



A Letter from the Abbey

Cistercian Abbey • Our Lady of Dallas

Inside

Jubilee Mass for Fr. Julius

Fr. Julius Leloczky will celebrate his 50th Anniversary Jubilee Mass on June 5 at the Abbey Church. The event takes place during Reunions Weekend. See page 6.

Brothers serve with the pope

Br. Thomas Esposito and Br. Ambrose Strong served at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday with Pope Benedict. See page 4.

Stations of the Cross trail

Students completed mulching the trail and installing Stations of the Cross in time for Palm Sunday. See page 6.

Mark your calendar

All events at the Abbey Church

Sunday, June 5

Golden Jubilee of Fr. Julius Leloczky

Sunday, July 3

Vows Ceremony of Br. Stephen Gregg and Br. Lawrence Brophy, who will take their Solemn Vows.

Sunday, August 14

Priestly Ordinations of Br. Thomas Esposito and Br. Ambrose Strong
Diaconal Ordinations of Br. Stephen Gregg and Br. Lawrence Brophy

Monday, August 15

(Feast of the Assumption)
First Mass of Fr. Thomas Esposito

Saturday, August 20

(Feast of St. Bernard)
First Mass of Fr. Ambrose Strong

Sunday, October 9th

(Feast of St. Denis)
Golden Jubilee
of Fr. Abbot Denis Farkasfalvy

Roman tour guides

Young monks enjoy giving visitors special treatment

By Br. Anthony Bigney

If you are lucky enough to be planning a trip to Rome, consider contacting some of the Cistercian monks studying there. Depending on their schedules, one of them might show you around.

“Brothers Stephen, Ambrose and Thomas have become quasi-natives of the Eternal City after living there for two or three years,” noted Fr. Ignatius Peacher, who spent the fall

semester of 2010 in the Eternal City.

“On weekends and in our free time, they would take us newbies (Br. Lawrence and me) to churches and other sites. They knew what bus to take, what time was best to visit, and were able to converse with the locals in flawless Italian.”

“I was especially impressed when Br. Thomas and I would go on bike rides and he
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Photo by Jim Reusch

Fr. Ignatius Peacher and Bishop Kevin Farrell embrace at the conclusion of the ordination on March 25 at the Abbey Church.

Deeply rooted

Fr. Ignatius Peacher's
journey to the
priesthood emerged
organically

By Br. John Bayer

On the Solemnity of the Annunciation of Our Lord, Friday, March 25, 2011, Br. Ignatius Peacher was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Kevin Farrell.

Since the feast fell on a Friday this year, classes at Cistercian Prep School were cancelled to make it possible for members of the school community to attend the ordination ceremonies.

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French film captures Trappist way of life

By Fr. Peter Verhalen

In April the theology and French teachers at the Prep School encouraged their students to attend the Cannes Film Festival winner “Of Gods and Men.”

Our brothers in Rome had seen the movie when it debuted in Europe and told us it is a “must see.”

The movie tells the story of eight Trappist monks (Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance) living in Algeria whose lives are threatened by terrorists.

The film remains faithful not only to the events that took place in 1996 but also portrays with a sense of respect and understanding unique among movies today the monastic way of life of these Trappists.

Their lives are filled with prayer, study, the simple manual labor needed to support themselves, and a ministry largely by



The Trappist Cistercians in “Of Gods and Men” find faith, hope, and love in the face of Algerian terrorists.

example to the Muslim villagers among whom they live. The film is a study in leadership and humanity, and compels us all to ask the question, “Am I bearing witness to the faithful love of Christ?”

© Marie-Julie Muller / Why Not Productions. Courtesy of Soap Pictures Classics

Notes

Abbey website overhauled

The abbey’s website, www.cistercian.org, has had a dramatic face-lift over the past few months.

Br. John Bayer and Kara Dahl, the webmaster, have collaborated to make the website more beautiful and informative.

One can check out artwork from Fr. Damian Szödényi and Fr. Ignatius Peacher, homilies delivered in the Abbey Church, the latest abbey news, and photos of important events.

Abbot attends installation of new Archabbot of Zirc

Fr. Abbot Denis headed to Zirc, Hungary for the Installation of Abbot Sixtus, newly elected Archabbot of Zirc.

As Abbot of Zirc, Sixtus is the *ex officio* Abbot President of the congregation to which Our Lady of Dallas belongs.

On the return trip, Fr. Abbot spent a week in Rome attending the annual meeting of the Pontifical Biblical Commission and meeting with the four brothers studying in the General House.

Fr. Aloysius Kimecz, 1926-2010

Early in the morning of December 17, 2010 our brother Fr. Aloysius Kimecz passed away.

At his wake the following Monday testimonials to his life were offered by Mark Talkington '79, by Fr. Paul McCormick, and by Betty Sitton, a Cistercian faculty member and a long-time friend of Fr. Aloysius.

His funeral was held the next day, after which the monks, joined by several of Fr. Aloysius’s friends and admirers, journeyed to Calvary Hill Cemetery to bury him.

Fr. Aloysius spent many years teaching at Cistercian Preparatory School and serving at St. Edward’s parish in Dallas.

In the monastery he will be remembered fondly for many reasons, in particular for the special affection he had for the younger brothers of the monastery, his fidelity to our common prayer, and for the tremendous strength with which he carried his illness during the last several years of his life.

Fr. Abbot, during his sermon at the Funeral Mass, described Fr. Aloysius as having a “deeply religious soul” and finding a deep sense of peace in his last days.

Let your good deeds multiply like the blooms of springtime

Easter came so late this year that by the time it arrived we almost began packing for Summer vacation.

I am still anxious that Lent and summer have overlapped so badly that when school starts in September, I will be ready for Christmas!



THE ABBOT'S VIEW

Fr. Denis Farkasfalvy

But, jokes aside, I was starved for some Easter spirit, in the middle of April, and Easter was still a week away.

When nature goes through its annual renewal, we (at least in the Northern hemisphere) like to think of a complete spiritual and physical renewal.

According to the Gospel message (which applies to all people) unless we are born again, we cannot enter the Kingdom.

This kind of rebirth is not the result of mere Lenten efforts, by which we try to put more order and responsibility into our daily life.

Rebirth at Easter is a function of encountering our faith, more specifically the meaning of our faith: the convincing paradigm of nature helps.

Just as a wintry landscape cannot be turned into spring by dreaming about it, we cannot resurrect our inner life, either, by dreaming about a better way of life.

But just as in nature, it is enough for just one bluebonnet to begin so that when I look again there are hundreds and thousands everywhere — so God’s grace can do its job with my inner landscape.

First one heartfelt prayer, then one single good deed, then a sighing desire to love as Jesus did.

For one reason or another — mostly for reasons I do not know — my inner landscape can also blossom, grow, and feel inspired, and I reach out to clean my heart, renew my attitudes and start again my freshman course in “Love Thy Neighbor 101.”

Br. Thomas and Br. Ambrose serve with the Holy Father at Chrism Mass

Chrism oil may be reserved for August ordinations

On the morning of Holy Thursday, Br. Thomas Esposito and Br. Ambrose Strong served as deacons for the Chrism Mass held in St. Peter's Basilica.

"After kissing the altar, the two of us walked with the Pope around the altar as he

incensed it," recalled Br. Thomas.

"Ambrose sat to the left of the Holy Father, and I sat to the right."

During the Chrism mass the pope blesses the Holy Chrism used at Confirmations, Ordinations and Baptisms.

"As deacons soon to be ordained, the Chrism Mass was especially significant for us," Br. Thomas explained.

"We witnessed the priests renewing the profession they made at their own ordinations, and we're hoping to receive some of the chrism oil for our own ordinations in August."

"I don't exaggerate," commented Br. Ambrose, who had a chance to shake the Holy Father's hand after the Chrism Mass, "when I say he has an intensely luminous presence."



Photo by Francesco Felici

Br. Thomas Esposito and Br. Ambrose Strong accompany Pope Benedict at St. Peter's Basilica on Holy Thursday.



Photo courtesy of Fr. Peter Verhalen

Fr. Gregory Schweers (left) and Fr. Peter Verhalen with Bishop Thomas Tschoepe at their ordination in 1981.

Frs. Peter and Greg mark 30 years

April 20 marked the 30th anniversary of priestly ordination for Fr. Peter Verhalen and Fr. Gregory Schweers.

Fr. Gregory, on the occasion of his anniversary wrote, "St. Augustine was supposed to have remarked that God writes the history of our lives using crooked lines.

"After 30 years in the priesthood, I have only been able to decipher two of these lines.

"One, God's gift of the priesthood to me is an unmerited miracle;

"Two, faithfulness to my vocation says much more about God's mercy toward fools than it does about my perseverance.

"My conclusion is, then, that I shall continue to pray that God's mercy and miracle continue in this, my foolish life!"

Students complete Stations of the Cross trail

Cistercian Fourth Formers finish work in time for Palm Sunday dedication

By Br. Anthony Bigney

With the addition of a permanent Stations of the Cross along the cross country trail in the woods behind the Cistercian Abbey, the weeks of Lent will never be the same.

The trail covers nearly half a mile winding through the bluebonnet-covered woods and serves as a wonderful setting for a prayerful walk.

The idea was initiated in 2006 when Br. Abraham Frei (who since departed the monastery) first nailed simple stations to the mesquite trees along a trail through the 20 acres purchased in 2005.

The cross country team quickly found the new acreage perfect for training. And in 2007, Steve Reine-mund '99 began making annual donations for the maintenance of the cross country trail.

When Fr. Aloysius Kimecz passed away in December 2010, his former students believed the Stations of the Cross would be a beautiful way to honor him.

Meanwhile, Dr. Tom Pruitt was looking for a project for his Fourth Formers preparing for confirmation.

With help from many dads (especially Charlie Dorsey), Dr. Pruitt and his Form IV students spent the morning of March 26 spread-



Photos by Thomas Tilden

(Left) Ben Tilden '15 hauls mulch. (Above) Br. Anthony Bigney leads Fourth Formers and their parents in prayer along the trail.

ing mulch, digging holes, carrying and installing the posts with the Stations of the Cross.

"As a Confirmation project," Dr. Pruitt explained, "I wanted it to be more than 'just' a work day. We began the day with a meditation on the Stations, then ended the day with prayer."

There are 15 Stations, the traditional 14 plus a Resurrection Station, created by a German artist. On Palm Sunday nearly 100 people came out to dedicate the trail and pray The Stations of the Cross.

Most of the members of the monastery, nearly every Form at the Prep School and many individual families have since hiked the trail and prayed along the *via crucis*.

Young monks enjoy playing tour guides

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would show me short cuts through the back streets and alleys.”

But you don't have to be a young monk.

The Moroneys (Jim Moroney '74, wife Barbara, and daughter Meagan) made a quick, one-day tour of Vatican City (including the Scavi tour of the tombs of the early Christians) before sitting down to a dinner with Brothers Ambrose, Ignatius, Lawrence, and Thomas. (Brother Stephen was ill and unable to attend.)

“Even in Rome,” insisted Barbara Moroney, “having four monks in black and white habits walk up to our table was quite a site.

“We shared stories of our day and asked them to tell stories of their experiences in Rome. Their reminiscences brought to life the tours we had completed hours earlier.”

“We learned from each of the brothers about how the choosing of their names can be a back and forth between them and the abbot,” she said. “It was fun learning about each of them and their varied experiences.

“Despite their differences, what stayed with us was their commonality of purpose and the community they were building together in Rome, which will serve them well as they return to join the larger monastic community at Cistercian.”

While rainy and cold during their four-day stay over Thanksgiving last year, the Merrick family (Nick Merrick and wife Leslie, Margaret, Matthew '15, Catherine, and Andrew) were delighted by the company of the brothers.

They toured the common areas of the General house with Br. Ignatius Sunday afternoon, the ancient city with Br. Thomas on Monday, the Vatican with Br. Stephen on Tuesday, and the Spanish Steps with Br. Lawrence and Br. Thomas on Wednesday.

“Most of our kids take Latin and have a grasp of the history and culture of Rome,” Merrick said, “so the monks helped tie together the gospels, the physical sites, and the

history.”

“Touring St. Peter's with Stephen was great,” he added. “He pointed out things we'd never have see on the general tour. Each brother really made Rome come alive.”

“Tuesday night,” Merrick added, “We took them to their favorite restaurant, which they call ‘Fat Mamas.’”

Each night was capped off at the Old

her senior thesis on women in the early church.

“But by far,” she insisted, “my favorite experience of the trip was being with the Cistercian brothers.”

“I got up with them early in the morning for their first liturgical prayers, the prayers of the hours,” she said. “The chants are really beautiful and everyone from all around the world participates.”

“When they could, they would come with me to the places I was going,” Rasch remarked. “They'd give me my own private tour.”

“We had great conversations. Intellectual life is very much alive among the Cistercians.”

“All the brothers are so happy. I did feel a solidarity with them.

“They are young and just like my friends here at Notre Dame who are thinking about a religious life.

“The brothers like to watch sports, and they are seeing some of the same movies and reading some of the same books.”

Clearly, the monks enjoy entertaining visitors.

“The five of us met twice a week to chat about news, our daily lives, and then pray the rosary,” remembered Fr. Ignatius. “It was usually at these meetings that one of us would announce that a Cistercian family was coming to Rome and would like to meet us. It was exciting to plan the rendezvous.

“We would determine who was available (not in class or swamped with studies),” he said, “then choose a restaurant based on our visitors' location and their plans.”

The monks, with their varied interests and years of study and experience there, can enlighten even the most seasoned visitor.

“It is a joy to share what we have learned and illuminate others about the things of God and the Church,” explained Fr. Ignatius. “We also have the enjoyment of vicariously experiencing the awe of seeing Rome for the first time through our guests.”

That never gets old.



Matthew Merrick '15 with Br. Lawrence Brophy at the Trevi Fountain in Rome over the Thanksgiving holidays, 2010.

Young Monks Education Fund

Please invest in our future

If you would like to support the education of the brothers, your contributions (including frequent-flier miles) would be greatly appreciated. To donate to the Young Monks Education Fund, please contact Erin Hart, director of development, (phone: 469-499-5406, email: ehart@cistercian.org) or go directly to <https://www.cistercian.org/giving> (secure).

Bridge, where the group enjoyed some of the best gelato in Rome.

Lauren Rasch (daughter of Steve Rasch '80), a junior at Notre Dame, visited Rome in October and had the opportunity to reside in the Cistercian General House. She was the only non-religious female in the house during those weeks.

“I received a grant to travel to Rome to study how women were portrayed in early Christian art,” said Rasch, who will write

The ordination of Fr. Ignatius Peacher



(Top) The Abbey Church was filled to capacity for the ordination of Fr. Ignatius Peacher. **(Left)** Bishop Kevin Farrell ordains Fr. Ignatius. **(Above)** The bishop and Fr. Ignatius concelebrate Mass. **(Right)** Fr. Ignatius receives a sign of peace and a few words from Fr. Joseph Van House.

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As was expected, many took advantage of the opportunity: besides many of Fr. Ignatius's family and friends, a very large number of faculty, staff, parents and students from all forms were in attendance, filling the Church to capacity.

Fr. Ignatius has known the monastery since 2002, well before receiving his call to enter the monastic life. Before beginning the novitiate in August, 2005, he spent some time working for the monastery and living in the retreat house while he studied at UTA and prepared for a career in architecture.

"Fr. Ignatius was with us for the longest time getting ready to accept a vocation," Abbot Denis remarked. "One has the impression he knows how arduous the path of discernment is, and his vocation has, for that reason, the deepest roots."

After joining the monastery Fr. Ignatius began his studies in the-

ology and philosophy at the University of Dallas. He completed his studies for the priesthood in Rome this past fall.

The Bishop gave a beautiful homily on the life of a priest.

Fr. Ignatius was impressed with the Bishop's emphasis on "the need for a priest to be holy" and how eloquently he spoke about the priest carrying out his ministerial role *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ).

"I liked the exchange of peace with all the priests," Fr. Ignatius recalled about his ordination. "The gesture of receiving a sign of peace and their kind words gave me comfort and encouragement."

On the following Sunday, March 27, Fr. Ignatius celebrated his first mass in the Abbey Church.

Fr. Roch preached about the wonderful and challenging mission of the priest, encouraging Fr. Ignatius to recognize it always as a sacred responsibility and gift.

Abbey Church Services

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Sunday July 3rd

Vows Ceremony of Br. Stephen Gregg and Br. Lawrence Brophy, who will take their Solemn Vows.

Sunday August 14

Priestly Ordinations of Br. Thomas Esposito and Br. Ambrose Strong

Diaconal Ordinations of Br. Stephen Gregg and Br. Lawrence Brophy

STANDARD SCHEDULE

Office of Readings and Morning Prayer	6 am
Evening Prayer	6 pm
Daily Mass (Mon - Sat.)	6:30 am
Mass on Sunday	9 am

Note: First Friday Masses are held only during the school year; they are not offered during the summer months.

Stations of the Cross detail. See page 4.



Photo by Thomas Tilden

Cistercian Abbey Our Lady of Dallas
3550 Cistercian Road
Irving, Texas 75039

Fr. Julius to celebrate 50th anniversary

By Br. Justin McNamara

July of this year marks a milestone in the life of Fr. Julius Lelóczy and the Cistercian Abbey.

Fifty years ago, July 9, 1961, Fr. Julius was ordained to the priesthood in the Cistercian Abbey of Lilienfeld in Austria.

Yet his fruitful ministry to the faithful of Dallas, Fort Worth, and of course, Cistercian Preparatory School, had begun “underground.”

His religious studies were secretly carried out in Communist Hungary until 1956 when he escaped and fled to Rome to complete his education and formation.

Upon ordination, Fr. Julius came to America and pastorally assisted at St. George’s in Fort Worth and then St. Augustine’s in Dallas.

In addition to learning English, Fr. Julius “was amazed by the vitality of the parishes, by the many activities going on there, their numerous volunteers, and by the deep faith of the parishioners.”

It was and remains the sacramental role of his priesthood that has always marked

Golden Jubilee Mass Sunday, June 5



Photos courtesy of Fr. Julius

Fr. Julius Leloczy at his ordination at the Abbey of Lilienfeld, July 9, 1961.

him with a sense of awe: “The awareness of acting in the person of Christ always moves me deeply.”

Following his year of pastoral work he took up assignments in the Preparatory

School, including librarian, religion teacher, and later Form Master of two classes (’86 and ’00).

A special assignment called Fr. Julius to Rome again in 1990 where he spent two years as secretary to the Abbot General of the Cistercian Order, all the while providing spiritual formation and guidance to the young Cistercian monks studying at the Order’s ‘mother-house.’

Particularly moving experiences for him came when he had the opportunity to meet Blessed John Paul II, while helping out at the Vatican Radio station in 1991 and then with Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 at a Wednesday audience.

But the crowning moment to his priesthood arrived in 2000 when he set foot on the same ground upon which Jesus himself once trod.

It was a fitting return for a man who has given fifty years of service in love to others for answering the Lord’s call and working tirelessly in the Lord’s vineyard.

God bless you, Fr. Julius, on your 50th Anniversary to the priesthood!