fordham program called Global Outreach. He and a team of 11 other students worked with a group called Hand in Hand Ministries and built a home for a family.

ALUMNI AND ALUMNI PARENTS FROM ALL CLASSES ARE INVITED

Join us for Cistercian's 50th anniversary *grand* celebration



Friday, June 1 @ 2 pm
Golf Tournament

at Bear Creek Golf Course

(open to current students and parents plus alumni and alumni parents)

Benefitting the Colin T. Stone '13 Scholarship Fund

and the Tom Hillary Scholarship Fund

Sign up before May 1 to save \$\$

visit: www.cistercian.org/golf

Saturday, June 2
Reunions Weekend

Tournaments and Picnic

(open to all alumni and alumni parents)

Sunday, June 3
50th Anniversary

Celebratory Mass and Brunch

(open to the entire community)

For more information, contact Erin Hart
ehart@cistercian.org or 469-499-5406



Saturday
8:30 am - 5 K Run with Fr. Bernard
9-10 am - Alumni Assoc. Meeting
10 am - Soccer, B-ball, Volleyball
11:30 - 3:30 pm - picnic lunchroom (no charge)
1 pm - Quiz Bowl Tournament

Sunday
10:30 am - Mass
11:30 am - Family Brunch (West Gym, no charge)

Fr. Bernard didn't try to hammer me into a round hole

I found Cistercian after my first freshman year at MacArthur High School in Irving, to which I had been recently transplanted by a divorce and associated nastiness.

Leaving my rural life and longtime friends for the city and its urban schools and a sundered family did not suit me.



Afterthoughts

Smokey Briggs '84

During my first freshman year I cut class upwards of 50 days in favor of training mules and horses for some folks nice enough to pay me for the work.

The mules kept me sane, but they were not great tutors in Geometry.

Despite my delinquency I made A's and B's.

A few days after the last day of school, which I of course skipped, I came to the conclusion I was on a rocky path, and started looking for alternatives.

I looked up private schools in the phone book and Cistercian, with a "C", was at the top of the list.

The entrance exam indicated that I might make the cut regarding use of the English language, but I was way, way behind in mathematics — I might be able to keep up if I dropped back a year, and worked hard.

With an August 25th birthday I had always been the runtiest kid in the class, so dropping back a year sounded fine to me.

A few weeks later I arrived at Cistercian for the first day of school, dressed in the first pair of khaki's I had ever owned and down-at-the-heel cowboy boots. I didn't really know what to expect, but I had moved often enough in my short academic career to know how the first day at a new school went.

I was excited, both by the thought of a new school that did not seem to be run as a half-way-house-before-prison, and by the knowledge that before the day was done I would have been in a few fist fights, as me and the local toughs sorted things out.

Fr. Bernard introduced the new kids first thing. There were five of us. We stood as he said our names.

When I stood Paul Ruiz yelled, "He looks like a truck driver," and there were a few snickers. I glared at him and took note of the kid I was going to fight first — he was tall, skinny, had the reach on me, and he looked quick, so I decided I would rush him hard and punch to the body.

And so my life at Cistercian began.

At the end of the day, there had been no fights, most of the kids were nice or at least indifferent, and I was in over my head academically, and knew it.

Here, I realized, I could fail, and failing meant...well failing. *Adios*. Good bye. *Vale* (I pulled that from memory, Fr. Matthew. Hopefully it does not show.)

It was one of the first times I had to entertain the possibility of truly failing, other than on the gridiron at a 5A high school.

Looking back, I realize that this was one of my first meaningful encounters with the goddess Freedom.

Fate and restless feet landed me in far West Texas. There is no Cistercian here, that I have found, and I have looked. I have four children and want for them a good education.

Schools here often more closely resemble the half-way-house-before-prison of my pre-CPS days.

As my beautiful wife Laura and I contemplated our future, school was prominent, and more than once I puzzled over just what ingredients made Cistercian such a grand educational experience, in hopes of finding something similar for my offspring.

After a couple of decades of thought (I never claimed to be a fast study) I have come to the conclusion that at the heart of Cistercian's success is Freedom — and that realization has sculpted my children's educations.

At Cistercian I was free to succeed or fail.

My teachers were free to fail me, but also free to help me learn.

Most, rather than holders of state-issued teaching certificates, were experts in their subject matter, who liked to teach.

I never had a teacher at Cistercian who needed the textbook. The text was simply an aide for the students, a skeleton of notes so we did not have to write every word discussed.

As students we were amazingly free to question the status quo, and even encouraged to do so, or at least not punished for it that I remember.

At Cistercian I found academic freedom — vast, terrifying and wonderful all at once.

I had known and loved Freedom in one of her forms, as a child growing up in rural Texas, where I was free to read books under shady trees, hunt squirrels, and mostly roam and explore hundreds of acres of nearly unfenced land with a .22 rifle in my hand, and a dog or two at my side.

I lost that when we moved into town, and then found Freedom in another of her forms at Cistercian.

I did not know what I had found at the time, but I did know, that for whatever reason, I liked Cistercian.

So, a new chapter in my love affair with Freedom began.

My little fairy tale did not have to end happily.

I was a bit of a squarish peg at Cistercian (not the only one, I might add).

As my form master, Fr. Bernard could have tried to hammer me into a round hole. I do not think it would have worked.

Instead, I like to think he cut some angles into the hole, and maybe he and I sanded a rough edge or two off myself.

Our relationship was not all peaches and cream.

I was born with a bad case of distrust of authority. Nine years in public schools had inflamed my condition.

Fr. Bernard was the authority. Heads butted more than once.

And yet, there was freedom for me to exist within the halls of Cistercian.

Not many institutions, or people, are capable of this — of making room for someone or some idea that does not fit neatly to the mold.

I think it is a testament to the overall culture of freedom that permeates Cistercian — academic and more.

After 46 years, I have concluded that life on this earth is an eternal struggle for Freedom.

Today, when life poses a question to me, I do not ask what potential result I prefer — I ask what Freedom demands — what course of action allows me to live free without forcing my thoughts or demands on my fellow man.

Freedom does not flourish where she is not welcome. We mortals have to invite her into our hearts and lives.

She was welcome at Cistercian in 1980 (and I suspect and hope she still is today).

Community calendar

APRIL

- 12 Abbatial Benediction
Peter Verhalen, O. Cist.**
- 25 Abbot's Circle Dinner**

JUNE

50th Anniversary Celebration

- 1 Golf Tournament**
- 2 Reunions Weekend
Tournaments & Picnic**
- 3 Community-wide
Celebratory Mass/Brunch**

CISTERCIAN

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

3660 CISTERCIAN ROAD
IRVING, TEXAS 75039

Does Scripture tell us anything about venerating saints?

For many decades I was convinced that Scripture has nothing to say on the veneration and intercession of the saints. I have accepted the Church's teaching on this issue because it comes from the constant tradition beginning with the second century.

In the middle of the 2nd century we read about the veneration of the martyrs and later it was extended to those who were *like* martyrs since they had died to their selfish self and had given themselves to God and men with heroic love.



On Prayer

Fr. Roch Kereszty

To my surprise, and embarrassment, I discovered a few years ago that the New Testament actually does speak about the importance and veneration of the saints, if indirectly. But most Catholics are unaware of it just as

I had been. I mention here only a few key texts.

At the question of Peter, "We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?" Jesus reassures them, "Amen I say to you, who have followed me, in the new age when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, you yourselves will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mt 19:27-28).

When will that be? Before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish High Court, Jesus declares, "From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mt 26:64).

In other words, the new age, literally "new birth" or "regeneration" begins with the death and resurrection of Jesus. This is made clear by Stephen, the first martyr, who, when being stoned, sees the heavens open and "the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 8:56).

Besides, judging in the Bible means not simply judging a case of law but rather governing (think of the Book of Judges). Thus, Jesus promises the apostles that they will share in his governance of the Church, the new Israel. In the Book of Revelation Jesus extends this

promise to everyone who wins the battle of faith: "I will give the victor the right to sit with me on my throne, as I myself first won the victory and sit with my Father on his throne" (Rev 3:21).

There are other scenes in the Book of Revelation where all those who take part in the heavenly liturgy praise God and the Lamb for making them priests and kings (Rev 1:6, 5:10, 20:4, 6).

So our God is not a lonely tyrant who jealously keeps all power to rule to himself. He does not tell the saints in heaven: "Stay out of my way. I can do everything infinitely better than you."

Our God is so loving and so powerful that he wants to govern the world by soliciting the intercessory prayers of the saints. From all eternity he has decided to do certain things at the requests of the saints in heaven and even of those who pray to Him on earth.

But you may still insist, "Why seek the intercession of the saints when I can go directly to Jesus, or the Father or the Holy Spirit?"

We can and we should "go straight to God," but the saints like to pray with us and for us, because they love us.

They can also help us to pray better by sharing their love of God with us. It is part of the saints' joy to help us understand and appreciate God's plan for us.

Moreover, in Jesus dwells the fullness of divinity. But everyone in heaven expresses some features of his infinite beauty and goodness in a special way.

No two saints' holiness is the same. One does not like organizations like Philip of Neri, while St. Ignatius of Loyola organized his Order into a most effective "army."

St. Francis of Assisi did not want to possess a single book, while St. Albert the Great read all the available books of the 13th century. Yet each of them radiates the same Christ, the same love, peace and joy.

This great variety of saintly characters enables each one of us to feel especially close to some. First, however, we need to become acquainted with them.

Write to me (fr-roch@cistercian.org) if you would like to find a good book on a particular saint.

Brotherly love can seem easy, but only if we share in the love that comes from God and is God.