

Questionnaire for Candidates for the Novitiate

Date April 8, 1945

1. Full Name Eckroth, William Anthony
Family Name First Name Middle Name

2. Full Address Mandan, N.D.
206 Collins Ave.
Postoffice and State Street or Rural Route

3. Name of Father _____ Living or dead? Living

4. Name of Mother _____ Living or dead? Living

5. Is your father a Catholic? Yes Is your mother a Catholic? Yes

6. Date of birth June 21, 1926 Place of birth Mandan, N.D.

7. Where was your father's domicile or quasi-domicile? Mandan, N.D.

8. Baptism— a) Time: June 23, 1936 b) Parish: St. Joseph's
c) City: Mandan d) State: N. Dak. e) Diocese: Bismarck
(If the place was a mission at the time of your baptism, state from where it was then attended)

9. Confirmation— a) Time: May 6, 1933 b) Parish: St. Joseph's
c) City: Mandan d) State: N. Dak. e) Minister: Bp. Nehrlé

10. Student at St. John's: From Sept. 1940 to _____

11. Give the name of the colleges and seminaries in which you pursued your studies and the date of your sojourn at each
Grade - St. Joseph's Mandan High School at St. John's; also
College here.

12. Mention the dioceses in which you have spent more than six months (one year) after the completion of your fourteenth year;
give for each the name of the city, state, parish, and date of sojourn: Bismarck and St. Cloud.

Note: If you have been at more places than three, for which space is provided here, please give the information on the back of this.

13. If you have been a postulant, novice, or professed religious elsewhere, state where, in what capacity, and how long: No.

14. Have you the required age for the novitiate (15 years completed)? Yes.

15. Is this choice of religious state your free and deliberate act? Yes.

16. Did you ever fall away from the Church and join some sect? No. If so,
a) What sect? _____ b) Date of Apostasy _____
c) Time of membership in sect: _____ d) Date of Conversion _____

17. Were you ever married? _____ Is wife still living? No.

18. Did you ever commit a grievous crime which is or may be laid to your charge? No.

19. Have you a debt which you can not pay? No.

20. Have you any accountability or business entanglements that may cause annoyances? No.

21. Are your parents or grandparents in need of your support? Brothers 6 - Sisters 4.

22. Were you ever epileptic? No. Insane? No.

23. Are any members of your family afflicted with epilepsy or insanity? No.

Family Name Eckroth

Baptismal Name William

Entered as Postulant

Entered the Novitiate July 10, 1945

Name in Religion Richard

Date of Departure

Reason for Departure.....

.....

.....

Certificate of Baptism

This is to Certify, that William Anthony Eckroth

Son } of _____ and _____
Daughter }

born on the 21 day of June 1926

was Baptized on the 23 day of June 1926

According to the Rite of the Roman Catholic Church

in St Joseph's Church at Mandan, North Dakota

Sponsors _____ By the Rev. Edgar Kees, O.S.B.

as appears from the Baptismal Register of this Church.

DIEDRICH SCHAFER CO. MILWAUKEE WIS

Issued by Rev. Edgar Kees, O.S.B. Date June 23, 1926

OSB ECKROTH_00001

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH
108 3RD. ST. N. E.
MANDAN, N. DAKOTA

April 10, 1945

The Records of St. Joseph Church, Mandan, N. Dak.
state that William Anthony Eckroth received
the sacrament of Confirmation on May 6, 1933.

Rev. Gustav Luetmer
Pastor

OSB ECKROTH_00004

Litterae Testimoniales



Praesentes Inspecturis Salutem in Domino!

Cum ex praemissa diligenti investigatione Nobis constiterit Dilectum Nobis in Christo
Gulielmum A. Eckroth, ex legitimis natalibus in paroecia S.
Josephi in loco Mandan, North Dakota ortum, pie
educatum atque in religione christiana bene instructum, moribus bonis ingenioque praestanti ornatum, honesta
vita ac fama conditioneque integra commendatum, neque inquisitum aut aliqua censura, irregularitate aliove
canonico impedimento, quod sciamus, irretitum esse, neque opitulandi parentibus necessitudine gravatum
existere: Nos per praesentes litteras indubiam fidem facimus et testamur nihil, quantum cognoscere potuimus,
ex hac parte obstare quominus praefatum D. Gulielmum A. Eckroth ut ad
statum religiosum admittatur commendemus.

In quorum fidem has Testimoniales litteras manu Nostra subscriptas sigilloque Nostro et Secretarii Nostri
subscriptione munitas expidiri jussimus.

Datum Bismarck, N. D., ex aedibus Nostris Episcopalibus.

Die 4a, mense Junii, A. D. 1945

+ Vincent Moran
Episcopus.
Gulielmus J. Garvin
Secretarius.

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Looking to the Past and the Future

Looking back over this past year, I see a very different year than I had been accustomed to living before my entrance into the novitiate. Before, I had been full of big ideas, lots of activity, had been always doing something - in short, I was a typical student of the world. Yes, I felt I had a vocation to the religious life and I tried to be regular in my religious duties, but I thought then that the novitiate was the place to become holy and that therefore there was no need to start early. Now I feel ashamed of the attitude I then held, for I see that it is never too early to start preparing for such a noble calling as the religious-priesthood. And of course with such lax preparation, it was but a natural consequence that doubts would fill my mind at times regarding my vocation. They came plentifully and forcefully, sometimes almost overwhelmingly, when the novelty of the novitiate changed into routine. But now that the end is approaching, after having tried to be obedient and therefore make a serious novitiate, I feel rather convinced that this is my calling, and I hope with God's assistance to persevere in it.

Yes, this was a very different year for me, not only materially - rising earlier, spending more time at prayer, being under closer supervision, but also spiritually - becoming more spiritual-minded. I probably have not done as well as it would have been possible, as well as some of the other novices have done, but I have tried to be obedient, to keep occupied, and to advance in perfection. I realize I am far from St. Benedict's conception of monastic perfection; nevertheless, I believe I am closer to the coveted goal than I was a year ago.

I have learned not to be too presumptuous of my own strength and capabilities. I thought last August that I was becoming a fair swimmer, but my mind was suddenly changed when I had to be pulled out of the water. I naively tried to maintain the 1st tenor section of our chorus in the novitiate programs until I made several blunders. I thought I was a rather up-and-up card player until some one forcefully reminded me that talking across the table is just as bad when it is done jokingly as when it is done openly. I discovered that it is not always the person or persons who make the most points in a volleyball game who really win the victory. I have learned that I cannot carry on a conversation as well as many people can and that I am a poor defender of a point under discussion. I have come to the conclusion that more is required of each individual in the religious life than I had at first imagined.

I enjoyed performing all the manual labor which fell to our lot during the year.

But as to the future, when I will be a cleric, and still later, with God's grace, a priest, I do not know what to say. I would like to continue to do some outdoor labor, as a cleric, at least periodically if not regularly, if I could. When a priest - St. John's has a very large field of activity, but where I would fit in best I leave to the discretion of my superiors. Before entering upon my year of novitiate, I felt no inclination to the pedagogical field, but in the course of the year, I have discovered that a person can do a great deal of good for souls in this field. But this does not mean I consider myself qualified to be a teacher. I am not very convincing as an instructor, at least so I felt in our psalm-study classes, but I

would perhaps improve. One of the advantages of being an instructor here at St. John's is that a monk resides at the Abbey and therefore lives the community life fully. There does not seem to be any particular field in instruction that appeals to me most, but I do not think I would make a plausible English teacher, because my own English is so poor, and I am not very imaginative when it comes to writing essays. I did not like chemistry very much, but I did enjoy my history and mathematics classes. German? - I do not know even enough to converse meagerly. Latin or Greek? - I do not know them well enough or possess enough facility in the application of them, though I did enjoy searching through Latin writings for material for the two articles I prepared for the Musiva.

Concerning missionary life - before my novitiate I could never have pictured myself as a missionary, but I see now that a missionary has a great opportunity to gain eternal merit. I do not know whether I would have the patience and endurance necessary for this field.

One thing that would appeal to me in being placed in a parish is that I could give more vent to my activism. What I mean is that I could work more with my hands - repairing and improving the buildings and property. There are also many drawbacks - living outside the monastery, temporal and secular preoccupations, irregularity of time schedule, and the fact that I am not a good speaker. I like to do manual labor, even if it is only cutting weeds or cleaning sprouts off potatoes. But I do not enjoy writing papers or speaking in public.

In summary, I am willing to undertake anything that my superiors impose, and I have no intention to suggest any special field of labor,

because I believe my superiors can judge better by their own experience, where I could best save souls and at the same time insure my own salvation. I think my health is good enough for whatever be commanded me; I like community life and manual labor, and the Divine Office in choir.

Frater Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

F. Richard

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I was born on June 21, 1926, at Mandan, North Dakota, the tenth child in a family of fourteen. My brothers and sisters were :

Of these,
who were all older than I, died in infancy.

My father was born in 1889 somewhere in southern Russia the last of five children of German emigrants. The family arrived in America on November 11, 1891, and went directly to Mandan. My dad was educated in the Mandan public schools until at the age of fourteen he began to work for the Northern Pacific Railroad.

My mother was born in 1890 at Mandan the fifth child in a family of seven. Shortly after her birth, the family moved to Dubuque, Iowa. Her father was killed in a farm accident, and her mother drowned a short time later while trying to save my mother's brother who had fallen into the Mississippi River, and who also drowned. My mother was cared for by the Franciscan Sisters for several years and then sent to a private home. When she was about fifteen, she came back to Mandan with her older sister

I don't remember much of my youth, but when I was five, my mother took me with her to visit in Aberdeen, South Dakota. I was too small to appreciate the trip or even to recall what took place.

One summer day the same summer, I climbed to the top of the kitchen cupboard when my mother wasn't looking and fell about eight feet to the floor with no apparent injury.

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I slept with my two older brothers on a couch in the living room until we built two additional rooms upstairs when I was six. We then had plenty of room, and even extra room when my two brothers married, and joined the Benedictine Sisters at St. Joseph, Minnesota.

I entered St. Joseph's School at six. My first grade was memorable for the F's I received in spite of the fact that I cheated in most of the tests - especially in spelling class. I spent my only day in a hospital this year when I had my tonsils removed. I became sick the Sunday scheduled for my first Communion, so I waited a week and made mine privately. I was also confirmed the same year by Bishop Wahrle, since it was his custom to confirm young. I believe it was at this time that I first conceived the idea of becoming a priest. I probably formed it as most youngsters get notions of the like, but I kept my desire, though I don't know what caused me to form it.

During my second year of school I began to improve and took more interest in my studies.

When I was about seven and my oldest brother was still courting his bride-to-be, I couldn't understand why he would always take her riding in the evening, but never my mother. I didn't think it right, so one afternoon I determined to remedy affairs by purchasing a huge lock and key, which I attached to the garage door. I didn't stay for the fireworks, but fled to my aunt's house when he tried to get the car out. He finally managed to smash the lock when he couldn't find either me or the key. I kept out of his sight for several days, and it passed over without serious consequence.

I think it was this same summer that I had the fight in which I received the small scar on my forehead when one of my pals threw his

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toy water gun at me. But it was only one of our usual quarrels, and we soon were once more the best of friends.

We had a small shed in the yard in which my dad had raised dogs in former years. But since we no longer had any dogs, we kids converted it into a club house. One Sunday morning as my cousin and I were coming from our basement with our pockets full of grapes, we found smoke billowing from our club house. We caused a lot of excitement by raising the cry of "fire", and after it had been extinguished by the garden hose, it was learned that _____ and our neighbor _____ had caused the fire when they tried to light a premature Halloween pumpkin with straw. We received quite a scolding from my dad, but the hardest part to take was the fact that our club house was merely a hulk of charred embers.

_____, and his sister _____ and I then began the construction of a series of shacks against our garage out of scrap lumber and fruit crates. The one we considered a masterpiece was carried off by unknown pranksters on Halloween and deposited on an empty railroad flat car, despite the planks we had laid on the roof to add more weight to it.

During the winter a relative (I think she was a great-aunt) came from Switzerland for an extended visit. She stayed most of the year, and I was especially delighted by the odd-tasting chocolates she brought with her. She acquired a speaking knowledge of English, so I no longer had to pester my mother with questions as to what she was saying in German.

In the fourth grade I was fitted for my first pair of glasses which I broke rather frequently. I also began to peddle the local daily paper, but I never built up a thriving business. The money

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I earned I kept in a pig bank which could be easily opened (which was its usual state.)

One day while Father Marcellus was giving us religious instructions I began to day-dream. Just then he asked me a very simple question to which the rest of the class was eager to answer. I acknowledged that I wasn't listening and he reprimanded me severely for it. But I was in greater dread of the good Sister I had for a teacher when she would see me after class. But she must have figured Father had given me enough, because she never said a word about it.

I began to serve rather young because I lived close to church and could be reached easily when a server was needed. We had a very good instructor. She was rather strict, but we gained a sense of respect and reverence due the services at the altar. And it was woe to those who were absent without a flawless excuse.

and I were usually together in whatever happened - so it was only natural that when one began to collect postage stamps the other did likewise. But we soon found it better to combine our efforts, with the result that we built up quite a collection. At least we considered it large, and we enjoyed the effort we put in it.

I liked very much to pick wild fruit. In fact one day I persuaded and a pal of ours to walk about eight miles with me to pick some wild plums, but when we arrived at our destination we found the trees bare. We lost a friend that day. But we were successful at other times, and my favorite pie was the kind mom made out of June berries. They were well worth the effort connected with picking each single berry, for they did not grow in clusters.

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The first day of Christmas vacation during the fifth grade I went to bed with scarlet fever. had already been in bed with it for a week or so and we were soon followed by my two younger brothers

. You can imagine what a Christmas we celebrated that year. I recall trying to sit up and act cheerful when the healthy ones opened their gifts, but the effort was too great and I was forced to return to bed. However we all recovered with little or no lasting results.

I invested five hard-earned dollars in an old bicycle, but I became thoroughly disgusted with it when both tires became flat. I could not afford new tires, so I cut them open and inserted a rubber hose in each one. This proved very uncomfortable, but it worked. I determined to get rid of it after I had panted and sweated the nine miles to Fort Lincoln and back while my pals rode comfortably on their bikes. I would have felt ashamed to sell it (it was so poor), so I gave it to a cousin in the country. By working Saturdays in my cousin's grocery store, and with the aid of a loan from my brother I managed to buy a good bike for twenty dollars, and this I kept until I left for St. John's.

During the summer I formed a close friendship with a classmate from across the tracks. He had an ideal shed in which to raise pigeons, so I wrote my cousin , who had in the meantime moved to Billings, Montana, to send me some pigeons - since he had offered to give me as many as I wanted. Six arrived in a short time and before long these had multiplied into about forty. Then the feed bill began to hurt our pocketbooks, so we ate a number of them. After we released the flock to forage for themselves, too many threats came from his neighbors,

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with the result that we had to move our flock to his grandmother's farm near Huff, N. Dak. - about fifteen miles from town. That was the last of our pigeon venture, for the coyotes killed off all our birds except two which flew back to their old roost in town.

That same summer the Heart River rose very high during the June rainy season and his home was flooded. The water felt warm, so we spent the afternoon wading around his yard unmindful of the danger about us. For when the water receded after a few days, I chanced to step near the wall of the house, only to feel my foot go through. I jumped back and further investigation showed that there was just a thin crust of dirt over an abyss of water which still filled their basement. You see, the house had stood on the ground with only a small furnace room cut out of the dirt which had been enlarged by the flood waters and into which I would have fallen if I had gone through. I surely walked more cautiously after that.

That autumn my dad taught me how to shoot a gun and took me along on many of his hunting trips. But I was a poor shot and never killed much. The highlight of that season for me was the day I shot a prairie chicken. I believe that is the only one I ever did shoot, for there are not as many any more and the few remaining are rather wild. However, I enjoyed roaming over the prairies carrying a shotgun like my dad and older brothers. My joy was usually dampened somewhat by the fear of rattlesnakes, but I never met any out hunting.

I don't recall any memorable event during the seventh grade except that it was the only year I completed without being absent a day from school. I had the servers' instructor for teacher, so I often got out of class to serve for funeral masses.

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During the summer vacation I helped in what way I could in the construction of a six room addition to our school. Then dad took and me with him to Mauston, Wisconsin, to visit. It was our first real train ride and we hardly slept for excitement. During the half day we waited in St. Paul, Father Angelo showed us the Cathedral, the capitol, St. Bernard's Church, where he was then assistant, and other points of interest. He has been a friend of our family ever since he was assistant at Mandan. We visited my sister a day and a half, and returned home by the same route.

We had purchased a gas stove when I was only about six, so we no longer had need of our big brick chimney in the kitchen. We destructors went to work when my dad gave his consent. But he was rather surprised to find the whole chimney gone when he came home from work in the evening.

I liked to be up high, and when we shingled our roof, you should have seen me run around. But I nearly slipped off the roof one day, so I quieted down considerably.

My joy was unbounded when my cousin who lived next door to us, said he was going to tear down the barn in his back yard and that we could help him. It was a very dirty job, but the dirtier we became, the more we liked it. But our interest waned considerably when the time came to clean up the mess and to plan a new garage to take its place. He was then on his own, for, though we were good destructors, we certainly weren't constructors.

One autumn day during my last year of grade school, my glasses fell off while I was playing football. They became mutilated, of course, so I decided not to wear them any longer.

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In the winter our special delight was to cut figures out of wood with a jig saw and paint them. Never a week went by in which we didn't pester the managers of the grocery stores for their fruit boxes. They must have become rather angry with us at times, but we didn't mind, we were having fun.

The last year I was home I had to get up early every Saturday morning to go with Father Othmar to the State Reformatory, where he heard confessions and offered mass for the inmates. I was rather surprised at the disrespect and passive attitude they expressed as a whole.

A very memorable day in my life was one in January, 1940, when I was hunting rabbits with my dad and brothers. As was our custom, we didn't care too much for game laws and shot pheasants any time of the year. Just as we began to hunt, a huge cock pheasant took out of the brush near me. Of course I shot it. We hunted for some time and brought a number of rabbits back to the car. Because we were quite far from home we thought it safer to conceal my pheasant, so we placed it under the rear cushion.

Later in the afternoon we were just returning to the car in order to leave for home when another car approached and the head of the North Dakota Game Department stepped out. You can imagine my consternation as he asked to see our game. Well, he found the pheasant on my brother the pheasant he had just shot a few minutes before after missing easy shots all afternoon. The others were surprised, for and I had been alone when he shot the pheasant, and none of the others knew he had one on him. My heart just about stopped when he asked to search our car. I was amazed at the possible hiding places

he uncovered for us, but it wasn't very humorous at the time. However, he must have been satisfied with the fact that he found the one on my brother, for he didn't search diligently enough to find mine - though he did reach under the cushion where it was hidden. I said hardly a word all the way home, but I resolved never again to act in like manner.

Finally June arrived, and I graduated. A couple weeks after graduation, six of us fellows each contributed about ten dollars and spent a week in the Black Hills of South Dakota. We had a grand time to say the least. We must have driven about six hundred miles and saw the Passion Play at Spearfish, South Dakota, Mount Rushmore, Devil's Tower in Wyoming, Lead and Deadwood with their huge goldmine, Rapid City and its School of Mines, Mount Harney, the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains, the Bad Lands, and various caves.

Father Hildebrand arranged for my entry to St. John's. The year before this another of my sisters had entered St. Benedict's Convent, and was in the novitiate when I entered St. John's. Boarding school was a novelty to me, for I had always been accustomed to staying home a great deal. But I withstood the first weeks of homesickness and grew to like school better every day.

The first year passed by very rapidly for me - must have been the regular schedule. I believe I was more homesick after that first Christmas vacation than at any other time in my five years here. But the semifinal exams soon took my mind off home. Everything at St. John's delighted me, but the immense tracts of forest and lake especially pleased me.

One winter day I was knocked senseless while tobaggoning. I was in a daze most of the afternoon, but I eventually regained my senses.

That certainly was a strange sensation. I could see, walk, and talk all right, but I couldn't, for the life of me, imagine where in the world I was or who I was. I thought and thought, but I just couldn't come to any conclusion as to what my name was. It didn't occur to me to ask one of my many companions who were standing about me and staring at me at times.

I must have worked rather hard that year, because at the graduation ceremonies I was awarded the gold medal for the freshman class.

During the summer and I went up to Billings, Montana, to spend a couple days visiting our cousins there. It was our first and only trip to Montana, and we really enjoyed it. I also spent a week this summer shocking wheat. I seemed to hit the hottest weather too, for the thermometer registered over a hundred one day. Just after I left for school, (I came back three weeks early upon request) and his family moved to Muskegon, Michigan, where he has lived ever since. I enjoyed those three weeks back early more than any of my school years.

My sophomore year also went by very rapidly. But this year I took more interest in sports - especially basketball. In fact I even went to Minneapolis once with the team - though I couldn't rise higher than the B-team. I don't recall anything outstanding that happened during the year except that our family spread out some more with the departure of my sister for Seattle, Washington. She was soon followed by who is at present in Alaska.

During the next summer vacation I turned carpenter and painter, I helped my uncle paint his house, then helped build a small home, and rebuilt our garage. I again spent a week shocking wheat.

As for my junior year, I again played basketball, but not much better than the year before. During the year I was very surprised to receive a scholarship through Fater Abbot from a kind lady in St. Paul whom I later met upon two occasions. In the spring of the year I was very amazed to read in various newspapers that Mandan was flooded. I didn't believe it until I saw pictures to prove it, and received word from home that it was true, and that our house too was flooded. I could hardly wait for Easter vacation to arrive to see the results of the water. Fortunately our house wasn't damaged too greatly though the water had filled the basement to the floorboards. I again received the class medal this year.

I held a regular job during the summer in a tailor shop - that of dry-cleaning and pressing clothes. It was rather hot work, but I didn't mind it much. In August, when the business was slack, we took the boilers apart, cleaned them, and somehow finally put them together again. Then I put a new roof on the cleaning building. About this time we began some repair work at home, so I quit my job. First we had to recement part of a basement wall that the flood had damaged and then we tore off our front porch and built a screened-in one on the side of the house. A carpenter was hired, but we proved to be of great assistance. I had to leave for school before it was completed.

My last year of high school was easier than the others, but I didn't work as hard and my marks bore testimony to that fact. I earned a letter on the football team, but didn't play basketball.

I became rather downcast when I learned I must attend summer school the next summer, but graduation went well. I was valedictorian.

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Then I became an electrician during vacation and wired the light fixtures in the porch. But I had only a week vacation before summer school, so I couldn't do much.

My studies during the summer session were easy, so I took them lightly - with disastrous results. After summer school both and went home for a visit. and her husband also came from Washington on a surprise visit, and were we ever glad to see them. None of us had ever met her husband because they were married in North Carolina before he was released from the army. I hauled wheat from a combine for my cousin for a few days.

I was kept busy the next school year - chiefly in extra-curricular activities, but I managed to get my lessons in too. I didn't have the same enthusiasm I possessed in high school; I lost it during the summer session of school. I donated five pints of blood to the Red Cross.

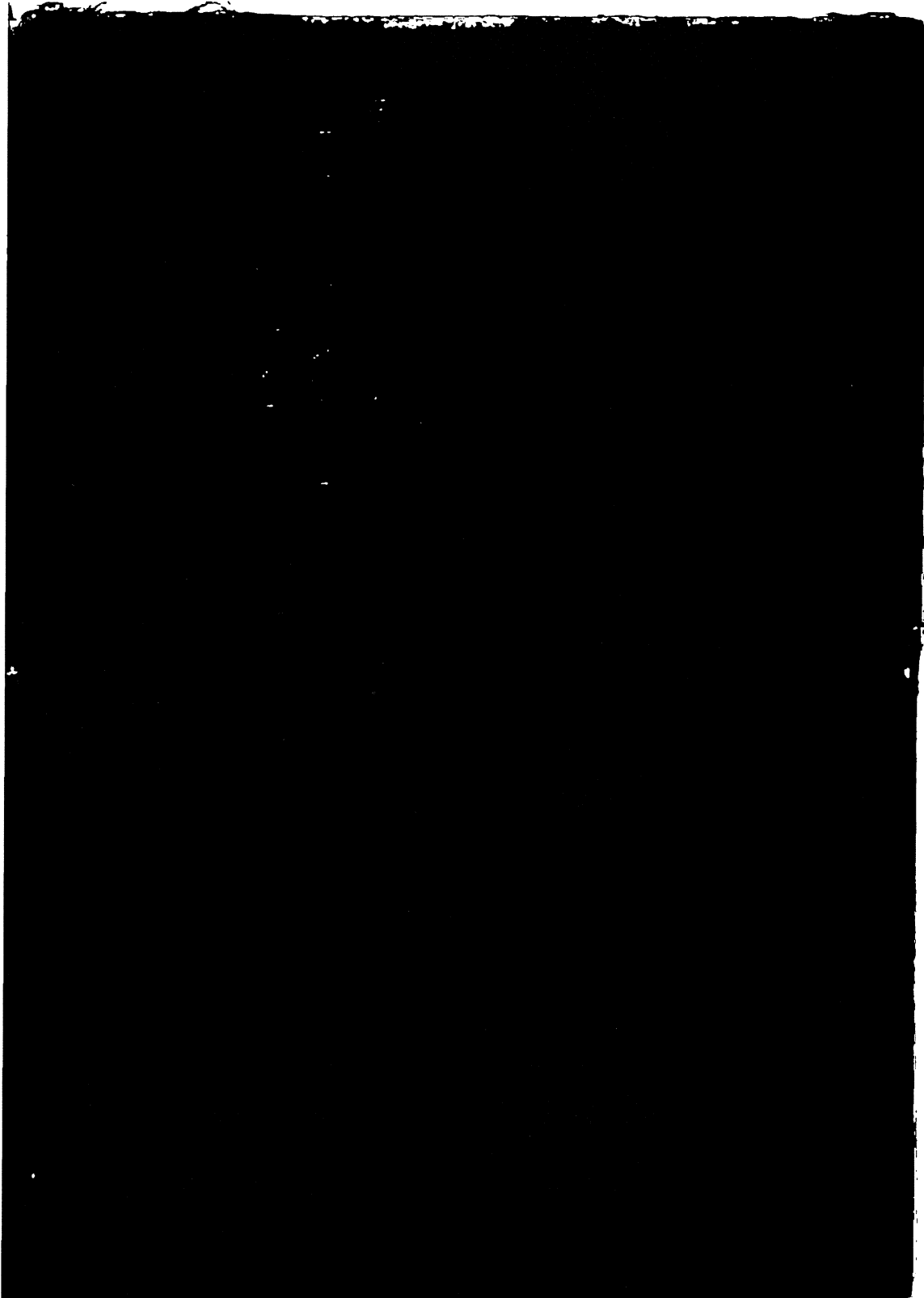
But during vacation I enjoyed working at home - put in various electrical wiring and fixtures, painted the house, cemented part of the basement floor, did some carpentering and some plumbing.

It was rather difficult to leave home this last time, knowing I probably won't see it again for a long time, but I feel my vocation is here.

Frater Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

Frater Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

OSB ECKROTH_00021



OSB ECKROTH_00022

LEGES
DE INSCRIPTIONE ET FREQUENTATIONE

1° Inscriptio regulariter fiet usque ad diem 15.
post initium anni scholastici.

2° Candidatus initio anni scholastici a singulis
professoribus attestationem inscriptionis petere
debet.

3° Similiter in fine anni scholastici antequam
examina fieri incipiunt a professoribus attestatio
frequentationis petenda est.

PONTIFICIUM INSTITUTUM ACADEMICUM
SANCTI ANSELMI

Cognomen Eckroth
Nomen D. Richard
Natus die 21 mensis Junii anni 1926
Civitas Mandan, N Dak
Regnum vel Respublica U. S. A.
Ex Monasterio vel Diocesi S. Joannis Bapt
Habitat Romae _____

Admittitur ad frequentandas lectiones Instituti
nostri.

Romae, die 27 mensis Nov. anni 1946

RECTOR S. ANSELMI.

Ubalinus Peste OSB

6

Anno scholastico 1946 - 1947
Inscribitur in Facultate philosophica
Anno I

Romae, die 27 mensis Nov. anni 1946

RECTOR S. ANSELMI.

Ubalinus Peste OSB

Anno scholastico 1947 - 1948
Inscribitur in Facultate philosophica
Anno II

Romae, die 27 mensis Oct. anni 1947

RECTOR S. ANSELMI.

Ubalinus Peste OSB

Anno scholastico 1948 - 1949
Inscribitur in Facultate philosophica
Anno III

Romae, die 14 mensis Oct. anni 1948

RECTOR S. ANSELMI.

Ubalinus Peste OSB

Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

.....
Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

.....
Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

.....
Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

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Anno scholastico

Inscribitur in Facultate

Anno

Romae, die..... mensis..... anni.....

RECTOR S. ANSEIMI.

ANNO SCHOL.:	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES:		

Notanda vel addenda:

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Rector S. ANSELM

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

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Attestatio Professorum:

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Addenda vel notanda

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Rector S. ANSELM

ANNO SCHOLASTICO: 1947-1948

ATTESTATIONES:

DISCIPLINAE	EXAMINA SUBIIT	INSCRIPTIONIS	FREQUENTATIONIS	EXAMINUM SUPERATORUM
1 Logica formalis	cum laude	P. Matth. Thiel	P. M. Thiel	P. M. Thiel
2 Logica naturalis	bene profectus	P. Matth. Thiel	P. M. Thiel	P. M. Thiel
3 Cosmologia	profectus	P. Corvini	P. Corvini	P. Corvini
4 Psychologia I	bene profectus	P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga
5 Metaphysica specialis	cum laude	P. Leo Thiry	P. Leo Thiry	P. Leo Thiry
6 Ethica principia	cum laude	P. Leo Thiry	"	"
7 Arist. prius II	cum laude	J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller
8 Arist. prius III	bene profectus	J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller
9 Biologia	cum laude	P. Beda Thamm	P. Beda Thamm	P. Beda Thamm
10 Anthropologia	cum laude	P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga
11 Theologia naturalis	bene profectus	P. Corvini	P. Corvini	P. Corvini
12				
13				
14				



Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

Matthias Redeker

OSB ECKROTH 00027

ANNO SCHOL.	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES <i>1947-1948</i>		
<i>Logica symbolica</i>	<i>requisit</i>	<i>P. Beda Thum</i>

Notanda vel addenda:

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Rector S. ANSELMI

Adalricus Besters

Anno scholastico *1947-1948*

Exercitationes practicae

De enteriologiae scholae Loozianensis

Scripto satisfecit

Attestatio Professorum:

P. Beda Thum

Addenda vel notanda

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Rector S. ANSELMI

ANNO SCOLASTICO: 1948-1949

ATTESTATIONES:

DISCIPLINAE	EXAMINA SUBIIT	INSCRIPTIONIS	FREQUENTATIONIS	EXAMINUM SUPERATORUM
1 Metaphys. gener.				
2 Metaphys. special				
3 Cratologia				
4 Ethica gener.				
5 Ethica specialis				
6 Theol. naturalis				
7 Met. phil. I				
8 Psychol. experim.				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14 Errari assignando disciplinas supra recensitas				

Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

Isidorus Beckhoff

ANNO SCHOL. :	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES :		

Notanda vel addenda :

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Rector S. ANSELMI

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

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Attestatio Professorum :

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Addenda vel notanda

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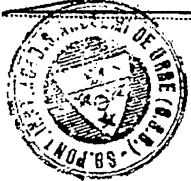
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Rector S. ANSELMI

ANNO SCOLASTICO: 1948-1949

ATTESTATIONES:

DISCIPLINAE	EXAMINA SUBIT	INSCRIPTIONIS	FREQUENTATIONIS	EXAMINUM SUPERATORUM
1 Ordo logicus	} Vide pg. 24	P. Watta Ethel	P. W. Ethel	P. W. Ethel
2 Quaest. metaphys.		Thos. Mueser	Thos. Mueser	Thos. Mueser
3 Quaest. criticolog.		SP. Connor	SP. Connor	SP. Connor
4 Ordo ethicus		P. W. Ethel	P. W. Ethel	P. W. Ethel
5 Quaest. ethicae spec.		P. Leo Elvys	P. Leo Elvys	P. Leo Elvys
6 Quaest. scol. natur.		Thos. Mueser	Thos. Mueser	Thos. Mueser
7 Quaest. Cosmolog.		P. Beda Thum	P. Beda Thum	P. Beda Thum
8 Quaest. psychol.		P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga	SP. Connor
9 Hist. phil. quaeest.		Bene probatus J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller	J. P. Muller
10 Hist. phil. contemp.		probatus P. Beda Thum	P. Beda Thum	P. Beda Thum
11 Psychol. experim.	Bene probatus P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga	P. D. Garriga	
12				
13				
14				



Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

Matthias Rosta

OSB ECKROTH 00031

ANNO SCHOL. 1948/49	EXAMEN SUBITI	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES:		
<i>De spatio et tempore hospes</i>		

Notanda vel addenda:

LICENTIATUS in Philosophia:

Examen de universa philos. { Orale: 20/VI/49
Scriptum: 20/VI/49



Rector S. ANSELMI

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

Attestatio Professorum:

Addenda vel notanda

BENE PROBATUS } P. Matti Ghel
P. Beda Thom
P. Leo Phiny
RITE PROBATUS } P. Leo Phiny
D. P. Emori



Rector S. ANSELMI

OSB ECKROTH 00033

ANNO SCHOLASTICO:		ATTESTATIONES:		
DISCIPLINAE	EXAMINA SUBIT.	INSCRIPTIONIS	FREQUENTATIONIS	EXAMINUM SUPERATORUM
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Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

ANNO SCHOL.:	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES:		

Notanda vel addenda:

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Rector S. ANSELMI

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

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Attestatio Professorum:

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Addenda vel notanda

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Rector S. ANSELMI

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ANNO SCHOLASTICO:		ATTESTATIONES:		
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Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

ANNO SCHOL.:	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES:		

Notanda vel addenda:

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Rector S. ANSELM

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

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Attestatio Professorum:

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Addenda vel notanda

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Rector S. ANSELM

ANNO SCHOL. :	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES :		

Notanda vel addenda :

Rector S. ANSELMI

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

Attestatio Professorum :

Addenda vel notanda

Rector S. ANSELMI

ANNO SCHOL. :	EXAMEN SUBIIT	EXAMINIS SUPERATI ATTESTATIO
CURSUS SPECIALES :		

Notanda vel addenda :

Rector S. ANSELM!

Anno scholastico

Exercitationes practicae

Attestatio Professorum :

Addenda vel notanda

Rector S. ANSELM!

ANNO SCOLASTICO:

ATTESTATIONES:

ANNO SCOLASTICO:		ATTESTATIONES:		
DISCIPLINAE	EXAMINA SUBIIT	INSCRIPTIONIS	FREQUENTATIONIS	EXAMINUM SUPERATORUM
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Rector SANCTI ANSELMI

In Nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi. Amen.

Ego, Frater Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth ex parte
Mandan, North Dakota, Diocesis Bismarckensis
ad honorem Omnipotentis Dei, Beatissimae Virginis
Mariae, ac Beati Patris nostri Benedicti, et omnium
sanctorum, tenore praesentium per vota temporaria
ad triennium volitura promitto stabilitatem et
conversationem morum meorum, ac obedientiam
secundum Regulam eiusdem Sancti Patris Benedicti,
et statuta nostrae Congregationis coram Deo et
sanctis eius, quorum reliquiae hic in praesenti ecclesia
sunt, simulque in praesentia Reverendissimi in
Christo Patris ac Domini, Domini Alcuini Deutsch, huius
monasterii Abbatis, et coram Reverendis Patribus et
Venerabilibus Fratribus hic praesentibus: In
Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

In cuius rei testimonium praesentem
schedulam manu propria scripsi in hoc venerabili
loco Abbatiae Sancti Joannis Baptistae, College-
ville, Minnesota, anno ab Incarnatione Domini
millesimo nongentesimo quadragésimo sexto,
die undecimo mensis Julii, in festo
solemnitatis Sancti Patris nostri Benedicti.

† Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth

Alcuinus Deutsch O.S.B.
Abbas.

Abbaye deareduous, Province de Namur, Belgique
August 22, 1948

Dear Bill,

Well, here goes for another session of this machine which has the strange key board; so please forgive the many mistakes which will result. I suppose the best way to begin the narration of my experiences here at the Abbey of areduous is to write first of the general location of the abbey and give the sehhaute for an ordinary day.

Belgium is a small country. I believe not more than 200 miles from east to west and perhaps not more than 150 miles at the longest line from north to south. It is bounded by France on the west and south, by Luxembourg on the south east, by Germany on the east, and by the Netherlands on the northeast. It has about 25 miles of coast on the North Sea. The Abbey of areduous is in the south central part of the country, only 15 air miles from the French city of Givet. So you can see it is very close to the southern border of Belgium. This southern section of Belgium is very hilly and quite heavily wooded, for much of the land is too rocky for farming or good pasture. The abbey rests on the brow of a high hill, overlooking the small Malignee River. This river empties into the large and important Meuse River about five miles east of the abbey. Great numbers of river boats haul coal, grain, and other merchandise up and down the Meuse River.

Trains stop at the abbey station a half mile down the hill. Asphalt roads also connect the abbey with the rest of Belgium, but no regular buses travel this route. The view is excellent. Near and far you see forests with clearings for fields or pastures scattered here and there where the terrain is level enough and where there is enough soil covering the rock which underlies the whole region.

The abbey itself is built on a solid rock foundation, thus it has no basement. It is not only built on rock, but also of rock. The material of the huge quadrangle-shaped abbey proper together with the many other buildings attached to it consists of the native gray stone chiseled into blocks. It is an impressive set of buildings. The long abbey church occupies an entire side of the quadrangle. Even the nearby workshops and the farm buildings are of the same stone construction. The Abbey School (high school and junior college) joins the northwest corner of the main quadrangle. This is a more or less exclusive school open only to boys of rather noble birth - which still persists in many countries over here. The fathers of many of the students are in the diplomatic corps or other high government positions. In fact there are even two American boys enrolled here - sons of a diplomat. I met one of them just before they returned to the States for the two month summer vacation. There are 80 or 90 such students in this school; all must study Latin, Greek, French, and must also study English, not to mention the other customary subjects.

Then the abbey has another school, similar to an American craft or technical high school. This is open to boys of all classes. The training they receive in wood and metal craft is amazing; and the final pieces they produce upon graduation are a real work of art and wonder with awe. They produce beautiful chalices, monstrances, and other religious articles, not to mention the secular pieces of art. But, imagine, though both of these schools are attended by boys of the same age, though each school has a full athletic program, though they are separated by only a few hundred yards, yet there is no inter-school associating, no inter-school ball games. "It wouldn't be fitting for those of noble birth to associate with those of inferior birth." When you find this, it really makes you proud of the fact that you are an American.

Under the sanctuary of the church there is a small basement chapel filled with a dozen altars. When the weather becomes warm and damp this chapel becomes exceedingly wet, the water just collects on the stone floor, for everywhere there is stone. But when it is dry it is a very nice chapel; for the altars are simple but beautiful. They are used every day for mass.

The big church itself, a basilica, also has many altars along the side walls, thirteen all together I believe. There are many priests here, so all the altars (upstairs and down) are used at least once every day. The church could be very beautiful, it has many beautiful paintings on the upper parts of the walls, but the lower parts of the same walls and even the numerous stone pillars have been painted in the loudest red and green imaginable. It was painted that way by the early founders; now the present generation regrets it! The church is certainly richly furnished with vestments and chalices. I have seen most of the feast day vestments - what needlework! Each cope and chasuble is a piece of art in itself and there are so many of each color. Many of the chalices were made by the monks themselves in the abbey technical school, but among the more historic chalices were those of the first Abbot-Primate of the Benedictine Order, who was also the second abbot of areduous; then they have also a very ornate ciborium which Pope Leo XIII gave them;

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the most expensive chalice was a recent donation, a very plain one, but of solid gold.

The present kitchen is nothing to talk of, even the priests have to take their turn at washing and wiping the dishes, but a new, modern kitchen is nearing completion which among its many improvements will simplify the dish work with an automatic steam washer. Of course the machine of perhaps primary importance is the one which makes French-fried potatoes. If there is anything the Belgian likes more than French-fries it is more of the same. Potatoes is perhaps the main staple crop of Belgium; I had thought Ireland was the Potato King.

The food we receive at table is very good and very plentiful. For breakfast you can eat all the hot oatmeal you want, good bread without end (white or whole wheat baked in big loaves and sliced just like in America), a good big helping of butter, and of course coffee and milk. Quite different from a Roman breakfast - ration of small dark bread with a little bit of butter and coffee (?) with a little milk already added. Believe me, I'm really filling up while I can.

Dinners and suppers too are very healthy and plentiful. Lots of meat, fresh vegetables, potatoes, with a second serving of everything, even the meat, and oftentimes the desert too. Speaking of the desert, we receive some strange ones sometimes at the evening meals; imagine cottage cheese, or pie cakes, or waffles; even cream of wheat being served as desert. But this happens only occasionally; usually it is fruit or cookies.

On a couple of the major holidays we enjoy a cold beer during the noon meal. This beer is not as strong as most American beer. Otherwise we have only water to drink for dinner and supper. Everywhere I have been here in Europe the people think it strange that in America one drinks coffee with the meal. These people just don't know that they are missing. But one dish I certainly enjoy and that is buttered potatoes. After you have filled your plate with a big helping of washed potatoes, a gravy bowl full of melted butter is passed around, and you can take all you want. Boy, do I! They seem to have a large supply of dairy products.

It's surprise to find so many guests visiting the abbey, considering its location so far from the beaten path. At most meals there are about twenty lay men, guests, eating at a special table in the monastic refectory. Any women guests must eat at one of the neighboring convents. I have been told that Harcours has become quite a pilgrimage center, but on what basis I do not know. I have not heard of any miracles performed here or any apparitions having been seen here. The scenic location and the student facilities offer a great attraction to Scouts. Almost every night two or three groups of Boy Scouts find lodging in the dormitory of the abbey technical school. These Scouts evidently have quite a tour of Belgium during the summer months. Since they go on foot, they are likely to arrive at any hour. The cleric who takes care of them is on the go day and night.

Two years ago a library building was donated to the abbey - that's a structure! Externally it is of the same "old stone" block construction, but inside it is really up to date. In the basement are located ten tiled showers and baths and storerooms for the numerous publications of the abbey. Then there are four floors devoted solely to steel shelves for books. The shelves immovable, reach from floor to ceiling, yet all books can comfortably be reached without the aid of stools. A fifth floor is devoted to duplicate copies, and the attic floor has been fixed into sound proof music rooms with a large record-lounge room at one end. An electric elevator runs through the middle of the building. There are also large reference rooms on the lower floors, well lighted. The abbey possesses an imposing collection of books, but excels especially in monastic history and the writings of the early fathers of the church. With its six floors, the library is no taller than the rest of the abbey buildings, for these old buildings have such high ceilings, which the new library does not have.

The two church towers hold six or seven bells. Of course the bells were taken by the Germans during the war. After the war all the bells except the largest one were found intact and were returned to their places in the towers. The largest bell, which had been a gift to the abbey from the Queen of Belgium twenty-five years ago, was found, but all broken up ready for smelting. The pieces were returned to the abbey and a new bell was cast from the pieces. Last summer this new bell was blessed in the presence of the same Queen of Belgium who had given the original bell. I have seen pictures of the event; it must certainly have been quite a celebration. The bells are very melodious when they are all rung at the same time.

Then there is also an open air cement swimming pool, primarily for the use of the students but used very much by all the monks now during the vacation. Fresh water contingally flows into it, perhaps it is fed from springs; it is pretty cool when the sun does not shine. It is a large pool too, at least 40 feet by 100 feet, and has three diving boards.

The clerics are given a little opportunity for various games like volleyball and basketball on outdoor courts, but only a couple days during the week. But because they must play with their habits on, the games do not become very fast and exciting. Basketball is a new game for them, they have only a very vague idea of the rules, know only one, that is, put the ball through the hoop. Otherwise everything goes, no holds barred. In the fall they are also allowed to play English football, really what we call soccer. For this game they can put old clothes on and remove their habits to play. When snow falls in the winter they enjoy bobsledding and similar sports. At the Abbatial School are seven beautiful tiled tennis courts (converted also into basketball or volleyball courts according to the seasons), but for some reason none of the priests or clerics uses them.

Twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays all go out for a long hike through the surrounding hills. The hike usually lasts about two and a half hours so you cover quite a bit of territory. It is very enjoyable to go on these hikes at this time of the year (provided it does not rain), for the fields are now ripe and the grain is being cut and put away. Any American implements are in evidence - mowers, binders pulled chiefly by horses; I have seen only a few tractors. But nowhere did I see a combine, though no doubt there must be some in the country. I was amazed at the primitive methods in use on many of the smaller fields. The wheat is not only tied into bundles by hand, but sometimes it is even cut by hand, cut with a hand scythe. And I have been told that some farmers even thresh in the old way with hand flays. As a rule the fields near here are not very large, for the land is so hilly and rocky, but further north the land is quite level; perhaps then the practices are different.

The weather has not been very nice this summer. Even rainy Belgium has been bothered with much more rain than normally. Hardly a day has gone by without a shower bursting forth. On the whole the weather has been very cool - even uncomfortably so. We have had only a week of really hot weather.

Oh yes, another thing; this is the first place that I can really say I have slept on straw. ~~Yes~~ Yes, all the mattresses is is a big bag of straw. Of course it is not so comfortable as a real mattress, but when you are tired, anything goes.

But now for a plan of the average day here at arecaus:

5:00 aroused with a knock on your door and the voice of the warden "Benedicamus Domino - let's praise the Lord" to which you sleepily respond "Deo gratias - thanks be to God;" If you are a heavy sleeper and do not hear, he simply keeps knocking on your door and shouting until you answer something.

5:30 Be in church; matins begins on the cot. Lauds and mass follow immediately, lasting until approximately 6:45. Fortunately you sit during most of the matins and lauds, so you are not too tired when you go to serve mass at 6:45. If no counts show up you have to serve a second mass; so you go to breakfast between 7:45 and 8:00. I have already described this, so I shall not repeat. Then you can do what you wish - shave, talk, read, study, preach.

10:00 Put on your cuculla and go to church for terce, high mass, and sext. (I wear the cuculla here, even novices and clerics like myself who are only in simple vows, though the cuculla the novices and we clerics wear do not have sleeves as the real cuculla have.) (For you who do not know what the cuculla is, it is the large black choir cloak with many pleats worn over the habit usually only on great feast days by those who have made solemn vows - like I shall make next summer.) This is finished by 11:00 when you are again free to study, read, or stroll about.

11:00 angelus rings; go to the refectory for dinner. The dinners have been very good; though the soup in Italy is superior to the daily soup here. But it is only in regard to the soup that Italy excels; the rest of the meal here is far superior to some. So as I said, I'm rilling up while I can. The hour of none follows immediately after dinner then the clerics usually sit and talk together for an hour. Different ones are then assigned some job to perform; so I usually go to my room and read, study or write.

5:00 Put on your cuculla again for sung vespers. This lasts only twenty-five minutes and again you are free to do what you like.

7:30 Supper bell rings; so you go to the refectory. The suppers too are very good, very similar to an American supper, lighter than the dinner, but still plenty good. After supper there is time for a short common walk and talk.

8:30 Go to church for spiritual reading; then compline, and off to bed.

Upon my arrival here I was surprised to find that so many understood and spoke at least some English. So the first few days all my conversations were in English, for two of us Americans had arrived together at Maredsous on July 17 - Fr. David of Newark, New Jersey and I. I was given a room with the clerics on the top floor about half way between the clerics still studying philosophy and those already in theology. Here the clerics are divided into these two groups - philosophy and theology. Though there are only six or seven in either group, yet each group has its separate superior, has its separate hikes, recreation. The novices are mixed with the philosophy clerics. I am with the theology clerics.

During the first couple days Fr. Jerome of the abbey (he speaks some "American" in contrast to King's English, for he had been with the U.S. Army a short while in the drive through Belgium in 1944-45, even though he was a cleric at the time, just two years older than I) showed me all about the buildings, making me at home - the church, sacristy, cemetery (grave of Don Columbus' mission). Like the stained glass windows in the church - especially the predominating shade of blue. Two Portuguese students from Sant' Inseleo came to spend a few days; so we had quite a mixture of tongues.

July 20 Fr. David and I walked to nearby Maredret (1/2 mile) for the high mass of the Benedictine nuns there. The convent there, St. Scholastica's was built in the same style as the abbey of Maredsous. They are just like twins, Maredsous and Maredret; for the patron of Maredsous is St. Benedict, and the patron of Maredret is St. Scholastica. As you know St. Benedict and St. Scholastica were twins. Maredret houses about eighty cloistered nuns and other Sisters who are not cloistered, all under an abbess, who wears a pectoral cross and carries a crosier just like an abbot. Maredret was founded through the efforts of the second Abbot of Maredsous, Aldbrand de Hemptinne, who later became the first Abbot-Primate of the Benedictine Order. Abbot de Hemptinne's sister became the first abbess of Maredret and ruled forty-eight years until her death early this year. The church of the nuns is somewhat strange in so far as it has two naves, at right angles to one another, converging at the altar. The strictly cloistered nuns occupy one of the naves, and visitors can enter the other nave and attend, as at the one common altar. Of course everything just sparkles with cleanliness.

July 21 is the Belgian Independence Day. For years at least one shower has fallen on this holiday, so now it is called "The National Shower Day." The tradition was not broken this year either. In the sunny morning we biked to nearby Ermeton where there is another little convent of cloistered nuns. They are cloistered, but still they do not have the grill and do not bar visiting women from entering the cloister as most cloistered houses do. They seem to have an overflow of vocations; do not know where to put all the young women who want to join them.

July 22 Fr. David left for the Bay of St. Andrew and thence to America via England; so I began studying French, had my first lesson that day from Fr. Jerome.

July 24 school closed for the summer for the eighty or ninety students in the Diocesan School. On the last day prizes were awarded, but what was my surprise to see that all the prizes were books, chiefly novels. The higher the rating, the more books the leaders in the different classes received. The two American boys were not present to receive their prizes, for they had left a couple days early to board their ship to the States, for it sailed on the 23rd.

Next day I conducted four American Jesuits from Louvain about the abbey and the surrounding grounds. They were from Louisiana, Florida, and New York, but from the good time we enjoyed being together you would have thought they were just "from across the river." In the afternoon a young man entered the novitiate. The ceremony was very interesting, like our own, but there was more to it; for instance, here the ceremony takes place in the chapter room and the abbot gets down on his knees and washes the feet of the novice before giving whatever name he pleases to the novice. The novice makes no suggestion as to the name he would like to have. This one received the name Fr. Certain.

The next couple days were quite hot; so I went swimming. Even the old superior of seventy years came in and swam about for a while.

On July 29 a large group of Belgian war invalids spent the night here as part of a tour of the Ardennes forest, and Northern Belgium. The clerics prepared their beds. What a flock of medals most of them were carrying; but what a group of invalids they were too! Most of them were still from the first world war;

July 31 many guests began to arrive for the ordinations on the following day. Their was full of color with two white-cassocked crapists present (they were ordained sub-deacons the next day). In the evening all the bells were rung for ten or fifteen minutes - what a din! but a beautiful one.

August 1st was the ordination day. Early in the morning I attended a "low" mass in the Greek Rite; it lasted only forty minutes; I thought it would be much longer. At 9:00 the ordination mass began by the Bishop of Namur. Of course the sanctuary of the church was richly decorated, the floor was heavy with rugs. But what surprised me was the fact that the whole mass was sung. This was the first time I ever heard of the ordination mass being sung, for you know the newly ordained must read the mass along with the bishop. Nevertheless the Preface; Sanctus, Ite Missae, Agnus Dei, Communion were all sung, and the newly ordained simply read when the bishop sang. It was really an elaborate ceremony, even four chantors were dressed in copes, and as is the custom here, the first of the four chantors carried along his emblem - a staff with a statue of King David at its top. It reminded me of a crosier. Naturally the mass lasted very long; we left church at 12:10.

Two priests of Maredsous were ordained; so on the next day, the 2nd of August, the older of the two sang his first solemn high mass at the main altar. Again the preparations were very elaborate with four chantors in copes as on the preceding day. There was a short sermon after the Gospel, then the younger of the two new priests went out to the first side altar and read his "first mass." If there had been more in the class, they would have all gone together after the sermon to read their masses at the side altars. It is simply the custom to do it that way here, all of us clerics and the Brothers received communion during the mass at the main altar. That same day one of the old priests of the monastery died.

The priest had to be buried the next day, though his funeral mass could not be read for a couple days. So after Vespers on the 3rd we all went to the basement chapel where his body lay in state. From there it was carried into the church proper where the usual absolution was given and then it was carried in procession to the cemetery and interred. The cemetery is very small, it is built below on the edge of the hill and the new library. Soon it will be full. The older Fathers say: "I'll be under before it is filled; so I'll let the younger ones worry about making a new cemetery." Father Harold (St. Leonards in Indiana) arrived that same afternoon to spend the rest of the vacation with us here at Maredsous. So we were the only two Americans at Maredsous for the rest of the summer.

August 4th I met two English seminarians in the hall, talked with them a few minutes and was surprised to learn they had met my friend Mr. David in a railroad station in London just a few days earlier - what a small world. These two may go to Rome to study this year, so we shall probably see more of one another.

But then August 5th was a great day - the day of the abbatial blessing of the new Abbess of Maredret. The bishop of Namur was the presiding prelate, but there were many other dignitaries in the sanctuary of the church at Maredret for the ceremony. There were five Benedictine abbots, and several others whom I could not place. Inside the enclosure were four abbesses from other cloistered convents. I was very fortunate in being appointed to serve for the mass, only had to carry a candle, so I had plenty of time to watch the whole ceremony. It was the first time and perhaps the last time that I was to witness the blessing of a Benedictine abbess. The vestments were of the best workmanship; those nuns can certainly sew! The ceremony was very similar to the ceremony of the blessing of an abbot. The litany of all saints is sung. Then the bishop presents the abbess with the Rule of St. Benedict and tells her to guide her flock according to the norms therein. At the offertory she presents two large, beautifully decorated candles to the bishop. She receives communion at the mass - but immediately after receiving the host she also drinks some wine from a second chalice which has not been consecrated. Shortly after communion the bishop presents her her pectoral cross and crosier. Immediately thereafter she once more enters the cloister and sitting in her throne receives the kiss of peace and pledge of fidelity from each of the nuns under her charge.

That would have been enough for one day, but in the afternoon the bishop allowed the doors of the strict enclosure there to be opened for an hour, and anybody could go in and visit the whole building from top to bottom - certainly a rare privilege. The halls were filled with hundreds of lay people and many clergy who heard about the unexpected opening. All the nuns were allowed to talk and laugh and visit as much as they liked during that hour - and believe me, can they talk fast and long when they are given such an opportunity. I thus visited the whole building, from top to bottom. It is certainly a clean, beautiful house they have. It too is built like Maredsous in the form of a quadrangle, and quite large. The kitchen was so clean you could have eaten off the floor. The cornerstone of the convent had been laid exactly fifty years ago on that very day; and I believe this was the first time it had ever been opened to the public in all the years since its completion.

August 7th we had the Office for Father Bede and the Pontifical Requiem high mass. Then after dinner we clerics went for a really long hike 6:00 - 7:30. I wore my own heavy

work shoes and Father Harold borrowed a pair of heavy, steel-toed mine shoes (which he regretted). We walked northeast over rocks, brush, up and down hills for two hours when we sighted the Meuse River and decided to stop and eat (Father Harold's dogs were barking quite audibly by that time.) There we made a fire, prepared some cocoa, toasted sandwiches, ate lots of candy, cookies and plums. There out in the open we sang Vespers as best we could. Then we returned by more or less the same route. I walked back with one from Haredsous who doesn't understand any English, and it was surprising how well we managed to keep talking in spite of my broken French. By that time I could already understand French quite well; though I could not speak it but brokenly. But everything comes with patience. Latin words sufficed to fill the blank gaps where I did not know a French word. We arrived at the abbey in time for the 7:30 supper; no one ate much. But poor Father Harold. I never saw such a pair of "hot dogs" like his two feet. He had several blisters the size of quarters and his little toes were chafed open from the rubbing of the ill-fitting shoes. NEVER AGAIN he says well; at least, never again with those shoes.

A couple days later we made another shorter hike down the beautiful valley over which the abbey stands. Some got pretty wet feet crossing the creek, rather than take the aerial route by means of low trees and a fence as others of us did. No Father Harold along this day. I had an opportunity to weigh myself and found I am still 165.

On August 10th, the Feast of St. Lawrence, the Irish cleric (red as fire) too) and I were sent to serve the high mass at Kredret. Imagine my surprise when he told me immediately before the mass "you have to read the Epistle, you're first acolyte." Well; I got through it all right with a sigh of relief. He was there singing the chant very beautifully. I enjoy going there for high mass. In the afternoon I persuaded Father Harold to take a "little" bike ride. I had the map, so he never knew just how far I had planned to go. I suggested Dinant, and as it was all downhill he readily agreed. It was a beautiful ride down the winding, twisting valley, always on a narrow asphalt road. During the intermittent showers we stopped under the many train bridges. In Dinant we obtained a mug of all of Belgium and also refreshed ourselves with some Belgian beer. The afternoon was still young so we decided to return by a little bit longer route which one of the fathers at the abbey had suggested. Oh how Father Harold regretted that! He seemed to be going uphill all the time; would get to the top of a rise, only to find another hill just ahead. Well to make it short, we arrived at the abbey at 7:45. He really had not travelled more than .5 miles, and it was really a lot of fun in spite of the work, at least for me.

August 14 Father Harold and I went to the Benedictine Priory at Chevetogne, about 25 miles east of Haredsous. A train, two buses and lots of waiting and presto we were at Chevetogne in three and a half hours! This is a strange house, has not yet reached the abbey stage, is not a member of any congregation of Benedictines - simply Benedictine. The five clerics at dinner with us at Laet' Anselme last year, so we enjoyed a grand visit. But the strangest part about the community is that it is half Latin Rite and half Greek-Slavic Rite. There are two chapels, the Latin one and the Greek one, both of them have the full liturgical life a less a really great feast for one rite or the other depends the concentration on only one of the two rites such as was to happen the next day, the feast of the Assumption. The priests and clerics there speak dozens of different languages: French, English, German, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Polish, Russian, Latin, Greek, Danish, and many of the Slavik languages. The monastery is situated out in the country amid fine wooded hills and little fields of wheat or pastures.

For the feast of the Assumption the Greek Rite took over, so a case of the Latin Rite had to blend their voices into the Greek choir (there are only twenty-eight in the community and not all of them are at the priory). Saturday evening I attended Vespers and Matins (which in our Latin Rite would take approximately an hour) in the Greek Rite from 7:30 until 10:15. Fortunately I had an English book with which to follow the Slavik words. You had to stop awake, you were starting almost continually. The reason for its great length is the fact that it is almost entirely sung. By the end of the evening and after much practice I could make the Greek sign of the cross as well as most of them (from the right shoulder to the left shoulder, not vice-versa as we of the Latin Rite complete the sign of the cross). Because it was a feast of the Blessed Virgin, beautiful blue vestments were used. It is a pity the Latin Rite does not use blue vestments. The tabernacle in the Greek chapel is very nice, is in the form of a golden and jeweled dove, life size - very small, but the Greeks do not use ciboriums for the hosts as the Latin Rite does. There were no compline or Lauds, the Vespers and Matins in earlier days of the Greek church used to last all night. It lasted long enough as it was. Leaving the chapel I kissed the great icon with all the others.

August 15 the Greek mass began at 8:30 and ended at 10:15. Again everything was very solemn and sung. There were many lay people present. I had an English-Greek book, so I could easily follow the whole mass. Five priests co-celebrated at this mass. Again the blue vestments were worn. Terce was also sung in Greek; it is much longer than our own Latin Office. We clerics received communion at the Greek mass - under the species of both bread and wine therefore. The large ikon was carried to the refectory during the noon meal.

During the afternoon we of the Latin Rite returned to our own chapel and said Bext and None, sang Vespers, for as we were (seven or eight), recited compline and Latin.

They have a Russian student there who wishes to join the community, but first he must study much. His home was in Odessa. His father was in the diplomatic corps. He had no religious training at all. He served in the Red Army, drove through the Belgians, met the Americans at Magdeburg. After his military service he made his way to Denmark where I believe he was converted two years ago. He is very young, seems to be my own age. He speaks some English and many other tongues, told me that the lack of a religion in Russia is pitiful and even shocking.

Next morning we were up at 5:00, went to the Latin chapel and sang Lauds, then sang the daily high mass. This is a daily affair there they tell me, few as they are. Prime followed and then the priests went to offer their private masses. Terce is recited at 8:45 and Bext just before the 11:30 dinner. After dinner Father Harold and I returned to Maredsous.

August 17 one of the priests asked us if we would like to go to see a sawine in a nearby town, for his friend was here with a car, and his friend spoke excellent English. Of course we said yes. So in the afternoon we drove to Foy, to see the church of the Blessed Virgin (Noire Dame de Foy). It was surprising to hear a Belgian speaking English so well, and using some good American expressions too. He was from Bruxelles.

Next day the abbot pontificated at Vespers, because of the sixteenth anniversary of the dedication of the abbey church.

August 19 was the actual celebration day - what a feast, most of the Office was sung, only a minimum was recited. The four chanters were in their beautiful copes even for Latin. The abbot pontificated at Lauds, then at 10:00 for Terce and the high mass; what beautiful vestments they use on such feasts as this! and what a dinner we had: french fried potatoes, fried duck and then to top it off, a limitless amount of ice cream. I never saw so much ice cream since I left the States. I ate and ate and ate ice cream, but still a great deal was carried back to the kitchen at the end of the meal. I hope this is not the last time they serve ice cream like that. Then to finish the day the abbot again pontificated at Vespers.

August 20 three friends from Chevetoigne came over for the afternoon. They were an Englishman and two Dutchmen (Holland) but all spoke English. They are Olivetans (wear white habits), a distant branch of the Benedictine Order. They do not belong at Chevetoigne but are members of a house in London. They have been studying the Greek liturgy at Chevetoigne.

All in all, I have been learning quite a bit of French and have been having an enjoyable time all around. I like very much being here; the community is so friendly and kind. French is a lot of fun, amusing too at times. For example take the word for water, in French it is eau but it is pronounced o, just like the fifteenth letter of the alphabet. Sometimes French is long and complicated, for example take the number ninety-nine, it is quatre-vingt-dix-neuf, which translated really means "four twenty's + ten + nine." Add it up, it equals ninety-nine, but what roundabout way to say it!

Early in September I shall spend some days visiting the abbey at Louvain and at St. André near the coast on the north. But then I shall return to Maredsous to remain here until it is time to leave for Rome after October 1st, for school begins only on October 15th. So you still have time to write me here at Maredsous.

Dear fellow clerics,

Some weeks have passed since I last heard from any of you, busy? Who's teaching what this year, any clerics on the high school staff? Fr. Landelin, could you get hold of an old catalogue for the college and high school and send them here? The clerics here have asked me for one to see what kind of a program the students have at St. John's. That is, if it is not too much trouble. Perhaps a catalogue from last year if there are any around. The clerics here are a swell bunch, really making me feel at home. I was surprised to learn that Fr. Hugo of the Sylvestrians is to go to Rome this year. Do you have his Detroit address? Am having lots of fun learning French. How about a word from Fr. Joseph-Martin?

Fraternally in St. Benedict,

J. Richard

Alte Metten, Germany
August 7, 1949

Dear conference,

just a few more weeks and I shall be once more with you.

I have been here at Metten four days already and will remain here a couple more days before journeying further homeward. Metten is a very nice, moderate-sized monastery. It is only about third largest in numbers in the Bavarian congregation; they have only two clerics and three novices at the present time. Most of the fathers here speak or understand English quite well. However since the three other Americans here and I want to learn as much German as possible, we have been doing most of our talking in German. Two days ago Father Raphael from St. Bernard's and I bicycled to the Ottilien abbey of Schreckelberg, twenty odd miles southeast of Metten. That abbey was founded only in 1903, but is a fine prosperous house now. It is situated on a hill right above the Danube River, not far from the Austrian & Czechoslovakian borders. Then on the return to Metten we also visited the Bavarian abbey of Niederraltaich, a very old Benedictine abbey, founded before Metten in the 8th century. It too was closed in the secularization of 1803, was again reopened from Metten in 1913. Now they are larger than Metten, have 12 clerics and lots of brothers. There we were shown about by an old Father Nikola who for many years had been an Indian missionary in Montana.

All the Bavarian abbeys have excellent breweries - and so they (we).

Drink the beer - a pint at each meal, and lots between meals! No weak 3.2 stuff either.

Tomorrow a group of us intend to hike to Mt. Arber, about 5000 feet high, north of Metten, right near the Czechoslovakian border. Of course we couldn't cross the border if we wanted to - and we don't want to. They say the border is heavily guarded.

But before coming to Metten I also spent several hours in Munich (I missed my train when I went to St. Boniface's in Munich for dinner). The large Abbey basilica of St. Boniface was terribly bombed. Munich, a city of 700,000 was 60% destroyed. It is terrible! I saw nothing so bad in Italy! Less than a third of the length of St. Boniface remained standing as they are covering that and will use it as the church. I have a couple cards, before and after views, which I will send or bring home with me. Abbot Bonifaz Höbermüller there was very nice, saw to it that I got all around the city - but what ruins. And they say the Rhineland is even worse. I was nearly a week at Ettal, south of Munich - had a most enjoyable time hiking and mountain climbing with the five clerics there. Even had the honor of hiking with Cardinal Pflüger of Cologne, for he is spending a 3 week vacation at Ettal. Then too I also visited two fellow Anselmians...

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P.S. Fr. Brief *der* *Blindenschrift*
wird *nicht* *als* *Post*
befördert.

ERSTER FALZ

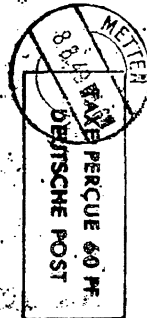
Absender:

Dr. Richard Schütz, 118

Abt. Medizin

bei Regenerberg, Bayern

LUFTPOSTBRIEF



DURCH
LUFTPOST
PAR AVION

The Clerivate
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota

U.S.A.

Wenn dieser Brief irgendwelche Einlagen enthält,
wird er nur durch gewöhnliche Post befördert!

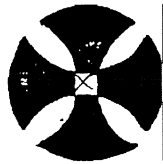
ZWEITER FALZ

Seiten zusammenfalten, den unteren Teil des Briefes
hochschlagen und mit der Klappe verschließen

In Nomine + Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Amen.

Ego, Frater Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth ex Mandan,
North Dakota, Dioecesis Bismarckiensis, ad honorem
Omnipotentis Dei, Beatissimae Virginis Mariae, ac Beati
Patris nostri Benedicti, omnium sanctorum, tenore
praesentium per vota solemnia promitto stabilitatem
et conversationem morum meorum, ac obedientiam
secundum Regulam ejusdem sancti Patris Benedicti,
et statuta nostrae Congregationis, coram Deo et sanctis
ejus, quorum reliquiae hic in praesenti ecclesia sunt,
simulque in praesentia Reverendissimi in Christo Patris
ac Domini, Domini Bernardi Kaelin, Abbatis Primatis
Ordinis sancti Benedicti, ad hoc specialiter delegati
a Reverendissimo Domino, Domino Alcuino Deutsch,
monasterii sancti Joannis Baptistae, Collegerville, Minne-
sota, abbate, et coram Reverendis Patribus et Venera-
bilibus Fratribus hic praesentibus: In Nomine Patris,
et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

In cujus rei testimonium praesentem schedulam
manu propria scripsi in hoc venerabili loco,
Ecclesia sancti Patris nostri Benedicti, Larnen,
Helvetia, anno ab Incarnatione Domini 1949 die 11
mensis Julii, in festo sollemnitate sancti Patris
nostri Benedicti.



Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth

**Declaratio Manu Propria a Candidatis Ante Professionem
Votorum Solemnium Subscribenda, Juramento
Coram Superiore Emissio**

(Cf. Instr. S.C. de Relig., nn. 17, 18, 1. Dec. 1931, A.A.S., XXIV, p. 80)

Ego subsignatus Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth
alumnus Ordinis S. Benedicti, ex Abbacia Santi Joannis Baptistae
cum petitionem superioribus exhibuerim pro emissionem votorum solemnium et recipiendo subdiaconatus ordine, diligenter re perpensa coram Deo, juramento interposito, testificor:

1. Nulla me coactione, seu vi, aut nullo impelli timore in emissionem votorum solemnium et in recipiendo eodem sacro ordine, sed ipsam sponte exoptare, ac plena liberaque voluntate eadem cum adnexis oneribus amplecti velle.

2. Fateor mihi plene esse cognita cuncta onera ex professione solemnium et ex eodem sacro ordine dimanantia, quae sponte amplector, ac Deo opitulante propono me toto vitae curriculo diligenter servare.

3. Quae castitatis voto ac coelibatus lege praecipuntur, clarè me percipere testor, eaque integre servare usque ad extremum vitae, Deo adjuvante, firmiter statuo.

4. Denique sincera fide spondeo jugiter me fore, ad normam sacrorum canonum, obsequentissime obtemperaturum iis omnibus quae mihi a Praepositis, juxta Ecclesiae disciplinam, praecipientur, paratus virtutum exempla, tum opere, cum sermone, aliis praebere, adeo ut tanti officii susceptione retributionem a Deo promissam accipere merear.

Sic testor ac juro, super haec sancta Dei Evangelia, quae manu mea tango.

Datum ex Collegio Sancti Anselmi, de Urbe, (Romae).
~~Abbatia S. Joannis Baptistae, Collegeville, Minnesota~~

Die 1 mensis Junii anni 1949

Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth

Testor coram Domino, testationem praemissam cum adnexo juramento ante me, loco ac tempore indicato, rite fuisse elatam.

Ubaldo Beske OSB

~~Abbas~~ Delegatus Abbatis

Declaratio ante Professionem Votorum Solemnum Jfacienda

Petitionem et Testationem a me, infrascripto Fratre Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth
alumno Abbatiae Sanc ti Ioannis Baptistae....., Ordinis S. Benedicti, die
mensis anni ante votorum triennialium professionem factam, intuitu
instantis professionis votorum solemnum necnon susceptionis ordinum majorum mecum iterum retractans,
coram Deo denuo obtestor me adhuc in eadem mentis dispositione et voluntatis intentione persistere et
inde ad vota solemnia nuncupanda necnon ad subdiaconatum recipiendum moveri.

Datum ex Aedibus Collegii Sancti Anselmi de Urbe (Romae)

Die 1 mensis Iunii anni 1949

Sig. Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth

Haec declaratio die, mense, anno ac loco suprascripto coram me facta est.

Sig. Udalricus Becke OSB

Abbas Delegatus Abbatis.

Sententia Magistri Spiritualis Clericatus

De Fratere Clerico Richardo Eckroth

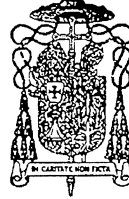
FR. Richard has been in Rome for almost three years. I neglected to write to Rome for recommendations. He writes faithfully to the Clerics. From the letters to them and to me I judge that he is doing well. At present he is plagued with the studying of Greek for his licentiate examination.

Die 4 mensis Septembris anni 1919 Sig. Richardus Eckroth C.S.C.
Magister Spiritualis Clericatus.

In Nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Amen.
Ego, Frater Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth ex parte
Mandan, North Dakota, Diocesis Bismarckensis
ad honorem Omnipotentis Dei, Beatissimae Virginis
Mariae, ac Beati Patris nostri Benedicti, et omnium
Sanctorum, tenore praesentium per vota temporaria
ad trivium ultimum promotam stabilitatem et
convictionem morum meorum, ac obedientiam
secundum Regulam eiusdem Sancti Patris Benedicti,
et statuta nostrae Congregationis eorum his et
sanctis eius quorum regulae hic in praesenti valentia
sunt, simulque in praesentia Reverendissimi in
Christo Patris ac Domini, Domini Alexini Kuntz, prius
monasterii Abbatis, et eorum Reverendissimae Patri meae et
Venerabilibus Fratrum hic praesentibus: In
Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

In cuius rei testimonium praesentem
schedulam manu propria scripsi in hoc venerabili
loco Abbatiae Sancti Iohannis Baptistaee, College-
ville, Minnesota, anno ab Incarnatione Domini
millesimo nongentesimo quadragesimo sexto,
die undecimo mensis Julii, in festo
solemnitatis Sancti Patris nostri Benedicti.

† Richardus Gulielmus Eckroth
Aleximus Deutsch O.S.B.
Abbas.



Josephus Franciscus Busch
Miseratione Divina et Sanctae Sedis Gratia
Sancti Clodoaldi Episcopus

Universis et singulis has litteras inspecturis fidem facimus et
testamur Nos die 17a mensis Decembris anni 19 50
in Ecclesia Abbatiali Sancti Joannis Baptistae
Dilectum Nobis in Christo Ricardum Eckroth, O.S.B.
Abbatia Sancti Joannis Baptistae

ad sacrum subdiaconatus ordinem
juxta Romani Pontificalis Rubricas et assistente Nobis in hac Sancti
Spiritus gratia promovisse et ordinasse.

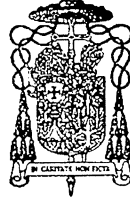
In cujus rei fidem has testimoniales litteras sigillo Nostro
majori insignitas confici jussimus.

Apud Sanctum Clodoaldum,

die 17a mensis Decembris anni 19 50.

+ *P. W. Bartholome*

Coadjutor Episcopus Sti. Clodoaldi.



Josephus Franciscus Busch
Misericordiae Divinae et Sanctae Sedis Gratia
Sancti Clodoaldi Episcopus

Universis et singulis has litteras inspecturis fidem facimus et
testamur Nos die 15a mensis Septembris anni 1951
in Ecclesia abbatiali Sti. Joannis Bapt., Collegeville
Dilectum Nobis in Christo Richardum Eckroth, O.S.B.
ex Abbatia Sti. Joannis Baptistae

ad sacrum diaconatus ordinem
juxta Romani Pontificalis Rubricas et assistente Nobis in hac Sancti
Spiritus gratia promovisse et ordinasse.

In cujus rei fidem has testimoniales litteras sigillo Nostro
majori insignitas confici jussimus.

Apud Sanctum Clodoaldum,
die 15a mensis Septembris anni 1951.

+ J. W. Bartholome

Coadjutor Episcopus Sti. Clodoaldi.

JOSEPHUS FRANCISCUS BUSCH
MISERATIONE DIVINA ET SANCTAE SEDIS GRATIA
SANCTI CLODOALDI EPISCOPUS

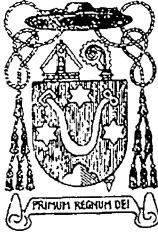
Universis et singulis has litteras inspecturis fidem facimus et
testamur Nos die .septima. mensis. Junii..... anni 1952.
in .Ecclesia Abbatiati Sancti Ioannis Baptistae, Collegeville, Minnesota.....
Dilectum Nobis in Christo..... Richardum Eckroth, O.S.B.....
..Abbatiae Sancti Ioannis Baptistae.....
.....
ad .sacrum PRESBYTERATUS ordinem.....
juxta Romani Pontificalis Rubricas et assistente Nobis in hac Sancti
Spiritus gratia promovisse et ordinasse.

In cujus rei fidem has testimoniales litteras sigillo Nostro
majori insignitas confici jussimus.

Apud Sanctum Clodoaldum,
die, septima. mensis... Junii..... anni 19.52..



Coadjutor Episcopus Sti. Clodoaldi.



L'ABATE PRIMATE O. S. B.

ROMA

COLLEGIO S. ANSELMO

VIA PORTA LAVERNALE 19, TEL. 593.569

Nos infrascriptus Abbas Primas O.S.B.
praesentibus letteris attestamur vi potestatis del-
egatus nobis a Rev.mo P. Abbate monasterii S. Joannis
Baptistae in Collegeville, U.S.A., Rev.mo D. Alcuino
Deutsch, O.S.B., professionem solemnem D. Richardi
Eckroth, O.S.B., monachi supradictae Abbatiae, nos die
11 Julii 1949 in Ecclesia Collegii PP. Benedictinorum
in Sarnen, Helvetia suscepisse.

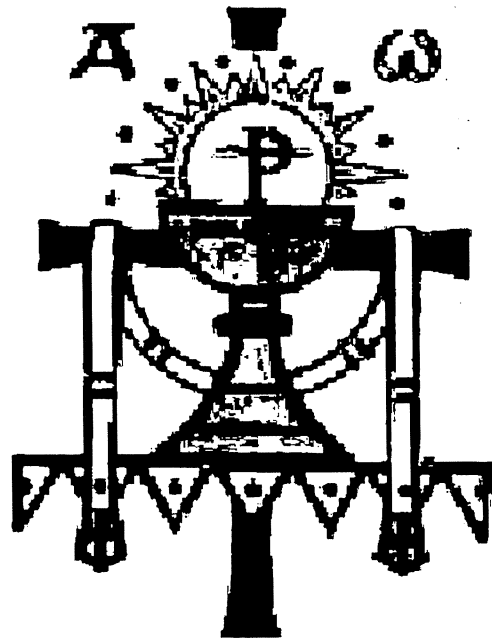
In quorum fidem praesentes litteras
sigillo nostro munitas propria manu subscripsimus.

Bernardus Kaelin O.S.B.

Bernardus Kaelin, O.S.B.
Abbas Primas

Datum ex Abbatia S. Anselmi de Urbe
die 3 Decembris 1952

OSB ECKROTH_0061



**+ THOU ART A
PRIEST FOREVER**

OSB ECKROTH_00062

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L.P. 116

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

In all things may God be glorified.



Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Monk of St John's Abbey

Ordained Priest
June 7, 1952
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota

First Solemn Mass
June 12, 1952
St. Joseph's Church
Mandan, North Dakota



O God, bless all who have helped me to
Thy Holy Altar.

DIOCESE OF ST. CLOUD
CHANCERY OFFICE
SAINT CLOUD, MINNESOTA
CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That on June 7- 1952

Rev. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B. was ordained to the
priesthood of the Catholic Church, and that he is
authorized under the rules of said Catholic Church
to solemnize marriages.

Joseph F. Breach
Bishop of St. Cloud

per J. L. Zittelbach: Chancellor

Filed for record and recorded

June 20, 1952.

Charles J. Schmitt
Clerk of District Court

October 3, 1960

Father Abbot,

The Brothers presently follow this prayer schedule:

4:45 Prime, conventual mass, meditation
11:35 Terce, Sext, None, Particular Examen
12:30 Visit to Blessed Sacrament
5:30 chanted Vespers
7:30 Lauds, Compline (ends 7:55)

After January 1, 1961 it will no longer ^{be} permissible to anticipate Lauds, hence some Brothers have felt that only the Office of Compline at 7:30 in the evening is an extremely short expression of night prayer and therefore wonder if they might be permitted to have 1 nocturne of Matins embodied into their daily Office. Then their daily schedule would take either of these two forms:

1. 4:45 Lauds, Prime, conventual mass (private meditation)
11:35 Terce, Sext, None, Particular Examen
12:30 Visit to Blessed Sacrament
5:30 chanted Vespers
7:30 1 nocturne of Matins, Compline (end c.8:05)
2. 4:45 Lauds, Prime, conventual mass (private meditation)
11:35 Terce, Sext, None, Particular Examen
12:30 Visit to Blessed Sacrament
5:25 chanted Vespers, Compline
7:30 1 nocturne of Matins (end c.7:58)

I have not spoken to the Brothers about it and would not do so unless I felt that you were favorable; but I feel that most of the Brothers would favor adding one nocturne of Matins to their Office under these circumstances. Perhaps their biggest regret in changing from the former Short Breviary to the present Monastic Diurnal was the complete exclusion of the Hour of Matins. Father Marcellus has told me that he would be very willing to prepare an edition of the psalms thus needed, in a form congenial to public recitation, and he believed that such an Office could be worked out before January 1st in a multilithed form. He says that the Sisters want all of Matins in the years to come, so this would be work with future application.

A. Richard

INFORMATION FOR THE ARCHIVES OF SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY, COLLEGEVILLE

NAME: Richard William Eckroth
 (Religious) (Baptismal) (Family)

BIRTH: Mandan Morton North Dakota June 21, 1926
 (City) (County) (State) (Month) (Day) (Year)

YOUR PATRON SAINT: Bl. Richard Whiting NAMEDAY: December 1

TRIENNIAL VOWS: St. John's Abbey July 11, 1946 Abbot Alcuin Deutsch
 (Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

FINAL VOWS/OBLATION: Sarnen, Switzerland July 11, 1949 Abbot Primate Bernard Kaelin
 (Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

ORDINATION: St. John's Abbey June 7, 1952 Bishop Joseph F. Busch of St. Cloud
 (Place) (Date) (Bishop)

FATHER'S FULL NAME: _____

FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE: near Karlsruhe, Ukraine, Russia

FATHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: German-French (Alsace-Lorraine area)

FATHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic (Latin rite) DATE OF DEATH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FATHER'S EDUCATION: 8th grade

FATHER'S OCCUPATION: retired from railroad work Northern Pacific RR--switchman
 (Now) (When You Entered Monastery)

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: _____

MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE: Mandan, North Dakota

MOTHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: Swiss

MOTHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic DATE OF DEATH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION: 8th grade

YOUR CAREER BEFORE ENTERING THE MONASTERY: student

EDUCATION	SCHOOL	FROM	TO	MAJOR	DEGREE	DATE
ELEMENTARY:	<u>St. Joseph's School Mandan N.D.</u>	<u>1932-1940</u>		<u>diploma</u>		<u>May, 1940</u>
SECONDARY:	<u>St. John's Preparatory, Collegeville</u>	<u>1940-1944</u>		<u>diploma</u>		<u>May, 1944, Valedictorian</u>
UNDERGRADUATE:	<u>St. John's University, Collegeville,</u>	<u>1944</u>		<u>philosophy</u>		
THEOLOGY:	<u>St. John's Abbey, Collegeville</u>	<u>1949-1953</u>				
GRADUATE:	<u>Collegio di Sant' Anselmo, Rome</u>	<u>1946-1949</u>		<u>Philosophy</u>		<u>Ph.B 1948, Ph.L 1949</u>
POST-DOCTORAL:						
OTHER:						

[Over Please]

DATE FILLED OUT: June 3, 1964

(Signature)

LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ALL THE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS (lasting six months or more) YOU HAVE RECEIVED SINCE PROFESSION AND ORDINATION. Give (a) the type or nature of the work, e.g., assistant pastor or plumber or math teacher in Prep School, (b) the location, (c) the duration, (d) any special achievements or items of note, e.g., built parish hall in 1948.

studied in Rome 3 years 1946-1949 Socius to Novices 1951-1953
assigned to college faculty September 1952 to present time
added to Seminary faculty September 1952 to present time
in both assignments I have mostly taught Logic classes, but have had an occasional
venture in Psychology, Introduction to Philosophy, and a Latin course on St. Augustine.
Master of Brothers June 1956 until the present time when I expect a change
Prefect in St. Thomas Hall-1965-1966.
St. Anselm's Hall-1968-1967
Assistant Chaplain at St. Benedict's Convent, St. Joseph, Minn. July 1967-

GIVE YOUR PARENT'S PRESENT ADDRESS, IF LIVING.

Mr. & Mrs.

LIST YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE ORDER OF THEIR BIRTH. INCLUDE YOURSELF. For those still living give their present address; for those who have died write "deceased." Put an asterisk before those whom you want contacted immediately and directly by the Abbey when you die.

*

*

*

IN THE REMAINING SPACE AND ON AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY PUT DOWN ANY OTHER ITEMS OF INFORMATION OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YOURS THAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY RECORDED.

OSB ECKROTH_00066

Eckroth, Fr. Richard.

Born: June 21 1928 at Mandan N.D.
Parents:
Profess: July 11, 1948
Ordained: June 7, 1953 at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.
1st Sol. Mass: June 12, 1953 at Mandan, N.D.

Assignments:

Sept. 1953 Socius to Novices.
Philosophy 22b(1sem); 22(3sem).

Sept 1953 - Socius to Brothers.
Philosophy 12; 22a; 22 b. Penitence.

Sept. 1954 - Socius to Brothers; Philosophy 12(1+2 sem); 12 b. Penitence
Philosophy 22a(1+2 sem); 22b(1+2 sem).

Worked all summer as Carpenter on the
New Abbey Shrine - Penitence every Sunday
during this time.

Sept 1955 Socius to Brothers. Philosophy 12a; 22a; 22 b; 12; 22a; 22b

June 1956 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22 a, b, c.

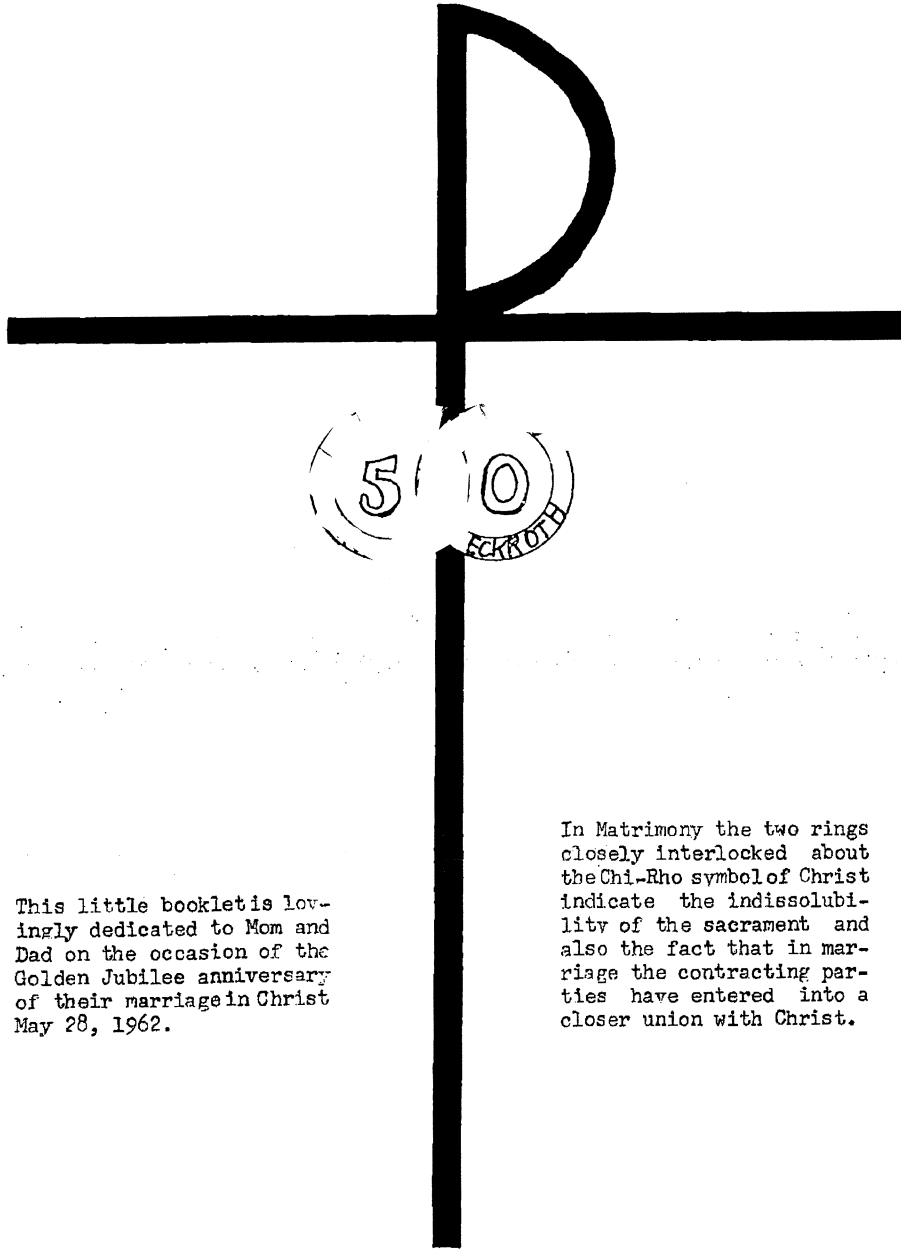
Sept. 1957 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22 a + c)

Sept. 1958 Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22 a, b, c.

Sept 1959 Master of Brothers Philosophy 22 a; 31 D.



OSB ECKROTH_00068



This little booklet is lovingly dedicated to Mom and Dad on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee anniversary of their marriage in Christ May 28, 1962.

In Matrimony the two rings closely interlocked about the Chi-Rho symbol of Christ indicate the indissolubility of the sacrament and also the fact that in marriage the contracting parties have entered into a closer union with Christ.

ECKROTH FAMILY HISTORY

"And God created man to His own image; to the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." Genesis 1,27

Remote Ancestors

Very little is known about the remote ancestors of the Eckroth family, except that at the beginning of the nineteenth century they lived in that portion of the Rhine Valley which serves as the present boundary between Germany and France. The Eckroth ancestors lived in or near the city of Karlsruhe in the state of Baden. It is possible that people bearing the Eckroth name still live in this part of Germany, but nothing is known of them, although some contact was made with Eckroths living in northern Germany just after World War II.

It is interesting to speculate on what might have been the origin and significance of the name "Eckroth". It is made up of two words, "Eck", which means angle, corner, or summit, and which was also used to describe posts or other devices used to mark off boundaries of land, and "roth" ("rot" in modern German) which means red.

The Eckroth Family Moves To Russia

Starting about 1785, the Russian government began to encourage Germans to settle in southern Russia. The immigrants were supposed to show the Russians modern farming methods. To induce families to come they were given about 160 acres of land but were not required to cultivate it. Various other privileges were also given, and the Germans did not have to serve in the army. Large Catholic colonies came from Baden, württemberg, Pfalz,

Alsace and Lorraine. Lutheran colonies came from Saxony. Most of these Germans settled in southern Russia, the Ukraine, Crimea, and along the shores of the Caspian Sea.

The first Eckroth ancestor whose name is known was _____ who was married to _____. He must have been born about the time the family moved to Russia. The Eckroths lived in a German settlement not far from the Bug River called Karlsruhe, in remembrance of their earlier home on the Rhine. Like most German villages in Russia, Karlsruhe was a small collection of farm homes with a church, perhaps a few shops, and a community pasture, usually tended by some young man who did not yet own a farm of his own. The farmers would walk out to their fields six days a week and put in long hours of hard labor. Sunday they went to church and rested. When necessary they travelled to some large city for supplies. Occassionally they went as far as Odessa, about 200 miles away on the Black Sea. They moved about 1810.

The Germans in Karlsruhe had their own school in which they were taught their religion. They also had to learn the Russian language, but still retained their native German language and many customs.

_____ owned a farm machinery shop in Karlsruhe. There were ten children in the family: _____, the oldest, was born August 24, 1848. The other children were _____

and

All but one of these children eventually came to America.

_____ farmed and also helped to make farm machinery for his father. He married _____ who was born about 1852 or 1853, the daughter of _____. _____ was evidently a wanderer in the early part of his life and he told his friends that he had been as far away as Turkey and had seen the remains of Noah's Ark on top of Mount

Ararat! It is not recorded whether anyone believed him. After his wife died,) came to America with a younger daughter,

He settled on 160 acres of land in McHenry county which he improved and finally "proved up". Until his death December 27, 1908, he had never been sick a day in his life.

The children of

both died as infants in Russia, and the)orn March 22, 1889.

Immigration To America

The German settlements in Russia were thriving communities and the industrious farmers must have been the envy of their Russian neighbors. However, by the 1860's the policy of the government began to change against the Germans. Many of their privileges were revoked and finally they were required to serve in the Russian army. The settlers, who had stoutly maintained their German language and customs, did not relish the idea of fighting for the Czar.

Beginning in 1889, many of the Germans began to leave Russia for the New World. They would sell all that they owned at an auction to get the money for the long passage to America with something left over to make a new start. Many were attracted to North Dakota because of its similarity to the land which they were leaving.

One day) came home with a horse he had just bought from a neighbor who was leaving for America. Soon afterwards he asked if she would like to go to America. Her answer was, "Better today than tomorrow!" The Eckroth family soon put their own farm up for auction, and) also decided to make the trip at the same time. The auction was not as successful as) had hoped; so finances were meager.

The Eckroth and Knoll families set out across Russia, Austria, Germany and Holland to Rotterdam from which they sailed to their new home. the father, and his youngest son, were the only members of the whole party who did not get sea-sick during the eleven day trip. was just two and one-half years of age. The group spent two days in New York getting through customs and started west by train. They arrived in Mandan on November 11, 1891. There was already two feet of snow on the ground; so was a little dubious about what sort of country this would be for farming. Another problem was money; he had just \$17. in American money left in his pockets. But the people in Mandan were very kind to immigrants.

, the oldest of children was married to while the family was still in Russia. They remained in Russia where taught school and later was employed as an agent for a shipping company in Odessa, until they also came to America about 1905.

Settling Down In North Dakota

ntended to begin farming as soon as possible, but during the first winter he took a job shoveling coal at the railroad coal dock. The work lasted all night and paid \$1.25 a day. The Eckroth and Knoll families lived together the first winter in a three room house located a few blocks northeast of the St. Joseph's Church.

In order to be ready to begin farming, gistered for land and also obtained a claim for his oldest son. A livestock brand was registered in his name about this time, simply the letters AE. When the twentieth of May brought two more feet of snow it almost broke heart. He thought of going back to Russia; but since even the \$17 was long gone, there was nothing to do but stay in North Dakota. But later in 1892 he saw one of the finest wheat crops he had ever seen in his life!

Eventually all of [redacted] brothers and sisters came to America except for [redacted] who had no children, and most of them who came to North Dakota returned to the profession of farming. The parents, [redacted] remained in Russia where they died; so there are no known Eckroths living in Russia today.

In July of 1894 [redacted] died from burns received in a fire caused by the explosion of a gasoline stove which she was refilling while working at C. P. Thurston's Boarding and Rooming House. She is buried in the old cemetery northwest of Mandan under a small stone bearing the family name spelled "Ekroth".

For a time [redacted] did miscellaneous carpenter work. Soon he took a job doing carpenter and general repair work on houses owned and rented by Mr. L. N. Cary. The family fortunes began to look brighter and soon [redacted] was planning to have a home of his own. After some disagreement, [redacted] left the employ of [redacted] and bought the lot at [redacted] which has belonged in the family ever since. The lot was occupied by a frame shell of a building about 24 feet square which had been used as a blacksmith shop. A basement was dug and the shell enlarged and finished into a home much like the present except that the upper floor was not developed. [redacted] did the carpenter work himself, and a coal stove in the basement supplied heat. Many hundreds of tubs of ashes were carried up from the coal stove before the present gas heating system was installed--a fact to which many of the Eckroths can testify.

Very often the homes of the German-Russians were very brightly painted and this house was no exception. It was the custom to paint the floors a bright orange throughout the house, even including the front and back steps! The home still displayed some of these orange floors until a few years ago.

The bright coloring reappeared in the small buildings used as summer kitchens for both city and farm homes. The inside walls of the present garage still show a few traces of a soft blue color from a time when it served this purpose.

After the family home was completed worked on the construction of the present St. Joseph's Church, and also on the original Central High School. Then he served two or three years as street commissioner for the city of Mandan, but soon tragedy struck in the form of a stroke which prevented him from taking further employment. These were hard times for the Eckroth family. had just completed grade school in 1903 and had started high school. But as money became scarcer quit school after two weeks and traded his Latin and algebra books to his friend in exchange for a job as call-boy on the Northern Pacific Railroad. His mother took in washing, and also made altar breads for the church--no pay for this of course. In 1906 left the railroad to work as a clerk in a grocery store for a few months, but soon returned to the railroad. He became a yard clerk in 1907 and a switchman in 1910. remained an employee of the Northern Pacific Railroad from this time until he retired on April 1, 1954. He also served as a volunteer fireman during these early days and still holds a life membership certificate in the North Dakota Volunteer Firemen's Association.

the oldest of boys, married
 on February 8, 1899. married February 5, 1903.
 Eckroth died on December 24, 1915. survived him until
 March 18, 1921; thus she was able to hand down the recipes for many of the
 delicious German dishes that have always been popular in the family. In 1908
 met whose family history we shall next trace.

OSB ECKROTH_00077

GRUNENFELDER FAMILY HISTORY

"But the Lord said, it is not well that man should be without companionship;
I will give him a mate of his own kind." Genesis 2,18

The history of the Grunenfelder family would be very interesting if it could be known completely. However the history is fairly well known from the beginning of the nineteenth century. This narrative is largely adapted from a history published in connection with the fiftieth wedding anniversary of _____ on September 23, 1945.

Several generations ago there lived a male Grunenfelder who held a title. The crest that he had came down from still earlier generations and is the one now in the family. This "wapa" as the folks in Switzerland call it depicts St. George astride a horse in the act of spearing a dragon. In 1935 Grunenfelder had gold rings made showing the crest and these were distributed to the four male Grunenfelder descendants: _____ in Switzerland,

_____ and the fifth _____ living in America.

Another interesting fact in the family history is the five unbroken generations in which the first child born was a boy who was given the name _____, but throughout life called _____. This succession was finally ended when a daughter, _____, was born to the fifth Grunenfelder.

The Grunenfelders in Switzerland

The first Grunenfelder whose name is known is _____ I) who was born in the early part of the nineteenth century in Wangs, in the canton of St. Gallen, in Switzerland. He received a good education which trained him to be a teacher. His first position was with the Wangs school system and

he taught there his whole life. He married in his early twenties but nothing is known about his wife.

Soon after his marriage, built the ancestral home in Wangs. This two-story structure of six rooms was built of hand-hewn logs six inches thick held together with wooden pins. The exterior was finished with wooden siding and roof with wooden shingles. The ground floor windows were larger than those of the upper floor and each was fitted with shutters. The interior was finished with wood-faced walls and it had low ceilings and doorways. The stairway leading to the upper floor was built with a twist in it and only a few steps which were about eighteen inches in depth.

A tall, husky man, the first was light complexioned and always clean-shaven. Although of masterful physique he died at an early age and is buried beside his wife in the Wangs cemetery.

There were three children in the family, the second was born in 1831, and there were two girls whose names are not known. At the death of their parents, the children were cared for by a man named Wyss with the help of some money set aside for this purpose. The second received his early education in his father's school in Wangs and then a college education in St. Gallen where he graduated in 1856. The two girls received the ordinary education then offered in Wangs. Both girls married, one lived in Filters and the other in Mels. After his graduation returned to Wangs to accept the position of "Ober Lehrer", or teacher of upper grades, which he held for the next 33 years.

The year 1856 also marked the marriage of to who had been born and raised in the nearby town of Mels. She was a very small woman with beautiful blond hair and expressive brown eyes. In contrast, her husband was robust, weighing about 200 lbs, standing six feet tall.

There was quiet anticipation in the Grunenfelder household the December of 1857 for were expecting their first child. Naturally they hoped for . Their prayers were answered on the eighteenth, During the next nine years two more boys, (always called simply were born. The boys attended the Wangs school and had their father for teacher when they reached the upper grades. The boys were shown no favoritism in the class room, The townsfolk expected the "Lehrer's" children to be model children both in and out of school, but they still had their share of boyish adventures nevertheless.

In 1868 a great sorrow came to this home. was expecting her fourth child when some trouble developed and after much suffering the child was born but died. When strength began to ebb, she asked that she be allowed to see her three boys once more. After taking them into her arms for the last time she said, "Take the children away, it breaks my heart to see them." Soon afterwards she died and was buried in her home town cemetery in Mels.

For the next five years carried on alone with his teaching job with only the help of a housekeeper to manage the children. the youngest, was only two years old at the time of his mother's death. After this time decided to remarry. The new mother, proved to be loving, understanding and efficient in every way. The three boys called her mother and loved her as such.

 had three children: . All of the Grunenfelder children except remained in Switzerland and there are a very large number of relatives in Switzerland today. In fact Wangs consists predominantly of Grunenfelders and Kalberers.

ied in 1889 but survived him until 1927.
 visited her relatives in America throughout the year 1935 and then returned
 to Switzerland where she died at Wangs in 1960.

Grunenfelders Move to America

The third was the first Grunenfelder to leave Switzerland.
 He came to America during the summer of 1882 and made his home in Dubuque,
 Iowa, where he stayed with his aunt Mrs. the
 half-sister of inenfelder and also the grandmother of ,

From Iowa, next went to Bismarck in Dakota Territory where he
 worked for a time for , a brother of his step-mother. Across
 the Missouri River lay Mandan, then an outpost of civilization. Soon
 went to work in Mandan for who had a blacksmith shop in the east
 part of town. Later he went into business for himself and ran a grocery
 where the Penney Store is now located. The grocery prospered with much of
 the business coming from the soldiers at Fort Lincoln.

While in Iowa, met and fell in love with
 father's family came originally from Switzerland, and her mother's family from
 Luxembourg. was one of six children. A sister,
 came M- the mother of Rev. Father and
 S. O.S.F. Another sister became the mother
 of

wanted to become permanently located before marrying, and there-
 fore had gone alone to Dakota. Early in 1883 he sent for and they
 were married in Bismarck on April 3rd of that year.

After three years [redacted] anxiously awaited the birth of the fourth [redacted] Providence was kind and their prayers were answered on April 18, 1886. Also born to [redacted] and [redacted] in Mandan were [redacted], [redacted] born on April 10, 1890 and destined to become [redacted] to figure as a central personage in this narrative.

In 1889 [redacted]'s brother [redacted] along with other Grunenfelder and Kalberer relations, came to Dakota. [redacted] went to work in his brother's bakery making bread, rolls, pasteries, and a thing unheard of in Switzerland--pies! [redacted] expanded his business and also began to make ch ese.

However, in the spring of 1891 he gave up his business and moved to a farm at Turkey River, Iowa. After returning to Iowa three more children were born:

In 1895 the family moved again to a farm on "Twelve-mile Island" on the Mississippi River. From this point tragedy lay in wait. On July 16, 1896 baby [redacted] fell into the river. His mother who was pregnant at the time tried to rescue him by holding to the branch of a tree along the water's edge. The ground gave way and she too fell into the river. Mother and baby drowned. Both were buried in the little cemetery in Cassville, Wisconsin.

The following January [redacted] while running the horse-power on a hay bailing machine, was injured when the horses broke loose and ran away. He lived thirty-six hours and was conscious to the last. He died on January 12, 1897 and was buried beside his wife and baby in Cassville,

The death of their parents was a great tragedy to the seven minor children in the Grunenfelder family. [redacted] as old enough to go to work and take care of himself but the other children were distributed to friends, relatives and other homes. [redacted] went to Mandan to live with his Uncle

just seven years old, was taken in by the Sisters of St. Francis at Cassville, who educated her along with their boarding students. During the summer months the Sisters took [redacted] with them to their motherhouse at Silver Lake near Milwaukee. [redacted] lived with the Sisters for about four years. Then the Sisters found a home for her with [redacted], a wealthy Swiss widow at Dubuque. [redacted] owned three coffin factories and a general merchandise store, [redacted] lived with [redacted] for several years and made her first Holy Communion during this time. After completing grade school, [redacted] was sent to a sewing school for several months; then she decided to go to live with her uncle [redacted] in Mandan where her brothers and [redacted] were already staying. Her brothers provided the fare to Mandan, and [redacted] provided [redacted] with a good-sized trunk and other necessities. [redacted] and her sister [redacted] returned to Mandan in 1906.

New Families in Mandan

[redacted] was an acquaintance of [redacted] who then worked at the Badger and Wyman butcher shop in Mandan. He was also a classmate of [redacted] grade school for several years. In 1906 he heard that [redacted] pieces and [redacted] were coming from Iowa to live in Mandan with their brothers [redacted] and their cousins [redacted] and [redacted] and as seamstresses at Toman's Tailor Shop.

The first date between [redacted] took place at the "Volunteer Firemen's Dance". Many other dances followed in Mandan and also in the smaller towns around, such as St. Anthony, which had the advantage (?) of including a long wagon ride. The young couple also enjoyed hunting trips and picnics with [redacted]'s brother [redacted] and sister [redacted] as well as other friends. Many of these events are preserved for us today in photographs.

married on August 22, 1910 and
 was born in 1913. married
 on September 19, 1911. led and later married
 married at Traverse City, Michigan
 in 1913.

and were married on May 28, 1912 in
 St. Joseph's Church, Mandan, North Dakota. The Nuptial Mass was celebrated
 by Father Hildebrand Eickhoff, O.S.B., the assistant pastor at that time.

In the fifty years since that day the descendants of that marriage have
 grown to include fourteen children, twenty grandchildren, and three great-
 grandchildren. Many of these descendants as well as other friends and rela-
 tives will gather in Mandan during 1962 to congratulate the couple for their
 anniversary and to wish them many more happy years in the future.

and children and their date of birth are as follows:

April 18, 1913
 , 1914
 January 18, 1916
 March 21, 1917
 February 12, 1919
 March 18, 1920 *November 1, 1920
 August 9, 1921
 May 10, 1924 *November 4, 1924
 May 9, 1925 *February, 1926
 Rev. Fr. Richard O.S.B June 21, 1926
 June 21, 1928
 October 7, 1932
 May 10, 1934
 April 18, 1937

Happy are you who fear the Lord, who walk in His ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork; happy
shall you be and favored.
Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses
of your home;
Your children like olive branches around your table.
Behold, thus is the man who fears the Lord.
The Lord bless you from Sion; May you see the prosperity
of Jerusalem all the days of your life;
May you see your children's children. Peace be upon
Israel!
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Psalm 127
Blessing from the
Wedding Mass

SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY

COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

December 4, 1965

Dear Father Abbot,

Addressing this letter seemed strange; I have addressed first-day covers to you many a time, but never have I addressed a letter to you at Sant' Anselmo; in fact seldom have I addressed any letters to Sant' Anselmo since I left there in 1949. But I felt I must write you now and thank you for the very special kindness shown in your recent card which reached me for my patronal commemoration. Thank you very much for your kindness and prayerful remembrance. Thanks also for the greetings which you extended from others at Sant' Anselmo. I would guess that Father Ulric, Father Augustine Meyer, maybe John Mueller, and Gabriel Biki are the only few remaining from my days in the caro collegio. If you have convenient opportunity to greet them from me, I would be very grateful. Certainly if Fra. Avellino is still in the Porter's Office give him my heartiest greeting; he was always especially kindly towards me.

With the Council closing in a few days, you will likely be returning soon and will see the great progress that has occurred in the physical plant. It looks like the new sewage disposal plant will be operating very soon; the new drainage system has been completed through the football stadium to carry off the water from the north side of the library and science hall. But other improvements are not as prominent as these major items. For example little mention is made of the granite pieces that have been laid in the cemetery to curb the turn-around area. It is good to see this development, but it is still a bit disappointing not to see the monuments for the abbots, nor the main center piece which I understand is planned for the cemetery. At a recent discussion on the new dormitory construction program Father Florian reported that the county commissioners were agreeable to routing the county road along the east shore of the Watab lake, even behind the cemetery, and rejoining the present county road in the vicinity of the Pfleuger home.

One of the unsung heroes in the effort to improve the area of the watab has been old Father Edgar. Through these autumn days he has regularly spent a couple hours cleaning brush and chopping up old wind-falls in the area surrounding the path from the back of the cemetery down to the watab and back towards the wells. It is just amazing how he has spruced up this area with his consistent, unspectacular activity. Of course the new routing of the county road may undo or change some of his achievements, but he has certainly shown what a marvelous change can result from a little consistent effort.

The cold weather has made it possible to get some pretty good ice on the hockey rink; so the hockey team has been practicing and are scheduled to play their first conference game this coming week in St. Paul. There is too much snow on the ground for the football team to practice outdoors, so they have daily drills in the gymnasium after evening meal. One of the players told me they will leave early on December 8th for Augusta, Georgia in order to get in an outdoor practice Wednesday, Thursday and Friday on the field there. The players seem fairly confident about their ability to triumph over the team from Linfield, Oregon.

There is a sort of restlessness among the students as we approach the Christmas vacation, but not nearly the amount of enthusiasm for the football game in Georgia as there was before the 1963 game in California. The fact that the game occurs during a regular school session, and during an examination time at that, has discouraged many of the students from planning to make the trip to Georgia. Of the 102 students on my floor, most of whom are juniors, only about 10 or a dozen are thinking about the possibility of making such a trip; and in many of the dorms the proportion of interested students is even less.

*In Christ,
Richard, OSB*

OSB ECKROTH_0086

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.,

From January 1, 1967, to December 31, 1967

RECEIPTS:		EXPENSES:	
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 19 (excl. Stipends)		Salary to Assistants	
Mass Stipends on hand, Jan. 1		Wage for Servants	
Salary for Pastor		Kitchen, meals	5,00
Salary for Assistant chaplain	600,00	Beverage	3,50
Stipends	352,00	Cigars and Tobacco	8,20
Stola		Clothing	
Sale of Devotionals		Laundry	
Donations	18,00	Books	8,00
Auto Service		Newspapers and Magazines	14,00
House Maintenance		Stationery and Postage	
Salary for Chaplain		Devotionals	
Honorarium for Confessor		Barber and Toilet	
Missions and Retreats	35,00	Telephone and Telegraph	,80
Literary work		Auto Maintenance	57,80
Other Sources		New Auto	
		Medical Attendance	
		Medicine	
		Travel, (bus, air, rail)	36,70
		Carfare and Taxi	
		Fairs and Entertainments	15,90
		Alms	5,85
		Donations	
		Sundry Expenses	50,10
		Stipends to Abbey	158,00
		Stipends to Others	
		Stipends on Hand Dec. 31	
		Surplus Income to Abbey each month	600,00
		Cash on hand Dec. 31, (excl. Stip.)	41,15
Total	1005,00	Total	1005,00
Salary due Jan. 1,			

N.B. Please give information requested on last page

OSB ECKROTH_00087

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

of

Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

for the year

1967

Please give names and addresses of your
nearest relatives

parents:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

brothers and sisters:

Name:

Street:

Town and State: phone:

Name:

Street:

phone:
Town and State:

phone

OSB ECKROTH_00088

Raven Totem Pole (center background) at Saxman Park, Ketchikan, Alaska.

Color by Mike Miller, Ketchikan, Alaska

August 14, 1988

Dear Father Abbot,

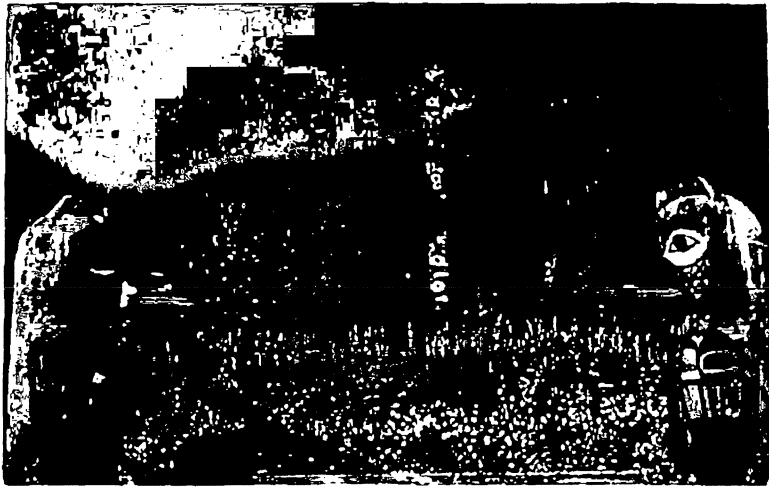
This card gives a good idea of the typical pioneer totem poles, for there are originals that have been reproduced. This is a very interesting country! There was a Reminiscence from Mt. Angel at the next town of Wrangell through the past year. Now the plans here to see for it again as the city of Ketchikan where my sister's family lives.

F. Richard, U.S.B.



POST CARD

Rt. Rev. Baldwin Demaree, OSB
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minn
56331



PERSONAL ACCOUNT

of

Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

for the year

1968

Please give names and addresses of your
nearest relatives

parents: this is a change from last year

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

brothers & sisters

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, C.S.B.

From January 1, 1969, to December 31, 1969

RECEIPTS:		EXPENSES:	
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 1969 (excl. Stipends)	41.15	Salary to Assistants	
Mass Stipends on hand, Jan. 1		Wage for Servants	
Salary for Pastor chaplain	2520.00	Kitchen, meals	12.80
Salary for Assistant		Beverage	4.50
Stipends	795.00	Cigars and Tobacco candy	19.17
Stola		Clothing	
Sale of Devotionals		Laundry	
Donations		Books	8.75
Auto Service		Newspapers and Magazines	24.50
House Maintenance		Stationery and Postage	2.85
Salary for Chaplain		Devotionals	3.10
Honorarium for Confessor	30.00	Barber and Toilet	.90
Missions and Retreats		Telephone and Telegraph	3.55
Literary work		Auto Maintenance	26.89
Other Sources gifts	25.00	New Auto	
		Medical Attendance	
		Medicine	
		Travel, (bus, air, rail)	20.15
		Carfare and Taxi	
		Fairs and Entertainments	15.25
		Alms	28.15
		Donations stamp collection	45.35
		Sundry Expenses	38.93
		Stipends to Abbey	522.00
		Stipends to Others	
		Stipends on Hand Dec. 31	
		Surplus income to Abbey <i>each month</i>	2520.00
		Cash on hand Dec. 31, (excl. Stip.)	114.38
Total	3411.15	Total	3411.15
Salary due Jan. 1,			

N.B. Please give information requested on last page

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

of

Fr. Richard Eckroth, C.S.B.

for the year

1969

Please give names and addresses of your
nearest relatives

parents:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

OSB ECKROTH_00092

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.,

From January 1, 19⁶⁸, to December 31, 19⁶⁹

RECEIPTS:		EXPENSES:	
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 19 68 (excl. Stipends)	41.15	Salary to Assistants	
Mass Stipends on hand, Jan. 1		Wage for Servants	
Salary for Pastor		Kitchen, meals	35.80
Salary for Assistant chaplain	1530.00	Beverage	7.00
Stipends	708.00	Cigars and Tobacco	
Stola		Clothing	4.00
Sale of Devotionals		Laundry	
Donations		Books	64.66
Auto Service		Newspapers and Magazines	16.00
House Maintenance		Stationery and Postage	10.80
Salary for Chaplain		Devotionals	3.30
Honorarium for Confessor		Barber and Toilet	.35
Missions and Retreats		Telephone and Telegraph	1.85
Literary work		Auto Maintenance	76.50
Other Sources gifts	9.00	New Auto	
		Medical Attendance	
		Medicine	
		Travel, (bus, air, rail)	84.75
		Carfare and Taxi	1.75
		Fairs and Entertainments	9.15
		Alms	19.60
		Donations Theology workshop	30.00
		Sundry Expenses	21.99
		Stipends to Abbey	430.00
		Stipends to Others	
		Stipends on Hand Dec. 31	
		Surplus Income to Abbey	1430.00
		Cash on hand Dec. 31, (excl. Stip.)	41.15
Total	2288.15	Total	2288.15
Salary due Jan. 1,			

N.B. Please give information requested on last page

OSB ECKROTH_00093

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

From January 1, 1970, to December 31, 1970

RECEIPTS:		EXPENSES:	
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 1970 (excl. Stipends)	114.31	Salary to assistants substitute	50.00
Mass Stipends on hand, Jan. 1		Wage for Servants	
Salary for Pastor chaplain	2520.00	Kitchen, meals	7.35
Salary for Assistant		Beverage	
Stipends mass	787.50	Cigars and Tobacco candy	19.70
Stola		Clothing	
Sale of Devotionals		Laundry	
Donations	15.00	Books	1.75
Auto Service		Newspapers and Magazines	30.00
House Maintenance		Stationery and Postage	5.08
Salary for Chaplain		Devotionals	9.00
Honorarium for Confessor		Barber and Toilet	
Missions and Retreats		Telephone and Telegraph	11.60
Literary work		Auto Maintenance	192.81
Other Sources		New Auto	
parish assistance	80.00	Medical Attendance	
		Medicine	
		Travel, (bus, air, rail)	118.55
		Carfare and Taxi	
		Fairs and Entertainments	18.32
		Alms	30.90
		Donation abbey stamp collection	136.10
		Sundry Expenses	94.35
		Stipends to Abbey	386.00
		Stipends to Others	
		Stipends on Hand Dec. 31	
		Surplus Income to Abbey	2310.00
		Cash on hand Dec. 31, (excl. Stip.)	65.30
Total	3516.81	Total	3516.81
Salary due Jan. 1,			

N.B. Please give information requested on last page

OSB ECKROTH_00094

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

of

Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

for the year

1970

Please give names and addresses of your
nearest relatives

parents mother name:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

brothers and sisters:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

OSB ECKROTH_00095

acknowledged on 1/14/72 - John, osb

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B. _____,

From January 1, 1971, to December 31, 1971

RECEIPTS:		EXPENSES:	
Cash on hand Jan. 1, 19 71 (excl. Stipends)	65.30	Salary to Assistants	
Mass Stipends on hand, Jan. 1		Wage for Servants	
Salary for Pastor chaplain	2520.00	Kitchen, meals	32.05
Salary for Assistant		Beverage	
Stipends	778.50	Cigars and Tobacco	
Stola		Clothing	2.90
Sale of Devotionals		Laundry	
Donations		Books	37.80
Auto Service		Newspapers and Magazines	42.80
House Maintenance		Stationery and Postage	22.10
Salary for Chaplain		Devotionals	8.00
Honorarium for Confessor		Barber and Toilet	1.80
Missions and Retreats		Telephone and Telegraph	13.43
Literary work		Auto Maintenance	165.06
Other Sources		New Auto	
gifts	26.00	Medical Attendance	
from Procurator for summer	100.00	Medicine	.60
travel		Travel, (bus, air, rail)	90.45
		Carfare and Taxi	
		Fairs and Entertainments	16.60
		Aims	44.80
		Donations	
		Sundry Expenses	130.06
		Stipends to Abbey	320.00
		Stipends to Others	
		Stipends on Hand Dec. 31	
		Surplus Income to Abbey	2520.00
		Cash on hand Dec. 31, (excl. Stip.)	41.25
Total	3489.80	Total	3489.80
Salary due Jan. 1,			

N.B. Please give information requested on last page

more brothers and sisters

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

of

Fr. Richard ECKROTH, C.S.B.

for the year

1971

Please give names and addresses of your
nearest relatives

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

Name:

Street:

Town and State:

OSB ECKROTH_00097

11 January 1971

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Benedict's Convent
Saint Joseph, Minnesota 56374

Dear Father Richard:

This will acknowledge receipt of your Personal Account.

As I am sure you know, the community here at Saint John's Abbey is very much aware of the substantial support which comes from the surplus income of the Fathers and the Brothers on parishes and chaplaincies. The financial statement each year indicates that the amount of revenue is increasing in spite of the fact that the cost of living is going up. In some instances I am sure that this increase represents an ever more conscientious living of the spirit of poverty.

The revenue for the past fiscal year from "exposits" was \$202,522 before expenses were deducted.

Mass Intentions in excess of those you need are still most welcome. For various reasons such intentions are almost disappearing in other parts of this country and abroad, and the excess we have are sometimes the means of support in the abbeys to which the intentions and stipends are sent.

I am happy that you are taking such good care of the Abbey stamp collection. I have two albums donated to Saint John's by Would you please come in to pick them up, and then we can talk about how to handle this gift. Thank you.

My daily prayer for you is that this year will be one of many blessings for you and especially joy and peace in your life and in your apostolic work.

Devotedly yours,

Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B., abbot

BD/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00098

STUDENT ACCOUNTS OFFICE
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321

4 9 0000 • ECKROTH RICHARD OSB

Please detach this stub and mail with your remittance. Your cancelled check serves as your receipt.

		BALANCE PREVIOUS STATEMENT \$	3.80
10/34 CASH	12.00	10/31 TLR	1.00
11/02 FOOD	1.10	10/21 TELF	5.63
11/30 TLR	2.65	<i>Month - to rally Bro. Richard Oliver's</i>	
12/08/72		BALANCE DUE	26.18

PLEASE MAKE PAYABLE TO ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

OSB ECKROTH_00099

STUDENT ACCOUNTS OFFICE
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321

4 9 0000 • ECKROTH RICHARD OSB

Please detach this stub and mail with your remittance. Your cancelled check serves as your receipt.

12/23 DUPL
12/31/72

1.20

BALANCE PREVIOUS STATEMENT \$ 26.18

BALANCE DUE 27.38

PLEASE MAKE PAYABLE TO ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

OSB ECKROTH_00100

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B. , From January 1 1972 to December 31 1972

RECEIPTS:			EXPENDITURES:		
Cash on hand <u>January 1</u> 19 <u>72</u> (excluding Stipends)		41.35	Salary to Substitute		
Stipends received—for Masses offered		703.00	Wages for hired help		
Salary for Pastor			Food and Beverage		10.38
Salary for Assistant			Tobacco		
Received from Abbey			Clothing and Laundry		8.20
Withdrawn from Business Office			Room, Board, Tuition		
Donations		68.75	Books, Newspapers, Magazines		39.80
Auto Allowance			Stationery and Postage		3.75
House Maintenance			Dues and Subscriptions		
Salary for Chaplain		2520.00	Barber and Toilet		2.64
Honorarium			Telephone and Telegraph		12.95
Missions and Retreats			Auto Maintenance		146.73
Literary work			Medical Attendance and Medicine		
Other Sources <u>parish help</u>		10.00	Travel (other than Vacation) (bus, air, rail, taxi)		35.45
			Entertainment and Recreation		5.75
			Alms and Donations		64.00
			Vacation		27.00
			Other Expenses		79.42
			stipends given to Fr. Roger		336.00
			Surplus Income to Abbey		2520.00
			Cash on hand _____ 19____		51.03
Total		3343.10	Total		3343.10

N.B. Please give information requested over.

OSB ECKROTH_00101

1972

Mass Stipends to Abbey \$ _____

Mass Stipends to Others _____

Total \$ _____

Mass Intentions on Hand _____

Dollar value of Stipends on Hand \$ _____

To those residing outside the Monastery, to avoid any difficulty at time of transfer or death:

Please list items of value which are in your possession and belong to the Monastery, such as cameras, tape recorders, radios, stereos, television sets, chairs, and valuable objects of Art. (Do not list things which belong to the rectory or parish.)

- camera
- radio
- Royal upright typewriter
- wooden carving of medal of St. Benedict
- relic of St. Richard & authentica
- phonograph records
- humidifier
- all books in my bookshelf
- ~~desk~~ stamp equipment

PLEASE GIVE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.

(Even if you filled this out last year, this might require updating.)

NAME:

STREET:

CITY AND STATE:

NAME:

STREET:

CITY AND STAT.

NAME:

STREET:

CITY AND STATE:

Mass Stipends to Abbey \$ _____
 Mass Stipends to Others _____
 Total \$ _____

Mass Intentions on Hand _____
 Dollar value of Stipends on Hand \$ _____

To those residing outside the Monastery, to avoid any difficulty at time of transfer or death:

Please list items of value which are in your possession and belong to the Monastery, such as cameras, tape recorders, radios, stereos, television sets, chairs, and valuable objects of Art. (Do not list things which belong to the rectory or parish.)

Royal upright typewriter
 chalice and paten
 relics: Holy Cross, St. Richard
 all books in my room
 wood carving of St. Bend. medal
 old radio
 old camera (Kodak) 35mm. & light meter
 1972 Chevrolet Nova for my use
 loose, used stamps

PLEASE GIVE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.

(Even if you filled this out last year, this might require updating.)

father:

NAME:

brother:
 STREET:

CITY AND STATE

brother:

NAME:

sister:
 STREET:

CITY AND STATE

sister:

NAME:

SISTER:
 STREET:

CITY AND STATE

sister:

brother:

brother:

telephone:

brother:

brother:

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B. , From January 1 1973 to April 30 1973

RECEIPTS:			EXPENDITURES:	
Cash on hand _____ 19____ (excluding Stipends)			Salary to Substitute	
Stipends received—for Masses offered			Wages for hired help	
Salary for Pastor			Food and Beverage	
Salary for Assistant			Tobacco	
Received from Abbey			Clothing and Laundry tailor repair	3.00
Withdrawn from Business Office			Room, Board, Tuition	
Donations			Books, Newspapers, Magazines	
Auto Allowance			Stationery and Postage	1.96
House Maintenance			Dues and Subscriptions	
Salary for Chaplain			Barber and Toilet	
Honorarium			Telephone and Telegraph	
Missions and Retreats			Auto Maintenance	
Literary work			Medical Attendance and Medicine	
Other Sources			Travel (other than Vacation) (bus, air, rail, taxi)	
			Entertainment and Recreation	
			Alms and Donations	
			Vacation	
			Other Expenses duplicating	2.60
			Surplus Income to Abbey	
			Cash on hand _____ 19____	
Total			Total	7.56

N.B. Please give information requested over.

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

Mass Stipends to Abbey \$_____

Mass Stipends to Others _____

Total \$_____

Mass Intentions on Hand _____

Dollar value of Stipends on Hand \$_____

To those residing outside the Monastery, to avoid any difficulty at time of transfer or death:

Please list items of value which are in your possession and belong to the Monastery, such as cameras, tape recorders, radios, stereos, television sets, chairs, and valuable objects of Art. (Do not list things which belong to the rectory or parish.)

PLEASE GIVE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.

(Even if you filled this out last year, this might require updating.)

NAME: same as January 1, 1973

STREET:

CITY AND STATE:

NAME:

STREET:

CITY AND STATE:

NAME:

STREET:

CITY AND STATE:

OSB ECKROTH_00106



SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY • COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA
66321
OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

May 15, 1973

Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.,
St. Benedict's Convent
St. Joseph, Minnesota 56374

Dear Father Richard,

The personnel staff and I have discussed your request to be relieved of being chaplain at St. Benedict's, though you will continue to teach two courses in logic here in the college.

We have thought of various possibilities, but our final conclusion is to ask you to assist Father Aloysius at St. Augustine's in St. Cloud, along with Father Louis, the other assistant. We are withdrawing Father Cosmas from St. Augustine's. This appointment is agreeable to Father Aloysius and I am confident will be agreeable also to Bishop Speltza. I hope it will be agreeable to you and that it will not be too difficult for you to commute from St. Augustine's for your class work here. I hope, too, that it will be possible for you to continue your work on the stamp and coin collections.

Please let me know if this is agreeable to you so that I can write to the Bishop for his formal appointment and approval.

With good wishes and the prayer that God Bless you and your work,
I am

Devotedly,

Abbot

JE:fp

OSB ECKROTH_00108

June 8, 1973

Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Convent of St. Benedict
St. Joseph, Minnesota 56374

Dear Father Richard:

In writing to the Bishop this morning, I asked him to make your appointment as assistant at St. Augustine's effective on June 19 and I have just written to Father Cosmas that the date of his appointment to St. Bernard's would be effective on the same date. However, if this should be inconvenient for either of you, I have asked Father Cosmas to be in touch with you so as to arrange a more convenient date.

I am grateful for the great good that you did at St. Ben's convent and for your willingness to accept the appointment at St. Augustine's. I hope you will be happy in the work there and since you will continue to teach here, I am sure that I will see you occasionally. I am happy also that you were willing to continue to take care of our stamp and coin collection. I would not want the work to become too heavy for you and if you have any suggestions as to a younger man who might work into these projects, I will gratefully accept them.

With all good wishes and prayer that God bless you, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot
JE:fp

OSB ECKROTH_00107

PERSONAL ACCOUNT

Of Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B., From January 1 1974 to December 31 1974

RECEIPTS:		EXPENDITURES:	
Cash on hand <u>Jan 1</u> 197 <u>4</u> (excluding Stipends)	98.07	Salary to Substitute	
Stipends received—for Masses offered	97.00	Wages for hired help	
Salary for Pastor		Food and Beverage	16.50
Salary for Assistant	2619.70	Tobacco	
Received from Abbey		Clothing and Laundry	25.50
Withdrawn from Business Office		Room, Board, Tuition	
Donations	354.00	Books, Newspapers, Magazines	35.25
Auto Allowance		Stationery and Postage	10.45
House Maintenance		Dues and Subscriptions	1.50
Salary for Chaplain		Barber and Toilet	6.55
Honorarium	21.00	Telephone and Telegraph	
Missions and Retreats		Auto Maintenance	68.80
Literary work		Medical Attendance and Medicine	66.
Other Sources <u>bingo prizes</u>	18.00	Travel (other than Vacation) (bus, air, rail, taxi) gasoline simply	179.40
		Entertainment and Recreation	30.85
		Alms and Donations	248.48
		Vacation	119.53
		Other Expenses <u>mostly for cooking</u> <u>gas at the cabin</u>	53.35
		<u>Mass stipend money sent to</u> <u>Fr. Roger Schoenbeckler</u>	97.00
		Surplus Income to Abbey month by month	1958.95
		Cash on hand <u>December 31</u> 197 <u>4</u>	289.66
Total	3207.77	Total	3207.66

N.B. Please give information requested over.

OSB ECKROTH_00109

1974

Fr. Richard Eckroth

Mass Stipends to Abbey \$ _____
Mass Stipends to Others _____
Total \$ _____

PLEASE GIVE NAMES AND ADDRESSES
OF YOUR NEAREST RELATIVES.
(Even if you filled this out last year,
this might require updating.)

Mass Intentions on Hand _____
Dollar value of Stipends on Hand \$ _____

NAME:
STREET:
CITY AND

To those residing outside the Monastery, to
avoid any difficulty at time of transfer or death:

Please list items of value which are in your
possession and belong to the Monastery,
such as cameras, tape recorders, radios,
stereos, television sets, chairs, and valuable
objects of Art. (Do not list things which
belong to the rectory or parish.)

NAME:
STREET:
CITY AND STATE:

relic of St. Richard
relic of Holy cross (no authentica)
old radio
wood carving of medal of St. Benedict
typewriter (Royal upright 1952)
miscellaneous books
chalice & paten & pall
alb

NAME:
STREET:
CITY AND STATE:

The Church of St. Augustine

443 2nd Street S. E.
St. Cloud, Minn.

January 10, 1974

Fr. Abbot,

The figure of \$309.25 may seem excessive for alms and donations; but Father Aloysius says you have given permission for us to donate regularly to the parish collection, and on top of that we are often "touched" by transients for hand-outs at St. Augustine's; and as there is no common parish fund to draw upon, nor any provision for food or lunches to be served either here or at a convenient lunchroom nearby, we are expected to make such offerings from our own pocket.

Another figure that may seem higher than appropriate is the miscellaneous expense of \$102.39. This mostly covers the cost of supplies for the log cabin near Cass Lake, which I have always supplied from my pocket, as well as licenses for the boats and canoe used there, and the expenses for repair and maintenance of the chain saw which I used considerably last winter to procure lumber logs for Bro. Hubert, and for which there was no fund to draw from other than my own pocket.

Faithfully in St. Benedict,

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00114



SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY • COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA
56321
OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

January 15, 1974

Dear Father Richard,

Thank you for your personal account for the past year, for your letter of the 10th explaining two of the items, and for the amount of \$2149 which you were able to contribute to the support of the community during the past year. I appreciate the explanation of the Alms and Donations and of the Miscellaneous, and I gladly approve both. I think it good for the Fathers at St. Augustine's to donate something regularly to the parish collection and also to practice charity to those in need, and I am grateful for the work you do to keep the cabin near Cass Lake in shape and in procuring lumber logs for Brother Hubert. In the name of the community I am grateful for the work done and for the sacrifices made.

With all good wishes and the prayer that God continue to bless you and your work, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

OSB ECKROTH_00113

April 16, 1974

Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
St. Augustine's Church
443 Second Street Southeast
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301

Dear Father Richard,

Father Daniel has spoken to you about a change from St. Augustine's and he has also spoken to Father Aloysius. I believe he has also discussed the possibility of your working at Albany with Father Germain, while continuing to teach your regular classes here. Father Daniel has also spoken to Father Germain and the latter came to see me this afternoon on another matter and he expressed his happiness at the decision which I arrived at this morning, to ask you to accept an assignment to Albany. Father Germain is certain that you and he will be able to work out a schedule that will be fully acceptable both for the work of the parish and for your work here. I hope you will be pleased with this assignment.

With every good wish for the joys of Easter, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE:fp

OSB ECKROTH_00112

May 20, 1974

Dear Father Richard,

Originally I had planned to send Father Patrick to Tokyo at the end of June or early in July. However, in view of complications that have arisen in fulfilling commitments already made for the summer, I have now decided and have asked Father Patrick to remain in Albany until the end of August. I have also written the Archbishop of Tokyo and Prior Hildebrand of this change in plan.

While I know that you are eager to begin work at Albany, I hope that you will not mind remaining at St. Augustine's until near the end of August to help with the necessary work there during the summer. I admit this is not the best solution but it appears to be the only feasible one at present.

With every good wish and the prayer that God bless you, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE:fp

Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
St. Augustine's Church
443 Second Street, S.E.
St. Cloud, MN 56301

OSB ECKROTH_00111

9878 Jerusalem, Nov. 19, 1976
to our Father Abbot,

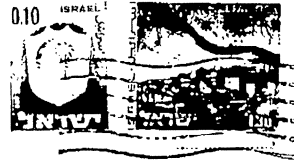
Certainly one of the highlights
of my 3 months in the Holy Land
was my visit - visit to the
St. Catherine's Monastery.
This was St. Catherine's Monastery
where I wish you a vivid memo-
ry of visit. St. Catherine's Monastery
is following the ancient monastic ideal
the theme of Jesus St. Peter, at its
monastic expression! For many years

מנוסטריה קתרינה סיני
המנוסטריה קתרינה סיני
המנוסטריה קתרינה סיני
המנוסטריה קתרינה סיני



MONASTERY OF ST. KATHERINE at the foot
of Mount Sinai, "The Mountain of God". The
monastery was built by the Emperor Justinian
(525-565 A.D.).
Monastère de Sainte Catherine au pied du Mont
de Dieu. Construit par l'Empereur Justinien (525-
565 A.D.) Basilique Orthodoxe grec.

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Abbot John E. Eckroth, OSB
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minn.
56321

U.S.A.

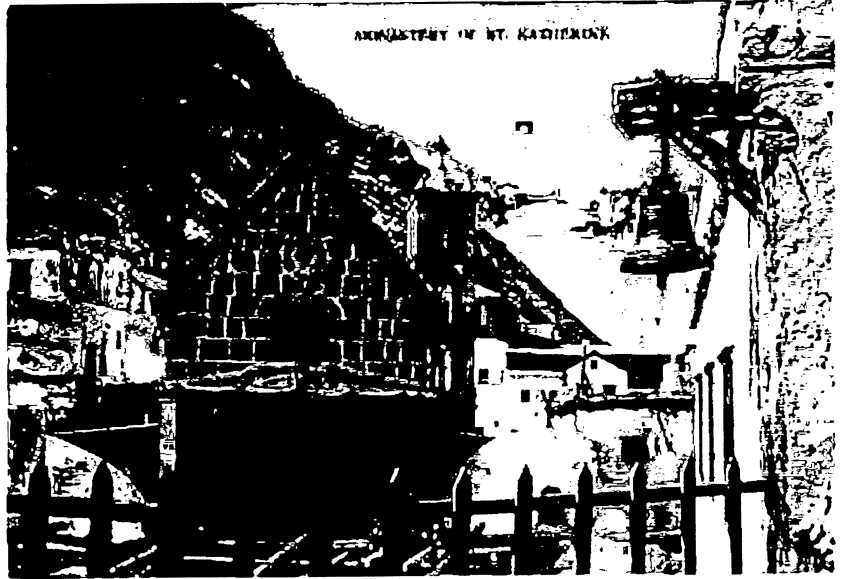


Oct. 15, 1976 Jerusalem
Dear Father Abbot,
Arrived here safely Wednesday
evening and was warmly received
by the Franciscan Friars. Will join
them in the public Via Crucis
which they conduct each Friday
afternoon. This church is the 2nd
station, and the Holy Sepulchre is
the last station. It is very
interesting here in the Old city
of Jerusalem, in the Arab Muslim
section especially! Am praying
for all at the shrine.
Fr. Richard, OSB

Jerusalem Old City - The Chapel of the Crucifixion
in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre 1081

St. P.O.B. 2133 Jerusalem Printed in the Holy Land

Rt. Rev. Abbot John
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minn.
56321
U.S.A.



OSB ECKROTH_00117

April 30, 1976

Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Church of Seven Dolors
Albany, Minnesota 56307

Dear Father Richard,

The personnel staff and I have spent many hours in trying to work out the appointments for the coming year in a way that will best fit the needs of each person as well as the needs of the particular apostolate and the commitments of the community. Our final meeting, hopefully, was on Wednesday of this week, the 28th.

Though I asked you earlier not to sign your contract with the University for the coming year, I have not mentioned my thoughts for the coming year as many things were quite unsettled until this past Wednesday when I decided we could no longer delay decisions. I have written to Father Germain asking him if Father Urban will be acceptable as associate pastor, and I have written to Father Urban if an appointment to Albany will be acceptable. I hope for a favorable response from each.

For your future work, I would be grateful if you would consider going to the Bahamas, since the Bishop has been asking for additional help from us, partly in view of the fact that a couple of our men are getting along in years. If this is agreeable to you, I would give you the opportunity for taking some courses or workshops, as you might choose, even for the 1st semester of the coming year. This would mean being available for going to the Bahamas in January of 1977, which would be a good time so that you could become somewhat acclimated before the warmer summer weather sets in there.

Father Urban is still working for the EPFL, but he has resigned from that and asked for a parish assignment. I doubt if he can wind up his work in Spain before the middle or end of July. For the present, then, I would ask you to continue at Albany, with the possibility of taking a couple of the Workshops being given here this summer.

I would appreciate your letting me know whether this assignment and plan is acceptable to you. In the hope that it will be, and with all good wishes I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

OSB ECKROTH_00115

For Bahamian Correspondence, 1975-1993 See Box 25 BOX

My dearest ones,

Christmas, 1976

Here goes for an account of my recent travels in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. I had my last mass in Albany, Monday morning, October 11, and after a quick breakfast drove to St. John's where I left my car. There met me and took me to the Minneapolis airport. Here I boarded a 747 to New York. They are huge planes, but it was only partially filled. In New York I boarded an Icelandic DC8 for the night flight across the Atlantic. This was jam packed with not a single empty seat. It was beautiful to see the lights of New York and Boston and the New England coast as we flew out of the States; but one could only vaguely make out New Foundland and Greenland. About midnight we received a meal; and after a couple more hours we landed at 6:00 a.m. in Iceland for refueling. From Iceland we were constantly in the clouds and rain until we landed in Luxembourg. I had only a couple hours in Luxembourg before boarding a train through France to Zurich, Switzerland. The French Customs were rather suspicious of the group in our train compartment, for one of the Americans in the group had gotten on in Amsterdam and this city is notorious for drugs. But they found nothing. I spent the night in a Swiss hotel and went early to the airport. You have to be at the airport hours before a flight to Israel, for the Israel security is extremely tight, and they search your bags and person most thoroughly, in their efforts to prevent hi-jacking and bombing. We were in a 707 for this flight, and the sky became clear as we flew over the Alps and Italy and Sicily and the Greek Island of Rhodes to land in Tel Aviv. This was still an hour drive from Jerusalem; and I was much impressed at how quickly darkness sets in after the sun has set. It seemed so much more quickly than in our northern climate. Anyway I was warmly welcomed at the Franciscan House of Biblical Studies and arrived in plenty of time for the evening meal.

It is a rather specialized university in preparing Doctors of Sacred Scripture, and there are about as many professors as students. Only priests are allowed to live there, but a few Seminary men do come for class from another Franciscan house across the city, and there was even a Syrian Orthodox cleric in our classes. I signed up for 5 classes, but since I would leave before the end of the semester, I would not have to take any exams. The students come from all over the world: Poland, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Canada, Yugoslavia, France, etc. Among the professors are some outstanding Scripture professors; some have written many books, and others have done very important work excavating sites in the Holy Land. The classes were all taught in Italian; but very many of the reference books were in English, for so much has been done in Scripture research by Englishmen and Americans. Also in the streets one can use English very easily, for aside from Hebrew and Arabic, English is the most commonly used language. Even little kids know some English.

The church bells in the city were beautiful to hear. But there were other things I heard too. I lived in the Moslem Arab sector, within the walls of the old city of Jerusalem. And I was only a few hundred feet from a Moslem minaret, which blasted out the call for prayer five times each day: about 4:30 a.m., mid morning, noon, before sunset, and after sunset. With windows open, it really roused one from sleep about 4:30! Sometimes they used a loud, strange-sounding horn over the loudspeaker, and other times a human voice singing a strange melody with Arabic words over the loudspeaker. Believe me, it really gave a unique character to this native setting! There was an Arab school across the street from my window, and the kids were very noisy both in class and out of class. It was a noisy neighborhood. Some cars could drive by the front door, so there was a lot of honking of horns, for it was a very narrow and dangerous street. In other parts of the old city it is impossible for such a vehicle to pass, and only donkeys are used to haul things. It was so interesting to live in the old city, for there the life has not much changed from the time of Christ. People are mostly Arab or Armenian; they dress very often in their old native attire, long robes, much jewelry, turbaned headdress, often carry things on their heads, sit smoking Turkish water pipes by their shops; most have stools in the street to sit and talk; they spend an awful lot of time talking and visiting; shop keepers have much of their wares on the street outside their shops. The streets are often very narrow, steep, dirty and smelly; but it is all part of the scene. And such a mixture of nationalities! Most of the buildings as well as the old walls of the city are hundreds of years old, and all of stone. One sees all kinds of food offered for sale, whole carcasses of goats, sheep or rabbits, live chickens. One saw many different kinds of vegetables and melons we do not have in our country, and we received quite a variety of them on our table but always prepared in an Italian manner. In the fall months there is an abundance of delicious fruits: grapes, apples, oranges, pears, grapefruit at very cheap prices. The streets were clogged with thousands of tourists, but it was very edifying to see the real devotion that most expressed. One thing that surprised me much was the large number of T.V. antennas, even in the old poor section of the city. Interestingly much of the English language T.V. comes from the country of Jordan, just a few miles east of Jerusalem. In this Arab sector you found a lot of anti-Israeli graffiti on the walls of buildings, and of course a lot of soldiers, even on the flat housetops with automatic rifles and side-arms; and they always carried plenty of real ammunition. All the city gates were heavily patrolled, and it was not uncommon to be stopped for security checks. But it was mostly the Arabs that were checked out. One sensed a lot of bitter feelings between the Arabs and the Jews. This area of the city was taken from the Arabs in the 6-day war of 1967; so it is still strongly anti-Israel.

There were so many sites to visit and pray at in the Holy City, as well as in the Holy Land in general. Several times I visited the Benedictine Abbey of the Dormition, which was at the opposite side of the Old City from where I stayed. It was badly damaged in the 1948 war and is only now being restored. The room of the Last Supper, over the tomb of King David is a shrine for Moslems and Christians, and the tomb of David is a shrine for Jews as well as Moslems and Christians. Different Christian groups have charge of the site of the Holy Sepulchre and Calvary in the same Basilica. The Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane and other

OSB ECKROTH_00118

FIRST SHEET

12/4,5/1970

[two illegible words]

Dec 28-29, 1970

Jan 1,2 1971

Jan 22-23, 1971

March 12-13, 1971

10-22

Feb 12,13 – 1971

Feb 25,26, 1971

March 26,27, 1971

April 14-15, 1971

BACK OF FIRST SHEET

Boys for cabin trip

10-22

(pink haus 4/5 from)

10-22 Sr. Dunstan

4 5 & 5

~~5th~~
5th
Nov 6-7

2
3*
4
3
2
1

3:15

10-22

(13 years) [?]
- 6th grade
[?] - 6th grade
7th grade
~~6th - 5th~~

SECOND SHEET

Apr. 23,24 1971

May 7-8, 1971

May 19, 1971

Fr. Urban
Bro Gabriel
Bro Gerard

June 4-5, 1971

July 14, 1971

July 23-24, 1971

Aug 25,26, 1971

Sept 10-11, 1971

Sept 24/25, 1971

Oct 8-9, 1971

Oct 23-25, 1971

Bro. Martin

Nov 5-6, 1971

Nov 26-27, 1971

Dec 10-11, 1971

Jan 7-8, 1972

Jan 21-22, 1972

BACK OF SECOND SHEET

9yrs
~~10 yrs~~
10 yrs
10 yrs
13 yrs
13 yrs
~~13 yrs~~
~~13 yrs~~ (friend)
14 yrs
~~13 yrs~~
10 yrs (friend of
9yrs
9yrs
10/11 yrs
girl, about age of girls
10 grade

(6 grade)
7th grade
4th grade

(12)13
6th grade)

11 yrs
8 yrs

THIRD SHEET

Feb 15-16, 1972

March 10-11, 1972

March 24-25

Apr 7-8, 1972

Apr 27-28, 1972
Bro. Steve
Bro Victor

May 19-20, 1972

June 1-3, 1972

Fr. Gervase
Fr. Cuthbert

June 23-24, 1972

“
“

July 1-3, 1972

Bro. Steve

& Kids

July 12-13, 1972

August 18-19, 1972

Sept 1-2, 1972

Sept 15-17, 1972

Oct 19-21

Nov 3-4, 1972

Nov 17-18, 1972

BACK OF THIRD SHEET

2 girls 12 yrs
10 yrs
2 girls
girl c 9/10

? (6th)
 (6th)
- with
 7th grade
 3rd grade
 9th grade
? - 10th grade
 (4/5th grade)
boy (11th grade)
 7th grade
7679
 -6th grade-
6th grade
 6th grade
 -6th grade

FOURTH SHEET

Dec 1,2 – 1972

Dec 28-29, 1972

Jan 5-6, 1973

Jan 21-22, 1973

Feb 9-10, 1973

Feb 23-24, 1973

March 9-11, 1973

March 23-24, 1973

Apr 6-7, 1973

Apr 24-25, 1973
Fr. Denis Parnell

May 4-5, 1973

May 18-19, 1973

~~**June 1-2, 1973**~~

June 15-16, 1973

July 1, 1973

Nov 11-12, 1973

BACK OF FOURTH SHEET

12

boy 7
girls 10/12
13 yrs
· boy 7
girls 8/10/12

boys/girls

Cabin Guest List
Page 18

FIFTH SHEET

Jan 1-3, 1974

Jan 17-19, 1974

Feb 7-9, 1974 alone

March 15-16, 1978 [sic]

March 29-30, 1974

April 19-21, 1974

May 10-11, 1974

May 26-27, 1974

June 11-13, 1974

July 7-8, 1974

251-9458

BACK OF SHEET FIVE

Kids for Cabin trip

boys
kids

SIXTH SHEET

Sept 15-16, 1974

Sept 29-30, 1974

Oct 13-14, 1974

Oct 27-28, 1974
Fr. Godfrey
Bros Philip & Anthony

November 28-30, 1974

Dec 15-16, 1974

Dec 29-31, 1974

Jan 19-20, 1975

Feb 16-17, 1975

March 2-3, 1975

March 16-17, 1975

SEVENTH SHEET

March 30-31, 1975

Apr 13-14, 1975

Apr 23-24, 1975

May 13-14, 1975

May 25-27, 1975

June 29-July 1, 1975

Aug 24-25, 1975

Sept 14-15, 1975

Oct 5-6, 1975

Dec 28-30, 1975

January 29-31, 1976

Feb 19-21, 1976

March 21-22, 1976

May 15-17, 1976

July 11-13, 1976

July 13-15, 1976

BACK OF SEVENTH SHEET

August 24-25, 1976

Sept 9-11, 1976

Sept 25-27, 1975 [sic]

Jan 8-9, 1977

(10-22) ✓ Boys for cabin trip 4348
(pinkhouse 4/5 from)

DC ✓
10-22 ✓ SD. Dematon
6th grade

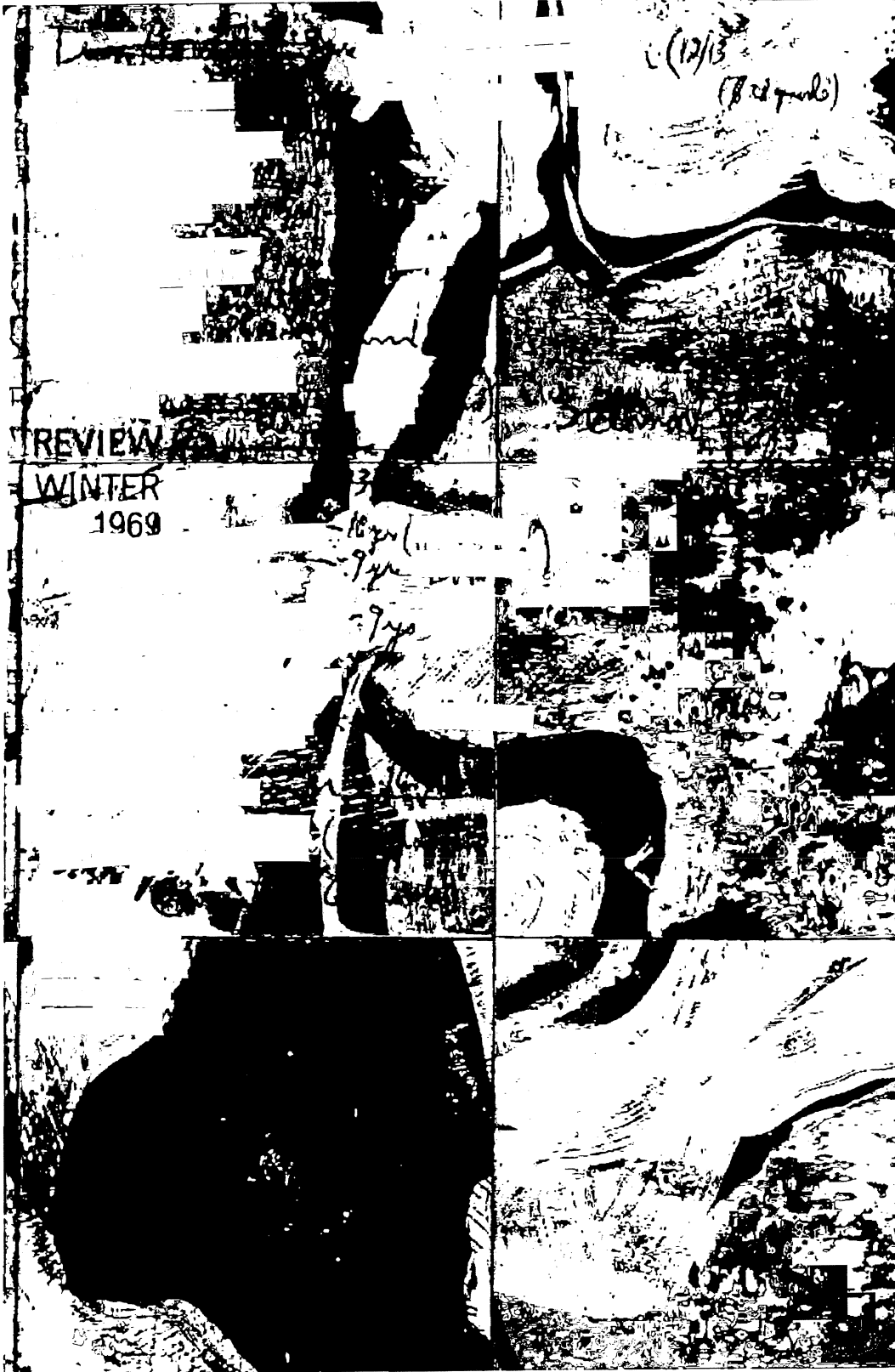
15 ✓ 7665

Cabinis
2
3
4
5
6
7
10-22

3:15
(13 pro)
6th grade
- 6th grade
- 7th grade

CABIN TRIPS

Apr. 23, 24 1971	May 7-8, 1971	May 19, 1971 Fr. Urban Bro. Gabriel Bro. Gerard
July 14, 1971	July 23-24, 1971	June 4-5, 1971
Aug 25-26, 1971	Sept 10-11, 1971	Sept. 24-25, 1971
Oct 8-9, 1971	Oct 24-25, 1971 Bro. Martin	Nov 5-6 - 1971
Dec 10-11, 1971	Nov 26-27, 1971	Jan 7-8, 1972
	Jan 21-22, 1972	



1972 CABIN TR		
Feb 25-26, 1972	March 10-11, 1972	March 24-25
Apr 7-8, 1972	Apr 27-28, 1972 Bus. Stone Bus. Victor	May 19-20, 1972
June 23-24, 1972	June 1-3, 1972	July 12-13, 1972
	Fr. Hume Fr. Gauthier	July 12-13, 1972
August 18-19, 1972	Jul. 5, 1972	Sept 15-17, 1972
	Sept 1-2, 1972	
	Nov 3-4, 1972	Nov 17-18, 1972
519-21		



OSB ECKROTH_00707

CABIN TRIPS		
Dec 1, 2 - 1972	Dec 28, 29, 1972	Jan 5-6, 1973
Jan 21-22, 1973	Feb 9-10, 1973	Feb 23, 24, 1973
March 9-11, 1973	March 23-24, 1973	Apr 6-7, 1973
Apr 24-25, 1973 Fr. Dennis Parnell	May 4-5, 1973	May 18-19, 1973
1, 1973	June 15-16, 1973	June 11-12, 1973



OSB ECKROTH_00709

CABIN TRIPS 1974	
Jan 1-3, 1974	Emerging phase: winter
Jan 17-19, 1974	Feb 7-9, 1974 alone
March 29-30, 1974	March 15-16, 1974
May 10-11, 1974	April 19-21, 1974
June 11-13, 1974	May 26-27, 1974
	July 7-8, 1974



OSB ECKROTH_00711

1974 | CABIN TRIPS | 1975

Sept 15-16, 1974	Sept 29-30, 1974
Oct 13-14, 1974	<p>Yosemite National Park (T146 Sat 11/7) R 31</p>
Oct 27-28, 1974 Ft. Bidwell Base Park, 4 Amities	November 28-30, 1974
Dec 15-16, 1974	Dec 29-31, 1974
Jan 19-20, 1975	Feb 16-17, 1975
March 2-3, 1975	March 16-17, 1975

T146
ME 12
R 32

EMERGENCY PHONE
BAR-DILL RESORT
of Clear Lake

Western mountain in Nevada
371911 from Secretary of State
1879 from Nevada State
Secretary of State

1975 CABIN TRIPS EMERGENCY PHONE

BAR-BILL RESORT
of CASS LAKE

March 30-31, 1975

Apr 13-14, 1975

Apr 23-24, 1975

May 13-14, 1975

May 25-27, 1975

June 29-July 1, 1975

June 24-25, 1975

Sept. 14-15, 1975

Oct 5-6, 1975

Dec 28-30, 1975

January 29-31, 1976

Feb 19-21, 1976

March 21-22, 1976

May 15-17, 1976

July 11-13, 1976

July 13-15, 1976



Saint Anselm's Priory: Benedictines in Tokyo

BROTHER PETER FINISHES NOVITIATE

Br. Peter Hidenari Kawamura's first profession as a Benedictine monk took place on Sunday, 24 March, at Saint Anselm's Priory. Prior Aloysius Michels received the monastic vows in a liturgical ceremony arranged by Br. James Zarr and involving the whole community, parishioners, and guests present.

Brother Peter was born on 15 January 1949, in Mutsu-shi, Aomori Prefecture, and was baptized in 1973 at Ominato Church of the Immaculate Conception. He attended Tanabu High School, then worked for five years at the prefectural government in the survey of national land and the preparation of a new topographical map. Next, he studied at the Tokyo Catholic Theological Seminary and was ordained a deacon at the Sendai Cathedral in March 1983.

Attracted by monastic life, he decided to seek admission to the community after making a retreat at Saint Anselm's Priory. He was especially attracted to the long tradition of Benedictine monasticism which appealed to his way of seeking God. He came to Saint Anselm's in November 1983 and began his novitiate on 21 March 1984, the



Br. Peter Hidenari Kawamura.

feast of Saint Benedict. During the year of his novitiate, under the tutelage of Prior Aloysius as novice master and of Fr. Chrysostom Kim of Saint John's Abbey, he deepened his knowledge of the Benedictine spirituality, history, and way of life.

Brother Peter is a quiet, prayerful individual. In the past year he has been sacristan. As a deacon, he has helped in the liturgy, including the distribution of communion at Mass. Now that he has made his three-year vows, he will begin to take a more active part in community life.

DIARY OF FATHER HILDEBRAND

Fr. Hildebrand Yaiser (1901-1983), co-founder of Saint Anselm's Priory in 1947, kept a diary from the time of his arrival in 1931, when he participated in the establishment of a Beuronese Benedictine monastery in Japan. He used a kind of Swiss shorthand, writing in German. Through the kindness of a Swiss missionary, Fr. Joseph Schumacher, Bethlehem Foreign Mission Society, Iwate Prefecture, the diary is being dictated onto tapes. Two are already in the archives of Saint John's Abbey. When finished the tapes will amount to about one hundred hours, so time and patience are required for this tedious work.

Prior Aloysius Michels was one of the pioneers of the community. He feels that the tapes make fascinating listening and are important as primary documentary sources for the Benedictines in Japan.

VISITORS AT SAINT ANSELM'S

Among the visitors to Japan recently have been Fr. John Farrelly O.S.B. of Saint Anselm's Abbey, Washington, D.C., and Dr. Kevin Ryan, professor of education, Boston University. They have been on a lecture tour for the Foundations of Moral Education project with an aim of stimulating attention to character development among young people. They have visited

Taiwan and Korea as well as Japan. Father Farrelly concelebrated and spoke about this work at the English Mass at Saint Anselm's on 24 March.

Fujimi

continued from page 1

be self-supporting. Such discussions revealed that the land is fertile and can be gardened; that the demand for teachers of the English language is high; that a parish close by would be in need of a pastor. Further, it has been assumed that the Priory in Tokyo should be able to support its own offspring without great effort, for the Priory has for years been self-sustaining.

Abbot Jerome has been insistent that no attempt be made to frame a foundation upon American ideas of monasticism; hence his desire for a slow growth of the new place. His hope is that as new vocations continue to come to the Priory, Japanese natives should be able to imprint their culture upon the Rule of Benedict. He recognizes, from the Abbey's history of foundations, that the purchase of property does not finalize this location as a permanent home for a monastery. If and when the community grows, it can decide for itself whether to stay on the property or to look for a new site. The Abbot and the business office of Saint John's Abbey are assured that the purchase price is generous to the buyer so that should another move be made, the property is eminently valuable as an investment.

The property is in the diocese of Yokohama, and the bishop welcomes the presence of Benedictines.

MOVING? Anytime you move, we would appreciate knowing (in advance, if possible) both your old and new address. Write: Editor, Saint John's Abbey Quarterly, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321. Thank you.

OSB ECKROTH_00716
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Eckroth, Fr. Richard.

Born: June 27, 1926 at Mandan, N. D.
Parents:
Profess. July 11, 1946
Ordained: June 7, 1952 at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.
1st Sol. Mass: June 12, 1953 at Mandan, N. D.

Assignments:

Sept. 1952 Socius to Novices.
Philosophy 22b(1sem); 22(2sem).

Sept. 1953 - Socius to Brothers.

Philosophy 12; 22a; 22b. Extension.

Sept. 1954 - Socius to Brothers; Philosophy 12(1+2sem); 12b(2a)
Philosophy 22a(1+2sem); 22b(1+2sem).

Worked all summer as Carpenter on the
New Abbey String - Extension every Sunday
during this time.

Sept. 1955 Socius to Brothers. Philosophy 12a; 22a; 22b; 12; 22c;

June 1956 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22a, b, c.

Sept. 1957 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22a & c)

Sept. 1958 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22a, b, c.

Sept. 1959 - Master of Brothers. Philosophy 22a; 31D.

PERSONAL	Full Name: Fr Richard Eckroth	B 1926 P 1946 Ord 1952
	Social Security No. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Birthplace: Mandan N Dak
	Hospital Insurance: <u>yes</u>	Namaday Date: Dec 1
	Nearest Relative for emergency (address, phone): <u>1</u>	
	Present parental home address: <u>1</u>	
	College Degrees (with name of school): <u>B.A. (St. J.)</u>	Major:
	Graduate Degrees (with name of school): <u>P.R.B. & P.R.L. 1949</u>	Major:
	Special skills, arts, crafts, athletics:	
	Experience: Administrative Business <u>Chaplaincy</u> Farming Industry Library	
	Educational Mechanics Missionary Pastoral <u>Teaching</u> <u>Counselling</u> Social	
Other:		
Languages: <u>Spanish</u> <u>Italian</u> <u>German</u> <u>French</u> Russian Polish Other:		
Hobbies, Sports, Recreation: <u>Stamp Coll, fishing - Work in woods - Wine - reading for a hobby</u>		
Number of brothers: <u>6</u> sisters: <u>4</u> Your rank among them: <u>10th out of 14</u>		



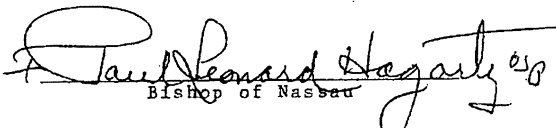
THE HERMITAGE .
BOX N-8187
NASSAU, BAHAMAS

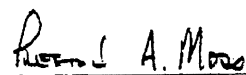
PAUL LEONARD
By the Mercy of God and Favour of the Apostolic See
Bishop of Nassau

OFFICIAL LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

With the approval of the Right Reverend John Eidenschink, O.S.B. Abbot of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, I hereby appoint Reverend RICHARD ECKROTH, O.S.B., as Associate Pastor of Holy Family Church on Robinson Road, New Providence. This appointment will be effective as of January 22, 1977 and will remain in effect until further notice. From the date of appointment you are to assume all the duties of an Associate Pastor, according to the law of the Church and the will of your pastor.

Given at Nassau from our Chancery
this 5th day of January, 1977.


Bishop of Nassau


Vicar General

OSB ECKROTH_00119



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N-3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 808-324-1511

January 24, 1977

Dear Father Abbot,

After a week in Nassau, it is about time that I send you a note and assure you that Father Prior and Father Gervase and I had a safe and enjoyable flight down here; and I believe they accomplished their own mission here before going on to Puerto Rico on Friday. I don't know what kind of omen the people here would interpret the history-making cold that accompanied us down here, but the snowfall and the unprecedented cold temperatures apparently made history here several days last week. Actually the weather has not yet become anything near warm and several schools were closed here just because of the temperatures. By contrast to the sub-zero weather Minnesota has had the past weeks, it really seems very pleasant here at this time. But I guess it mostly depends upon the point of contrast.

I feel grateful for the appointment to work with Father Silvan in this rather new parish of Holy Family, founded by Father Marcian in 1966, for it appears to be a very thriving parish, with good participation of the laity. I personally have a lot of anxieties yet about my ability to do a decent job at it, but I will do as well as I can. Father Silvan is very helpful in getting me acquainted with the operation of the parish, and he expects me to take over the ordinary operation of the parish. His own time is more and more in demand at the bishop's office, especially with his work on the marriage tribunal I guess. I understand it is a rather thriving parish by Bahamian standards; in fact even the church which has no debt was built mostly by local contributions. Of course there are many poor families within it and they require a lot of attention, but there is a good cooperation and generosity from the more gifted lay leaders in the parish, which helps all the programs to function smoothly. So, we can only see what the future brings....

The parishioners do not offer mass stipends, and I did not bring any supply with me, so I would appreciate your asking Father Roger Schenbeckler to send some on to me at his convenience. I have received some for the time being from Father Elias, and I can continue to receive some from him until Father Roger can send some. Before I left St. John's he had asked me if I wanted any, or just let him know if I would need any. At that time I had no idea whether there would be stipends from the parish or not, so I had declined taking any at that time. Now I can use some.

A little Volkswagen has been assigned to my use, and I have been out a bit trying to get accustomed to driving such a machine, and especially trying to get accustomed to driving on the left side of the traffic. It is chiefly at the corners and at the many traffic circles that I have a bit of difficulty; but then the traffic circles can prove a problem even to the veterans, for one never knows if all the contenders are going to follow the "rules" of the jockeying. It is a bit of a game in a way, but can be very harassing at the rush hours.

Holy Family is located only about 2 1/2 miles down a main thoroughfare from the Monastery back gate, so it is very handy that I reside at the Monastery and drive back and forth for the services and office hours at the parish center. Also it obviates all the heavy down-town traffic that would be involved in residing at the Priory. Also the support and company of the Brethren is very reassuring, so I am grateful for this arrangement.

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00120

4 February 1977

Via Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Post Office Box R-3940
Mesa, Arizona

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your letter of the 26th which I found on my desk when I returned from the visitation at Saint Vincent Archabbey on the afternoon of the 1st. Since my return my schedule has been crowded and I really haven't had a chance to speak at any length with either Father Prior or Carvase. We are looking for a chance to get together tomorrow or early next week.

I am happy that the trip down was safe and enjoyable and that you are already somewhat settled into your work and that you are finding it very interesting. You mentioned that you could use some Mass intentions. I shall ask Father Roger to get some ready for you and I will enclose them and the check with this letter. You may write him directly whenever you are in need of intentions in the future. I am sure he will always be happy to send them.

In the hope that all will continue to go well with your work and in your living at Saint Augustine's, and with greetings to the brethren, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JK/ey
Enclosure

OSB ECKROTH_00121



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N.3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 809-324-1511

March 23, 1977

Dear Father Abbot,

Lent is going by very quickly, and I thought I should not let it pass completely without a word to you. In line with the practice of the house here, I submitted two resolutions for Lent to Prior Elias and he approved them. First was to be more regular in returning on time to the Monastery to join in the 5:30 Community Mass, and the second was of a self-denial effort to give up the usual evening drink of soft drink or rum mixture that is available before evening compline. And so far, I am happy to report, I have been quite faithful in these resolutions. I think you would have approved them, and Father Elias gave me his blessing in your stead.

The monastic observance here at St. Augustine's is really very edifying! Not only is a real effort made by all to attend the Divine Office as much as possible, even by those who are most busy with other concerns, like Fr. George, but also the Office is prayed in a very reflective and measured manner. Regularly each week there is a spiritual conference by the Prior which the Candidates also attend, and then this is followed by a discussion or report to the professed monks, in which are included Bro. David, Fr. Theophile, the Brother from St. Leo's and myself. In the next days the Abbot from Trinidad will be visiting here in preparation for the 2 Brothers he is willing to send to St. Augustine's to help augment the community here. They are to arrive only in September. At the evening meals we are reading the life of Abbot Boniface Wimmer, and many a smile or chuckle is raised at almost each meal. Until today Abbot Leo Rudloff was with us and he too seemed to enjoy the manner in which the unique character of Abbot Wimmer has been brought out in the book.

But before I get along too far in this letter I have a couple questions I have wanted to present to you. 1. deals with Mass intentions, specifically binational stipends. I offer quite a few binational masses, for almost every morning I offer Mass at the parish for the people here, and then at the Community Mass I again offer as a concelebrant. So, what should I do with these binational stipends? At St. John's I regularly turned them in to Father Rogan with the notation that they were binational stipends. I would appreciate if you could advise me what to do with them in my present situation. 2nd has to do with my salary here. The bishop has determined that I receive a regularly monthly salary of \$150. just as all the other pastors do in Nassau. In addition to that sum I also pay from the parish funds \$150. to St. Augustine's Monastery for my board. Presently I have taken out a savings account from which I can withdraw any amount at any time, and I have been depositing my Mass stipends and salary money in this account. Naturally there are some daily expenses for personal needs and things like postage, so not all the salary gets deposited each month. The savings account is a joint one with Father Elias as the joint signer, and it pays 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ % interest. Of course it will never become a really big account; but it is safer than keeping the money in cash here on the premises, for there is an increased amount of vandalism and house-breaking in Nassau; and of course St. Augustine's is not excepted from this either. Anyway, if you find it convenient to respond to these two queries sometime I would appreciate it.

Bro. Berry Gearman was with us this past week-end for a pleasant break from Florida where he is learning the special features of the new computer that will soon be installed at St. John's. It was good to see a face from the abbey! But also Father Colman was in town a week and also visited and talked with all of us at the Monastery; and that was pleasant too.

With best wishes for a blessed Holy Week & Easter,

Fr. Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00122

31 March 1977

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Post Office Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd of March which I found on my desk when I returned from my visit to Saint Anselm's in Tokyo. I am happy to know that you submitted your two Lenten resolutions to Father Prior, that he approved and blessed them, and that you have been faithful in observing them. Soon you will receive the blessings of Holy Week and the joy of Easter. I appreciated, also, your account of the monastic observance at Saint Augustine's. My experience also was that their observance is very edifying and I hope that from there there will be some good candidates.

In reference to your two questions: our indult specifies that bination Masses are to be used for the education of candidates for the priesthood. Since Saint Augustine's does not do this, at least not at present, I would recommend your keeping the bination stipends in the savings account and periodically sending them to Father Roger. Secondly, I would recommend, also, that you keep your salary (whatever you do not need for personal expenses) in the savings account and occasionally send this to Father Gervase or to me as surplus income. This for the present. We will be considering our missions at one of the next Senior Council meetings and perhaps we will come up with some different arrangements regarding salary, etc.

Last evening at the Chapter I read Bishop Balke's formal request to take over the care of Saint Joseph's and the Newman Center in Moorhead and to give us instead the parishes at Frazee and Lake Park. The Chapter did not object. I also gave a brief report on my visit to Tokyo: if all goes according to planned, Abbot Odo Haas will become Prior and Pastor this summer though the foundation still remains ours. Father Patrick will be returning at the end of April to await an assignment here.

With greetings to all in the community, especially Brother David, for a joyful Easter, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JR/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00123

St. Augustine's Monastery
Nassau, Bahamas
April 27, 1977

Dear Father Abbot,

Thanks for your letter some weeks ago responding to my questions about bination stipends and how to secure my money while in the Bahamas. And thanks now again for the letter about the general chapter and the appointment of a new SubPrior. I agree with you that Father Letus has fulfilled the role well. Sorry about Fr. Theodore suffering a stroke; he is ~~in~~ my prayers. I'm returning the ballots for anew subprior, and also Fr. Alan's survey, which I ask that you leave in his box, to save on postage. All goes well here; Holy Week was very nice. I had never previously attended the Chrism Mass. I believe all 12 pastors of Nassau were in attendance at the Bishop's concelebrated Chrism Mass the evening before Holy Thursday, and at the mass all of the priests renewed their loyalty. It is a beautiful ceremony.

Fr. Burton was here a few days last week, and though we did not see much of him he did share some of the latest rumors and news of the abbey with us, and it was refreshing to have him here. I understand that Fr. Peregrin hopes to come here this next week-end from some meeting he is attending in Florida; and of course Fr. Andre is due here next week for the Alebbalic Program; so we should be due for further news of the abbey and community. Bro. David had a sudden pain this past Sunday. They took him promptly to the doctor who assured him it was not appendicitis, but possibly a kidney stone or the like. Brother is up and about his work but under continued observation by the doctor. All goes well.

Fraternally, *T. Richard, OSB*

5 May 1977

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your letter of April 27th which arrived this morning. I appreciate your having sent your suggestions for the office of Subprior and the questionnaire for the General Chapter. I have given the latter to Father Allan.

Father Burton called by phone a couple of days ago but I have had no real opportunity to speak with him since his visit to the Bahamas. He seemed hopeful that the results of his visit would be good. At the present time Father Andre is in the Bahamas, and I am sure he will give a report on his return. I am sorry to learn that Brother David had a sudden pain on April 24th, since I have heard nothing further I am assuming that he is feeling better. Please give him my greetings.

Father Theodore's condition remains the same. Father Peter returned to Redlake yesterday but must still take it very easy. Father Patrick Okada will be going up to help him and to stay on there.

With every good wish, and a prayer that God bless you, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00125

Alumni Association
ST. JOHN'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

August 1977

Dear Fellow Alum,

Another fundraising letter from St. John's? No! Not at all. We'd like to talk to you about something more important--much more important--our own children.

For the last couple of years our sons (and daughters!) have attended St. John's Prep. And although we are very happy about this it was their choice--not ours. St. John's Prep School is very different today than it was 15, 20, or even 25 years ago--there's no doubt about that. But the school has maintained and even improved itself in those areas which are most important--Christian morals and academic standards.

And although the cost of a Prep education has gone up (what hasn't!) the school does have available thousands of dollars in financial aid--much of it provided through our annual alumni fund drive.

If you are interested either for your own son or a friend, why not send the enclosed postcard in to the school today. We know Fr. Alan would appreciate the inquiry and give it every possible attention.

Sincerely,

Father of

Father of

OSB ECKROTH_00126

1977

INFORMATION FOR THE ARCHIVES OF SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY

NAME: Richard William ECKROTH
(Religious) (Baptismal) (Family)

BIRTH: Mandan ~~St. John~~ Morton, North Dakota June 21 1926
(City) (County) (State) (Month) (Day) (Year)

YOUR PATRON SAINT: Bl. Richard of Glastonbury NAMEDAY: December 1

TRIENNIAL VOWS: St. John's Abbey July 11, 1946 Abbot Alcuin Deutsch
(Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

FINAL VOWS/OBLATION: Benedictine Priory
Sarnen, Switzerland July 11, 1949 Abbot Primate Bernard Kaelin
(Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

ORDINATION: St. John's Abbey June 7, 1952 Bishop Peter W. Bartholome
(Place) (Date) (Bishop)

FATHER'S FULL NAME: _____

FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE: _____

FATHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: German-French Russian

FATHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FATHER'S EDUCATION: Grade 8

FATHER'S OCCUPATION: _____ retired
(When You Entered Monastery) (Now)

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: _____

MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE: Mandan, North Dakota

MOTHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: Swiss

MOTHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION: Grade 8 She was orphaned at age 6 1/2

YOUR CAREER BEFORE ENTERING THE MONASTERY:

student; with summer work in carpentry, general farm work, dry cleaning establishment

EDUCATION	SCHOOL	FROM TO	MAJOR	DEGREE	DATE
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ELEMENTARY: St. Joseph's School, Mandan, N.D. 1932--40

SECONDARY: St. John's Prep School, Collegeville, Minn 1940-44 diploma

UNDERGRADUATE: St. John's University, Collegeville, 1944--45, 1949---

THEOLOGY: St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, 1949--53

GRADUATE: Colegio di Sant'Anselmo, Rome, Italy 1946--49 Philosophy
Ph.B July 1948
Ph.L. July 1949

POST-DOCTORAL: _____

OTHER: Seminar at Marquette University, Milwaukee; American Benedictine Academy meeting at St. Vincent's Archabbey, Latrobe, Pa.; Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; Scripture renewal at Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem, Israel.

LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ALL THE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS (lasting six months or more) YOU HAVE RECEIVED SINCE PROFESSION AND ORDINATION. Give (a) the *type or nature* of the work, e.g., assistant pastor or plumber or math teacher in Prep School, (b) the *location*, (c) the *duration*, (d) any *special achievements* or items of note, e.g., built parish hall in 1948, or Danforth grant in 1960.

In charge of the Abbey stamp collection and coin collection 1950--76

Socius to the Novices 1951--53

Assistant to the Brother Master 1953--56

Instructor in Philosophy, later Associate Professor with tenure 1952--76

Wine maker and in charge of Wine Cellar 1963--76
Master of Brothers 1956--64

Assistant Procurator 1961
Prefect of 2nd floor St. Thomas Hall 1964--66

Last prefect of St. Anselm Hall Pre-divinity group 1966--67

Chaplain at St. Ben's (Convent, college --69, high school --70) 1967--73
also instructed at St. Ben's High School 1967--70

Assistant Pastor at St. Augustine's Church, St. Cloud 1973--74

Assistant Pastor at Seven Dolores Church, Albany, Minnesota 1974--76

Associate Pastor at Holy Name Church, Nassau, Bahama Islands 1977---

Did a lot of physical work around St. John's: construction of Monastery Wing 1954,
Removed the 2 old barns and 3 silos, 2 old steer sheds, the old stucco machine shed,
the old mill and chicken coop, the old nursery, the old weather station.

Moved the flag pole to its present location (1977) and built stone base around it.
Also built the 2 stone ticket booths at the football stadium, built numerous curbs
near St. Thomas Hall. Also built a cement culvert from the flagpole corner north
to the Watab.

Did quite a bit of tree cutting for lumber in the woods south of Robert Pfeuger,
and in the right of way of the new I-94 highway, as well as removed a lot of dead
or damaged from the campus or near Flyntown.

Renovated the old log cabin on the Clara Kremer property on Swenson Lake near
Cass Lake, Minnesota

GIVE YOUR PARENTS' PRESENT ADDRESS, IF LIVING.

LIST YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE ORDER OF THEIR BIRTH. INCLUDE YOURSELF.
For those still living give their present address; for those who have died write "deceased." Put an asterisk
before those whom you want contacted immediately and directly by the Abbey when you die.

Fr. Richard Eckroth (William) St. Augustine's Monastery, Box N-3940 Nassau, Bahamas

IN THE REMAINING SPACE AND ON AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY PUT DOWN
ANY OTHER ITEMS OF INFORMATION OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YOURS THAT YOU
THINK SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY RECORDED.

OSB ECKROTH_00130

Eckroth, Rev. Richard (William), O.S.B.

Born: June 21, 1926 at Mandan, N.D., son of

Education: St. John's Prep 1940-1944. Valedictorian of his class.
St. John's University-Philosophy-1944-1946.
Collegio di Sant'Anselmo, Rome, Italy.
Ph.B.-1948. Ph.L. 1949.
Theology at St. John's Seminary.

Profession: Solemn Vows at the Abbey of Sarnen on July 11, 1948.

Ordination: June 7, 1952 in Abbey Church by Most Rev. Joseph F. Busch, D.D.

Assignments: Professor of Philosophy-1952--
Master of Brothers--June 1956-Aug. 1965
Prefect of St. Thomas Hall and St. Anselm's Hall-1965-1967
Assistant Chaplain at St. Benedict's Convent, St. Joseph-July '67

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OSB ECKROTH_00133
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OSB ECKROTH_00134
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OSB ECKROTH_00135
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February 12, 1973
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Abbot,

Another Lenten season has begun and I submitted resolutions to Father Elias which he approved for my observance. But I thought I should submit them to you as well.

1. for self denial, to give up the drink of rum we usually have at the evening social hour before con line.
2. for positive growth, to be more earnest in the lectio divina; so often I am at the parish during the evening time that would be devoted to this, so I will just make better provision for it.

The Nassau parishes have the custom of pairing up with Anglican parishes for ecumenical Ash Wednesday Services. This year it was the turn of Holy Family parish to host the Services with the neighboring Anglican parish of Holy Cross. The canon there is a very amenable person and the services went off very nicely. Years ago he had been a fellow missionary with Father Silvan on Andros Island; so the two have been friends of long standing.

Father Silvan has tendered his resignation from the parish as of April 1st; he figures I am capable of handling it alone. He intends to spend some time at St. John's to prepare himself in a more concerted way for his role in the chancery as the Officialis in the marriage tribunal. Actually he is doing a lot more than just that presently as one of the Vice Chancellors and is practically running the finances of the diocese too. One of my first jobs as sole pastor will have to be to prepare a group of young people for Confirmation, for the Bishop is scheduled to confirm at Holy Family on Pentecost Sunday. Strangely, there are also a number of marriages now pending too, and all through this first year here I have not had a single marriage, and I can think of only one or two validations that Fr. Silvan has handled during this time.

Looks like I will be seeing Father Herman more often now, for I was just informed last week that I have been elected to the Priest's Senate, of which Father Herman is also a member. I believe the Senate meets each month under the Presidency of Father Elias. Father Herman does not always come to St. Augustine's when he comes to town, so I have not seen him regularly in the past. When he was visiting at St. John's last fall I had the happy fortune of substituting for him on Mangrove Cay two different week-ends, and I just loved it! He has certainly established a fine plant and community at his station, and along with the Mercy Sisters who staff the clinic there and teach his CCD program they have just a very fine program going! I also had the opportunity to visit Father Nicholas last September, and in spite of all they had warned me about the primitive character of his accommodations on San Salvador I enjoyed just a grand visit with him. I'm looking forward to the time that I will be assigned to one of the out island missions rather than here in Nassau. Life is so much more peaceful even though primitive at these stations compared to Nassau. Just a week ago old Father Bruno at Sacred Heart Church in Nassau was held up at gunpoint in the middle of the night! And this noon when I had lunch with Bishop Leonard he reported that the Haitian Sisters next to St. Francis were broken in this morning while they were out to Mass and their whole place ransacked. Just before Christmas I personally came upon a burglar in the Holy Family rectory where Fr. Marcial used to sleep, and with the help of the police apprehended the big fellow. But it is a scary experience, I assure you!

In July I intend to come up for a vacation. My Dad is entering upon his 90th year now, and there is a good chance that he will be moving back to the Landan-Bismarck area when my brother is assigned this summer to the Bismarck chancery. So it should be handy to visit him there. I would like to be in Landan ab ut July 28th for that is the 50th wedding anniversary of some specially dear cousins at Landan. So if all goes well, I hope to be coming up to St. John's about the middle of July.

Fraternally,

Fr. Richard OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00136

15 February 1978

The Reverend Charles H. Backes
Church of Saint Joseph
Post Office Box 603
Mandan, North Dakota 58554

Dear Father Backes:

Thank you very much for your letter of the 12th and for the check of \$350 which you kindly enclosed to cover the stipends for 166 Masses @ \$2.00 each and six Masses @ \$3.00. I am very grateful to you for sending these Mass intentions for Father Richard Eckroth, as I am grateful to Sister , his sister, for recommending this to you. We will gladly send the intentions, and an exchange check, to Father Richard without delay.

With every good wish, and a prayer that God bless you during these Lenten days, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

John Eldenschink, O.S.B.
Abbot

JE/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00137

15 February 1978

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O. S. B.
Saint Augustine Monastery
Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

This morning I received the enclosed letter together with a check of \$350 payable to Saint John's Abbey. I am enclosing an exchange check made payable to you. I have written a letter of sincere thanks to Father Backes for sending these Mass intentions for your use, though I am sure he would appreciate a note from you also. Perhaps via your sister.

All are quite well here and the visitation is going along okay. All are well except myself. I am back in bed with a flare up of the infection caused by my stepping on a sea urchin. I felt miserable yesterday but am much better today and so I should be out soon.

In the hope that all is going well in your work in the missions, and with every good wish for the blessings of these Lenten days, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE/ev

Enclosures: Check
Letter from Father Backes

OSB ECKROTH_00138

21 February 1978

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Your letter of the 12th arrived this morning and I am happy to bless and approve your Lenten resolutions in addition to the approval given by Father Elias. I hope that these days are filled with many blessings for you personally and for your work.

Father Silvan has written that he will be spending some time here this spring, and I am sure that you are capable of handling the parish alone. I am happy that you have had an opportunity to visit Father Herman on Andros and Father Nicholas on San Salvador. I note, also, your desire to be assigned to one of the out islands in the future. When I suggested that you go to the Bahamas I had this in mind, knowing your abilities both as a priest and as a general handy man, both of which would be needed on an out island.

Congratulations upon your election to the Priest's Senate. Not only will this give you the opportunity to see Father Herman more often but it will also give you a better knowledge of the Church in the Bahamas.

Our visitation closed last evening and the four visitators left early this morning. The general feeling in the house is that this was one of our best visitations. I am enclosing a copy of the report given to the community last evening; there was a good discussion followed by a haustus.

You indicated that you wished to come up for a vacation in July, especially since your dad will be entering upon his 90th year and since there is a golden wedding anniversary of some cousins. We will be happy to welcome you here about the middle of July. I hope nothing will turn up to require a change in your plans.

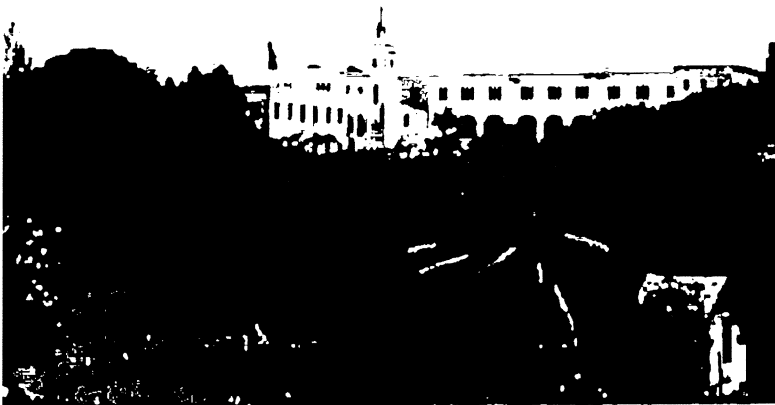
With every good wish for a joyful Easter, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE/ev
Enclosure

OSB ECKROTH_00139



ST. AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

Box N-3940 Feb 21, 1970
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Abbot,

Last night I received your surprise letter with the Mass intentions and check from the archives of St. Joseph's in Manhattan. I have just written him a letter to acknowledge the same, and I want you to know also that your letter has reached us and that the intentions will be duly taken care of. Sorry to hear of your recurrence of

sickness after stepping on the sea urchin in N.Y. I know what it's like!

Yours truly,
Fr. Richard, OSB



St. Rev. Abbot John, O.S.B.
St. John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota
56321

U.S.A.
AIR MAIL AIR MAIL

St. Augustine's Monastery
Nassau, Bahamas
December 14, 1978

Dear Father Abbot,

Your letter which arrived last evening asking for suggestions for the office of Subprior offers a good opportunity to write before Christmas and extend my best wishes to you for a very happy and blessed Christmas as well as an assurance of my prayers for God's continued blessing and guidance to you in the year ahead. Here in Nassau we had heard some scattered news of the Chapter that considered the question of re-accepting the monastery as a dependency of St. John's, and of course a fuller exposition of the question appeared in the most recent issue of the Confere, so I was not entirely surprised at the contents of your letter. I think your decision was a good one under the circumstances, but I do hope that in the future the St. John's community will reconsider its position. I do believe that St. John's has the deepest commitment to the Bahamas. And even though many would have us withdraw from work down here, I would have the community know that there is a very deep seated gratitude among the people here for all the priests who have served here so ably in one role or another. And the future will surely vindicate the role and position of a monastery in the Bahamas. Surely the next Bishop of the Bahamas will not be a Benedictine, so I do not foresee a future conflict that apparently was once true between the monastery as such and the bishop's office. It is a disappointment down here that St. John's did not accept the request of St. Augustine's to become dependent upon it. But this must all be part of God's plan.

You probably know that I will be coming to St. John's on January 3rd at the request of Father Gervase to make another batch of altar wine. I have written to Father Fabian asking for a bed to sleep in while I am there. My brother who lives in St. Joseph and teaches at St. Cloud State is agreeable to meeting me at the airport in Minneapolis. I'm due to arrive there on a North Central flight at 9:07pm; so I should be at St. John's by midnight. It will be good to be home again, even with the snow and cold one can expect in January. I foresee a very busy time, at least the first week, but I have written to Brother Ed about getting things a big ready, and I'm sure he will get done what he can. I hope Brother Stephen is also around at this time, for his presence is always a very reassuring factor, and he always has a way of being helpful without endangering his back condition. He is a gem!

Early this week Father Nicholas phoned me upon his arrival in Nassau, for I have several times helped him out with transportation while he is in Nassau. He surprised me with the news of his feeling so bad and of his decision to go to Minnesota at this time for a thorough check-up. I am glad that he came to this decision, for he did not seem to plan on it when he first came to town. Perhaps someone at the Hermitage convinced him to do so. And all of us here at St. Augustine's are glad that he is going up for a real good check-up, for all here have been worried about his condition which has deteriorated very much in the last year. A number here are wondering if he will even be returning to the Bahamas. From my talks with him last year when I visited him on San Salvador several days I gained the impression that he would not be adverse to spending his retirement years at St. John's, especially since he has seen what a nice facility we now have at St. John's in the form of St. Raphael's Hall. Personally I hope his condition is not a serious one. Would you believe, Father Hildebrand Eickhoff was the same one who suggested to Fr. Nicholas to study for the priesthood when he was a boy at St. Mary's in St. Cloud, who later at Mandan arranged for me to study at St. John's when I started my Pres School in 1940.

Sorry I will not get away early enough to be at St. John's for the Christmas gathering, but things will still be pretty busy for me at that time, so I did not plan to leave that early. But January 3rd is approaching rapidly.

Faternally,

Fr. Richard

OSB ECKROTH_00141

December 22, 1978

Dear Father Richard,

Thank you for your letter of the 14th, which arrived this morning. I appreciate your Christmas greetings and good wishes, your suggestions for the office of Sub-prior, and your words concerning the Bahamas. My judgment is the same as yours, and I am hopeful that we will have the opportunity to re-consider and that the vote then will be very favorable. If you say some of the things which you have written to members of the community here, that will help, IF the question does come up again.

Yes, I knew you were coming to make a new batch of wine, and I am grateful for your willingness to do so. I hope it will not be too cold here at that time; we have had some bitter weather though just now it is quite mild.

By now you have heard, since I called the Bishop last night though I only spoke with Fr. Remy, that Fr. Nicholas has inoperable cancer of the lungs and bone, and that it is terminal. The doctors say there is not need to try chemotherapy since the cancer has spread so far. I will see him at the hospital this afternoon.

Looking forward to seeing you here in early January, and with all good wishes for the blessings of these days, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

OSB ECKROTH_00142

St. Augustine's Monastery
Nassau, Bahamas
April 12, 1979

Dear Father Abbot,

I was ready to write you and submit to you my proposed Lenten resolutions for 1979 when I received your own Lenten letter and the resolution you asked all of us to observe this year. I was happy to add it to the two I had submitted already to Prior Elias. These were: to give up for Lent the usual drink of rum or vodka we have with coke at the evening recreation, and also to make a greater effort to be more recollected and slower and prayerful in my daily praying of the Divine Office. Both received Prior Elias' approval and blessing and I am happy to report that I was quite successful in observing them, as well as the additional resolution you proposed. With this letter I am enclosing the response you requested to the two questions that should be faced from our careful and reflective reading of the Holy Rule, as well as the address and inventory you requested.

Things have been going along very busily since I was at the abbey in January, for it was just after my return here that the Holy Father made His happy pause in Nassau. What an event that was! Of course the Bahamians are not as exuberant as the Americans are, but they were very enthusiastic really about his visit, from the top government officials down. People are kidding Bishop Leonard that he is now on a first-name basis with the Holy Father, ready for his ad limina visit in early May. At the parish things have been humming and tonight at the Holy Thursday Mass I will see some of the tangible fruits of my efforts as 50 children of the parish will receive their first Holy Communion. Father Marcian is going to join me at the Mass, for he still feels so close to the people of this parish which he founded 13 years ago. I had these children under instruction each Saturday since last September. But right after Easter I will be initiating the instruction of a group of 13-year olds or above, preparing them for the reception of confirmation on Pentecost Sunday in June. And behind all of these instructions there is the large Diocesan Assembly to prepare the whole parish for with weekly meetings. That is scheduled for the week of Ascension.

Several times I have reminded the Bishop of my willingness and desire to serve on San Salvador or one of the other of the family islands, but he always reminds me of the dearth of priests, which one cannot deny. Presently Father Silvan flies out to San Salvador for the week-ends when there is room on the plane; and also Father George Wolf likewise flies out weekly to the island of Eleuthera to care for his parishes on that island. Both Father Prior and Fr. Magous help out quite regularly in Nassau parishes for the week-ends; and of course visitors to the Hermitage have often been called on to serve this past winter season also. I eat 3 May lunch at the Hermitage regularly, and thus I come into frequent contact with the Bishop and with some of these visitors and hear of their experiences in the churches at which they have helped.

I have not heard any tall or rumors about abbatial candidates or whether you would accept a re-election this summer at the election; but my personal feeling is that I hope you will accept the onus again. I believe you have done a fine job of keeping the community pretty well together, and you have such a depth of experience to draw upon in the wise governing of the community. All of us are saddened by the reports of Father Cornelius' continued decline; but he is the object of many prayers being offered to God.

Yours in St. Benedict,

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00143

18 April 1979

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your letter of the 12th, for your Lenten Inventory, the list of your nearest relatives and your response to the two questions. These were well done, and I am happy to know that your resolutions fitted in well with the two that you had submitted to Prior Elias. Since you have had a good Lenten season, I am confident that the peace and joy of these Easter days will continue with you.

I appreciate what you wrote about your work at the parish and your continued willingness to serve on one of the out islands. I wish that I had more men to send to the Bahamas or that there were some hope of Father Cornelius' being able to return. That does not seem at all likely because he continues to grow weaker, as do Fathers Basil and Denis. Father Romuald suffered a heart attack, and is in the coronary care unit at the Saint Cloud Hospital. I anointed him last evening and he seems to have had a fairly good night. His death would really create difficulties in staffing, especially since Father Kenneth will be returning to California.

Spring came on Easter Sunday and we have had a couple of nice days since then. It is raining now and hopefully these showers will bring May flowers.

There do not seem to be many rumors about abbatial candidates, at least I do not hear of them. I have not come to a final decision whether I will accept re-election; if the vote were strong I probably would, though there are days when I dream of a small little parish or even a chaplaincy.

With greetings to all at the monastery, and with every good wish, I am

Devotedly yours,

Abbot

JE/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00144



THE HERMITAGE
BOX 187
NASSAU, BAHAMAS

P A U L L E O N A R D

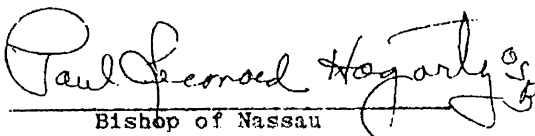
By the Mercy of God and Favour of the Apostolic See
Bishop of Nassau


OFFICIAL LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

With the approval of the Very Reverend Jerome Theisen, O.S.B. Abbot of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, I hereby appoint Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B., to be pastor of the Churches in South Andros (St. Robert Church, St. Gertrude Church, Sacred Heart Church) and the churches in the Mangrove Cay area (St. Benedict Church, St. Boniface Church and Holy Angels Church). This appointment will be effective October 13, 1979 and will remain in effect until further notice. From the date of the appointment you are to assume all the duties of a pastor, according to the Law of the Church.

Before assuming your duties you are to make the Profession of Faith, as required by Canon 1409 paragraph 1, number 7, and the Oath Against Modernism (Pius X Mot. Pro. 1910). This oath is to be taken before any priest of your choice, whom I hereby delegate to witness the same.

Given at Nassau from our Chancery
this 18th day of September, 1979.

+ 
Bishop of Nassau


Vice-Chancellor

OSB ECKROTH_00145

25 October 1979

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your recent letter. Thank you as well for your good wishes and prayers on the occasion of my blessing. I think the day went very well since the community had an opportunity to celebrate the liturgy, to discuss monastic goals, and to share a meal together. I was amazed at the number monks that returned for the day; I would judge that about 200 were present for the ceremonies.

I learned something about your mission churches from Father Herman Wind. I had a good talk with him about two or three weeks ago. He told me about the buildings that he constructed and about the difficulties of ministering to a number of churches. Yes, Father Herman was very handy in constructing buildings and in serving the people of the islands. But I am sure that you also have your talents in the area of maintenance and construction. I am sure you will do an excellent job in maintaining the various mission buildings.

Father Rupert Schreifels had a series of heart attacks this past weekend. He is resting comfortably now in Divine Redeemer Hospital in South Saint Paul, but I assume that he will need many weeks of rest before he takes up another assignment. You might remember also in your prayers Father Jeremy Murphy who is in our health center and who finds it difficult to breathe because of his emphysema.

If you have any comments on the statement I prepared for the day of the blessing, please send them to me. I took quite a few notes last Friday during the discussion but I would like to receive any more comments on the statement.

I wish you well in your work.

Fraternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00146

St. Augustine's Monastery
Nassau, Bahamas
October 7, 1979

Dear Father Abbot,

Thank you very much for the very personal note you sent me recently, and the carbon copy of your response to Bishop Hararty about his request that I be appointed to take care of the churches on South Andros and Mangrove Cay. I was very glad to learn from that response that you have in mind to pay a visit to the Bahamas in the foreseeable future. You can be sure that I will come in to Nassau to visit with you at that time. The Bishop has now officially appointed me to care for the three churches on South Andros and also the three churches that Father Herman has been tending so capably on Mangrove Cay. I will be going to South Andros on Saturday of this week to take up residence there. I hope to be able to make some arrangement to get to Mangrove Cay to hold Sunday Church also, but the two islands are separated by about 3 miles of open ocean, so one is very much dependent upon the weather for the sailing of the government ferry that plies between the two islands a couple times each day in fair weather. Because of the 4 Sisters of Mercy from the State of Maine who work with the priest there and who are presently on South Andros, I will first take up residence on that island. About the end of October they will move for 6 weeks to the convent on Mangrove Cay; so I will also then move to the residence of Father Herman on Mangrove Cay so they can have Mass most days of the week. At this time the greatest difficulty I foresee is trying to fit the shoes of Father Herman, for he has been so good a pastor and such a hardy person in maintaining things at his mission, that it is going to be most difficult to replace him. I will still be coming into Nassau monthly for the Priest's Senate meeting and the monthly day of recollection with the other priests. For contacting me in emergencies it would be best to phone Father Elias at the monastery or the Bishop, and have them contact me by radio.

Fraternally, *F. Richard, OSB*

OSB ECKROTH_00147

Mangrove Cay, Bahamas
February 21, 1980

Dear Father Abbot,

Thanks very much for the send-on's you have been having sent out from the abbey, containing the various spiritual discussions and papers that you and others have been giving to the community at St. John's, along with the other community news. And a special thanks for the personal note you sent about Christmas time. I appreciated it very much, for Christmas here was quite different from any I had previously celebrated. Starkly simple! Very much like it must have been for Christ at His entry into this world of mortals.

But here it is already the beginning of Lent. Last evening I initiated the season with the people of Mangrove Cay with a fine turn out of people at the Services last evening when we had Stations and Benediction and the imposition of ashes. Tomorrow I hope to cross over to South Andros and tomorrow evening have a similar ceremony at the north end of the island before I proceed south for the night, to have similar ceremonies on Saturday at both Kemp's Bay and at Little Creek where I reside on that island. Kittle Creek is located about 25 miles south of where I land at Driggs Hill, which is about 5 miles from my first church at High Rock. On Sunday I hope to get back to Mangrove Cay for evening Mass and most of the week to be spent on this island again. Last Sunday it was very windy and stormy; I made it across the 3 miles of open ocean, but got thoroughly drenched in the process. But that is one of the aspects of the life in trying to care for two different islands. For my Lenten resolutions I would like to submit the following:

Self denial in the form of giving up pop corn which I still love as much as I did in earlier years.

A Improvement in being more earnest in my lectio divina, right now concentrating on Abbot Marmion's CHRIST THE IDEAL OF THE PRIESTS again.

For the summer I would ask your approval on my plan for summer vacation. We are allowed 4 weeks away from our assignment; so I would like to return to St. John's on June 16th, which I can do in one day, possibly even from Mangrove Cay, make the community retreat at St. John's and also get in on the centennial celebrations scheduled for that time, especially to see my classmate Archbishop Rember Weakland, perhaps spend up to a week with my 91-year old Dad in Mandan and other relatives there, and then back at St. John's for the jubilees on July 11th.

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

5 March 1980

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for your letter of February 21, 1980. Your description of travels from one island to another indicates the wide-ranging ministry that you have. It is fortunate that you are in good health because it takes a strong person to travel from one island to another and from one mission station to another. I suspect that your busyness keeps you from getting lonely but that you do have time to spend with yourself in solitude.

I certainly approve of your plans for summer vacation. Since you will arrive at Saint John's on June 16, you will be in time for the community retreat and for the Congress of Benedictines. Later you will receive the full schedule of the retreat and of the Congress events. I am sure it will be a very pleasant time for you to meet your classmate Archbishop Rambert Weakland. It will also be a fruitful event to meet and listen to Cardinal Hume. The Congress has been on the drawing boards for over two years and I expect that it will be a very happy event for the Benedictines of this area.

I am happy to see that you take your lectio divina seriously. I will prepare a conference for the community on the subject of lectio divina and you will receive it sometime in April. I have come to realize again the importance of reflective reading of the scriptures or of some other spiritual book.

Father Cornelius is very weak. Last week we anointed him and really did not expect him to live much longer. He rallied a bit but is still rather tired and weak. It is quite clear that he is preparing himself for death.

It will be informative for me to discuss the situation of Saint Augustine's Priory when you return next June. In the near future I will want to visit the Bahamas and to assess the monastic life of the priory. I expect that I cannot do this until next fall. I am gathering reports about the work of our monks on the islands and about the state of monasticism at Saint Augustine's Priory.

The blessings of lent be with you!

Faternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00149

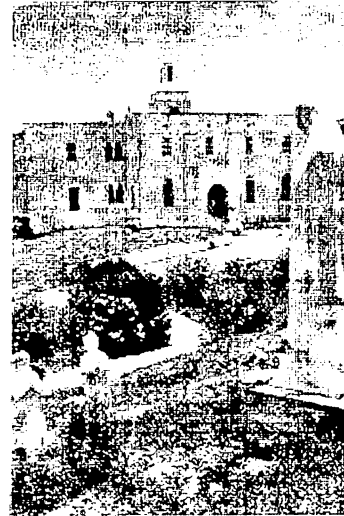
Bahamian Burial Society: 'Important Feature'

Every two months from one of the out islands of the Bahamas comes a letter from Fr. Richard Eckroth, the collection of which will eventually form a significant body of information for the island historian. In mid October the letter began with "September this year had for me very much of a *death* character. Mid September I did not get to Nassau for the usual monthly meeting with the bishop and other priests, for I had to preach a big sermon to the inter-denominational Congo #1 Burial Society of South Andros. They had asked Bishop Burke to come and preach, but naturally he had to be in Nassau at the meeting with the other priests; so he asked me to stay home and preach for him. About every five years they have their annual celebration at one of my churches; this year was their 87th anniversary.

"A burial society is a very important feature of native life. Everyone wants to be sure that when they die, they are given a proper burial; and membership in such a society assures this. They have monthly dues to pay, and a

special fee at the death of any member. They visit the dying person regularly to care for their needs, especially food and sympathetic presence.

"When the person dies, they build a coffin, dig the grave, have a 'setting up' (wake) all through the night between the death and the burial, which by law has to be within 24 hours of death, for there is no embalming in the out islands. Plenty of black coffee is drunk through the night, and the favorite songs of the deceased are sung over and over again; and plenty of visiting goes on. The men unofficially drink plenty of rum, too, in the course of the night. The Society carries the coffin and body to the church, and thence to the cemetery, with a brass band if one is available; but a brass band is becoming a rare thing now, even in Nassau where they have a good supply of musicians. So you see, membership in these burial societies is an important feature in the native culture. The congregation seemed to like what I said, and they treated me to a cake and soda afterwards."



Saint Augustine's Priory, Nassau, Bahamas.

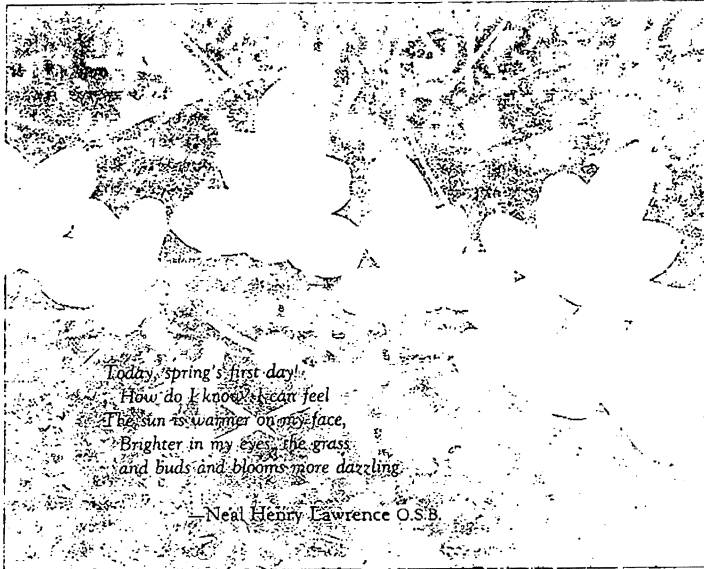
Father Egbert

continued from page 10

the pastoral ministry and during the next forty years was stationed in parishes and chaplaincies in Minnesota, North Dakota, and California.

One of his longest assignments was the direction of Saint Mary's Chippewa Mission at Redlake, Minnesota, for twelve years. During this time he provided not only for the spiritual needs of his flock, but worked zealously for their material advancement. He improved farm operations, developed an outstanding livestock and dairy herd, repaired and expanded the school facilities, and found time to be a bus driver and coach of athletic teams. In his apostolic ministrations he placed much emphasis on the practice of a joyous prayer life. He was also interested in the charismatic movement.

Afflicted with a serious kidney ailment during much of his life, he accepted his frequent operations and treatments patiently and kept active as long as possible.



Today, spring's first day!
How do I know I can feel
The sun is warmer on my face,
Brighter in my eyes, the grass
and buds and blooms more dazzling.

— Neal Henry Lawrence O.S.B.

My dearest ones,

September, 1980

So many things have happened during the month of August, some very happy, some not so happy, that I thought I ought to write about some of them before they get too far from my memory. The weather was not the most pleasant, for it was hot and muggy through the whole month, with plenty of rains, even torrential ones! But rarely did the rains have the happy effect of clearing the air and making things fresh again. But at least we were spared the ravages of the hurricane of the century which they named ALAN.

Two early happy events of the month of August were the ordinations of two promising young Bahamians to the priesthood, with yet a third one ordained to the role of Deacon. That now brings the number of native Bahamian priests to four, and for this everyone is grateful. Another special event of the month was the meeting in Nassau of the 14 bishops who make up the Antilles Conference of Bishops, to which the Bahamas belongs. I had nothing to do with the actual deliberations of these men, but I was in Nassau for the festive opening celebration Mass for the event. And then I had the privilege of having Bishop Brian Hennessey of Bermuda come out to the islands with me for the week-end. I had chartered a plane to take him with me to Mangrove Cay, along with another bishop and the pastor from North Andros, for our islands are not far apart. His time was limited on the islands, so I had announced over the Bahamas radio that we would have a Saturday evening Mass on Mangrove Cay, which was very festive and well attended; then we crossed in the boat over to South Andros before nightfall. It was quite late, and I did not have much good food in my refrigerator, so we decided to eat out at the one resort on the island. They were still suffering from the shortage of gasoline and diesel fuel, and at the resort they had none to run their generator, so we ate our meal in the dark. I hope it looked as good as it tasted, for I never did get a view of the meal. Ironically the very next Saturday a tug from Nassau towed in the crippled fuel tanker so it could unload its precious cargo, and the island could once again get into action. Anyway we spent a pleasant evening visiting together, with my own generator giving off plenty of power until it was time to retire. I had forgotten to tell the bishop that there was plenty of mosquito spray on hand, and he was too much the gentleman to wake me up to seek some, but spent most of the night fighting the buggers. I guess they were attracted to his new blood and really gave him a miserable night. He will never forget the Bahamas after this experience. He preached at the two masses on Sunday which were well attended, and then I made a lunch at the Sisters's Convent which is vacant in the summer; and after a period of relaxing we went to the airport to get him back on the charter plane to Nassau and more meetings scheduled for that evening. The 3:00 charter plane did not arrive until 5:45, which was almost time for the regular Bahamasair flight to Nassau. There was a huge crowd of people for the flight, and I had spoken with the ticket agent about getting the bishop on the plane if the charter did not arrive. I had made temporary reservations for the bishop at Mangrove Cay the week before, but the agent at South Andros had no contact by radio or phone with the Mangrove Cay agent so the only way he could have honored the reservation I had made would have been if the plane came first to South Andros and then gone on to Mangrove Cay. But when the charter plane showed up I quickly hustled the bishop into it and then I drove hurriedly down the road to get to the boat dock in the hope that the ferryman might have waited for me, for he was supposed to leave at 5:00. But happily he did wait for me and I got safely to the Mangrove Cay shore for an evening Mass with the people at Little Harbour.

South Andros had no gasoline for sale for a full four weeks, and already that time has been surpassed on Mangrove Cay, with still no end in sight for the arrival of a fuel boat to Mangrove Cay. Such mis-management is incredible. I quickly provided for such events, which occur with a certain regularity, for I keep about 25 or 30 gallons of gasoline in reserve at my rectory on South Andros, and more than 100 gallons on reserve on Mangrove Cay, for the truck there uses so much gasoline.

Another very happy event was the return at the end of the month of the Sisters of Mercy from Maine. Only two arrived at this time. One from last year will not return for a year, and her replacement will not come until January, and the third one from last year has been delayed by the recent serious illness of her mother. But the latest word is that her mother is improving and that she ought to arrive here soon. I was a bit embarrassed at the early arrival of the Sisters, for I had "lifted" the battery from their VW van for my truck which suddenly needed a new battery, and there was a delay in the arrival of a new one from Nassau. But it all worked out smoothly, for they had another VW truck to use for the few days they would be on Mangrove Cay before moving to South Andros for six weeks.

But a very sad note occurred the weekend of the return of the Sisters. One of our elderly parishioners, a woman of 75, became lost during the night and simply disappeared somewhere in the jungle like bush of Mangrove Cay. I was perhaps the last one to see her alive, for I took her home from church that night of her disappearance. I did not take her right to her door, for she lived up a big hill which is not usually accessible to a big truck like mine, but I took her to the bottom of her hill and then shined the truck lights up her path until she was out of sight; but then she must have become confused, for she never went home, but began wandering about the island. With a group of men I trampled through the bush looking for her, then they had a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter looking for her, and finally police dogs from Nassau, but we never did find her. Just gives you an idea of how thick and jungle like it is right up to the back door of the houses here. They now tell me that it occurs regularly that people go into the bush and simply never return. Even young people who should know their way have disappeared; but this was a woman who had lived 75 years on this island!

OSB ECKROTH_00151

With the turn of the page it is now October. With all the rush at Christmas, it might just happen that this could be the last letter you will receive from me until the holidays. I intend to write a Christmas letter, but the postal service here is so unpredictable; so consider yourself greeted for a Blessed Christmas and New Year. In August I received several "air mail" letters that were posted in the States in January and February, as well as several that were posted in nearby Nassau in June. Maybe August is clean-out month for the Bahamas Postal Service. A rowboat from Nassau would not take that much time to get out here!

Big change that came with October was that I have 4 Masses to offer on each Sunday. This year I am holding morning church on Mangrove Cay, and evening church on South Andros, the opposite of last year, to give the people a change. That means a 9:30 Mass at Little Harbour's Holy Angel's Church, then a big celebration in the biggest church of all at 11:00 at Pinders Settlement's St. Benedict's Church. Then while some of the women teach CCD for an hour I fix myself a lunch, and after lunch take all the kids and remaining adults to their homes. Then I still have an hour or so to listen to baseball, football or take a rest until it is time to go to the boat at the south end of the island for a 4:00 o'clock crossing of the ocean to South Andros. I was lucky through the last weeks of September and early October in not getting drenched, for this has been a very rainy season, even without a hurricane to stir things up worse. When I land at South Andros I usually have to hurry to my bus parked at the Baptist Preacher's house a quarter mile down the island, pick up a few parishioners and get to High Rock Settlement's St. Robert's Church about 7 miles away for a 5:00 p.m. Mass. When that Mass is finished I have to take the bus another 15 miles or so to Little Creek's Sacred Heart Church near the south end of the island, picking up people all along the way, even a couple English families, teachers who have come this year from England; and sometimes I have to go back and make a second run before I can start the 7:00 Mass. After Mass it regularly takes 2 bus loads to take the people home again before I can return to my rectory and fix a late supper and relax. It is going to be a strenuous year, but at least the people cannot complain that they have no chance to go to Mass. One of these English couples is really Anglican, but there is no Anglican church near for them to attend, so they fell quite comfortable worshipping with us.

I had an interesting crossing of the ocean between the islands again recently. I was crossing from South Andros to Mangrove Cay. The boatman did not check the gas in his tank. When we got about a mile from the Mangrove Cay shore we suddenly ran out of gasoline. We were still in the deep channel, so he could not use his 9-foot pole to move us closer to shore, and he had no oars to use either; so we just drifted! Luckily the tide was coming in from the big open sea, so eventually it would carry us up the channel between the islands with the chance that someone would see our plight and rescue us. In a rather futile effort he tried to use his pole as an oar, but you know he could not make much headway in that manner. After more than an hour of drifting we got into shallower water and he was able to touch bottom with his pole and then gradually move us to shore, but far from our proper destination. Well, at least we made it to shore, and though I was very late for church, there were still a few people waiting for me. But I was sure glad that the tide was coming in and not going out that time!

The recent rains seem to have brought out some of the creatures of the island. I do not mind the many varieties of lizards that abound, for I appreciate the mosquitoes and bugs that they catch with their lightning-like tongues; but I got kinda shooked the other day when I reached in my cupboard and brought out a soup bowl and saw some creature scurrying around inside it. Closer inspection proved it to be a young scorpion, about an inch and a half long, but flexing its poisonous tail in a real menacing, adult fashion. Needless to say I quickly annihilated it! And one Sunday in Church I was sitting listening to the lector read the first Scripture readings when I noticed something dark down at the foot of my chair. It proved to be a big black-brown tarantula spider, with a leg-spread of about 4 inches. The server plucked him up with a quick grasp behind his head and removed him. Yuuck, I hate spiders, most especially in that size!

Along the roads the signs do not announce a CURVE, but rather a BEND in the road. They must have run out of signs for right-handed bends, for along one stretch where there is a dangerous right curve, they have a sign for BEND, but with the figure for a left-handed curve. If you really would go left you would drop into the sea....Tires go fast here; I just replaced a pair on the truck, worn down evenly through the 2nd layer of treads, but with less than 9,000 miles on them. And on South Andros I have already bought the 4th new tire for the bus which gets more mileage than the truck because of the longer distances between points on that island.

This past summer I almost got re-assigned from these beloved islands of South Andros and Mangrove Cay. A real need arose in Nassau for a new pastor at the largest black parish in the city, Our Lady's Church. It is in a really rough district of the city and full of problems, with a funeral at least once a week. With the role would be the job of breaking in a new Bahamian priest. I begged off as earnestly as I could, and the bishop agreed with me over the personnel board because he wants me in the worst way to build a new church on South Andros. I have plans in the making, but we still have not received title to the property from the Anglican Church. The Anglican bishop has told me personally they have approved the transfer of title, but so far their business office has not actually done the deed; so we cannot start our thing....I bet I can make your mouth water telling you of the odors of fresh limes and fresh avocados I am gathering regularly from the trees in my church yard. They are one of the rewards for the rigors of the life down here. Soon some of the oranges should be ripening too.

O: 2000 ...

St. Benedict's Church
Mangrove Cay, Andros, Bahamas
May 12, 1981

Dear Father Abbot,

I'm sorry that I have let so much time slip by without writing a letter to you; but likely you have heard of me indirectly through some of the confreres to whom I write as regularly as I write to anyone, like Fr. Benjamin, Fr. Fabian, Fr. Arnold Dittberner, Fr. Omer, to mention a few. In line with the good word you gave when you were most recently in Nassau, I have made arrangements to come north on June 1st. I should get to the abbey that same evening, most likely by limousine from the Minneapolis airport, for my flight from Nassau by way of Atlanta is Eastern flight #278 into Minneapolis at 4:54 p.m. I would hope to go out to Mandan, N.D. on June 2nd, most likely with my brother Charles from St. Joseph for the centennial celebration of our home parish in Mandan of St. Joseph to be held on June 3rd and following. Many of the family plan to come together at that time so it will also be a family reunion with my Dad who is now 92. I intend to return to St. John's in time for the opening of retreat on June 8th and then spend the rest of my time until June 25th at the abbey. My return flight to Nassau is made out for June 25th.

Just this evening when I returned from South Andros I received your most recent sending: your own letter, the statement on vacations and the chaplains letters, Community and copy of the Record. Thanks very much for sending all these items on to me so regularly; I do enjoy this contact with the doings at St. John's. Also a copy of Fr. Alfred's CONFERRERE arrived in the same mail; and this is always interesting to peruse. Today's was a real calm crossing of the ocean waters between South Andros and Mangrove Cay; but I have experienced some real hair-raisers or -grayers this past winter. But only once did I miss getting across and another time I made it there by flying across in an airplane. The Sunday I missed getting across even the pilot would not fly, it was so stormy. But with the present hot sultry weather moving in, I am most eagerly looking forward to some cool days at the Abbey. I really do hope that the next time you get to the Bahamas you will make it a point to come out here where I am stationed; it is quite a different world from what you have seen in Nassau.

Fraternally,

Fr. Richard Eckroth OSB

13 October 1981

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Benedict's Church
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

The Homecoming celebration has come and gone for another year. We lost the football game to Gustavus Adolphus but otherwise it was a very successful celebration. Mr. Harry Holz received the Father Walter Beger Award for his many years of service on the governing boards of the university and for his continual efforts to raise funds for the university. Father Martin Schirber and Father Colman Barry J. sent many alumni to their minilessons on Saturday morning. I was able to visit with many alumni, including Senator David Lauenberg, after the football game and during the candlelight dinner in the Hall.

Last Saturday we held the funeral for Father Valerian Thelen. He served your home parish for five years, from 1937 to 1942. I am sure you remember his work at that time. I understand that he was also involved in building or remodeling the school in Mandan. He certainly was a very hard worker during his long life as a monk and a priest. He was handy with tools and was not afraid of physical labor.

Last Sunday the Diocese of Nassau received its new bishop. I was happy that Bishop Leonard could attend the ordination and also receive acclaim from the people of the diocese. I decided not to attend the ordination because I was previously scheduled for a workshop in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and also I wanted to speak with the bishop more at leisure when I visit Nassau in February. I am sure we had many Benedictines at the ordination service. It is, indeed, a new age for the church of Nassau. It is a new age also for the monastery of Saint Augustine.

Yesterday I noticed smoke coming from the short stack of the incinerator. We have not begun to burn garbage as yet but the employees are testing the new furnace. By November we should have a regular run of garbage trucks to the power plant. It will certainly cut into our expenses for heating the campus buildings.

OSB ECKROTH_00154

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
13 October 1981
Page Two

I wish you well in your work.

The Lord's blessings remain with you!

Fraternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/av

St. Benedict's Church
Mangrove Cay, Andros
October 22, 1981

Dear Father Abbot,

What a privileged joy it was to receive your letter this morning when I came across to Mangrove Cay from South Andros. Ordinarily I would have come across only Sunday evening to have mass with the people here; but this week I came across early in order to meet the mail boat out of Nassau, for I was hoping that they would have my new Datsun parish bus on the boat this trip. And as it turned out, I was not disappointed, for this evening at high tide the mail boat came flying in to the dock at Little Harbour. Right away one of the boys from the church hopped on his bicycle and came down here at St. Benedict's to call me. I'll have to wait for tomorrow morning to get the bus, for they have to wait for low tide to get the boat even near the dock level so that it can be driven safely off. It was a close squeeze, for the afterdeck of the mail boat is quite low, and they had to deflate the tires of the bus to drive it on in Nassau. I took no chances of losing it in these stormy seas; as many a car and truck have been lost out here by going over the edge of the boat in bad seas, so I took out a special marine insurance to cover its passage out here. It is a very new, 1982 Datsun 15-passenger bus with a diesel engine, so I look forward to many years of good service from it. Price was not bad either, considering the 52% import duty on such vehicles into the Bahamas. \$10,550.00 was the finish price. We had been scrimping and saving for a long time out here to purchase it; so we had the money to pay for it upon delivery. I had paid for it when I went in to Nassau for the ordination of Bishop Burke. So the purchase of the bus added to the momentous character of that week, which included the beautiful farewell for Bishop Paul Leonard. I don't think there was a dry eye in the Cathedral at the farewell for him, the day after the ordination of Bishop Burke. All of us Benedictine's were able to get to Nassau for both events, including Father Herman from San Salvador, who even had to miss his Sunday schedule because of the difficulty of travel. I had some difficulty myself to get there on time, but I succeeded. Saturday night I offered Masses at the principle settlements on South Andros, slept in my house there near the south end of the island, then rose very early Sunday morning to get on the road about 6:45 in order to get to Driggs Hill at the north end of the island where I had chartered the Baptist minister to take me across to Mangrove Cay in his fast motor boat. My truck was waiting for me at the Mangrove Cay shore, and I picked up people all along the road for a celebration for all the island at St. Benedict's Church at 8:30. After Mass I took the people home and then waited for a friend to pick me up and take me to the airport for the noon plane. Good Fr. George Wolf met me and a lot of the people from South Andros and Mangrove Cay with the school bus from St. Augustine's and took the people where they needed to go and then me to St. Augustine's for a lunch with a host of Jesuit visitors from Jamaica and Boston. After a short break he took all of us again in the school bus to the Cathedral grounds for the very impressive ordination rites. This was the first time I had witnessed the revised ordination rite and I found it most impressive and rich in symbolism. It was great to have Bishop Paul Leonard there in the good care of Bro. Andrew, but it was a disappointment not to find you there; but I guess everyone knew the reason you could not attend.

When you do come here in February I hope very much that you will have enough time to come out here to Andros where I am stationed; it is really quite a unique station! We will have 5 flights out to Mangrove Cay and South Andros this winter, and this is the schedule if you can look ahead to such a visit: It is a round trip: Nassau-Mangrove Cay-South Andros-Nassau Sunday, Tuesday, Friday mornings 10:45, Monday & Wednesday 3:30 p.m. I'd like to set it up that we would come together to one island, travel across the water to the other island by boat and leave again for Nassau from the other island. Air fare is the same for both islands. Of course Fr. Herman also wants you to come to San Salvador, but he has only 2 flights per week from Nassau, Mondays and Thursdays. Now if you can stay a couple weeks I would see no problem in your visiting all of us in our stations. Was so sorry to hear of the death of Fr. Valerian; we were very close friends.

Fraternally, *Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB*

OSB ECKROTH_00156

Jan. 1982

Customs 24

Monks who use cars should report any malfunction to the prior or procurator. Any damage to a car or injury to passengers should be reported immediately to the prior or procurator. All automobiles of the corporation are insured by a fleet insurance policy which covers the car, the driver, and the passengers.

The abbot may give individuals permission to have the use of a car for their work either at the abbey or away from the abbey. The procurator assigns cars for this purpose. Upon retirement or on completion of the assignment for which the use of a car was permitted, the keys for the car are returned to the procurator so that the car can be assigned to someone else or designated for general use.

Monks may not accept the gift of a car without permission of the abbot. Cars received as gifts become part of the abbey fleet and are to be turned over to the procurator when the user completes the work for which the car had been assigned.

CABINS

The cabins at Swenson Lake and Eagle Lake were given to St. John's Abbey for recreational use by members of the abbey. In order to share these facilities as equitably as possible among the members of the community the prior observes the following guidelines in scheduling reservations:

- a) The cabins should not be reserved for use by parties which do not include any Saint John's monks.
- b) Use of either of the cabins should not be scheduled more than six months in advance.
- c) Cabins should not be scheduled for a period of more than seven consecutive days by members of the same party.
- d) During the summer months (June, July, August) a second or third use of either cabin by members of the same party should not be scheduled more than seven days in advance.
- e) The names of all persons in a party using one of the cabins should be left with the prior before departure.

CLAUSURA

Sections of the monastery are marked by clausura. Monks may not entertain students or other lay persons in their rooms. Guest parlors are designed for this purpose. A superior may make exceptions for particular persons, times, and places.

CLOTHING

The formal garb is the monastic habit. It is customarily worn in choir and on other formal community occasions. For many formal activities the clerical shirt and suit are also appropriate. When monks choose to

29 October 1982

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Benedict's Church
Mangrove Cay, Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

I hope that your work is going well on the Island of Andros! It was good to have the opportunity to talk to you this summer and to find out from yourself about the progress of your work.

On Wednesday evening we held a ceremony of communal anointing for the sick and the elderly of the monastic community. It was a moving ceremony. It took place in the sanctuary of the abbey church and it constituted our evening service. All the monks imposed hands on the sick and the elderly and joined in the litany during the actual anointing with oil. It is good to schedule this ceremony from time to time for it assists our sense of solidarity with the venerable members of our community.

Father Philip Kaufman underwent by-pass surgery for vessels in his heart. It was discovered recently that his vessels, or at least some of them, were nearly plugged and the heart was receiving very little blood. He is doing well after the operation which took place at the Metropolitan Medical Center in the Twin Cities.

On Saturday, November 6, we will hold a small and quiet celebration of Bishop Leonard Hagarty's 50th anniversary of monastic profession. We have invited his immediate family to the event and also the nurses who work with him in the health center. The bishop is looking forward to the celebration and the visit with his brothers and sisters. We have decided not to invite his many friends for the list must indeed be very long and we do not have room for them at this time of the year.

The fall of the year is the time to plant trees so our Grounds Committee is busy planting a great variety of trees on our campus. I doubt that they are planting many elm trees because the Dutch Elm Disease has taken most of our elms in the past few years and it is precisely these trees that we need to replace. We have a number of monks who are very interested in the grounds around the university and abbey and they are particularly concerned about the state of our trees.

I wish you well in your work! The Lord's blessings remain with you!

Fraternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00157

Sacred Heart Church
P.O. The Bluff, South Andros
Bahamas
November 14, 1982

Dear Father Abbot,

What a surprise and joy it was to receive your recent letter; glad there was no apparent reason to row me out in it. I do very much appreciate a letter like this from you; it is another evidence of your deep and personal concern for me and all the confreres entrusted to your guidance. Thank you very much for the guidance and the personal concern. I have heard somewhere that you intend to visit in the Bahamas again before the home visitation. That is good; but it would be event better if you could manage to squeeze in a visit to one or the other of the missions where Fr. Brendan, Fr. Herman or myself serve at the present time. Perhaps you know from that she and I intend to come out here to visit with me on South Andros and also in Nassau the early days of February. If you do not get out here yourself this winter perhaps she can give you a blow by blow description of things here. I spoke of her coming to South Andros, for it looks like I will be residing quite regularly on this island all the next few months. Bishop Burke has assigned a 62-year old African Missionary Father to work out here with me, Fr. Gerard Scanlan, S.M.A. by name. He is living on Mangrove Cay, and I take care of the work on South Andros. He is good and experienced and has fitted in very quickly these last couple weeks. I believe he will be out here with me only until June when he expects to be assigned to Cat Island after the resignation of the Scarboro priest now serving there, who is getting along in years, an old Chinese missionary. So Bishop Burke has decided to give me a bit of a breather, lightening my load considerably by having him take care of the people on Mangrove Cay until summer. He is also close to some of his confreres, who staff the stations on North Andros, his immediate neighbor to the north of Mangrove Cay. It is close in distance, but far in travel, for there is no travel between the islands unless you happen to have a small private plane, and he is fearful of flying in small craft. Anyway, for the next few months I will not have to rush across the water a couple times each week, and what a relief that is in the winter storms! On the other hand I am liable to get spoiled and lazy and may not want to go back to the more rugged routine next summer when Fr. Scanlan moves on to greener pastures. But then I can look back and remind myself how good it was that winter I did not have to cross the ocean so often. Even this past Sunday when I tried to go across I could get no boatman for love or money to take me across. I guess I am still too stupid to not know when one should not try to go across. Maybe it would be dangerous if I had my boat in the water and would be liable to try to go across when I shouldn't. Even mid week when I did finally get across it was a real wet crossing and the people were all wondering how I got across. I got someone to take me the longer but safer route from Lisbon Creek, a couple miles up the bight. Still plenty to do here on South Andros, spiritually and physically, so I will not be into too much mischief. Senate and priest meeting this week in Nassau, and I am supposed to lead the spiritual part of the recollection this month; then I hope to get enough roofing material to put a new roof on one of the churches on this island; all three churches here need a new roof, but there are no monies for it. I began last Sunday to offer Mass at the middle church on the island, St. Gertrude's at Kemp's Bay. I had not offered Mass there for more than 2 years, but simply brought the people by bus to Sacred Heart where I live, or St. Robert's at the other end of the island where the Sisters have their convent. The people seem to be genuinely happy for the return of a full time resident priest on the island.

I have been happy and surprised to learn occasionally of the football success of St. John's. The last I heard they were 4 and 0 in the conference; and I believe that Concorde already had a couple defeats; so it looked like St. John's was headed for a very successful season. Too bad professional football cannot speak so glowingly. But then I have no occasion to watch that out here anyway. On Mangrove Cay I have a T.V. set and can sometimes pick up Florida stations, but have no time to watch Sunday football games. On South Andros I do not have such luxuries, just a nice stereo inherited from Fr. Marcian upon his death and some good classical records picked up from the St. John's library duplicates.

With filial love and respect

W. Richard, 1982

OSB ECKROTH_00158

3 November 1983

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Sacred Heart Church
Post Office The Bluff
South Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

While the hot season has turned to warm for you the warm season has turned to cool and cold for us. Actually our weather has been rather mild for this season of the year. I associate All Saints Day and All Souls Day with a snowstorm and cold winds. I recall many processions to the cemetery on All Souls Day and most of them were in the face of cold winds. This year, however, the walk to the cemetery was pleasant and we were able to hold a peaceful service around the cross in the cemetery.

Our Chapter voted almost unanimously on Tuesday evening to invite the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota to erect a spirituality center on our campus. This is certainly an historic event since it provides a different kind of ecumenism from the one we have experienced in the past. The Episcopalians will use the center as a place of prayer and discussion. They will take advantage of the prayer services of the monastery and the academic programs of the university. I am sure that many churches will look to this venture with interest. We hope that other Christian traditions will use the spirituality center for their own needs and indeed the Episcopal Church wants to open up the center to other denominations.

Today I will discuss with the Senior Council the matter of re-committing Saint John's Abbey to Saint Augustine's Monastery for another three years. I only want to broach the subject today but it is important to discuss the matter at this time since the three-year experiment is over on December 30, 1983. I hope to have the Senior Council and the Chapter extend the experiment until May or June 1984 so that I have a chance to evaluate the progress of the new community at Saint Augustine's Monastery. Perhaps in May or June our Chapter can vote once again on whether or not to continue the commitment to Saint Augustine's.

I wish you peace and joy in your ministry!

Fraternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00159

Sacred Heart Church

Little Creek, Andros, Bahamas
December 3, 1983

Dear Father Abbot,

It is about 8:30 p.m. this Saturday evening; I have put together enough ideas and thoughts for my four homilies tomorrow, so now I have some relaxing time in which to respond to your recent letter to me. Thanks very much for your personal concern to write to me on November 3rd and refer to many of the things going on about the abbey and school. I know with your busy schedule you must not find it easy to take such precious time to write to me since there was no special problem to write about. I very much appreciate this spiritual paternity which you exemplify.

I read with deep interest and full approval your talk to the community in August on the topic of Living in the Presence of the Lord, which I passed on to the Sisters of Mercy who work out here with me, and the most recent packet and paper from September on Spirituality and Ecumenism. This paper reached me only yesterday, for the mail service here leaves a bit to be desired. As you may have read from my periodic letters to the confreres, I still do not have a telephone in my house on Mangrove Cay, though it has been ordered by the Diocese, the owner of the property; and perhaps it will be installed in the early months of 1984. With that I can dial directly to you or anywhere else in the States; and likewise you can conceivably direct dial me also. It may prove to be a good contact if my Dad would take a turn for the worse. He is already well beyond his 94th birthday and is well taken care of in St. Vincent's Nursing Home in Bismarck and is visited by members of the family several times each week; but you never know when he could suddenly fold up. This is all the more possible right now, for within the last weeks my oldest brother has been reconciled with the Church and back to the sacraments after being gone for about 25 years; and he was always Dad's favorite, and therefore the recipient of many many prayers. I kinda envision my Dad like old Simeon, "Now, Lord, you can dismiss your servant in peace...."

In the same mail as your most recent sending came a letter from Bro. Walter, telling of his permission to spend January in the Bahamas, and his desire to spend a bit of it with me on Andros. Thank you very much for giving him this permission, and I am going to write him and assure him he will be most welcome to spend all the time he wishes with me on these two islands. Perhaps he wants to come and see whether what I have been writing is really true or not. Seeing is believing!

Now it would also be nice if you could manage to come out here also when you make your visitation in preparation for the St. John's Community considering an extension of its commitment to St. Augustine's for another three years. These first three years have certainly flown by swiftly. I think things are going along smoothly and promisingly at St. Augustine's and I trust that the St. John's Chapter will whole-heartedly support another three years of assistance to the developing community of St. Augustine's.

Thanksgiving Day last week was a special day of rejoicing for myself and the Sisters, for my brother and his wife from Portland, Oregon, spent the week with us, and also two other priests from within the Bahamas spent the day with us, the priest from North Andros who had taken my place on Mangrove Cay 9 months this past year, and a priest from Abaco Island. We all had much reason for which to give thanks, not the least of which was the joy of each other's company.

But enough for this time. I have yet to send out a Christmas letter, but I will use this opportunity to extend to you my prayers for a most blessed Christmas and continued guidance through the new year.

Fraternally, *Richard, OSB*

OSB ECKROTH_00160

5 March 1984

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Sacred Heart Church
Little Creek, Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Thank you for suggesting that I visit your missions on the Island of Andros. I thoroughly enjoyed my stay with you. It gave me a first-hand experience of life on the family islands. It also made me reflect about the sacrifices our monks of years ago made to be of service to the people of Andros. They must have lived in very primitive conditions and found transportation very difficult. You have it easier today but nevertheless it is still a very solitary life and one that is demanding in terms of ability to manage one's life in the midst of many machines and gadgets. Not everyone would be able to live in the rectory that you manage! The pastor in the Bahamas must be able to do a variety of jobs from mechanic to bus driver to preacher. He must also be a good chef.

I still remember the excellent meal of conch that we had on the Friday night of February 24. It turned out very well thanks to the efforts of many of us.

Abbot John and I were happy to find some progress in the community life at Saint Augustine's Monastery. It is my hope that our monastic community will vote to continue the experiment for at least another three years. I think it deserves further attention on the part of our community.

Thank you again for your hospitality!

I wish you the blessings and fruit of this lenten season!

Faternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00161

My dearest ones,

April, 1984

It is almost Holy Week and Easter as I finally find time to get off another letter to all of you. It seems that the older we get, the faster the time seems to fly by; just as when we were youngsters the time could not go by quickly enough. Since it will probably be about Easter when most of you receive this letter, I want to greet all of you for a very blessed Easter time and hope that you will have a good spring, late though it apparently is for many of your areas. May the joy of the Risen Savior fill your hearts and be the hope and promise of your eternal life.

Well, again I have had so many wonderful visitors, and so many interesting things have happened in my busy life out here, that I hardly know where to begin to relate some of them. The first visitors were good friends from Mandan, North Dakota. They spent most of a week with me, on both South Andros and Mangrove Cay, and like good North Dakotans, they enjoyed the simplicity of life that I have on these islands. Of course they also enjoyed the exotic tropical contrast to the North Dakota snows, and soaked up plenty of sun and sand. and I tried several remedies for my solar water heater; and thanks to several of you who wrote to me with suggestions to pursue; but nothing worked until we figured it could only be an air-lock somewhere on the hot water line. I figured it could only be at the point where the hot water line left the insulated storage tank. By drilling and chiseling through the cement wall through which this pipe passes, I was able to lower this pipe about an inch and a half; and that was all that was needed to make the whole system operational. Unfortunately we succeeded in remedying the situation just an hour before we had to leave South Andros and move to Mangrove Cay, so we did not get to experience the warm results of our labors. They gathered quite a load of sea shells and such things to take home to their children; but I think will get more enjoyment out of seeing the reminders in their home than the kids will; for they truly enjoyed their time here; and I hope they will come back for a re-play in the near future.

The next visitors came as a real surprise! They were Abbot Jerome of St. John's Abbey in Minnesota and retired Abbot John, also from St. John's, now pastor of Albany, Minnesota, and also the Abbot-President of our American Benedictine group. They had come to Nassau in order to evaluate the progress of the 3-year commitment of St. John's Abbey to re-establish the community of St. Augustine's Monastery in Nassau, originally founded from St. John's. We had a good evaluation time in Nassau, and they finished their work with some time to spare, so I suggested that for them to get a more genuine picture of the work in the Bahamas they really ought to come out to my mission on Mangrove Cay and South Andros. And by Golly, they both said yes! Bro. Barry who likes any excuse to fly and get away from his office duties at St. Augustine's, was able to borrow a little 3-passenger plane; so the four of us flew out to Mangrove Cay on Friday, to the great surprise of the Sisters of Mercy and the others out here; and I had to quickly provide bedding for the 3 visitors. Bro. Barry won the mattress on the floor. But before we could get to that stage of the evening, we had other excitement when we went to the airport about 5:15 to check out the plane before sundown. We were trying to take some precautions about the theft of gasoline from the planes parked at the Mangrove Cay airport, and what did we discover but that someone had stolen the battery from the airplane in broad daylight. We went directly to the police to report our problem. The policeman came back with us to the airport and we tried to scrounge a battery from a small drug-plane grounded at the airport, but it proved to be the wrong size and would not work. He said he had a good suspicion about who the thief might be and would work on it in the next hours. We returned to the rectory where Abbot Jerome had wonderfully tenderized the conch I had dug out for a cracked-conch dinner with all the trimmings. We had hardly finished our delicious supper when the police car drove up to the house and the officer showed us some wing nuts and washers, wondering if they would be the kind that attached the battery in the plane. They corresponded exactly to the missing battery and when we asked him where he found them he answered, "in someone's pocket." He said he would be back later and most likely with the battery. And it was less than 2 hours later that he did return with the battery and some culprit sitting in the back seat of the police car, on his way to lock up the culprit in the island jail. We were so happy to get the battery back, which was a brand new one, being used for the first time for this trip, that Bro. Barry did not press charges against the culprit. The whole incident must have put fear into the other young fellows on the island, for we lost no gasoline through the night. I took them all for a tour of the island in the parish bus and the abbots got to see where some of the early Fathers of St. John's who worked out here lived in times past. They seemed to enjoy the experience. After a morning Mass with the Sisters of Mercy and some more visiting we flew over to South Andros and there I took them the length of the island and showed them the three churches I care for on that island. After a pancake lunch we drove back to the airport from which the abbots and Bro. Barry left again for Nassau, and I drove the bus to Driggs Hill and then waited for the ferry to go back to Mangrove Cay. I think this was probably the first time ever that an abbot of St. John's came out to Mangrove Cay and South Andros, and I am very happy that both Abbot Jerome and Abbot John paid this historic visit. It was this same Abbot John who in 1976 assigned me to work in the Bahamas. I think I am the only one still in the Bahamas whom he assigned to work here. So, theirs was a very happy and historic visit, almost to match the historic visit of Cardinal Hayes of New York City who came to Mangrove Cay in 1928 to give Confirmation to the first group ever on Mangrove Cay. In that time there was not even a bishop in the Bahamas. I might add that good Mr. Hemmstreet would have come to the rescue again, for he dug up an old airplane battery from his garage that he began to charge up for Bro. Barry, and that probably would have gotten them off the ground on their way back to Nassau.

OSB ECKROTH_00162

2.

The next visitors were cousins from Billings, Montana. They too found the contrast from the Montana colds a very welcome one, even though it was unusually windy and cold much of the time they spent with me on South Andros and Mangrove Cay; and when the winds fall off, the bugs came on. And these pesky bugs seem to sense it when now blood comes on the scene, and they attack voraciously, with the result that especially became the object of their attack. But I think they enjoyed their time with me in spite of the bugs. It is such a contrast to be able to go into the ocean in February when the streams of Montana are covered with about 3 feet of ice. It was so windy that we were not able to cross to the other island for Sunday evening Mass, so I had it easier for a change. It was even too windy for Mr. to fly me across; so you know it was pretty windy! and also found the sea shells most interesting and took home oddies of them, even the larger conch shells, which added considerably to their weight. They they also got to shop in Nassau in the straw market before they flew back to Billings and loaded up on many of the locally produced straw items. But as soon as they left we experienced weeks of delightful weather. I heard on the radio that the night they flew back into Billings they were met by a full-blown blizzard, so it must have been with some reluctance that they arrived.

I think it was during the visit of the abbots out here that we witnessed an unusual thing in the sky. We were all drawn outdoors with a loud sound in the usually peaceful sky, and as we stood on the porch there came right over our heads 5 big military helicopters (I think British) and they were being refueled from a tanker plane while in flight. It was beautiful to see their strict formation and coordinated speed and the long tube from the tanker plane giving fuel to one helicopter after the other. I am wondering how far their pattern took them to the west, for it is not many air minutes from here and one is in Cuban air space.

As I said earlier, getting a telephone here goes in stages. I paid my fee and got my telephone number in January. Then I waited week after week until several months went by until late March when they finally began to put up a wire in my yard; finally in early April a man came in and put in the actual telephone. It looked real nice, push-button type, and had a nice ringing sound when he installed it; but it did not work. I tried several times to phone out that evening, but everything was dead. But the following day it came alive again, and I was even able to test it on a long distance call to Fr. Leonard in North Dakota. For those of you who might want to call me, you can do so by direct dialing: 809 329-4249. But for the next 2 months I will be on Mangrove Cay where the phone is only from Sunday night until Tuesday afternoon.

We have recently organized a parish council for the churches on South Andros, and one for the churches on Mangrove Cay; so it has been a busy time lately getting these organized and functioning with monthly meetings. It is a whole new concept for the people here, so it is going to take some getting-used-to. But I foresee many blessings coming from this greater involvement of the people in the affairs of the Church.

I have not had a lot of time for my usual projects, but I did install a new muffler and exhaust system on the diesel bus as well as new tires mounted on it for the annual safety inspection. Also I wired the house of one of the parishioners on Mangrove Cay who recently got himself a used diesel generator. That meant putting in ceiling lights and wall switches and outlets in all of the seven or eight rooms. At the first testing not all of the fixtures worked, but eventually I got all of them to work as they were supposed to.

Had some more rather late flights to Nassau again; don't really know why, but as the saying goes: "If you have time to spare, fly Bahamasair." One Sunday afternoon when I was waiting for the ferry to go to South Andros for the evening Masses I met a Canadian couple who had quite an odyssey getting to the Bahamas. They had left Ontario about 3 days earlier in their own plane, intending to fly to South Andros where they had reservations at the Las Palmas resort. They were grounded with bad weather somewhere in New York state; so they left their plane there and went commercial to Newark, N.J.; then with a couple more delays they got to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. In Fort Lauderdale they were advised to take a local plane to San Andros on North Andros, which would be relatively close to their destination. Only after arriving at San Andros did they discover that there is no connecting flight to South Andros; so they spent another expensive night in a hotel, then hired a boat for \$100.00 for a very wet passage from North Andros to Mangrove Cay, then another taxi drive the length of Mangrove Cay to the ferry for a free ride to South Andros. There I added to their happy ending by taking them to their destination at Las Palmas resort, which is on the way to my first church. Interestingly Jerry and Eleanor Knudson were also ALMOST routed to North Andros when they came out until I called them and got them to correct their flight. I can see how a typical travel agent in the States thinks that all of Andros is one big island with easy travel from one end to the other. It is not; it is divided by several wide bodies of water into many segments of land masses; and travel between some of those segments is very rare and expensive.

Dear Father Abbot,

April 16, 1984

Thanks very much for your letter of early March; I am embarrassed that so much time has flown by without my responding to your kindness: but if you read my above words you will see that I have not been idle. Her: it is already Holy Week; I had 4 big Palm Sunday processions yesterday and look forward to a busy week in the days ahead, including 12 Baptisms Holy Saturday evening. Later this morning I will have another meeting with the parents and guardians of these candidates, preparing them to appreciate what happens to the youngsters in this sacrament. One candidate is an adult, so I will administer Confirmation to her along with her first Eucharist,

Adrian Thomas 4-16-84

OSB ECKROTH_00163

St. Benedict's Church

Mangrove Cay, Andros, Bahamas

August 29, 1984

Dear Father Abbot,

This is rather late to be thanking you for the delightful time I enjoyed at the abbey through late June and into July, but I am sincerely grateful for the warm, family like reception I enjoyed with you and all the confreres there at the abbey. Many thanks to Fr. Fabian for the very fine quarters he found for me, and to Father Prior and Fr. Gordon for the car I was able to use. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of this vacation with all of you. I wish I could in turn offer a similar hospitality to you again and any other confreres who would like to visit Mangrove Cay or South Andros.

These have been busy weeks since my return to the islands, for there is always very much physical work to do, especially in the absence of the three Sisters of Mercy when I can work quite freely in their convents. Their one convent is now 16 years old and in this time the plumbing in their bathrooms had badly deteriorated, and I needed to replace most of it. The water here is very corrosive on metal pipes, so I went to plastic pipes and fittings wherever I could. The Sisters returned to the island yesterday, so that phase of work is now finished for another year. Also with the hot, muggy weather of July and August here one needs a good incentive to do a good bit of work.

Last week I spent in Nassau, on retreat with the Bishop and most of the priests working in the diocese. It was a good retreat, lead by a black priest from the Chicago Archdiocese, Fr. Edward Baxter by name. I had no opportunity to make a retreat earlier in the summer, for I was in travel at the time of the St. Augustine's retreat and had not yet left the Bahamas at the time of the St. John's retreat. The retreat was conducted at the Hermitage, residence of the Bishop, so I did not spend much time at St. Augustine's as I usually do. This coming week Fr. Silvan and I are going to switch; he will be on Mangrove Cay and I will go to Nassau to dismantle some more of the old Priory building and use the salvaged lumber to put a couple roofs on sheds in the Bishop's yard.

Abbot Gregory Roettger wrote recently that he will not be able to visit here and fish this coming January, that he will be in Rome as the Procurator for our Federation. I was happy at the choice of him for that role, and he sounded eager to give it a good try. He has a lot of the natural traits needed for that role. I hope you enjoy a good meeting of the abbots in Rome. Would you please give the enclosed notice to . . . I really am not interested in the school publications anymore, for I have lost contact with all those academic affairs in the busy interesting life I face here in the islands. Might as well save some postage.

Faternally

Fr. Richard, OSB
Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

OSB ECKROTH_00164

INFORMATION FOR PERSONNEL FILE

NAME Fr. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B. Present Date Sept 27, 1984

PRESENT work assignment (s)

Bahama Islands, parochial work on Mangrove Cay and South Andros

PAST work assignment (s) (General Data)

pastoral work at St. Augustine's Church in St. Cloud
pastoral work at Seven Dolers Church, Albany
chaplain at St. Ben's Convent, college and high school
taught at St. Ben's High School
philosophy teacher at St. John's University
prefect at St. John's University
Master of Brothers at St. John's Abbey
wine maker
business office at St. John's.

FUTURE work interest (s)

nothing special

return by 11-1-84

OSB ECKROTH_00165

St. Benedict's Church

Mangrove Cay, Andros, Bahamas

October 10, 1984

Dear Father Abbot,

Thanks very much for the recent sending of news and latest doings at St. John's. I am returning the two forms you asked to be filled and returned by November 1st. Too bad that you could not have been at St. John's for the passing of Bishop Leonard, but I guess you were busy enough in Rome at that time. I am glad that Bishop Burke and Monsignor Moss as well as Fr. Brendan were able to attend the funeral at the abbey before they brought the body back to Nassau for a most impressive funeral which even the Governor-General of the Bahamas made it a point to attend. It was very beautiful! And also very fitting for one like Bishop Leonard.

Out here things are going along in their usual busy, happy fashion. Brother Barry is especially happy that the plane has now arrived for Bishop Burke, and he expects to be called upon to fly it often for the Bishop or for others who need transportation on a short notice. The day after the funeral of Bishop Leonard it got a good workout when Brother Barry flew Fr. George and Fr. Elias to their assignment on Eleuthera Island, and then Fr. Pat Healey of Long Island used it to fly Fr. Herman to San Salvador, Fr. Paul Hayes to Exuma, and himself and his confreres to Long Island for their Sunday work. Without it they could have reached their assignments on time.

Faternally,

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

21 November 1984

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Church of Saint Benedict
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

I spoke prior Theophane recently that I would be in the Bahamas from January 21 to January 28, 1985. I hope to be present for Father Herman Wind's fortieth anniversary celebration, that is, the anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. I have never been to San Salvador and it will be exciting to visit that island. I still have very happy memories of my visit to Andros last winter.

If you were home you could be helping the workers tear down the dividing walls between the rooms on the second floor of the quadrangle! They are in the process of renovating the area north of the curved arcation in Saint Raphael Hall. We hope to have about eight more rooms available for the sick and the elderly in the next few months. The project should be finished in a matter of months.

Father Gregory Roettger is returning as a visitant to the community in January when I was in Rome for the Congress of Abbots. He was mayor to the community as procurator. I heard recently, however, that he was having some health problems and needs to return to the States for a prostate operation. I am sure he will return after the operation.

Last winter I began or rather continued my series of conferences on The Rule of Benedict. I explained the first three verses of the Rule and then the community took up the topic and discussed the Prologue for about twenty-five minutes. It was an excellent discussion; the community provided its own commentary on the Rule. I enjoy this communal study and discussion of the Rule.

I will see you in January.

Blessings and peace in the Lord!

Fraternally,

My dearest ones, *Father A. J. ...*

Christmas, 1984 *Nov 29, 1984*

It is time to write my Christmas greeting to all of you. It is hard to realize that this is already the 6th Christmas letter I am writing from Mangrove Cay and South Andros. How quickly these years have flown by! Christmas is such a home-centered, family celebration since we celebrate the coming of Christ into our world, that I would love to be with all of you to whom I am sending this greeting. Such is impossible. But I will be thinking of you praying God to bless all of you with great happiness and peace and everything good. And I trust that wherever you are, you will have a very happy and blessed Christmas celebration, followed by an abundance of blessings through the New Year. Just last week when I was with the Bishop in Nassau he told me that he was expecting some visiting priests at Christmas and was willing to twist the arms of one of them to perhaps come out to help me with the Christmas Masses on my two islands. This is wonderful; for with another priest here the people on both islands can plan to have a midnight Mass and the morning Masses at the other churches on Christmas Day. The Sisters will be on Mangrove Cay for Christmas, so I think I will set it up that the visiting priest will offer the Masses on Mangrove Cay, and I will offer the 3 Masses on South Andros. Then I will arrange for a boat or a plane to cross over to Mangrove Cay as soon as my Masses are finished so that I can get in on a most delicious dinner, which the Sisters always prepare, and which I do not have the skill to prepare. Also it will give me a chance to meet the visiting priest, for I think he will be out here only a couple days. So I am looking forward to a very nice Christmas.

I am having an easier time on Sundays now. I am no longer trying to offer Mass on both islands each Sunday as I had done the first 5 years out here. It got too hectic trying to get to the other island each Sunday evening, and I often got late if I got there at all; that the Bishop okayed my plan to offer Sunday Masses on only one island each Sunday, and then mid-week cross to the other island and offer the Masses there the next Sunday. Now I offer only 2 or 3 Masses each Sunday instead of the former 4 Masses and do not have that worry about getting to the other island for the evening. I find this so relaxing and easy that I feel almost guilty that I feel so good. The people do not mind, for in each church there is someone delegated to "hold Church", singing plenty of songs, reading the assigned Scriptures for the day, sometimes preaching, and then giving Communion to those who wish to receive. It is going well. It is more like the people had years ago when a priest came only once a month or so.

Some work to do these weeks. Helped one of the men cement the sides of the cess pit at the Sisters convent on South Andros. Late in the summer we had put a new cement top on it, but didn't have time then to cement up the sides. Looks real neat and solid now. Lots of grass to cut too on both islands, due to all the rains we had in the late summer and are still having. Again one lawnmower is almost ready to give up the ghost. I have used it so much on this rough terrain that it is cracked and ready to break in two. Oh well, any extra miles I can get out of it, the better....Picked only 10 grapefruit from my tree and no tangerines, for the kids beat me to them. Unfortunately the school bus stops right in front of my church yard and it is too tempting to the kids waiting for the bus, not to forget the kids who come early for their Sunday school class too. Got lots of avocados though.

Then I got another job in Nassau...The 3-meter diving board at the swimming pool at St. Augustine's College was ready to collapse, for the 12-inch steel supporting pipe was rusted through at the base. Fr. George there had asked me what I would suggest to fix it. I suggested that they fly me in with the Bishop's little plane and that I could build a nice strong form to build a tapered column of cement under the diving plate of the structure. So he did; had Bro. Barry fly out to get me. I went right to work and had the base dug out and the foundation poured with re-inforcing steel by the end of the day. But then as I began to build the forms for the column we learned that there was no cement to be had on the island. So I finished building the forms with strong bracing, oiled the forms with the help of Fr. Benjamin; and then did my monthly shopping before I could return to Mangrove Cay on the Saturday plane. I waited 4 hours for the plane and finally made it to Mangrove Cay in a small 9-seater chartered by Bahamasair. I had to return to Nassau in two more days for the monthly meeting with the Bishop and other priests. This time I waited 5 hours at the Mangrove Cay airport for the plane; so could do none of my planned work for that day. Tuesday morning immediately after breakfast we started mixing and pouring cement for the column, for cement had arrived in Nassau. The forms stood up well, to the surprise of some of the skeptics. The local people tend to build very weak forms and could not imagine me building a form strong enough to hold in about 2 cubic yards of wet concrete. The cement work lasted into the afternoon; then I hurriedly crated up the piece of plate glass I got from the old Priory building and which I want to use to make a solar panel for heating water in my house on Mangrove Cay. All Tuesday evening was spent with the Bishop and other priest Senators in our first meeting of the newly constituted Priest Senate of the Nassau diocese. This will be my last year on the Senate, for my second term of 3 years expires at the end of this year, and I am ineligible for re-election. Seems I have been on the Senate most of my 8 years in the Bahamas. All day Wednesday was spent at the monthly meeting with the other priests. I had gone down to the boat dock at 6:30 in the morning to send off my big piece of glass and other boxes, but found no boat to take it. When I asked where the Big Year Express was, the fellows on the dock said they were on dry dock and would not be going out to Mangrove Cay this week. Another wait....

Thanksgiving morning Bro. Barry again flew me back to Mangrove Cay so the two of us could join the Sisters in a very happy and festive Thanksgiving dinner. We were met by lots of special police and defense force personnel with automatic rifles which they were firing to frighten the people as they searched for drugs. No one was hit as far as I know, but I don't know if they found any drugs either. But they did search the correct houses.

Thanks for your kind letter which arrived today; and I am looking forward to your Bahamian visit in January. In the meanwhile a nice Holiday Christmas, A.S.B.

OSB ECKROTH_00168

May 19, 1985

Dear Father Albert,

Just a note to thank you for the special sign of your concern in going out to Mandan for Dad's funeral a month ago. And there wasn't even a Bro. Barry to fly you there in a quick flight. He brought Fr. Herman & Bro. Francis to Mangrove Bay recently to have a celebration for the people here.
Fraternally, Richard, OSB

my dearest ones, mid-May, 1965
The biggest event of this month was the passing of Dad to his eternal glory at the age of 96 on Friday after Easter. I had phoned Fr. Leonard Easter night and they told me that Dad was weakening, but knowing he had been weakening for months already I did not consider his condition critical. But that Friday night he quietly slipped away in his room at 11:00 in the morning. Ironically, Mom and Sister Mary arrived just about an hour after he passed, after driving those hundreds of miles from Minnesota to spend the week-end with him. Saturday morning they tried to catch me, but since I was not on Mangrove Cay where my phone is, they phoned the monastery in Nassau to inform me. In the usual way of communications in the Bahamas, the message never caught up with me. They really should have put it on the radio; and if I did not hear it myself, one of my neighbors would certainly have gotten the message and relayed it to me. The telegram they sent me has not yet reached me! So I spent that Saturday painting with rustoleum some of the 122 sheets of metal roofing that arrived for the St. Gertrude's Church at Kemp's Bay. Sunday I offered the usual 3 Masses at the 3 South Andros churches, asking the people to pray for Dad. Sunday afternoon I took the ferry to Mangrove Cay, for I had a big shipment of conch to take to the Benedictine Sisters in Nassau and the Monastery. Monday noon I took the plane to Nassau for the usual monthly meeting with the bishop, still not knowing of Dad's death. Naturally I did not take along any funeral clothes like a suit; in fact I wore rather light-weight clothes, for the weather was beginning to turn hot. In Nassau Bro. Francis met me at the airport, and noticing my light wear, asked if I had not received the telegram. I said, "No, what telegram?" He then told me Dad had died and they had sent me a telegram to let me know. Well, that was a startling announcement, and in the usual American way they would have been burying Dad by this day or Tuesday. So I hurried to a travel agency and told my need to get to Nassau as quickly as possible. The agent was able to book me for Tuesday morning, leaving Nassau on the first plane which is 7:30, changing in Miami to a Continental flight to Denver, Colorado, then a Frontier flight to Nassau. I flew into 2 new time zones and back into one and arrived in Nassau at 3:00, to be met at the airport by my brother. The temperature was anything but like Nassau at 42°, and the word that they had snow flurries that same morning did not warm things. I quickly had to get into some warmer clothing before going to the first wake service that evening. Happily they had timed the funeral for Thursday, April 18th, and all of us 11 kids were able to gather except Mom who is in a nursing home in Miami following his most crippling stroke last year. The funeral was a truly memorable event at 1:00 from old St. Joseph's Church where Dad had lived his life after coming from Russia back in 1891. Retired Bishop Hackert attended; and Abbot Jerome from St. John's Abbey along with Fr. Gordon Tavis and Fr. Luke Steiner and Bro. James drove from St. John's that morning and returned there very tired that same night. About 20 other priests con-celebrated the funeral Mass with Fr. Leonard and myself. Fr. Leonard took the role of main celebrant and asked me to give the sermon. Believe me, it was not easy; but I was able to manage through it and closed with the observation that Dad was being buried, April 18th, the very date on which his and Mom's first child was born into this world, and their 11th and last child was born into this world; for Mom and I share April 18th as their birthday. After the interment alongside Mom in the Mandan cemetery, the hundreds of people who had filled the church joined us for the lunch at the Knights of Columbus dining room, which was rather fitting, for Dad so much enjoyed meeting at the K.C. Hall. I think that Dad was perhaps the oldest member of the K.C.'s in North Dakota at the time of his death, for he joined the K.C.'s 75 years ago in 1910 when the closest lodge was Fargo. I was so happily surprised when a car of friends from Albany, Minnesota, drove to Mandan for the funeral.
The day after the funeral Mom and I joined me in driving to Miami to visit with Dad. We knew he was not in good shape, but I was relieved to find he was as good as he was and was receiving such wonderful care. He cannot speak or even help himself in any way, but we found him sitting in a wheelchair. I cannot say he really recognized us, but he certainly recognized his wife and I and parked up whenever we addressed him as Mom. Anyway, it was gratifying to see him so clean and comfortable and receiving such good care. He was 72 on the funeral day of Dad. Saturday I offered a Mass in the apartment of my cousin and Baptismal Godfather. He and his wife have always been special to me; and it is a pleasure to offer Mass with them now. I almost did not reach his apartment, for about a block from it, the engine of Fr. Leonard's van which I was driving conked out and refused to restart. I parked it along the curb and was startled to see smoke coming from the engine area. I quickly opened the hood and found the main electrical cable burning. So I found a pliers in the car and quickly disconnected the ground wire from the battery, and the fire went out promptly. But a little the electrical system was shorted. Strangely, Fr. Leonard had the same experience with his good car only a few weeks earlier, on the Interstate highway. Coincidentally both of these vehicles had only recently been worked on by some of his "boys" at the State Reformatory where he is chaplain. I'm wondering if maybe some of his boys were not practicing "hot-wiring" cars when the teacher was not looking and caused this side effect hours later. That same Saturday evening I boarded a bus in Miami to St. John's in Minnesota for a few days before going back to the Bahamas. It was a sleepy 4:00 a.m. when the bus reached St. John's, but I rested through the morning and then went visiting. When it came time to get a ticket to return to the Bahamas I discovered I could save \$100. by staying an extra day at St. John's, still taking the same flight. The travel agent said it is cheaper if you give the airline 3 or more days of notice. Tornados were in the area of St. John's that night, but I did not recognize the tornado warning as it sounded; so I spent the whole period right up under the roof, on the 5th floor of the monastery. I noticed it was a bit windy.

June, 1985

The time before Dad's death and since my return from the funeral has been rather busy. Holy Week opened with 2 Palm Sunday Services on South Andros, both with big processions; and the young people had decorated the inside of the church at Little Creek with hundreds of palm branches of which there is a limitless supply. Monday of Holy Week was spent spreading 3 gallons of paint inside St. Robert's Church at High Rock with the help of one of the parishioners and a good snack from the Sisters at mid-day. Used a light cream color and got by with only 1 coat. The next day 122 pieces of corrugated steel roofing arrived on the mail boat for the new roof on St. Gertrude's Church at Camp's Bay; so I had to pile these away inside the church until I would find time to paint them with rustolcum before taking off the old rusted roofing and putting on this new roofing. Wednesday of Holy Week was spent with one of the parishioners who was sure he could tear down my big 2-cylinder diesel generator to install the set of gasgets I had brought from Nassau the previous week. It took the whole day for the dirty, greasy job, but the climax to our efforts came when after a lot of cranking and priming to restore the fuel lines that had been totally drained, we got it to start and then ran it for a while to make sure it was going to function, and also to see if we had really licked theleaks. And glory be! there was hardly a drop being spit out from the machine. One used to get oil-spattered by just standing near the machine, it leaked so badly. Holy Thursday was a full day, for in the morning I was invited to the high school for the Easter program for the junior and senior high students and faculty. This was historic, for never in their history had they invited a Catholic priest to give the main words for this annual convocation. I pleased the students a lot by speaking very briefly, but leaving them with a good, easy to remember thought; for they were eager to get on with their Easter break. The principal said he wants to get me back another time to finish speaking, for they had expected a long, drawn-out, repetitious, Baptist-like preaching; and none of them even had a chance to doze off. Holy Thursday afternoon I ate the Jewish Seder meal with the Sisters, which is really the setting of the Last Supper of our Lord, which we would commemorate that night in the evening Mass at Little Creek. Friday morning I took the boat to Mangrove Cay to have the noon Good Friday Service with the people on that island. This lasted nearly 3 hours and the church was filled as usual. Holy Saturday I returned by boat to South Andros for the evening Vigil service scheduled for Little Creek, including the Baptism and Confirmation of a young man whom I had been instructing for several years. Then Easter morning I offered a 9:00 Mass at High Rock, then I hurried to the airport where good Mr. Hemmstreet was waiting to fly me to Mangrove Cay for the big Easter Mass to be celebrated there about 11:00. And there was really a crowd of people, including more white people than I had ever seen in that church. The Hemmstreets invited me to dinner with them, which was very nice. Easter Monday is a national holiday in the Bahamas, and the parishioners on Mangrove Cay had decided to have a big cook-out on that day to raise money for the starving in Africa. So by 6:00 a.m. I had to be on the road to pick up the women with their big pots and pans to begin their cooking of the chicken & ham, peas & rice, and conch fritters on open fires in the front yard of the church where the cook-out was held. The weather was just grand and the spirit of the crowd was very festive; so by the time the last piece of chicken was sold and drinks drunk and kid's prizes won at the hoopla table they had cleared just over \$600.00. ~~Later another 100 dollars would be added to this figure;~~ so I was able to take to the bishop \$700.00 for the starving of Africa from these poor brother and sisters.

The week-end I returned from Dad's funeral I had Sunday Masses on South Andros, then took the boat to Mangrove Cay Sunday evening, for I had arranged with Fr. Gerry on North Andros to fly up there Monday morning with Mr. Hemmstreet who was leaving that morning to fly back to the States for the summer; and he could conveniently drop me off at Fresh Creek on North Andros. Actually he was grounded a while on North Andros anyway, as well as other planes Nassau-bound, for the weather was bad in Nassau and they were not landing any planes for an hour or more. So after seeing Mr. Hemmstreet off I set to work on the big project of renewing the roof of the old church at Behring Point at the south end of North Andros. This is a historic church, for it was the very first Catholic church built in the Andros islands and became the mother church for the 6 other churches on North Andros, the 3 churches on Mangrove Cay and the 3 churches on South Andros. The church building is about 40 feet long and about 18 feet wide with a very steep roof, dangerously steep roof! Old Fr. Gabriel who had designed and built it in the early 20's was thinking of the churches he knew as a child in Germany where the roofs have to be steep enough to shed the snow. Perhaps nobody told him that Andros has never, never experienced a flake of snow, and the roof need not have been so steep. Termites had infested it badly and even had a big cone of a nest at the top of the roof, so there were plenty of rotten boards to replace. Also we first had to remove 3 massive steel cables that straddled the roof. Apparently Fr. Gabriel had put them on after the devastating hurricane of 1929 which had torn off his original roof, in an effort to keep any future roof from flying away in a hurricane. It was a good cable and had still not rusted through as most iron does in this climate. It was rough, hot work, with no appreciable help from the first 3 days; so things went slowly. Finally Fr. Gerry got a Haitian and another young local man to help, and things went smoothly; but we could not finish the job by Saturday noon when I had to call a halt to have Bro. Barry come and fly me back to Mangrove Cay for the Sunday work. It was not fun being up so high when the lightning began to flash; so we prudently went below and sat out the several storms that interrupted our work.

All is well here. Hot and humid, but quite normal for this time of the year, as you can well remember. I hope to come up in late July for a visit.

Fraternally Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00174

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Thank You
FOR YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS

OSB ECKROTH_00175

SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY

COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321

August 13, 1985

Dear Father Abbot.

Sorry I did not get to visit with you after my return from Mandan. I did have a very nice visit there with many of the relatives who gathered for the golden jubilee celebration of a cousin there. Also Father Terence came down from Garrison to join our family for the happy family gathering.

I hope you have in mind to have me continue working in the Bahamas. I had a thorough physical examination from Dr. Wittrock and he found everything in good condition.

What I had hoped to ask you about in a visit was the possibility of permission to use some money towards the purchase of a bus for the work of the church on South Andros. The present bus is getting to be rather unreliable and Bishop Burke has given his permission for me to arrange for a new bus. Financially the island does not adequately support the work of the church there, and the Bishop subsidizes the church work there to the amount of \$3,600. each year. We have about \$3,000. in church savings and the Bishop will contribute a couple thousand. Which leaves about \$5,000 yet to be raised. I believe that some years ago when Fr. Herman needed new transportation on Mangrove Cay he was helped with a considerable financial donation from St. John's. That is what is prompting me to ask the abbey through you for a similar donation towards the purchase of this bus. I spoke with Fr. Gordon about it; he seemed very understanding and favorable towards the request, but indicated it would have to come with your or the Senior Council's approval. If your decision is favorable it would involve no direct out-lay of funds from St. John's, but with your approval I would take it from the savings account that is in my own name at FINCO, a Nassau savings institute. This account was begun and built up to about \$8,000. from my arrival in the Bahamas when I used to draw a salary and was not directed to turn over my salary to St. Augustine's Monastery. Presently my parish salary is turned in to St. Augustine's each month. The Prior of St. Augustine's is the co-signee for this savings account.

So I am hoping for an answer to this request when you have occasion to write again.

Filially in Christ,

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00172

11 September 1985

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Church of Saint Benedict
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Sorry we did not get an opportunity to talk about your work on Andros Island before you left Minnesota. But I have your letter of 13 August 1985 and your request for funds for the purchase of a vehicle. Like Father Gordon, I too am very interested in your having a reliable mode of transportation on Mangrove Cay. To begin the discussion I wonder whether you have considered the Missionary Vehicle Association, Incorporated. This association, as you probably know, assists missionaries in the purchase of vehicles. Perhaps you have received funds from them in the past. Their address is 1326 Perry Street, Northeast, Washington, D. C. 20017. The association is directed by The Reverend Philip Deke. Perhaps you have considered this possibility and have not thought it appropriate. I surely will want you to receive a donation from Saint John's Abbey, either through your account in Nassau or from our missionary funds. I will leave it up to Father Gordon to decide which is more appropriate. But in the meantime, I wondered whether there would be any point in approaching the Missionary Vehicle Association.

I had a good visit with Father Herman Wind who is in Minnesota for a vacation. It amazes me to realize his record of service in the Bahamas. Practically his whole life has been devoted to service on the out islands of the Bahamas. He has done much work, including physical work in the maintenance of these missions. But now he finds it difficult to do the kind of physical work that he did in earlier years.

I will await your reply before moving ahead with any further consideration of funds for a vehicle.

Blessings and peace in the Lord!

Faternally,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

OSB ECKROTH_00171

Sacred Heart Church

Little Creek, Andros, Bahamas
September 23, 1985

Dear Abbot Jerome,

It was so good to receive your latest letter in the most recent mail pouch. You were responding to my request for financial help in funding the purchase of a new bus for my work on South Andros. I had no knowledge of the Missionary Vehicle Association in Washington, D.C. that you suggest I first contact. So I have phoned Bishop Burke today and asked him whether I could write to them for such help. He indicated that he knows of the organization, but has never yet approached them for any help. So he also encouraged me to write to them and send the request to him that he would accompany it with his own letter of commendation. I have done so this evening and will enclose a carbon copy of what I wrote to them to yourself. Bishop Burke has had no previous dealing with this organization; so he can only hope with me that they will view my request with favor. I will let you know when I get a response to the request to see if I need any further help. Bishop Burke has also indicated that he would help too in the financing of the bus, for he knows how needed it is and how irreparable the old ones are. I was kinda lucky, for in my absence to Minnesota he had sent one of his Jesuit confreres to replace me one Sunday on South Andros. This Fr. Paul Hayes, S.J. who lives at the Hermitage with the Bishop came back to Nassau with all kinds of tales of woe for the conditions on South Andros and that people like myself needed all the support they can get from the Church in Nassau. So I know that Bishop Burke has had the message drummed into his ear repeatedly and knows there is a real need. It is too bad that the Church and its people out here are so poor, but it is simply a fact of life and you cannot change it over-night. Actually my own time on South Andros and Mangrove Cay is approaching its end. I told Bishop Burke that I would hope for a change to a different assignment after 10 years on these two islands, both for the welfare of the people and for my own welfare. But I would hope then for another assignment on one of the islands if my health still calls for it. Actually I love the life out here very much, but I do sincerely believe that 10 years is enough at one of these isolated posts. Fr. Alto and Fr. Herman were too long on Mangrove Cay; and they will both admit it I am sure. I know Fr. Herman will admit it, for he has told me so; and he has been an excellent island priest. So if I succeed in getting a new bus it will be more for the benefit of the one who will follow me than for myself that I am seeking this favor.

Truly I did enjoy my several weeks with the confreres at the abbey this summer. Everything was so peaceful and home-like. Thanks for the wonderful family spirit that you as abbot are inspiring the home community to achieve. In the future when I can no longer serve in an active way for the Church I relish the thought of coming home to the community at St. John's to spend my declining years of earthly life and look forward to the lasting life of eternity. But Dr. Wittrock in giving me a thorough physical exam this summer assured me that I should be good for more years of work than himself. And with your and the community's approval I would hope to spend as much of it as I can working for the Church in the Bahamas. I never really thought I would come to love the work here as much as I have, for I never volunteered for the assignment here; I was simply asked by Abbot John to come here after many happy years of teaching at St. John's and working as Chaplain at St. Ben's 6 years, and parochially at St. Augustine's in St. Cloud and Seven Dolours in Albany. But I am surely glad that I did not resist the call to serve in the Bahamas even though well beyond the prime of life at 50.

Thanks, fraternally,

Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00169

September 22, 1986

Dear Father Albert

Today I would like to
VW Rabbit visit the Customs
people and the Traffic department

Thanks so very much for
releasing the car for my
use here. It was very
much needed, and it
should serve well here,
for it seems to be in
very good condition.
Thank you very much!

This note
is coming to express
warm thanks for all
your thoughtfulness

Fa. Richard Eckroth, OSB

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

29 October 1986

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Benedict's Church
Mangrove Cay
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Brother Damian reports that he enjoyed visiting with you in Mangrove Cay, Andros. He was delighted to drive the truck to Miami and prepare it for use at Saint Augustine's Monastery. Brother Damian works steadily in our garage and with our cars; it was good for him to get away from the abbey for awhile and to see where some of our confreres work.

Last evening the monastic community discussed the issue of formation. You might remember that I appointed a Task Force on Formation last summer and now the Task Force is beginning to discuss issues with the whole community. The Task Force including myself prepared papers on the way in which the whole community forms recruits. Our papers stimulated an hour's discussion on the subject. We heard some eloquent statements on the way we form people in this community, on the nature of our goals, on the depth of our spirituality, etc. In the weeks and months ahead the Task Force will pose specific recommendations to the community for discussion. We will need to know more about the location of formation as well as the structure of the formation programs. In a way our reflection on the way in which candidates are formed in our community is a self-examination for the whole community on the way it lives its monastic life.

Father John and I together with another visitor will visit Saint Augustine's Monastery in early February. We will need to assess the progress of the community and recommend various ways in which it will be governed in the future. Do we wish to continue with the structure of apostolic administration? Should the monastery become

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OSB ECKROTH_00179

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
29 October 1986
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dependent once again? These are some of the issues we need to look at.

Are you recommending that you be assigned to another island in the Bahama chain? Last year you mentioned that you did not want to extend your stay on Andros beyond ten years. Perhaps this is something we might wish to talk about in February.

I wish you the Lord's blessings in your life and ministry!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00180

St. Benedict's Church

Mangrove Cay, Andros, Bahamas

November 11, 1986

Dear Father Abbot,

It was a delight to receive your letter of October 29th upon my return to Mangrove Cay from a 3-day workshop in Nassau on Evangelization in the Bahamian culture. The meeting was well attended by the clergy and Sisters working in the diocese, even though the clergy had a 2-day workshop just two weeks previously on the theme of Church. Like yourself, Bishop Burke is very concerned about the growth and upbuilding of those working in the Bahamas. This was the first real use of the new diocesan pastoral centre located on the St. Augustine's campus. It is difficult to realize that he celebrated the 5th anniversary of his episcopal ordination in October.

I am happy that Bro. Damian enjoyed his brief stay in the Bahamas, and especially on Andros. I was more than happy to provide him with a bed for the brief hours he spent here. I wish it could have been much longer. Again I repeat the invitation to yourself and Fr. John and the other visitor to come out to Andros when you come to the Bahamas this winter. I know you have already visited San Salvador and Andros, so I suppose it really is Fr. Brendan's turn to host you on Grand Bahama, and I am sure he would love to have you; so you will just have to decide for yourself if you have any spare time with the visitation. The diesel Rabbit which Bro. Damian brought to the boat in Miami is working like a charm on South Andros; and I seem to be getting the same wonderful mileage that it scored on so highly in Minnesota. I think I have put in only about 10 or 15 gallons of diesel, and already I have traveled about 800 miles with it on South Andros. It runs so well and looks so good that people here find it difficult to believe that it is a vehicle 5 years old with more than 100,000 miles on it. I suppose a lot of the credit for this fine performance is due to the excellent care that Bro. Damian takes for this and the other cars of the abbey fleet. Again thanks a million for releasing it for my use in the Bahamas.

During the workshop last week word came from St. John's of the untimely death of Fr. Clement Burns. I was happy to be at his jubilee celebration last July 11th at the abbey. I have long held a special esteem for him; guess we are kindred spirits in many ways, and I cherished the warm friendship he tendered me. May he now receive a rich reward for his labors and a place among God's special elect.

You raised the question in your letter about my preferences for service in the Bahamas. Yes, I think that to serve 10 years in an island situation is sufficiently long, and I believe Bishop Burke agrees with me, but I still have about 3 more years to fulfill such a quota on Andros. I came out here in October 1979; so I have just completed 7 years of service on Mangrove Cay and South Andros. When my time is up, I would hope to receive another out-island assignment; and this should not be difficult for the Bishop to make, for already he has no priest to reside on Bimini, on Exuma, on Inagua, and at the end of this year he will lose the S.M.A. priest serving the 7 churches on North Andros with no replacement; there is only one priest for the 7 or 8 churches on Long Island, and one also on Abaco; and Fr. George Wolf still goes out each weekend from Nassau to care for Harbour Island and part of North Eleuthera. The priest on Cat Island is getting very elderly and may soon have to retire; so there are plenty of "job prospects" for me when my time on Mangrove Cay and South Andros is fulfilled. Also that would be the same time that Fr. Herman would be in for a change from San Salvador. But with the quincentennial of Columbus' landing coming in 1992, I would hope that he can remain on San Salvador through that event. Presently for myself, I would much prefer to remain here on Mangrove Cay and South Andros for a couple more years.

Not to mention the termite holes in this stationary; last night I had to burn 5 fine books including Work and Worship, for the termites had eaten everything between the covers.

With fraternal regard,

J. Richard OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00177

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

3 November 1987

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Holy Name Church
Bailey Town, Bimini
Bahamas Islands

Dear Father Richard:

You might have heard by this time that Father Brendan Forsyth has developed cancer of the throat and of the lungs. The chemotherapy arrested the cancer in his throat but some has migrated to his lungs and this matter is very serious. At the present time he is undergoing a series of chemotherapy to arrest the cancer in his lungs, but the prognosis is poor. After his series of chemotherapy has been completed, he will travel to the Bahamas to go through his personal items and to take leave of his many friends. I hope that he will have the strength to make this last trip to the Bahamas. Father Michael Naughton will accompany him since Father Michael knows the Bahamas well and will probably himself want to say hello to many friends.

I will travel to the monastery in Nassau during the week of January 18; I hope to stay for a week this time.

I continue to talk to monks about working in the Bahamas for a year or two or three. I have been successful in a few cases but I still have to find others to replace those who will come back next year. Recently I asked Abbot John Eidenschink to request a three-year extension of my apostolate administratorship of the monastery.

Saint Mark's Monastery in Kentucky will probably have to close within the year. The monks of the monastery will select other monasteries in which they can continue their monastic life. Three of the monks will come to Saint John's in February or

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OSB ECKROTH_00182

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
3 November 1987
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March. I am not sure whether you ever worked at the monastery in Kentucky, but those who have feel sorry about our having to leave this project which Abbot Alcuin began in the late 1940's.

This evening the monastic Chapter will discuss the feasibility of constructing a girl's dormitory on the prep school campus. Brother Linus Ascheman, headmaster of the school, merely wants to find out whether the monastic community is generally favorable to this proposal. He does not have a schedule in mind or even a consideration of finances at this time. He would like to serve the few dozen girls who apply to the school and would like to live on campus. The prep school is down in enrollment and this would be one way to increase its student body.

I wish you well in your ministry!

Blessings and peace in the Lord!

Faternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

HOLY NAME CATHOLIC CHURCH

P.O. BOX 622, BIMINI - BAHAMAS Phone (809) 347- 2239

November 12, 1987

Dear Father Abbot,

Thanks for your letter of November 3rd which arrived yesterday. It was a clear reminder to me that I had not written to you in a long time. When I was at the abbey last June I had no idea that Bishop Burke had in mind to assign me to a different pasture in the Bahamas. Fr. George Wolf had been attending Bimini on week-ends from Nassau; and he certainly did excellent pastoral work for the people. But with the plan of the bishop to allow the people to go ahead with the building of a new church on the island, the bishop thought it best to assign a resident pastor, to oversee the construction work, to be on hand for the Benedictine Sisters (3) who staff the Holy Name parochial school, and also to try to help heal some of the divisions within the parish community. And thinking I could possibly fill this job description, he assigned me to Bimini at the end of September.

Looking through the Baptismal Register here I find the names of almost all of the priests of St. John's who have served in the Bahamas in the last 50 years, for the Church came to Bimini only about 1940, and it was Fr. Alban Fruth who built the quaint chapel that served the Catholic community here since 1946. And almost as many other clergy served the Church here as Benedictines. Most of the pastorates have been rather brief ones; and this can give you an idea of the internal problem.

Thanks for the words about Fr. Brendan. I am often asked about him by the Sisters here and some of the lay people who knew him from Grand Bahama. There is more association between Bimini and Grand Bahama than between Bimini and Nassau. Grand Bahama and Bimini are the closest to the States, and thus their orientation is much more to the west than to Nassau in the east. It is sad to learn the prognosis of Father's condition, but I am glad that you hope he will be strong enough to make another visit to the Bahamas after the chemotherapy treatment. And I agree that Fr. Michael Naughton is an excellent choice as his traveling companion.

Thanks also for the good word that you intend to come to the Bahamas about the middle of January. I will certainly make it a point to get to Nassau during your visit. You would be welcome to visit on Bimini either coming or going from Miami, but the Chalk's flight are noisy, slow and rather expensive. Also it necessitates a change of airports in Miami. I'm glad you are planning to stay a week this year, for it should give you a chance to relax and also possibly visit some of the islands.

The work on the new church here is proceeding very slowly. Work began October 5th to remove the old church, and all we have to show for 6 weeks of work is a big hole in the ground and pile of 500 bags of cement under canvas. With a little bit of luck we might get reinforcing steel next week out of Florida and then something can begin to happen. But I do not intend to lose any of my precious few remaining hair by fretting over it.

Yours in St. Benedict,

Fr. Richard J. OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00181

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

18 October 1988

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Holy Name Church
Bailey Town, Bimini
Bahama Islands

Dear Father Richard:

I wonder whether this is the time when you complete your church in Bimini. I seem to recall that you wanted to complete the work by the middle of October. You are scheduled, of course, to remain the rest of the year, or so I understand.

I enjoyed the Congress in Abbots that I attended in September. It brought back memories of my student days at Sant' Anselmo. I was particularly depressed by the site of the garden back of the college; apparently the officials of the college do not have enough money to keep the gardens up as they used to be maintained in the past. Also, one cannot any longer use the steps and the door to the Via Marmarta. It was always very handy in our day to descend the hundred steps or more and catch the streetcar. You studied philosophy at Sant' Anselmo. You should know that they no longer offer the doctoral or licentiate program, though the rector was seeking ways to reinstate these programs. Not many students are studying philosophy these days, not even Benedictine students from around the world.

Our entrance plaza is nearly complete though the electricians are still hooking up some lights. Also, the architect keeps changing minor details. The sunken area around the two silver maples were filled with gravel, but now the plan is to place sod in this area. It probably will add to the warmth of this plaza between the Great Hall and the church.

I have not as yet set up my schedule for a trip to Saint Augustine's Monastery in January. I need to avoid the Pastoral Workshop here at Saint John's

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OSB ECKROTH_00185

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
18 October 1988
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and the beginning of the second semester. Next semester I will teach a course on The Rule of Benedict for graduate students. I hope to talk with you at that time about your work at Saint Augustine's Monastery. At that time, too, Father Daniel Durken should be at Saint Augustine's and I am sure he will add much to the life of the monastery.

I hope you are still enjoying your life on the family islands. Thank you for your good service in this regard!

I wish you blessings and peace in the Lord!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00186

HOLY NAME CATHOLIC CHURCH

P.O. BOX 622, BIMINI :- BAHAMAS Phone (809) 347- 2239

November 3, 1988

Dear Father Abbot,

How nice of you to write me a letter ~~without~~ my prompting it by requests or questions! I believe this is part of your policy of fulfilling the role of abbot for the community, and I commend you for such a good policy. It was good to read your comments from the recent abbot's meeting in Rome. It must have been a special meeting with this year commemorating the 100th anniversary of the present Sant' Anselmo. Yes, I too retain fond memories of my three years spend in philosophical studies there just after the novitiate, 1946-49. I was sorry to learn from your letter that they no longer offer the philosophical program towards the licentiate and doctoral degree. I did not know it had been dropped, but I can understand why in the light of the world-wide lack of interest in philosophical studies. However I do not consider such a world-wide lack of interest to be a commendable thing. Maybe I am showing my age when I look back and recall how thoroughly I enjoyed teaching the philosophy courses I had at St. John's and how valuable I considered the St. John's philosophy requirements in the 50's, 60's and early 70's. But we are living in a different time now, and perhaps in the future there will again be a return to the solid foundation which a good philosophical program can offer.

It also surprised me to read in your letter that the spacious garden area at the Colegio are no longer kept up and that even the old iron door opening to the Via Marmoratta is no longer in use. Students in my time found it most handy, as especially people like Fr. Virgil can assure you. I do not know how he managed it, but he had one of the precious keys to that door.

Yes, I am looking forward to your visit to St. Augustine's this winter, for just what my role is intended to be at St. Augustine's is not clear to me. Just two weeks ago when I was in Nassau the bishop called me to his office to inquire whether it was really true that I would no longer be available for a pastoral assignment after June, 1989. I again explained to him what I understand is the intention of you and Father Prior, that you consider it important to have a more prominent image in the monastery to hopefully attract the interest of vocations to the community. He says he appreciates this purpose, but still wonders if it is the right move. He again referred to the change a few years ago of Fr. Stephen Beauclair from his pastoral work at St. Francis Xavier's where he was doing most commendable service to his appointment to St. Augustine's in the formation program which seemed to dis-hearten him from continued work in the Bahamas. Anyway he would like to speak with the Prior again about the merit of such a change in my own regard.

My own opinion is th t I am willing to serve in any way that I am needed and which my superiors consider most opportune. I thoroughly enjoy the pastoral ministry, especially in the family island ministry, but I also enjoy the community life I experience at St. Augustine's whenever I come to Nassau. Apparently the bishop is facing the problem of losing the Josephine priests who have serve on Long Island the last 15 or more years, and now also my presence on Bimini. Actually I am not sad to leave Bimini; I find it a very fractured parish community and I just do not know who has the ability to heal the rifts.

With fraternal regards,

F. Rindone, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00184

February, 1989

It is already after Ash Wednesday and into the solemn season of Lent. That means that Easter is not far in the future. It was our turn to host the Anglican and Catholic communities for the Ash Wednesday Service this year and I prepared a program like I first experienced in Nassau and thought was very effective there. We had to bring in many extra chairs to seat the over-flow crowd. Possibly a few came out of curiosity to see our new church, but most came sincerely concerned about making it a spiritual experience. Only minutes before it began I learned that there would not be an Anglican priest to deliver the sermon as was expected, so I decided I would NOT try to speak a half hour "off the cuff". When it came time for the sermon I explained to the people there was no Anglican priest to preach, and I begged off trying to preach at such length as they expected. I did say a few words about the character of what our Lent should be, and they must have liked what they heard, for you could hear a pin drop during my 6 minutes, and at the end when acollection was taken up, I found among others a crisp \$100.00 bill in the basket! Maybe if I would preach shorter in the future I might find more such bills in the basket.....

The great joy of the recent weeks was the coming of so many happy visitors. From
ame cousin n the same flight as

They had planned their schedule so they would all meet in Miami and then take the Aero Coach commuter plane to South Bimini. After my religion class at the public school that afternoon I went to the Government Dock to get the ferry across to South Bimini to meet them as they would step off the 5:00 flight; but I never got there. No ferry showed up until 4:30, and then the operator disappeared down the street to refresh his throat. In the meantime the taxi driver I had commissioned to meet us had called by CB and learned that the plane had landed and all the relatives were safe and sound; but they had to wait nearly an hour before the ferry boat-taxi driver on the other shore finally picked them up and brought them to me on Bimini proper. Oh well, we had a very happy meeting and then went to my house to settle in after a substantial meal. We visited a bit that evening, but not too late, for they were all pretty bushed from their long, long day of travel. had

about 2:00 that morning, and the North Dakotans about 5:00 a.m. In the next days I would give them some wild rides on my golf cart, for there was something stuck in the contact and it would not start slowly, but with a galloping jobk. Once you got going it was not bad, but I did burn off a lot of rubber those days. We all crowded on the golf cart to travel to Bimini Bay Development at the north end of the island and just enjoyed the very lovely scenery there and along the whole island. The island is only about 1,000 feet wide at its maximum and thus has no more than 2 streets. It is easy to see the whole island in a short while.

brought along a fishpole and wanted to try his luck. He did land a number of smaller fish and saw plenty of bigger ones at the south end of the island where there is a concrete breakwater from which to fish, but he got a bit excited when an 8-foot hammerhead shark nosed into the breakwater just a few feet below his feet. Later that day some of the locals succeeded in catching the shark and removing its threat from the bay. Some weeks ago one of the locals told me he had seen a similar shark about 15 feet long only about 500 feet from where saw this one. That one got away.

I did their best to buy out the local straw market and had a lot of fun in the process. They had brought along so many goodies for me like jellies, cheese, home-canned goods, smoked sausage, kettles and frying pans and everything but the kitchen sink, that they figured they would have plenty of room in their now almost empty suitcases. Of course they both have so many grandchildren that they had plenty of excuses for all their buying. We had grand weather in the 80's all the days they were here, and they all took on some rosy color. Evenings saw a lot of pinnocle played, for they are avid pinnocle fans, and they brought along several new decks of cards. For Sunday I got a call to travel to Cat Cay for Mass. The weather was nice and took all of us there on one of his big yachts, about 40 feet long. Two of the Sisters from the convent also went with us, and we had a very enjoyable trip and celebration in the St. Louis chapel there. was

especially eager to attend Mass in a St. Louis chapel, for that is her patron. Again we enjoyed a nice lunch, the compliments of the Cat Cay management. On the return trip to Bimini

decided to let us try our luck at fishing, so he put out into the deep water outside the reef and began zig-zagging back and forth. He had his deck-hand put out two lines for and me to handle. The bait on each one was about 12 inches long, so you know we were not angling for pan fish. We both got good strikes almost the same moment, but in both cases lost all our bait and caught no fish. This happened again with the same disappointing result. But the third time a strike came on only one line and the deck-hand after setting the hook handed the pole to me, for I had the best chair from which to work the fish. They all gave me plenty of advice and after a good long battle, for the fish was out at least 500 feet when he struck, I got him up to the boat where the deck-hand could use a gaff hook on him. The fish was more tuckered out than I, for up close to the boat he did not have much fight left in him. It turned out to be a wahoo, about 35 lbs or more, about 2 feet long. It was a beauty, and I know from past experience that they are delicious eating. Unfortunately we were all to go to Nassau the next morning, so we did not get an early taste of it. We all flew to Nassau on the Chalkie

OSB ECKROTH 00721

Bishop Burke to bless new Bimini church Friday

By THE REV. ALFRED CULMER

The Catholic community in Bimini will make another milestone in the local community's history on Friday of this week.

Holy Name Catholic Church, the newly-constructed building, will be blessed by the Most Rev. Lawrence A. Burke, S.J., Bishop of Nassau, on Friday, April 14, at 5 p.m.

According to John Sears, president of The Parish Council for Holy Name Catholic Church in Bimini, the festivities will begin with a parade which will leave Chalks terminal at 4 p.m., leading up to the dedication and blessing of the new church by Bishop Burke at 5 p.m.

The clergy of the diocese, together with the laity from the various islands in the Commonwealth, will make their way to Bimini for this celebration of faith and thanksgiving.

Holy Name Catholic Church in Bimini has a long and colourful history. It began with the call of one man, John Alfred Levarity, who became the first person to be converted to Catholicism on the island of Bimini.

This conversion took place during the Second World War, during a lengthy stay of Mr. Levarity in the hospital of Nassau and through the many visits from the Rev. Leonard Haggarty, an American priest serving as chaplain to the British and American Forces stationed in The Bahamas.

Hospital visits were a part of Fr. Leonard's daily duties. Mr. Levarity was touched by the actions of the chaplain who never failed to smile as he stopped at each patient's bedside. After the third visit, Mr. Levarity approached the chaplain.

"Father, could I have a little of your time?" Mr. Levarity asked. "I'd like to get to know you."

The chaplain turned and said, "I am Leonard Haggarty, a Catholic priest from Iowa. Now, who are you?"

"I am John Alfred Levarity, from the Island of Bimini."

Levarity and Haggarty!

lain said, laughing. "Do you know that both our foreparents were from Ireland and that they were all Catholics?"

"No, I didn't," replied Mr. Levarity. "But if what I see in you represents the Catholic Church, then I am going to become a Catholic, too." Upon his return to Bimini, he spread the good news and carried out the command of Fr. Leonard. The church progressed and the first Catholic Mass was celebrated by Pro-Vicar and Vicar-Delegate the Rev. Bonaventure Hansen, O.S.B., January 19, 1941.

On January 20, John Alfred and his wife Rosam and Levarity, their daughters, Barbara, Inez and Elsie, along with their husbands-to-be, Bruce Roberts, Wilmore Stuart and Lawrence Rolle, were the first to be baptized.

The mission was officially opened at Bimini January 20 with a nuptial mass for the triple wedding in the Levarity family. Fr. Bonaventure officiated as a substitute, because of illness, for the then Bishop of the Catholic Church in The Bahamas, Bishop Bernard.

In May of 1941, Fr. Bonaventure, accompanied by Fr. Leonard, returned to Bimini. During this visit the remaining 40 converts, prepared by Mr. Levarity, were baptized. At this time services were still being held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Levarity as well as at the rentex hall. The land on which the present church is built, then owned by the parents of Mr. Levarity, was purchased by Bishop Bernard. The house was used as the church until 1945. The building demolished before the construction of the new building was built in 1945 and dedicated on July 1 of that same year.

Throughout four decades, the white round-roof church was a Bimini landmark and, no doubt, the source of many memories — happy ones at weddings and baptisms, and sad ones from funerals. Two particularly proud events for the entire

aconate of "local boy" (Fr.) Simeon Roberts (Pastor of St. Thomas More Parish — New Providence) and the blessing, on that same day, July 18, 1983, of the bright and spacious Social Hall.

In recent years, as the community has grown in numbers and in activities, some inadequacies have become evident in the much beloved building. It provided little protection against strong wind and heavy rain; furthermore, it cannot accommodate the congregations that gather for funerals, weddings and other special occasions. It is not surprising that the call to build a new and more adequate spacious house of God for His people to worship was heeded.

The people of God in Bimini are grateful to Bishop Lawrence A. Burke for his support and encouragement in giving permission for the building of this new church and also to all the members of Holy Name Church for the co-operation and support in the building of this house of worship.

The last Eucharistic Assembly held in the old building was on October 1, 1967. The construction of the new church began on Monday, October 2, 1967, with the tearing down of the old historical monument. The new church was completed in December of 1983.

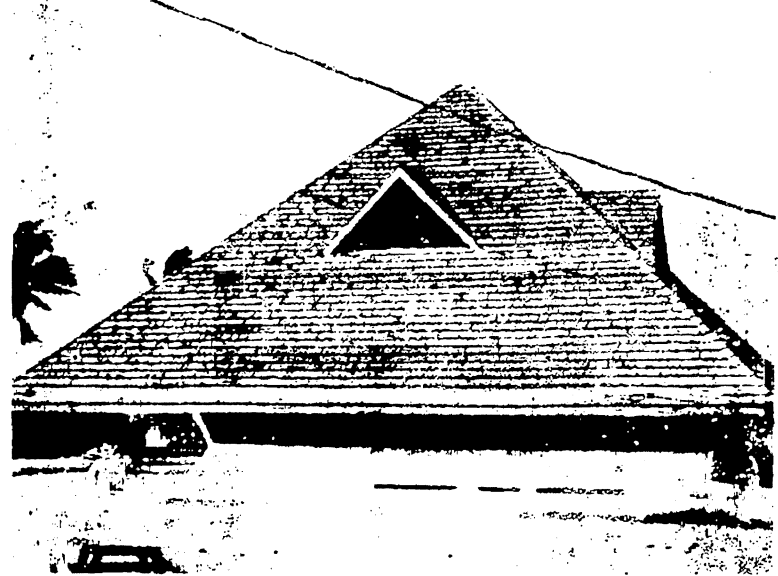
The Pastor of the Catholic community in Bimini is the Rev. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B., who was actively involved in the guidance of the construction of the new building.

The people of God in Bimini express their prayerful gratitude to all those who have served them over the years and invite the continued prayerful support as they prepare to

have the new building blessed and dedicated to the honour and glory of God.

Fr. Culmer is director of commu-

nications in the Catholic Diocese of Nassau.



Holy Name Catholic Church

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321
August 3, 1989

If you have anything to do with the
address list of the monks away from the
abbey, you can change mine from BIMINI
to: St. Augustine*s Monastery
Box N-3940
Nassau

also the telephone number there is:
809 254 1511

Thanks,

Fr. Richard

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

ADDRESSES OF CLOSEST RELATIVES

Name of Monk: Fr. Richard Eckroth

Date: August 2, 1989

1) * Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Numbers: Home _____ / _____
Work _____ / _____

2) * Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Numbers: Home _____ / _____
Work _____ / _____

3) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

4) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

* To be notified FIRST in case of death or serious illness.
(OVER, PLEASE)

5) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

6) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

7) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

8) Name: _____
Spouse: _____
How Related: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

Please list, if you wish, a close friend to be notified.

9) 1/ Name: _____
Spouse: _____
Address: _____
City and State: _____, Zip Code: _____
Telephone Number: _____ / _____

My dearest ones,

Here I am back in the Bahamas, but now located in the capital city of Nassau.. All you friends can now change my address to the following:

September, 1989

St. Augustine's Monastery, Box N-3940, Nassau, BAHAMAS

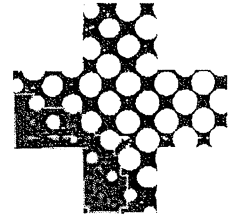
Fr. Benjamin Stein returned to the Bahamas with me on August 31st after he spent about 3 weeks at St. John's, and after I spent all summer in Minnesota getting my ailing hip replaced. My last night at St. John's was not the most restful, and I easily woke up without my alarm sounding at 3:45. After washing myself and throwing the last things into my carry-on bag, I rang for the nurse to help me get on the stretch socks that had been re-installed a few days earlier when my good leg had a flare-up. The nurse actually seemed sad to help me for the last time; she should have been glad that finally I would be out of her hair. We left St. John's at 4:30 to catch the airport limousine at 5:00 in St. Cloud. Interestingly the driver of our limousine was a former student from my very first class in 1952. At a later time I was also his parish priest in St. Cloud and had given First Communion to one of his children. We were soon ready to board our Northwest non-stop flight to Miami after having ALL our baggage screened, which they tell me is now a requirement for international baggage, and I even successfully went through the metal screening device in spite of the hunk of metal I now carry in my left hip. I thought sure it would trigger all the alarms; for years ago just my metal belt buckle triggered off such an alarm. We enjoyed a hearty tasty breakfast on the flight along with about 250 other passengers, and in a matter of about 3½ hours we touched down in Miami. We hurried to the Bahamasair counter to check for our 2:00 flight to Nassau. Little did we realize that they were ready to board the noon flight which was already delayed a full 2 hours and we could look forward to a delay of at least 2 more hours. When we tried to board this flight they informed us about the delay, but within 5 minutes they discovered that there were 2 no-shows and they graciously invited Fr. Benjamin and myself to board. Passing through Bahamian Emigration was quick enough, for the agent recognized me from Bimini, but passing through Bahamian Customs was a slow ordeal, for there were so many shoppers returning from Miami with oddles of goodies. When our turn came we did not even have to open a thing and the agent stickered our baggage for passing through. Fr. Silvan came to meet us at the airport and returned us to St. Augustine's for Mass and supper. It was cool when we left Minnesota that morning, but a humid 91° when we got off the plane in Nassau; but it was still a good feeling to get back and ready for the harness again.

Surely all of you are wondering just what I will be doing at the monastery in Nassau since I have been removed from the parish work in which I have been so happily engaged these past 13 years in the Bahamas. Really I do not know much more than you, for my work assignment is not yet very clear. Abbot Jerome at St. John's indicated he expected me to be involved in vocational work, both by my physical presence at the monastery in setting an example for prospective candidates to the religious life, and also by helping Fr. Elias in fostering vocations by talks or meeting with young people. After I become more mobile than I presently am with a cane, I expect I will be given plenty of little jobs that others are now covering. One such job I already have been given in the form of taking care of the sacristy. I also have some Mass assignments: as celebrant of our daily monastery mass this week; next Sunday to celebrate the Sunday mass here when most of the priest members will be out at other churches; then the following Sunday at one of the downtown churches, and the last Sunday of September at the prison. This will be my first experience at the Nassau prison. Perhaps by the next time I write I will have a better idea of what my responsibilities are to be.

Already I have had a chance to fly out to Andros and see the Sisters of Mercy. Fr. Benjamin was assigned to help at Mangrove Cay, and he got the assignment too late to catch a flight on Bahamasair, so he had to get Bro. Barry to fly him out on the new plane owned by the diocese. It is a neat 2-engine Piper AZTEC, a bit larger than the former push-pull SKYMASTER which served the Church well until the second set of engines got too old to replace. We met Bro. Barry at the airport at 10:30 Saturday morning when he came in from a Friday flight to Eleuthera and San Salvador; there he spent the night with Fr. Silvan. It was only a short flight to Fresh Creek on North Andros where the Sisters were located. They knew we were coming, so besides having a wonderful visit with them we also enjoyed a delicious lunch with them and the pastor, the Jesuit Fr. Ed Howard. From there we flew the few miles south to Mangrove Cay to leave Fr. Benjamin to offer the Sunday Masses, and then back to Nassau.

Before leaving St. John's I had an important session with Dr. Jaeger, the orthopedic surgeon, and with all my smiling and showing off how well I could walk with the crutches, and the glowing report from the physical therapist at St. John's, and the adequate report from the nursing staff at St. John's, Dr. Jaeger graduated me to the use of a cane instead of the crutches and officially released me to return to the Bahamas, even at the early date of August 1st. Then he truly "made my day" when he said he saw no evidence in the x-rays that I would ever have to have a similar surgery done to my other hip. That made me want to celebrate, which I did in the form of driving 155 miles to the St. John's cabin near Bemidji the next day in the company of Bro. Stephen from the abbey and...

CONFREERE



Saint John's Abbey
Volume XXVII, no. 6

Collegeville, Minn
September, 1989

NAMES AND PLACES

With some modest apologies the editor sends out this issue of the paper. An apology to Fr TIMOTHY BACKOUS, who had composed just the right length essay describing the antics of a group of monks who went to the State Fair. He opened with this: "The monastic maiden voyage of Br JOHN KELLY'S new 'Urban Assault Vehicle' was on 2 September when 22 confreres made their way to the State Fair." I had to cut his story to that one sentence because of the amount of other things which flooded in. Further, the picture planned for this page "did not pass through the camera."

Part of the difficulty also came from the pen of Fr DANIEL DURKEN, who on another page is described as becoming liaison with other newspapers. He practiced on this paper. The first article he submitted had to be retyped on account of margin control. After that practice, he produced the following which needed no retyping.

CONFRERES COMPLETE OR CONTINUE STUDIES

The following "Who's Who and Where" list is a collection of confreres who have recently completed or are continuing their graduate studies in a variety of academic and pastoral areas:

TIMOTHY BACKOUS completed a doctor's degree in moral theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. JOHN KULAS completed a doctor's degree in German literature at the University of Minnesota. JONATHAN LICARI completed a doctor's degree in Canon Law at St. Paul's University in Ottawa. COLUMBA STEWART completed a doctor's degree in the area of early Christian literature at Oxford University, England. DONALD TAUSCHER completed a two-year program in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Riverside Hospital in Minneapolis.

LINUS ASCHEMAN is pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree at the University of San Diego. MEINRAD DINDORF is taking a CPE course at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. ROGER KASPRICK is doing CPE studies at Stanford University Hospital in California. MICHAEL KWATERA is writing his doctoral dissertation in the field of liturgy at the University of Notre Dame. LUKE MANCUSO has begun a doctoral program in English literature at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. RAYMOND PEDRIZETTI has a half-year sabbatical leave from the university and is serving as chaplain at Saint Scholastica Priory in Duluth while he reads and writes on topics of philosophy and religion. FRANCISCO SCHULTE is working on a doctor's degree in spirituality at the Gregorian University, Rome, and is assembling material for his dissertation on Spanish spirituality in the New World. ROBERT WIEBER is studying pastoral counselling at Loyola University in Baltimore.

This past summer PATRICK WALL took a CPE course at St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth. DENNIS BEACH continued his master's studies at St. John's College, Sante Fe.

Fr AIDAN McCALL has a sabbatical leave and is spending part of it in New York City where he is residing with the Holy Ghost Fathers.

Excerpts from the Abbey Chronicle for August

- 1 Anthony Szpilka was invested as novice at morning prayer.
Abbot Jerome gave a conference on Chapters 34-36 of the Holy Rule.
- 2 Catholic Aid Association began its annual convention with celebration of the Eucharist by Bishop Jerome Hanus. Fr COLMAN BARRY was featured speaker.
- 8 Community debates the purchase of the property.
- 12 Abbot Jerome announced the results of the election for Council of Seniors: Frs BALDWIN DWORSCHAK, DONALD TALAFOUS, WILFRED THEISEN, JOEL KELLY and Br Douglas Mullin. The Abbot's appointees are: Prior JONATHAN LICARI, KELLY RYAN, GORDON TAVIS, DANIEL WARD and SIMON BISCHOF.

Word reached the abbey of the death of Fr Blase Schumacher at the abbey of St Gregory; he had been a capitular of our abbey and had been active in the mission in Utah and Bahamas.
- 16 Total eclipse of the moon. Fr MELCHIOR FREUND had briefed the community on its features.

Abbot Jerome left for a meeting of the Major Religious Superiors, capped by a vacation.
- 22 Chapter meets and votes down the purchase of the property
- 28 The Prep School began its 133rd year of continuous education
- 29 Community discussed at length the issue of the pharmacy.
- 30 Abbot Jerome announced that Fr DAN DURKEN had accepted the task of liaison for release of news items.

THE PHARMACY

The promised open forum on the pharmacy issue happened on 29 August. Abbot Jerome reviewed the issue beginning from a memo of Fr GERVAISE SOUKUP. The latter, disturbed by the high cost of medication, had sent to ten pharmacies a bid on the 49 medications most used in our Health Center. Four returned bids, the lowest from Snyder's.

At least 20 persons rose with opinions in the hour-long meeting. The suggestion of daily courier service uncovered hidden costs and personnel problems not always obvious.

In general, most voices brought approval to the present system--which one described as a useful luxury. Another reminded that we are a community of over 2000 persons. Other voices commented on removing non-prescription items from the pharmacy. Also comments were made about shoddy bookkeeping in pharmacy matters..

Fr ROMAN PAUR gave a summary statement about 8:40 which indicated that though the system may have some air of a luxury, it is a necessity to have the pharmacy on the campus. Abbot Jerome closed with the statement that he will again take up the matter with the council of seniors.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

Fr RICHARD ECKROTH tested his health by a week's journey to Swenson Cabin with Br Stephen Thell, as companion, driver, cook and bottle washer. Richard was content to walk around the grounds and observe the many changes since he first went to the place and made it habitable. The greatest excitement--a huge bear track on the path to the vinyl-roofed outhouse.

On 25 August Fr JOHN EIDENSCHINK tested convalescence with the permission of his doctor by wandering to the Albany golf course. After a couple wild shots he settled down to play a few holes with his usual cronies. He now is able to play all 18.

1170

LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ALL THE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS YOU HAVE RECEIVED SINCE PROFESSION AND ORDINATION. Give (a) the *type* or *nature* of the work, e.g., assistant pastor or plumber or math teacher in Prep school, (b) the *location*, (c) the *duration*, (d) any *special achievements* or items of note, e.g., built parish hall in 1978. or Danforth grant in 1980.

I have already a few years ago written up such a summary for the archives, so will only write here of my time in the Bahamas.

It was in January 1977 that I arrived in the Bahamas, assigned to join Frs. Cornelius, Nicholas, Brendan, Herman, Silvan, Remy and George to work under the direction of Bishop Hagarty. My initial appointment was to join Fr. Silvan as his assistant at Holy Family Church on Robinson Road in Nassau. There was no rectory at Holy Family then, so I commuted back and forth from St. Augustine's Monastery. At St. Augustine's I helped a bit with physical things like moving the stone altar in the chapel to its present location down the steps from the old sanctuary level to a location closer to the congregation and on a level with the congregation, and I also built a lecturn stand and 4 tall candle stands from Abaco pine. After one year with Fr. Silvan I took over the role of pastor of Holy Family Church until the autumn of 1979 when Bishop Hagarty assigned me to take care of the 3 churches on South Andros and the 3 on Mangrove Cay. This necessitated much boat travel between the 2 islands and some rather harrowing crossings. During the next 3 years I put new roofs on the churches at Little Creek, Kemp's Bay, and High Rock, as well as on the old church at Behring Point on North Andros where Fr. Gabriel used to live. I also painted all of the churches on South Andros as well as Holy Angels and St. Benedict's on Mangrove Cay at least once. In September 1987 Bishop Burke assigned me to Bimini to oversee the construction of the new Holy Name Church for that island. This was finished in a year and a half; and at that time Abbot Jerome of St. John's took me out of parochial ministry to join the community of St. Augustine's Monastery in Nassau. In the summer of 1989 I received a total hip replacement in St. Cloud Minnesota.

My dearest ones,

mid-October, 1989

About a month has flown by since I wrote to any of you, and things are going along quite well. Unfortunately I am still wedded to my cane and do not move long distances without it. I do not know if I have done something wrong in my therapy exercises or not, but I thought that by this time I would be totally free of the cane. I do some slow walking without the cane, but find that I tend to limp more than I believe I should. They tell me that even with the cane I am limping noticeably; so perhaps it is something deeper seated. I am performing the regimen of physical therapy exercises almost every day, along with 3 miles on a stationary bicycle. Maybe I am just impatient, but I expected my progress to continue at the same fast pace it was going at St. John's. I must confess that I have been doing a bit of activity which perhaps was not in the mind of the therapists; for one day Fr. George saw me swinging a heavy pick-axe into a pile of rubble and then hauling away loads of it in a wheelbarrow, and questioned whether I should be doing such things for a few months yet. Now mind you, I have not yet gotten out my chain-saw! Also I did push a power lawn mower around a bit. Where I was doing these things does look good now, but perhaps it was not the smartest thing to be doing until my hip has recuperated a bit more. I keep making good intentions NOT to overdo it, but I get so enthusiastic about a project that I forget the physical strain it will entail.

Officially my responsibilities are to be Sacristan for the church at St. Augustine's; Secretary for our community meetings which are normally once a week; Assistant school chaplain; Assistant vocational director; care of the grounds for the school and monastery; general repairs of the monastery; Mass at the Sister's convent Thursday mornings at 6:30 (about 5 miles across town); daily visit to Barclay's Bank to deposit the money from the school cafeteria, empty the mailbox at the main post office and do any shopping. Happily the bank has a parking space reserved for its customers, so it is the one place I can hope to find a parking slot. I am still not driving one of the small VW bugs, for I find the clutch action required of my left leg a bit much, so I have been driving a Chev rolet Citation, a compact car with automatic transmission. It is much harder to find a parking slot big enough for even a compact car. I have seen big limousines from people in the diplomatic corps parked on the sidewalks near the main postoffice, for lack of adequate parking space. They do not ticket diplomatic cars. Happily on top of these odds and ends of activity I have also been able to help out in some parish work on week-ends.

Just a few hours ago I returned from a week-end on San Salvador Island. This was the big week-end of the year for that island; for Columbus' landing there in 1492 is celebrated as a national holiday, and all who can, try to get to San Salvador to celebrate DISCOVERY WEEK-END. The church was packed, and I was startled to recognize a former student from St. John's who graduated in 1966, now living in Nassau, but celebrating the week-end on San Salvador. I had not only been his philosophy teacher at St. John's, but had an even closer relationship serving as his dormitory prefect a whole year when he was in his 3rd year of college. I travelled to and returned from the island with Bro. Barry in the bishop's plane. Our flight out on Saturday was delayed almost 3 hours when we found a flat tire on the plane; but better to find it on the ground in Nassau than on one of the islands where we would not have found a big enough jack or a replacement inner tube! We returned to Nassau with a full plane of 5 passengers: one stranded visitor from San Salvador, Fr. Silvan and Sister Margaret from Long Island, and Fr. George from Exuma Island. The flight to Nassau took about 2 hours, the plane travels about 185 mph, so you know we covered a lot of water. At the end of this week I should be making a return flight with him, returning most of these same people to their posts along with Fr. Hudswell to Cat Island, and leaving me on Long Island for what should be another interesting week-end. Long island is located in the tropical zone and has lots of mosquitoes.

Just a few weeks ago I spent a week-end on Long Island, the first time I had ever been to that island in the southeast Bahamas. One can find some unusual names in such places. For example we flew into the village called DEADMAN'S CAY, off shore was an island called HOG ISLAND, one of the villages is called HARD BARGAIN, and on the week-end I offered Masses at 4 villages: HAMILTON, THE BIGHT, BUCKLEY'S, and CLARENCE TOWN, where the main church and rectory is located. The island reminded me of Andros, for there are not phones in the homes, but you must travel up to 25 miles to get to a phone station for any calls; also the only electricity available is from private generators like the one at the main church at Clarence Town. The church at Clarence Town is quite a sight, for it stands on a high hill and has 3 steeples, with wide, majestic steps to the front door. The story is that it was designed and built by a priest who converted from the Anglican church, who in his Anglican-priestly days had designed and built the impressive Anglican church at Clarence Town with 2 steeples. So he tried to out-do his Anglican efforts by building an even more impressive Catholic church. A strange thing I observed where one leaves the main road to drive up the hill to the church was a deep canal cut through the rock of the island from the sea to an inland basin of water. The cut is at least 25 feet deep and hundreds of yards long; and they say it was chisled out by slaves (therefore before 1823 when slavery was abolished in the British Empire) to channel water from the ocean to the inland basin where it could be evaporated to form lots of table salt.

OSB ECKROTH 00723

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

21 November 1989

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Today the five bells arrive on campus by flat bed truck. They will be displayed on the church mall until November 28 and then will be blessed with a solemn ceremony and prayer. We hope to have the bells installed in the bell tower by Christmas Eve so that their first official use will be on Christmas Eve for the solemn vespers and midnight mass. We have a campaign underway to pay for the bells and we hope that it will be especially successful when people hear the bells and realize their place in our life and liturgy. You remember the bells from the old church, I am sure. As novices we used to ring them by hand and you as socius assigned Father Thomas Thole or someone else to gather five people together to ring the bells. It was always a pleasure to do so!

Father Joseph Charron, a religious from the Society of the Precious Blood and a moral professor in Saint John's Seminary, has been chosen to become an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul/Minneapolis. Father Charron has taught with us for a number of years, both in the 1970s and in the 1980s. He also served a six-year term as provincial of his province. The archdiocese is receiving an excellent man and we are happy for his appointment even as we are sad about his leaving campus. The ordination ceremony is set for 25 January 1990.

I am scheduled to arrive in Nassau on Monday, January 29, and I will remain until February 8. I will have plenty of time to speak with each one of you and the community as a whole. Father Gordon indicates that Saint Augustine's generally wants to continue in existence and wants to become a

Phone 612 363-2544

OSB ECKROTH_00187

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
21 November 1989
Page Two

dependency on Saint John's Abbey. I will want to verify this when I am there.

Brother Louis Blenkner who has been working in AIDS ministry for the last few years suffered a major heart attack nearly three weeks ago and is presently recuperating in the University of Minnesota Hospital. He still cannot converse with anyone and cannot swallow. He has made some progress, however, and this gives us hope that he will continue to recover. I suspect he will never be able to return to his work in the AIDS ministry. Right now I cannot find a replacement for him in the abbey.

I wish you the Lord's blessings and peace!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N-3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 809-324-1511

December 18, 1989

Dear Abbot Jerome,

Thanks very much for the personal concern you show to all of us by writing individual letters to at least most of us. From my own experience of writing to so many people, even with duplicated letters, I know it is not easy to write to so many different people and still have a personal word to give to them. Thanks. But thanks also that you still plan to come down to St. Augustine's towards the end of January for a good evaluating visit. That should prove helpful for you to know what to recommend next summer to the St. John's Chapter.

Wow, what an honor to St. John's that Fr. Charron has been picked to serve the Church as an auxiliary bishop in the Twin Cities. I never got to know him personally in my brief summer visits from the Bahamas, but I have heard a bit about him from others who came to know him pretty well, and all that I have heard about him has been most laudatory. The loss to St. John's is certainly a gain for the universal Church. But it seems to me that this has been the pattern of St. John's, to share their talent broader than just the Collegeville acreage. And I firmly believe that this generous sharing has brought God's blessings on the community. Men will never outdo God in generosity.

With the arrival of the new bells I am wondering whether they will have tones close to the ones that the old bells sounded. I always thought the old bells had a very beautiful tone. This I found most clearly experienced on a shivering cold winter morning when the tones seemed to carry so far over the frozen snow. I can even recall hearing the church bells of Avon and St. Joseph on such frigid mornings.

You were recalling the novitiate joy you experienced with the other novices at the festive ringing of the old bells. I recall that experience too, in the company of Fr. Arnold Weber, Landelin Robling, +Eugene Heinen, Barnabas Laubach, even Jeremy Murphy and Kilian McDonnell sometimes. It is kinda a shame that the novices today cannot enjoy that firsthand experience of pulling on those massive ropes and get carried some feet off the floor when you would get the biggest bell swinging and would hang on too long. I wonder sometimes whether novitiates today offer opportunities for such lasting, happy experiences and memories. I hope so.

My own health condition is not as good as I expected it to be by Christmas. A cane is still my almost constant companion. Mark Woods, the therapist from St. John's is due to arrive here in a few days, and I certainly hope to share some of his time to learn what I am perhaps doing poorly or what I need to stress more. I put in more than an hour of therapy exercises each day, including the equivalent of 10 strenuous miles on a stationary bicycle in a half hour. But I am still able to get in and out of a plane in good enough fashion to serve occasional Sundays on island assignments. Without a doubt, my heart is still in the islands.

Fraternally for a happy Christmas,

Fr. Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00189

INFORMATION FOR THE ARCHIVES OF SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY

DATE: January 8, 1990

NAME: William Richard Anthony ECKROTH
(Baptismal) (Religious Where Different) (Middle) (Last)

BIRTH: Mandan, Morton, North Dakota June 21 1926
(City) (County) (State) (Month) (Day) (Year)

YOUR PATRON SAINT: Bl. Richard Whiting NAMEDAY: December 1

TRIENNIAL VOWS: St. John's Abbey July 11, 1946 Abbot Alcuin Deutsch
(Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

FINAL VOWS/OBLIGATION: Sarnen, Switzerland July 11, 1949 Abbot Primate Bernard Kaelin
(Place) (Date) (Before Whom)

ORDINATION: St. John's Abbey Church June 7, 1952 Bishop Peter W. Bartholome
(Place) (Date) (Bishop)

FATHER'S FULL NAME: _____

FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE: _____

FATHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: _____

FATHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF FATHER'S EDUCATION: _____

FATHER'S OCCUPATION: _____ deceased
(When You Entered Monastery) (Now)

FATHER'S ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE: _____

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: _____

MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE: _____

MOTHER'S NATIONAL DESCENT: _____

MOTHER'S RELIGION: Roman Catholic DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF MOTHER'S EDUCATION: _____

MOTHER'S OCCUPATION: _____ deceased
(When You Entered Monastery) (Now)

MOTHER'S ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE: _____

YOUR CAREER BEFORE ENTERING THE MONASTERY: entered from St. John's Prep and University

EDUCATION	SCHOOL	FROM	TO	MAJOR	DEGREE	DATE
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ELEMENTARY: St. Joseph's School, Mandan, 1932-40

SECONDARY: St. John's Prep School, Collegeville, 1940-44

UNDERGRADUATE: St. John's University, Collegeville 1944-45

PRIESTHOOD STUDIES: St. John's University 1944-45, Collegio de Sant Anselmo, Rome 1946-49,
St. John's Seminary, Collegeville, 1949-53

GRADUATE: Collegio de Sant Anselmo, Rome 1946-49 Bachelor of Philosophy & Licentiate in
Philosophy

POST-DOCTORAL: _____

OTHER: some summer workshops at Marquette University and Catholic University in Washington

LIST YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE ORDER OF THEIR BIRTH. INCLUDE YOURSELF

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| <u>2.</u> _____ | <u>9.</u> _____ |
| <u>3.</u> _____ | <u>10.</u> _____ |
| <u>4.</u> _____ | <u>11.</u> _____ |
| <u>5.</u> _____ | <u>12.</u> _____ |
| <u>6.</u> _____ | <u>13.</u> _____ |
| <u>7.</u> _____ | <u>14.</u> _____ |

IN THE REMAINING SPACE AND ON AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY PUT DOWN ANY OTHER ITEMS OF INFORMATION OR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YOURS THAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY RECORDED.

I believe that I have filled out such a form a few years ago, which should be in the archives

of St. John's Abbey or St. Augustine's Monastery, Nassau.

DATE OF FORM: 1990

OSB ECKROTH_00201

LIST CHRONOLOGICALLY ALL THE MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS YOU HAVE RECEIVED SINCE PROFESSION AND ORDINATION. Give (a) the *type or nature* of the work, e.g., assistant pastor or plumber or math teacher in Prep school, (b) the *location*, (c) the *duration*, (d) any *special achievements* or items of note, e.g., built parish hall in 1978, or Danforth grant in 1980.

I have already a few years ago written up such a summary for the archives, so will only write here of my time in the Bahamas.

It was in January 1977 that I arrived in the Bahamas, assigned to join Frs. Cornelius,, Nicholas, Brendan, Herman, Silvan, Remy and George to work under the direction of Bishop Hagarty. My initial appointment was to join Fr. Silvan as his assistant at Holy Family Church on Robinson Road in Nassau. There was no rectory at Holy Family then, so I commuted back and forth from St. Augustine's Monastery. At St. Augustine's I helped a bit with physical things like moving the stone altar in the chapel to its present location down the steps from the old sanctuary level to a location closer to the congregation and on a level with the congregation, and I also built a lecturn stand and 4 tall candle stands from Abaco pine. After one year with Fr. Silvan I took over the role of pastor of Holy Family Church until the autumn of 1979 when Bishop Hagarty assigned me to take care of the 3 churches on South Andros and the 3 on Mangrove Cay. This necessitated much boat travel between the 2 islands and some rather harrowing crossings. During the next 8 years I put new roofs on the churches at Little Creek, Kemp's Bay, and High Rock, as well as on the old church at Behring Point on North Andros where Fr. Gabriel used to live. I also painted all of the churches on South Andros as well as Holy Angels and St. Benedict's on Mangrove Cay at least once. In September 1987 Bishop Burke assigned me to Bimini to oversee the construction of the new Holy Name Church for that island. This was finished in a year and a half; and at that time Abbot Jerome of St. John's took me out of parochial ministry to join the community of St. Augustine's Monastery in Nassau. In the summer of 1989 I received a total hip replacement in St. Cloud Minnesota.

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

12 February 1990

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Post Office Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

As I mentioned to you last week, I would recommend your spending a few sessions with Dr. Kirk Lamb to talk about your career and your work expectations for the future. Dr. Lamb's address is the following: 600 South 25th Avenue, Suite 211; Saint Cloud, Minnesota 56301. His telephone number is 612 / 252 - 2976.

I was sorry to discover that your recovery from your hip replacement was slower than expected. Apparently you are finding it hard to accept the slow pace of recovery. You are used to hard work and I suspect you have not been seriously ill in your life. Perhaps you need patience and realize that you will gain your strength only gradually over a longer period of time.

It is surely my hope that you can remain at Saint Augustine's Monastery if Saint John's Abbey accepts Saint Augustine's as a dependent monastery. Your presence is very important at the monastery since you are of good disposition, relate to all people, and can do any manner of work. Perhaps you might wish to get more involved in parochial work but I hope that you could always do this by working out of the monastery.

Thank you for taking me to the airport on my departure from Nassau! It was a good flight back to Minnesota; all planes were on time and the weather was favorable.

I wish you well in your life and work and I will see you next summer!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

Phone 612 363-2544

OSB ECKROTH_00198



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N-3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 809-324-1511

March 26, 1990

Dear Father Abbot,

Thanks for the address of Dr. Kirk Lamb which you sent in the letter sent down with Father Prior from the meeting of the abbots at St. Bernard's Abbey. I wrote immediately to Dr. Lamb, but only today received his letter. He is willing to meet with me and counsel me in whatever way he can. I have also written to Dr. Dwight Jaeger who did the hip replacement for me last July to arrange for a meeting with him when I come up to see Dr. Lamb. Hopefully he can tell me what I am doing wrong or have done wrong that I still depend upon a cane so much. I gave all this information to Father Prior here and since Dr. Lamb has me scheduled for an appointment on April 27th, I intend to come up to the abbey on April 25th. I will write soon to Father Magnus, who is the acting guestmaster I believe, to see if he can find a room for me to use during this visit. I told Father Prior here that I did not know how long I would have to be with these doctors in St. Cloud, so my trip to the abbey will be open-ended. It will be nice to experience budding spring in Minnesota again after an absence of 13 years.

Faternally,

Fr. Richard Eckroth, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00197

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

2 November 1990

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint Augustine's Monastery
Post Office Box N-3940
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

You might know that Bishop Lawrence Burke is scheduled to come to Saint John's to explain why he is opposed to the capital campaign of Saint Augustine's Monastery and College. He wrote me before he left for Rome that he would like to come to Saint John's to give his side of the story. I wrote to say that I would happily welcome him at Saint John's. This would also give me an opportunity to explain why we did not ask for permission initially. It did not occur to us that there would be a problem since bishops do not get involved in our fund raising activities in this area.

Bishop Burke made some startling statements at the synod in Rome, or so the press reported. It seems that he is advocating a married clergy for his part of the world. I wonder how the Roman officials looked at his speech. Apparently it did not change the direction of the synod nor did it alter the final report. I am looking forward to a conversation with him about this matter.

You have heard that Father Hilary will step aside as president of Saint John's University next summer. Earlier this week I met with the Search Committee for the first time. This committee of eleven members is soliciting nominations to the office and it will be its task to interview candidates and to provide me with a name by the middle of January. Our statutes indicate that I as chancellor can nominate to the Board of Regents for a vote. I have asked the Search Committee to look within Saint John's Abbey for a candidate because I believe we have serious and viable candidates within the monastery.

Phone 612 363-2544

OSB ECKROTH_00195

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
2 November 1990
Page Two

I am looking forward to my visit to the Bahamas in February. I want to be there for the centenary celebration of the coming of Benedictines to the Bahama Islands. Right now I am planning to be present at Saint Augustine's Monastery from February 15 to 25, 1991.

I hope that your hip is not giving you any trouble. It took a great deal of time to heal and this caused you much worry and consternation. I am happy that you were able to get relief this past spring and summer. You are not one to sit around and watch other people work at the monastery! I am happy that you are in a position to assist with the chores around the house once again.

I wish you the Lord's blessings and peace in your life and ministry!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

OSB ECKROTH_00196



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N-3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 809-324-1511

November 13, 1990

Dear Abbot Jerome,

Your letter a few days ago came as a happy surprise, for I did not expect you take time from your busy schedule to write to me when there was nothing pressing. But I like your *modus agendi* of taking time through the year to write a letter to people like myself who are gone most of the year from the abbey. Thanks for showing such a fatherly and fraternal solicitude.

Yes, I agree with you that it will be good for Bishop Burke to speak with you and Prior Theophile and any others about the campaign fund and the whole question of exempt religious in light of the new code of canon law. Really I am surprised at his problem, for he must have worked from the other side of the coin when he was a leader in the Jesuit community in Jamaica, though that was with a Jesuit archbishop in the person of Carter; who probably dealt with such matters in a fraternal and understanding manner. I have been wondering too if it might not be good for Bishop Burke to visit and speak also with Bishop Jerome Hanus in St. Cloud, for he too has functioned from both sides of the issue, and in the new mode of the new canon law. Oh well, my prayers are with all of you in your discussions, and I do expect good to issue from it.

The irony of the scene of Bishop Burke recently making a stand in the Roman Synod for a married clergy, at least in the Caribbean, is that he had not yet returned from the Roman Synod when Monsignor Moss had to phone him to inform him that one of his most recently ordained priests was leaving the priesthood. Fr. Gilbert Clement Kemp from the island of Eleuthera has been a leader in the charismatic movement in the Bahamas and a very gifted preacher and prayer leader and now wants out. I do not know the ins and outs of his decision, but the Bishop has sent out a letter to be read in all the churches officially informing the Catholic community of Fr. Kemp's decision and the bishop's thanks for the good he has done in these 3 years of active ministry. I hope and pray this is not the beginning of an exodus like the one which occurred in the late 60's and early 70's.

There should be quite a celebration in mid February for the centenary of the coming of the Benedictines to the Bahamas for the 100 years of continuous ministry to the Church in this part of the world. It seems to me that everyone who is aware of the Benedictine foundation of the Church in the Bahamas is truly grateful. I am on the Centennial committee preparing for the celebration, and I can say that the celebration should prove to be a very nice one.

My hip seems to be in good enough shape and I am able to function quite well without the use of a cane or any other walking assistance. I do take a couple of 800mg pills of Ibuprofen each day when I do not forget. And when I do forget I can feel the difference by the end of the day. I think they are mostly anti-pain pills, but I think they also help safeguard against infections from bruises or injuries; so I look upon them as a necessary evil.

When you are here in February I hope you will consider allowing me to work more actively in the islands, like I did for about 10 of my happiest years here in the Bahamas. My heart is truly in the island ministry than here in Nassau; they are like two different worlds.

Yours in Christ and St. Benedict,

Fr. Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00194

Dec 1990

Revised Custom

3. BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES

The monks of Saint John's use a personal budgeting procedure as an approach to monastic simplicity. In the spring of the year each monk receives a budget form from his immediate superior. Items not listed on this form are provided by the abbey. To facilitate the purchasing of certain items on campus and to obtain cash, each monk is issued a Saint John's ID card.

Monks living at the abbey are not to have checking accounts. Monks working in parishes and chaplaincies and others who are authorized may have checking accounts. A second signature, usually that of the treasurer, is required for these accounts. Off campus purchases are charged to the individual monk. Stipend income is to be turned in to the stipendiarius. Additional income and monetary gifts received by monks are to be treated as income to the monastery and must be turned in to the prior or the procurator.

4. CABINS

The cabins at Swenson Lake and Eagle Lake donated to Saint John's Abbey by benefactors, function as recreational sites for the monks. Mindful of the need to schedule the use of these cabins in an equitable fashion, the prior observes the following guidelines in making reservations:

- a. A Saint John's monk must always accompany any party using the cabins.
- b. The cabins will not be reserved more than six months in advance.
- c. Members of the same party may not reserve the cabins for more than seven consecutive days.
- d. During the months of June, July, and August the same person may not schedule multiple uses of the cabins.
- e. The prior or another superior should have on file the names of the persons using the cabins as a group.

5. CLOTHING

The formal garb of the monks is the monastic habit or cuculla, either of which is customarily worn in choir and at other community events. For many formal activities the clerical shirt and suit are also appropriate. When monks choose to dress informally, a simplicity in accord with monastic principles should be observed.

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LAWRENCE ALOYSIUS
By the Mercy of God and Favour of the Apostolic See
Bishop of Nassau

OFFICIAL LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

With the approval of the Very Reverend Mel Taylor, O.S.B., Prior of the Order of St. Benedict, Nassau, Bahamas, I hereby appoint **Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.**, as pastor of Saint John Chrysostom Church, Fresh Creek, Andros, Bahamas, and the missions attached thereto. This appointment will be effective as of September 24, 1991 and will remain in effect until further notice. From the date of the appointment you are to assume all the duties of a pastor, according to the Law of the Church.

Before assuming your duties you are to make the Profession of Faith, as required by Canon 833, Par. 6.

Given at Nassau from our Chancery
the 24th day of September, 1991.

Lawrence A. Burke, S.J.
Bishop of Nassau

Alfred Calmes
Chancellor

OSB ECKROTH_00203

September 24, 1991

The Parish Council and Parishioners
St. John Chrysostom Church
Fresh Creek, Andros
Bahamas

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I am happy to announce the appointment of Reverend Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B., as pastor of your parish and its missions. Father Eckroth replaces Father Edward Howard, S.J., who has served your communities with great love and generosity for the past four years. This change is being made because Father Howard has requested a change of assignment. I know many of you will miss him and I would like to thank him sincerely for his dedicated ministry among you.

I am grateful to Father Richard for his willingness to work among you and to be a member of the pastoral team, along with Sister Mary Miller, R.S.M. I should also take this opportunity to thank Sister Mary and the Sisters of Mercy for their loving presence and ministry within your communities. I ask you to give Father Richard and the entire pastoral team your full support so that the Gospel in its fullness may continue to be proclaimed and that God's People, nourished by the Word and the Eucharist, may continue to grow together in love with one mind and one heart through the power of the Holy Spirit. I pray that you may continue to be generous in your service to one another and in your giving. Please continue to pray for the needs of our entire diocese and for myself, your Bishop. You are constantly in my prayers.

Sincerely in Our Lord,

+ Lawrence A. Burke, S.J.

+ Lawrence A. Burke, S.J.
Bishop of Nassau

LAB/plm

cc Rev. Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.

OSB ECKROTH_00204

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

3 December 1991

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint John Chrysostom Church
Fresh Creek, North Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

You have returned to paradise on Andros Island! I am sure you enjoy your pastoral ministry on this family island since you seem to be energized by caring for the people of these islands who are rich in natural scenery but poor in manufactured things. I can imagine your days are filled with work for the parish and for the many people who come for advice.

Father Germain and Father Landelin decided to have heart operations about the same time! Now both of them are living in the health center and doing magnificently. They come to divine office and to table regularly. I suspect they are enjoying the respite from parochial ministry; both of them will go back to parish work after spending a few more weeks in recuperation.

On one of the warm days in the middle of November we broke ground for the construction of a new dormitory in Flynntown. This dormitory is being built in apartment style since many undergraduates, especially the upperclassmen, want to live in apartments rather than in single rooms of the traditional dormitory. We have too many of our students living off campus and we want to bring them back with the proper housing.

We miss Father Fintan's presence in many ways but especially in his care of firewood and the fireplace. He chopped wood and stored it up for our fireplaces; then he brought the wood into the building and tended the fire. Many of us comment that no one has really taken his place. He used to sit by the fireside and do his *lectio* at the same time that he tended the fire. I suppose the spiritual writers would not agree with this method but it seemed to work well with him.

Phone 612 363-2544

OSB ECKROTH_00205

The Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
3 December 1991
Page Two

When I was at Münsterschwarzach in Germany I visited my history professor, Father Kassius Hallinger, who was in their infirmary. I am not sure whether you had him as a teacher in Rome or not; perhaps he only taught in the theology program. He has since died and we posted the obituary on our bulletin board. He did fine work in researching the customs of the Abbey of Cluny.

I expect to visit Saint Augustine's Monastery at the end of January and the beginning of February. At that time we can talk about your work and the progress of the monastery.

I wish you a blessed Advent and a happy Christmas!

Fraternally yours,

Abbot Jerome Theisen, O.S.B.

JT/ev

Saint John's Abbey
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

Office of the Abbot

14 December 1992

Reverend Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
Saint John Church
Fresh Creek
Andros, Bahamas

Dear Father Richard:

Many thanks for your kind letter of congratulations on my election as abbot of Saint John's. Your support is most valuable to me and I clearly depend on your prayers for this present and future work.

My days in the Bahamas thirty years ago were a good beginning for my appreciation for the work that you are doing. Because I was the chaplain for the prison as well as teaching in the school, I never got out to the outer islands. I look forward to my next visit to the Bahamas and to be able to visit you at Andros and to seeing some of the other islands as well.

The blessing has been set for 4:00 in the afternoon on Sunday, January 10. We are trying to keep it a simple affair and we will be hosting many of our workers and our students on that day. During the community days between Christmas and New Year's we will have our own in house celebration. The one in January will be a time for recognizing the wider community around Saint John's.

I hope things are going well with you and that your health is good. Please continue to keep me in your prayers, as well as the community here. I hope that I can get to the Bahamas sometime in the coming year. In the meantime, take good care, and God bless.

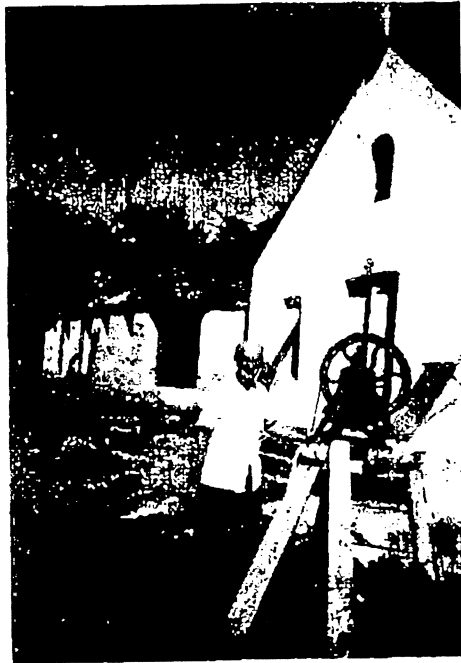
Sincerely in Christ,

Abbot Timothy Kelly, O.S.B.

TK/kr

Phone 612 363-2544

OSB ECKROTH_00207



My dearest ones, March, 1992

I thought that photo in my recent letter turned out sufficiently clear, so I will try to use one in this recent letter. This photo of myself standing by the old bell is in front of the old St. Mary's Church at Baring Point, the southernmost point of North Andros Island. It is in this same church yard that I have been busily refurbishing the old residence area which Fr. Gabriel and the other early Benedictines worked by boat to spread the Catholic faith through the whole Andros chain, from Mastick Point more than 100 miles north of here all the way south to the end of South Andros, about 60 miles distant. It was in 1898 that Fr. Gabriel began to work on North Andros, and by 1907 he had already built this solid stone church and had it ready for blessing, and of course all through this time of building he was building faith communities and spreading the gospel message all along the North Andros shore. He could only later build buildings in which to celebrate. Thus he established pockets of Catholicism all along the coastline at places like Gargill Creek, San O'Way Sound, Brown Sound, Delamash Bay, Fresh Creek, Small Hope Bay, Love Hill, Standard Creek, Mastick Point. In recent years the award-ties to the north, at Standard Creek and Mastick Point, have pretty well disappeared, but just this past Saturday I had to travel to Mastick Point to officiate at the burial of one of the old people there who

cleared allegiance to the Catholic faith. True, I did not have a Catholic church from which to bury her, but along with the officers of the NORTHERN STAR BURNAL SOCIETY to which she belonged and the nearby ST. JOHN NATIVE AFRICAN METHODIST CHURCH the relatives arranged a nice burial service at which all the officers and church ministers got their chance to say their piece, and I got the biggest piece by being the priest from her own church. Then we talked her body to the cemetery about a half mile away and laid her to rest in a combination Catholic-methodist commitment.

Back to the photo above, the bell has a very nice inscription on it, for it came from Minnesota during the First World War. It reads: DEDICATED TO THE HONOR OF THE HOLY SAVIOR, DONATED BY MISS BERADITTA RUPPE, AUGUST 1, 1916. We used to have a Fr. Leo Hoppe at St. John's Abbey, and he even attended my first Mass in Marden in 1950, I believe this donor was either his sister or his aunt. The stone house in the background of the photo was a kitchen and perhaps also a school building, for Fr. Gabriel always opened a school for reading, writing and arithmetic when he founded a church. The building has a narrow chimney at its far end, like you find nowhere else in the Bahamas.

Since my last letter I have been twice to Nassau. At the beginning of February it was to visit with Abbot Jerome from St. John's Abbey who was making his annual visit to St. Augustine Monastery. He seemed satisfied with the level of religious observance by us 9 brothers and priests, and blessed my continued working on Andros. The second trip to Nassau was to take part in the monthly meeting of the priests working in the diocese with Bishop Burke. Nothing startling new from this meeting, but there was good sharing of ideas and suggestions after the morning of recollection and prayer together. It is always uplifting and encouraging to mix with the other priests and Brothers and deacons and Sisters working in the parishes. I was fighting a bad cold this visit and thus did not enjoy my time as much as I usually do. But during the visit to see Abbot Jerome, I had brought my small chainsaw to Nassau in my travel bag and cut up a lot of fallen trees at St. Augustine's and also at the Bishop's house, for he had some time ago asked me to come do it, knowing that I like to cut up things. At this trip I also worked again on the floor of Fr. George's Volkswagen. Some time earlier I had stepped into it to ride with Fr. George, and my feet went right through to the ground, for the floor on the passenger's side had rusted through. To fix it at that time I cut up some aluminum window shutters and fastened them barest what remained of the floor. This time I had to re-fasten one of the shutters which had fallen out and more firmly attached all of the overlapping shutters. It forms an adequate remedy to the problem, but I would not recommend a 300-lbs person putting weight on it; but how could a 300-lbs person squeeze into a Volkswagen RUC anyway?

OSB ECKROTH_00208

At the time of my most recent February visit to Nassau, another priest from St. John's Abbey was also there for a working-visit. This was Fr. Vincent Tegeder, O.S.B. He is the Archivist at the abbey and had come down to help Fr. Silvan at St. Augustine's put better order into the archives at the monastery. An archives with its store of historical memorabilia in the form of old letters, works of art, photos, writings and books is always a treasure lode for later historians or people who are just curious about things past. I think they are also now beginning to save copies of these letters I send to you friends and relatives; for years from now someone may stand in need of a laugh and will look at some of my experiences and get a laugh. Otherwise I have nothing to do with the archives at St. Augustine's. But I have fond memories of Fr. Vincent, for back in 1940 when I first went to St. John's to begin my high school studies towards the priesthood, this same Fr. Vincent was the Dean of the high school until he went away for his doctoral studies to prepare for his teaching of history at St. John's University until his retirement and advancement to the archives. During our visit I found it easy to convince Fr. Vincent that he should come over to Andros with me for a few days, because with his background of history and his deep knowledge of the writings in the archives, he owed it to himself to come and see for himself just where the island missionary work of St. John's began in the person of Fr. Gabriel Roerig, O.S.B. 98 years ago. He found his visit here and seeing the places for himself very rewarding. He had read many thousands of words about the work of Fr. Gabriel and the many others who followed him and had seen many photos in the archives, but seeing it at firsthand was worth more than a thousand words. I took him around to all the churches and places that the priests used to visit by boat before there were any roads on the island. At Mastic Point up north we looked into and took photos of the old house there that had been converted into a church by the addition of a cross at the top of the old roof which still had its carved center post for which people have a special name which I cannot remember. Even the old thatched roof houses used to have this center post of mahogany; it was almost like a lucky horse shoe which I remember seeing as a kid over some doorways in Mandan. At Staniard Creek we could see only the walls of the very huge church that was built there about 1933, but burned down about 1990, with only the massive walls still standing to show where it was. But at Calabash Bay we could see the well built church of St. Gabriel which we still use for an evening mass each week. Here at Fresh Creek he could appreciate the nice big church which was built about 1960. And I was able to get him a pass to go onto the Navy Base with me where he enjoyed seeing the huge base and the nice air-conditioned inter-denominational chapel where I offer Mass each Saturday evening. Then after a long drive to the south we came to the settlement of Man O War Sound where we could see the old clap-board church of St. Joseph which is being eaten by termites. But there are so few Catholics living there we can easily bus them to Cargill Creek for a lively celebration. Then after visiting the church of Christ the King at Cargill Creek we went to the crown jewel of the island, Behring Point, where all the Church work on the island began with the first mass offered in 1894. This is where Fr. Gabriel established his home base and from where he worked by small boat all along the Andros coast. It is here that the majestic church of St. Mary stands, pictured on the other side of this page, and also the big 2-story stone residence where the priests lived when they were not traveling to the distant missions along the coast. This is the same building that I am trying to put back into usable condition, preparing for the centennial in 1994 as a memorial to the many Benedictines who labored for the Church on the islands. I do not have the whole roof of the building finished at this writing, but it is moving along at a decent pace. Since I am doing the work alone and can work at it only on days when I can get away from my other responsibilities, it is taking longer than it should. Also I am replacing the old roof, working from inside the building and hanging over the edge of the walls to nail boards and shingles in place. It is a 19-foot drop from the edge of the roof to the ground, so I had to borrow some metal scaffolding to finish the corners of the roof, since I could not stretch far enough from the inside. It is challenging, but not more than my hip can take. In fact all this climbing of ladders seems to be good for my metal hip, and it has not felt this good since I had the hip replaced 2 1/2 years ago. Needless to say, Fr. Vincent thoroughly enjoyed his 2 days with me and I think returned to the abbey and his archives with a much better appreciation for the work done here by his many Benedictine confreres, including myself, one of his own students.

But Fr. Vincent was not the only visitor I have recently had. The ... and their daughter from Canada along with ... who was a frequent visitor in years past to Mangrove Cay came up to Fresh Creek on the mail boat and spent a couple days here with me and the Sisters of Mercy. I did not have room to bed them down at night, so they all took reasonable accommodations at the nearby Chiccharney Hotel which is right on the edge of the Creek, and across the bay from the new Lighthouse Marina and Hotel. None of them had been to Fresh Creek for many years and thus found it good to see the growth and development that has occurred in recent years. They also enjoyed driving the length of the island and seeing some of the local sights. At the end of their visit they arranged for a charter flight back to Mangrove Cay. I think that flying back as a passenger like this was a bit of a disappointment for ... for in years past he had flown himself and others, including myself, this same route. But after he passed his 80th birthday he gave up his plane, though I can see that he still yearns to be at the controls. After 50 years of piloting, who wouldn't?

Richard, OSB

St. John Chrysostom Church
Fresh Creek, Andros
March 22, 1992

Dear Abbot Jerome,

This may seem like a late date at which to respond to your nice letter of early December, but I believe I voiced my thanks to you at our meeting in Nassau recently. And since you posed no serious question in your letter I did not take time during the busy holiday season to respond to it. You did make one mention of one of the former teachers at Sant Anselmo, Fr. Kassius of Münsterschwarzach. No, I never knew him, for he must have come to Sant' Anselmo after I left there in 1949. But I did know Fr. Thomas Rucker of that abbey; he served as procurator at Sant' Anselmo my last year there: a good understanding person and a returned priest-soldier from the Russian front who considered himself lucky to survive that terrible experience.

Yes, I can see how St. John's misses the steady work and attention and good example of Fr. Fintan, and not just for the fireplaces, for you saw for yourself the good he is contributing to St. Augustine's. Would that we all had his spirit and patience!

I thought the enclosed latest letter to the relatives and friends would best describe some of my activities. I get to work on restoring that old building of Fr. Gabriel only once or twice a week, for there are too many other duties at hand that demand attention. I am truly deeply grateful for the two Sisters of Mercy from Portland, Maine, who work here with me. They are excellent examples of real religious and very skilled in their parish ministry.

Monsignor Moss at a recent clergy meeting was happy to learn that I am working at restoring the old building at Behring Point, for as he observed, "We must celebrate that centennial in 1904, for it has left such a lasting impact on the Church in the Bahamas." The next time you come to visit I hope you will find time to visit here like Fr. Vincent did. My accommodations here are not as good as they were on Mangrove Cay or South Andros, but they are adequate. Fr. Vincent slept on my bed which is really located in the sacristy of the church, and I stretched out on the long couch which is in the adjoining room which functions as parlor, office and kitchen. But this is really quite heavenly compared to the conditions our older confreres lived with out here. You can ask people like Fr. Emanuel up in the health center. Your own classmate, Fr. Andre Brisette was the one who built the nice present church of Christ the King at Cargill Creek. All of the priests here left a real good name.

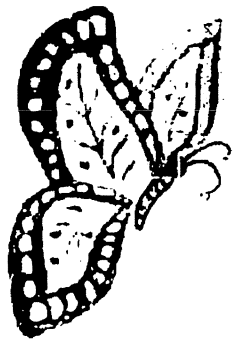
This past Saturday I had a sad funeral at Calabash Bay for a 44-year old rather simple minded woman whom Fr. Alto had baptized on Mangrove Cay. She was brutally raped and murdered by a young 16-year old drop-out. Ironically the incident took place at the next settlement of Small Hope Bay. I guess some of the violence of Nassau is spreading out to the islands. But Nassau is not far away; I can see its lights at night from the window of my quarters, about 35 miles distant.

Again I want to thank you very much for allowing me to continue this island ministry, for my heart is really in the islands.

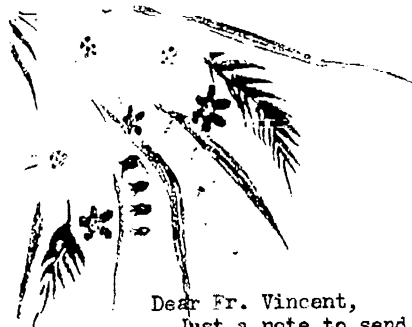
Faternally,

Richard OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00210



Thanks



Ans
5/30/92

Fresh Creek, Andros
May 9, 1992

Dear Fr. Vincent,

Just a note to send on to you the photos I received just yesterday from the days of your visit here. I thought they turned out quite well, especially considering the shadowy setting at the entrance to the cemetery and by the well house of Fr. Gabriel. I have recently walked into the old cemetery and found at the far end of it a very tall cross which has tumbled over due to the termite action on its base. If I live long enough I intend to clean up the cemetery. I have found one solitary cross which must mark a grave of someone; but I have not yet found any schema or layout plan of the cemetery which would indicate who is buried where. If there was one, it has probably been lost in the 98 years since Fr. Gabriel came here.

Bro. Neal from the monastery came back to Andros with me at the close of our priest/deacon retreat and spent most of the past week with me. I took him for a tour of the island like I took you, and he spent many hours reading the pages in UPON THESE ROCKS that pertain to Andros, and he gained a much better appreciation of what our confreres did for these peoples.

I have finished reading the nice book you sent about St. Joseph 1854 to the present; and I intend to turn it over to Fr. Silvan for the Archives at the monastery. As chaplain at St. Ben's for 6 years I became acquainted with so many of the names in the book; I found it most interesting. Fraternal thanks,
Richard, OSB



May, 1992

My dearest ones,

What a happy Easter it was! Before I go into it I should first say that the photo is of the two Sisters of Mercy from Portland, Maine, who work with me on Andros. Sister Mary Garrett Fitzpatrick on the left first came to the Bahamas some 20 years ago and at that time opened a clinic for the poor on Mangrove Cay, for she is a Registered Nurse. By the time her 5 years were up the government had opened its own clinic and she returned to the motherhouse to care for the elderly of their community. She returned to the Bahamas this past October. On the right is Sister Mary Miller who has been doing pastoral ministry on North Andros for nearly 3 years very effectively. They are standing

before the Church of Christ the King located at the edge of the ocean at Cargill Creek. This building was built by a good friend of mine from St. John's Abbey, Fr. Andre Brisectis about 30 years ago. He has since died of cancer; it is a reminder of my own mortality that we were just about the same age. It is a very attractive building, and the congregation here is loudest in its Sunday celebrations. When you have celebrated with them, you know you have CELEBRATED!

The celebration of Holy Week began with the Palm Sunday celebration for all the Catholics on the Island at Fresh Creek. The local Royal Bahamas Police force started off our celebration by an official raising of the Bahama flag at the park at the traffic round-about at the entrance to Fresh Creek from the main highway of the island. This was followed by the singing of the national anthem as all stood at attention. Then I had the solemn blessing of the palm branches which the people were holding in their hands, and we had a real variety of palm branches, not the spindly little strands I knew as a kid in our northern Palm Sunday liturgies. From here the servers and I led the long procession about a half mile to the church which is perched on the rocky shore of the ocean. The big church could not contain all the people, so many of them had to sit on chairs and benches set up in the breezeway between the church and the Sisters' residence, where later the meal would be served to all the worshippers. We had an overflow crowd because we had chartered a big school bus to bring the parishioners from Behring Point, Cargill Creek, Man O War Sound and Boven Sound. We bused in the people from nearby Calabash Bay, Small Hope Bay and Love Hill. Many came from the Auteo Navy Base. Even from Nichols Town at the northern end of the island some Catholics came to join the celebration. At the end of Mass we were treated to a song festival as the different adult and youth and children's choirs of the churches tried to out-do each other in tuneful renditions. After a long period of singing the people were ready for the big feed which the people of the Fresh Creek parish sponsored. The feed was delicious, and the visiting very economical. Even the neighborhood dogs got in on the feed in the pile of chicken bones that were left over.

To divide the Services of Holy Week among the churches I care for, I offered the Holy Thursday evening commemoration of the Last Supper in the Church of St. Gabriel at Calabash Bay. There was a nice congregation, but not like the ones we have at Fresh Creek on Sundays. At the washing of the feet I had only the servers to minister to, two boys and three girls. We did have a procession at the end, carrying the blessed Sacrament outside in the dark to the side door of the church where an altar of repose had been prepared for that night.

Good Friday found Sister Mary going to Cargill Creek to conduct the Service with the people there as I stayed at Fresh Creek and conducted the traditional Good Friday Service which I compressed into 2 hours, for I did not allow myself to get carried away in my preaching. At both churches the people were unusually generous in the special Holy Land collection.

For Holy Saturday I first had an evening mass at the ANTCO chapel on the Navy Base at the usual 6:00 p.m. hour. From there I hurried to Cargill Creek for the main celebration at Christ the King Church. We first blessed the fire at the edge of the ocean at one of the parishioner's yard and from there walked about a quarter mile to the church for the rest of the festive and impressive Holy Saturday liturgy. At the celebration a little girl of the parish was baptized, so this made the Holy Saturday celebration complete, for it is developed around the sacrament of Baptism. And the little girl did not mind the water at all; in fact I think she would have liked to go for a good swim in the font if she had been allowed. It was past 11:00 before we got back to Fresh Creek for some sleep.

Easter morning demanded an early rising for the Sunrise celebration the people wanted at Fresh Creek. Actually this excused me from the canonical Sunrise Service at the Navy Base scheduled for 6:30. Our own service started at 7:00 just after a very beautiful sun rose out of the ocean waters at 6:45. Later in the morning I again had an Easter Mass at Cargill Creek and then had the rest of the day to rest, which by that time I needed!

OSB ECKROTH_00216

It was just before Holy Week that I drove the last nail in the new roof of the 80-year old building in the church yard at Behring Point. I did not have to crawl out on the roof to finish the top rows of boards and shingles, but in a dream one night when I was thinking how I could do it most safely I got the inspiration to work from the top of the extension ladder with just my head and shoulders through the roof and use only short pieces of lumber with the 36-inch strips of shingles to work my way from each end of the roof to the trap door I had planned to leave at the middle of the roof; and it worked perfectly! I was truly relieved that I did not have to crawl out on that roof, for with my metal hip I can get a leg cramp quite easily, and the top of that high building is not the place to have a leg cramp! Then I counted the number of pieces of glass I would need to repair the wavy windows of the upper level and found that I needed at least 50 pieces, each of them 12 inches square. When I went to St. Augustine's for the Holy Week Chalice Mass I found a bunch of old window glass in the shop at the monastery and was able to cut more than 100 pieces of this glass that I could use for repairing the windows of the old Benedictine residence. Fr. George also let me have 2 aluminum shutter windows to install in the east end of the building, not seen from the road where the old window frames had totally disappeared. I have already installed the shutter windows and am ready to go to work on replacing the 52 window panes. That will make the whole upper level snug and waterproof; and we are just about ready for the rainy season. As time goes by I will have to work at putting in a cement floor on the ground level and then a new floor on the upper level as well. And what there is no stairway between the two levels I am toying with the idea of building a circular staircase to get to the upper level. I have never tried such a thing; but the more I dream of it, the more excited I get.

There has long been an old very heavy table in the recessed area between the church and the residence of the Sisters, and I found new table tennis equipment in the garage, so the Sisters and I decided to fix up the table for the kids to try this game. I bought a solid piece of plywood for a new top and painted it for table tennis; but so far not a single boy or girl has tried to use it. Perhaps it is a game that none of these have ever seen played and do not want to be embarrassed at the initial mistakes they would make. Someday I'm sure they will pick it up and then the Sisters will know no rest from the flock of kids at their front door.

A few weeks ago I witnessed my first wedding at Fresh Creek. It was between one of our choir members at the Fresh Creek church with a bride from Stafford Creek, quite a ways up the island, but who has employment at the ADFEC base and had been driving back and forth every day. They had been planning the wedding for months and spared no expense. For the wedding practice we had agreed upon a 4:30 hour. Well, I waited and I waited. Finally about 7:00 some of the bride's people began to appear. By 7:30 when the musician was here I figured we had enough people to start the practice. To me it seemed like total confusion, for only the bride and groom and two of their six attendants were present, along with dozens of relatives with dozens of children who had a wild time running around and getting into mischief. The kids would not be allowed to come to the wedding itself, so they were enjoying the practice. By 8:30 we had all had enough and called it quits, assured that those present would tell those who were absent how it should go. And it was remarkable how well and smoothly the actual marriage did go the next day. There were musical renditions by close friends of the bridal pair, and even the local police Inspector came all dressed up and played a saxophone solo during the signing of the papers. I was not able to go to their reception, for I had to get to the ADFEC base for the Saturday evening mass. A priest has to be able to shift preaching gears to go smoothly from a wedding celebration to a Lenten evening Mass with a very attentive congregation like you find at the Navy Base.

Just the week before this festive celebration I had to shift preaching gears from a very sad funeral on a Saturday afternoon to the evening Lenten Mass at the ADFEC chapel. The woman to be buried was in her 80's, with a mind as single as a child, who had been violently raped and then stabbed to death by a 16-year old school drop-out who lived not far from her. It was a kinda touchy situation, for her Baptist mother attended the same church as the family of the boy who did her in. But I offered a full Catholic funeral for her from the Church of St. Gabriel at Calabash Bay, and this church was filled with friends and relatives. But unlike most funerals out here not a single Baptist preacher attended. Everyone I met expressed gratitude for the "lovely" funeral we had for her. Even some of the Amish people from their community up north care for the funeral to pay their respects; and I thought that was so nice of them. Some of them had also attended that funeral I had up north at Hastic Point some weeks ago. That was more understandable, for many of the Amish people work with the people of the Hastic Point area on the large produce farms in that area.

You might remember in the last year or so when I described the several caves I had discovered on the campus of St. Augustine's College when I was doing landscaping there. Well, at a recent trip to St. Augustine's for one of the Priest Meetings, I learned that the workman had found a new cave, not far from the biggest one I had discovered. I had to investigate it for myself, with a flashlight peering through the round hole at the top of the cave from which the "plug" had fallen in, revealing a nice large cavern about 20 feet in diameter and about 10 feet in height. It had nice solid stone walls, curving up to the "chimney" at the top. So they plugged it up by hauling in stones and some soil for the top, and no one can now safely walk or drive over it. It was right alongside a path that is often walked by the students or driven on by trucks. It was only about 50 feet from the one I had discovered, and I would not be surprised if that whole area were honey-combed with such caverns. Bulldozers and tractors have passed over them repeatedly, but you just never know when the "plug" is going to let go and drop you in.

Thanks for your recent note.

Fraternally, Richard OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00217



My dearest ones, June, 1992

The photo opposite is from our Palm Sunday celebration. The good looking policeman is from the Royal Bahamas Police Force, and was the one who raised the flag to begin our Palm Sunday celebration. The other guy with no visible hair you probably recognize. In my hand you can see one of the very nice palm branches which we had for all the people. But I believe I wrote about this celebration in my most recent letter.

About a week after Easter I returned to Nassau to join the priests and Georges working in the diocese in the annual retreat which was conducted by Bishop MacKin from the Caribbean island of Barbados. It was a very nice, peaceful, restful retreat, for he acted and spoke just like one of us. He spoke very humbly, for in age he is younger than most of us working in the Nassau diocese. It was truly a good experience, and I am glad I was able to come in for it.

At the end of the retreat I was able to have Bro. Neal Lakee from the monastery return with me to Andros. Bro. Neal was born in the country of Trinidad, off the coast of South America of West Indian parentage. He is already in his upper 20's in age, but has had an interesting life in devoting about 5 years in working with very poor people in Jamaica before seeking admission to St. Augustine's Monastery 2 1/2 years ago. I was part of the

beam of his initial formation before he was sent to St. John's Abbey in Minnesota for his year of novitiate. After making his first vows last summer he returned to St. Augustine's where he was assigned much of the work that I had been doing last year: carrying, shopping for the kitchen and lining up the meals for the cook, general fixer-upper. After this year or next year I hope he will get the chance to return to St. John's to continue his studies. But I wanted him to come to Andros with me to give him a feel for some of our Benedictine ancestors in the Bahamas, for it was here on Andros that the first island missionary work of the Benedictines began with a first mass out here in 1803, followed by the arrival of a permanent priest in residence in 1894 in the person of Fr. Gabriel deSola, O.S.B. whose exploits here are legendary. Naturally I took Bro. Neal to all the Benedictine sites on this island from north to south, especially the south where Fr. Gabriel had set up his base of operation. During the week that he was here he read the lengthy but interesting chapters of the book UPON THESE ROCKS that deal especially with the missionary work on Andros. The whole book is an accurate and interesting history of the Bahamas with emphasis on the establishment and growth of the Catholic Church in these islands. It was written about 20 years ago by Fr. Colman Barry, O.S.B. of St. John's. Fr. Colman was President of the diocese for many of the years while I was teaching there. Bro. Neal enjoyed his time here, and I think he returned to the monastery in Nassau with a better appreciation of our Benedictine heritage in the Bahamas.

During the retreat one of the priests from Canada surprised me when he said that probably the very first Bahamian vocation came from Andros. This surprised me, for I knew only of Bro. Henry Neely, O.S.B. from Kincrove Cay and Sister Janis Cockley, O.S.B. from Calicut Cay here on North Andros. And many years ago I had met a Monsignor Albury who was born on Harbour Island about 90 years ago, but he did not become a priest in the Bahamas or serve here, but in Canada. So this priest showed me in the book UPON THESE ROCKS on page 154 where Fr. Colman makes the observation that the first Bahamian vocation was in the person of a daughter of one John Greene who had a sisal plantation near Baking Point. She became a member of the Sisters of Charity who were teaching in Nassau, but she never returned to the Bahamas to serve here. Interesting! I think this Canadian priest was so interested in this fact of history because the Greene family came to the Bahamas from New Foundland in Canada. They probably were white people; but when Monsignor Albury's people were also white. I find it interesting that such a vocation could be fostered in the primitive setting when there was no priest or regular Mass until the arrival of Fr. Gabriel in 1894. God's grace certainly works in mysterious ways!

I had quite a surprise at the AUMEC chapel. I know that we were to eat together after that Sunday evening Mass, for when it was announced by the organist that they have occasionally. I did not suspect that it was going to be a gathering in my honor. I got just a little suspicious when we came through the security gate and the Security Officer commiserated me. I thought: "he is a nice friendly man, but not a Catholic; how in the world does he know that this is my 100th anniversary of ordination?" But everything went along as usual through the Mass, at which there was a larger group than usual, but then it really hit us when we all moved to the special Mass Hall after Mass and there was this huge cake flown in from Florida, decorated with the message in icing, "Congratulations on your 100th anniversary, Fr. Richard". And then each one brought in a pot of this or a pot of that, except me, of course; and all of the pots were super delicious. I was even honored by the non-Catholic staff of the chapel, so it made for one very happy family-like celebration. There were plenty of children present, so the food was pretty well cleared off by the end of the gathering. They gave me a beautiful card and purse with more than a hundred dollars, and then a tangible remembrance of the occasion in the form of a beautiful hand-crafted ceramic fruit dish that can also be hung on a wall. It was made by one of the artists in the local art-crafts shop on the base, and pictured an outline of all of Andros Island, from north to south. It was a special remembrance for myself, for I have now served on all the units of Andros. I am sure it could not have been made from local clay, for I know of no local clay. I often pass by the ceramics shop, for it is in the same building as the woodcraft shop. Lately I have been spending time in the woodcraft shop to build some window shutters to match the ones on the upper floor of the old building I am restoring at Behring Point. Visiting went on a good while after the eating, and a very happy evening was enjoyed by all. I guess some of the nicest things in life come like this as surprises. I had no intention of celebrating my anniversary either at this time or late in the summer when I go up on vacation. Nice!

As I said, I have been doing some work with the fine tools in the woodcraft shop on the base to make the window shutters. I found some old cedar beams in the building that formerly supported the ground floor. They looked like porcupines with the many square nails still embedded in them, so I had to carefully cut away the lower part of the beams and ended up with some nail-free slabs of cedar from which I am cutting the framing and slats for the louvers. I remarked to the man in charge of the shop how heavy the cedar was, and he said that is a sign that this is OLD cedar. It has stood in the building for 80 years, so I had to agree that it is quite old. I believe it must have been cut locally, for it was all squared off with machetes, not sawed into beams. Now everything smells of cedar around here, and it is not a bad smell. It is a good rainy day project to work at inside the shop. At the old Behring Point building I have replaced the 52 broken window panes. But I forget to look above the 4 doors on the upper level; they all have small panes too, and 6 of these have been broken by stones by some very accurate throwers. Next trip to Nassau I must get 6 pieces to replace them. Also I am happy to announce that I have repaired the 3 balconies. To do this I suspended them with a one inch steel cable that cradles the balcony supports and then goes over the top of the steel walls into the attic where I have them clamped together and firmly fastened to strong supports. Now the 60-year old balconies are suspended from above in a very sturdy and even attractive fashion. I had to borrow a cable winch from Mr. Hemstreet on Mangrove Cay; he sent it up to me on the return voyage of the weekly mail boat. With this winch I was able to take up the slack on the cables before finally fastening them in the attic. It worked really nifty. The next thing I did was to replace the old flooring of the balconies. I mentioned that there were 4 doors upstairs, but just 3 balconies. The fourth door goes out to nowhere right now, but I hope eventually to build a nice big porch at that end of the building, for there is already a nice base for it on the ground level, and a door from the lower level goes out to this area. I would like to build a walk-out porch for both levels at this end of the building. The next thing I did in my reconstruction work was to tear out the old floor of the upper story, for it was rotted and termites and very dangerous to walk on. I was able to use some of the boards from the old roof, the ones which were not rotted and termites, and now have a substantial subfloor of Andros pine which is quite good against termites. Later I will coat this with preservative and then a layer of felt paper, and on top of that put in a floor of plywood which I will previously treat on both surfaces with a solution that makes a barrier to termites. But that is all ahead. Right now I am busy preparing the bottom level of the house for a cement floor. Each time I go to Behring Point I haul along a truckload of rocks and fill and back it in for a cement floor. Some of the men have offered to help me mix the cement by hand and pour it, so it is going to be in slow stages. But I must also embed in the cement the electrical conduits for the outlets of the lower level and also the plumbing rough-in for a bathroom.

Some of you have asked whether there was no stairway to this upper level. There was a good one while the building was lived in, but for the past 30 or more years it has been empty and anything useful in the building was taken away by different people, including all the furniture, the doors, many of the windows and shutters, the ceiling boards and even the substantial stairway between the 2 levels. Now one can only get "upstairs" by climbing a ladder until I get to work on the spiral stairway, which can only come either cement floor is in place.

all is well here. I hope you have a good summer.

Fraternally, Richard, OSB

Office of the Prior
SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321 U.S.A.

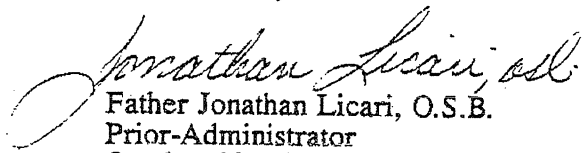
Dear friend,

As you are aware because of reports in the media, monks who have been members of the Preparatory School faculty have been accused of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of former students. We, as a monastic community, are deeply pained by these allegations, and particularly by the harm any sexual abuse has caused victims.

I am enclosing a copy of a statement released by the monastic community as well as a copy of Saint John's Abbey's procedures for dealing with cases of sexual abuse and exploitation. I want to take this opportunity to affirm both statements, and to assert my firm commitment to take every possible step to assure that this campus is a safe environment for all.

All of us at Saint John's Abbey as well as the Preparatory School staff have appreciated your concern, support and compassion. We need your friendship during these difficult days. Please remember us in your prayers as we will continue to remember you in ours.

Very sincerely,


Father Jonathan Licari, O.S.B.
Prior-Administrator
October 22, 1992

Enclosures

Office of the Prior
SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321 U.S.A.

A statement of Saint John's Abbey concerning sexual abuse and exploitation

Saint John's Abbey is saddened that some members of this monastic community have been cited in allegations of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation which are currently being processed by legal and church officials. Our primary concern must be for the victim's safety and well-being.

Several years ago when similar allegations were made against the clergy elsewhere, we began a process to deal responsibly with incidents or patterns of sexual impropriety within this monastic community if and when they are brought to our attention. The monastic community feels a deep revulsion for breaches of trust and responsibility, and we are committed to the following course of action:

- ▣ to respond immediately as a monastic community to achieve the spiritual and psychological healing of any person who may have been a victim of sexual abuse or exploitation inflicted by a member of our community;
- ▣ to deal quickly, firmly and appropriately with abusers;
- ▣ to strengthen the ongoing dialogue within this community on issues of human sexuality, basic spirituality and responsibility;
- ▣ to continue our rigorous scrutiny of all who seek membership in our community;
- ▣ to reaffirm and continue to implement procedures for dealing with cases of sexual abuse and exploitation which were adopted by Saint John's Abbey on February 7, 1989.

We have discussed these charges seriously as a community. We view sexual abuse and exploitation as unquestionably deplorable. Mindful of our generations of faithful service to the local and universal church and the academic community, we are determined that this community will not tolerate sexual abuse or sexual exploitation by any of its members.

Father Jonathan Licari, O.S.B., Prior-Administrator
Saint John's Abbey
October 22, 1992

Saint John's Abbey Policy When a Monk
Has Been Accused of Sexual Abuse
or Sexual Exploitation

When a monk has been accused of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation, the Abbey maintains a primary concern for the victim's safety and well-being. Recognizing that sexual abuse or sexual exploitation can have serious consequences for the victim as well as for the abuser, the Abbey will exercise the following steps:

- I. An Allegation
 - A. The Abbot will investigate the allegation.
 - E. The investigation normally will include an interview with:
 1. The alleged victim;
 2. The monk;
 3. Other knowledgeable persons.
 - C. The Abbot seeks appropriate advice.
 - D. Based upon the investigation, the Abbot takes appropriate action which may include:
 1. Intervention with the monk;
 2. Pastoral response to the victim;
 3. Notification of the proper civil authority such as police or child protection agency;
 4. Distribution of a statement about the allegation.

- II. Intervention with the Monk
 - A. The Abbot requests that the monk choose one other person, usually another monk, to be his support person and inform the Abbot who this person is. This is normally done when the Abbot informs the monk of the allegation.
 - B. Based upon the investigation, the Abbot decides whether or not to suspend the monk from his present duties.
 - C. Normally, the Abbot requires the monk to receive psychological evaluation.
 - D. If the psychological evaluation recommends treatment or other action, the Abbot:
 1. Follows this recommendation unless the circumstances warrant otherwise;
 2. Assigns the monk to live at the monastery;
 3. Finds appropriate work or vocational retraining;
 4. Establishes appropriate limitations on involvement with students and employees of Saint John's.
 - E. After treatment, the Abbot and the monk, in consultation with the monk's treatment professional and others, establishes an aftercare program.
 - F. If the monk completes the recommended treatment and the aftercare program, and receives a positive evaluation, the Abbot, after appropriate consultation, will consider giving the monk a permanent assignment with appropriate safeguards.

- G. If at any time the Abbot, with appropriate consultation, determines that the monk cannot continue in monastic life, the Abbot will seek to have the monk leave the monastery voluntarily. If the monk does not leave voluntarily, the Abbot may initiate appropriate canonical actions.

III. Pastoral Response to the Alleged Victim

- A. When the Abbot receives an allegation directly from the victim, the Abbot normally initiates an interview with the victim, not only to listen to the victim's account, but also to evaluate the needs of the victim. In cases involving children or vulnerable adults, other appropriate individuals may be interviewed.
- B. After appropriate consultation, the Abbot normally takes one or more of the following steps:
 - 1. Recommends that the alleged victim contact an advocate for victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation to assist the victim in evaluating the situation and the available options.
 - 2. Offers the victim financial assistance for counseling. Financial assistance normally is offered only if the alleged victim is personally interviewed. If financial assistance is accepted, the victim is asked to sign a statement that the financial assistance is not an admission of legal wrongdoing which can be used in subsequent legal action. The Abbot together with the victim will review periodically the continuation of financial assistance.
- C. If the Abbot receives a complaint or accusation against a monk from an attorney representing an alleged victim, the assistance offered may be limited because of the boundaries established by the initiation of legal action.

IV. Public Statement

- A. In some cases it may be appropriate for the Abbot to send a statement to various constituencies of Saint John's or others.
- B. If the monk is or has served in a parish, it may be appropriate to have a prepared statement read at all of the Sunday masses.
- C. If the allegation involves an incident which took place in a parish, it may be appropriate to hold a parish meeting for the parishioners. The meeting should be limited to parishioners and should last no more than one hour. Along with the pastor who chairs the meeting, the Abbot, a representative of the diocese, and an advocate for victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation should be present.

V. Definition of Terms

- A. Abbot: the abbot, the administrator of Saint John's Abbey, or his delegate.

- B. Allegation: a complaint or accusation of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation made by an individual to the Abbot, or a credible report of the same made to the Abbot by another person because the individual is prevented for a serious reason from speaking directly with the Abbot.
- C. Sexual Abuse: under Minnesota law, the subjection of a child or vulnerable adult to any sexual act is sexual abuse.
- D. Sexual Exploitation: under Minnesota law, any kind of sexual interaction between a counselor and client is sexual exploitation, whether initiated by either the counselor or the client. Clergy, when providing counseling, are considered counselors.

Adopted 7 February 1989
Revised 17 October 1992

Saint John's University

Box 2000

Collegeville, Minnesota 56321-2000

October 27, 1992

Dear Parents, Alumni and Friends:

Over the past fourteen months, four monks of Saint John's Abbey have been accused of sexual abuse of minors. Allegations have been made against three of them as members of the staff of the Saint John's Preparatory School in the early 1980's; allegations have been made against the fourth as a parish priest in the mid-1960's. These allegations have received extensive media attention in Minnesota and beyond.

As a monastic community we have been stunned and saddened by these allegations. Our deepest pain and most serious concern focus on the harm which any sexual abuse has caused to victims. As president of Saint John's University, I have come to realize the importance of informing all of you in the larger Saint John's family of these charges, as well as of the monastery's position on sexual abuse and exploitation.

The enclosed statement was issued last week on behalf of Saint John's Abbey by Prior Jonathan Licari, O.S.B. The monastic community accepts the responsibility of responding appropriately to charges of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, and will take every possible step to ensure that this campus is a safe environment for all. We also hope to come through this time of pain with a new awareness of how, wounded as we are, we can play a role in helping the churches address the seemingly endless suffering caused by sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

If you have any questions or concerns about this letter or about the enclosed statement, please let me know. The members of the monastic community need whatever counsel you can provide. Please keep us in your prayers as we work to confront breaches of trust and responsibility with directness and justice.

Sincerely,

Dietrich Reinhart, O.S.B.

Br. Dietrich Reinhart, O.S.B.
President

Office of the President

612 363-2247

OSB ECKROTH 00730

St John's Abbott. Oct 15, 1993

We met Sunday Oct 10, 1993

My son explained how
he was sexually molested by
Father Richards; when he was 7 year
of age, twenty year ago. (Ruined his
Life)

Please explain to me exactly
what St John's is going to do about
it, before the 1st of Nov!
So I can decide what to do

December 3, 1992
Fresh Creek, Andros

Dear Abbot Timothy,

I do not know if I helped elect you or not, for I do not know who was my proxy and how he voted, but I am very happy that the Holy Spirit moved the majority of the confreres to vote for you to be the spiritual leader of our community in these difficult times. You can be sure that I will be remembering you in my prayers, as I immediately gave thanks to God when Fr. Silvan in Nassau phoned me of your election just hours after the event. I am also happy that you have had the Bahama experience, for it should help you in some of the decisions you will have to make as Abbot. I would also look forward to your visiting us in the Bahamas when you can.

Fraternally, Richard, OSB

OSB ECKROTH_00212



My dearest ones,

February, 1993

My most recent visitor has been Bro. George Primus from St. John's Abbey. He came to Nassau at the time of my January trip to Nassau for the monthly meeting of the priests with the Bishop, and came out to Andros with me immediately after that meeting. It was a Thursday, and that is the weekly night for steaks to be served in the Mess Hall on the Base, so I was able to give him a royal treat for his arrival. Steak with all the trimmings you can pile on your plate. We would repeat the experience the next couple Thursdays. As civilians not on duty we have to pay, but where can you get a top meal like this for just \$3.00? He is a couple years older than I, and since we are kindred spirits we had a good time visiting and working together. We did a lot of outdoor clearing of brush and cutting of trees that needed to be removed and even started digging for a cesspit at the buildings at Dehring Point. Of course the terrain is all rock, but one often finds fissures and crevices in the coral rock, and this is what we were looking for in order to drive down an 8-foot ground rod for the electrical system we are ready to put into the buildings. We found a "soft" spot and drove the point down 5 feet into the rock near where I plan to have the cesspit. On a Saturday morning some of the men joined us to mix cement by hand and pour half of the porch slab at the back end of the residence buildings and steps. In this slab I buried an electrical conduit which will be the start of the steel line of pipes I intend to run across the 125 feet to the back of the ancient church to electrify that too. I have been waiting for an electrical engineer to hook up the meter and meter control box so we can begin to use electric tools there and get much more work done.

One day we drove to the north end of the island so he could see what that part of the world is like with its thousands of acres of farm produce under irrigation, and also see the ruins of the 2 churches that we used to have in that area. We stopped at one of the packing houses and I bought a bunch of delicious grapefruit which I shared with others. I like grapefruit with my breakfast, but a bushel of them goes a very long way. A heavy rain hit us along the way, and I learned the hard way that the floor of my little truck had rusted away, and suddenly when driving through a puddle I was totally soaked with water. I found some rags to stuff in the hole for a temporary solution, but such a condition called for early remedy. Back at Fresh Creek I found the top of a plastic barrel and was able to cut it down to fit over the opening in the floor and fastened it with pop rivets. Of course it is not the best solution, but at least it should keep me dry for a while.

A treat we enjoyed at the restaurant closest to my house in Fresh Creek was a supper of turtle steaks prepared by a real Bahamian cook Carmita Moxey. I had stopped in the afternoon to ask her if she had any conch on hand so we could come for one of her delicious conch steak suppers. She said she did have conch, but that maybe I would be interested in sea turtle steaks. I have not had such a delicacy since I did some work on Exuma Island some years ago and there enjoyed a tasty turtle steak dinner. Carmita did it up real well with all the Bahamian trimmings, and we went home stuffed!

Bro. George and I mixed a batch of cement in the unusual manner of the men here and poured steps to the outside of both ends of the residence at Dehring Point. The men would have helped me pour the last part of the porch slab, but the cement merchant in Nassau did not get my cement order to the boat on time for its sailing, and I had to wait an extra week for it. The boat is supposed to sail at a given time, but that time can be shifted drastically at the whim of the captain. Maybe it was just as well, for they had a very rough crossing and things got soaked terribly. I heard some of the passengers on the boat tell of their mortal fear of capsizing on the crossing. That is the same boat I hope to ride soon from Fresh Creek to Mangrove Cay for a visit.

OSB ECKROTH_00213

2.

I should have started the other side of this page with an explanation of the photo that I used to open the page. The photo is of the southern end of the Church of St. John Chrysostom at Fresh Creek where I live. The 12 feet of this end of the building are my living quarters. To the north you can see the pillars of the nice breezeway that separates the church from the rectory where Sister Mary lives. For Christmas I had gone up on the roof and highlighted the cross there with colored lights which made it really stand out by land approach or by sea approach, for the photo was taken nearly at the edge of the sea. In a wind storm you get plenty of sound effects with the huge waves crashing onto the rocky shore. Happily the building is about 25 feet above the level of the ocean, with a solid rocky wall to break the force of the waves. But my windows are frequently wet with salt spray.

For some time the ceiling of the sacristy of Christ the King Church at Cargill Creek has bothered me very much, for only half of it was still in place after termites ate away all the support of one of the ceiling beams with the result that the ceiling fell to the floor. So I bought some lumber in Nassau to replace the plaster board ceiling with wood. These I treated against termites and even painted them with 2 coats of enamel before cutting them to size and nailing them in place. The termite treatment and the 2 coats of paint made them difficult to fit together, but there is a nice carpet in the sacristy and I was afraid of dripping paint on it if I had nailed up the unpainted boards and then painted them in place. It was difficult work, but I finally succeeded in getting them nailed in place. Now the ceiling looks pretty good. And painted yet!

Another recent job with my Saturday helpers was to mix the cement and pour the floor of the old sacristy of the church at Behring Point. I guess we were in a hurry, for it did not turn out as smooth as our other floors, and we also had to repair some holes in the floor of the church itself where some roots of a tree about 25 feet away grew under the floor and pushed up the floor. I removed the cause of that occurring again by chopping off the offending roots outside the building. I think that Fr. Gabriel built this sacristy onto the church about 1900, so he could live there in relative comfort and roll right out of bed to the altar if he ever over-slept. In 1912 he built the big 2-story residence which was to serve him and all the later priests working the Andros shore as their residence and homebase.

I had another funeral in a non-Catholic church some weeks ago. One of our parishioners to whom I had been bringing Holy Communion each Sunday up and died, but the settlement where he was living at the end, Bowen Sound, does not have a Catholic Church, so the family asked if I could bury him from the Pentecostal Church in the settlement. The Pentecostal minister was agreeable to it, so I conducted a Catholic funeral in the Pentecostal church and then marched the body to the village cemetery where we laid him to rest. There were many non-Catholic ministers present at the funeral and all wanted to have a piece to say at a time for eulogies. By the time all got to say their piece quite a bit of time had passed, for some of them got pretty loud and long winded. I think that many of the people had never been at a Catholic funeral service and found it quite tame compared to what they are used to.

In my working on the grounds of the old buildings at Behring Point I have come across an official Bench Mark of the Lands Survey Office of the Bahamas. It is located in a cement base in front of the old residence building and almost at the edge of the nice road that cuts through the rocky ridge behind the buildings. It is dated only 1974, so it is not very old, but it probably reflects the official point from which any further surveying in the area is to be taken. The Church has a nice block of land, about 10 acres, at this Behring Point location, and this rather new government road cuts right through the land, and to build it on the level they had to cut through the rocky ridge to a depth of some 12 feet. Interesting!

I am writing these lines only a week into February. In a couple days I intend to board the mail boat and ride it to Mangrove Cay, which is probably further away from Fresh Creek than Nassau is. I have been invited to join them on Mangrove Cay for the dedication of a nice new library near the Sister's Convent. I am happy for this development, for I can foresee only good coming from such a facility. Of course I will also have a splendid chance to visit with my many friends on the island, and that will be enjoyable. At the end of the week I intend to fly back to Fresh Creek on a local charter service called Congo Air. That same Saturday morning I should take cement to Behring Point and join the guys there to pour the last part of the porch at the old residence building. Then a week later we are planning a big Parish Fair at the old buildings, this will be the Saturday before Ash Wednesday. We want to use the old residence to serve dinners to the people and the other building and stalls for different games for the children. I think last year at a similar fair we cleared more than \$700.00 on the meals; so we should do at least as well this year. I am hoping to have electricity to the building before that date, or else we will have to get one of the neighbors across the street to run an extension across the road. For Ash Wednesday I am looking forward to an ecumenical service with the Anglican community, but we have not yet decided whether to have it at their smaller St. Stephen's Church or our larger St. John Chrysostom Church. And then the day after Ash Wednesday is the 100th anniversary of the first mass offered on Andros. We are planning an evening outdoor Mass on the site where the house stood where it was offered. It is now a Fishing Resort, but the owner has graciously invited us to celebrate there that evening.

all is well here as you can see.

*Fraternally,
Richard, OSB*

OSB ECKROTH_00214

RICHARD WILLIAM ECKROTH

Mid-August 1993

reported their suspicions that their son had been involved as a young boy with Richard when at the cabin on Lake Swenson. The daughter-in-law had told this but they could get no confirmation of it from . They subsequently went to where lives but did not press him for more information than he was willing to give. They suggested that he go for counseling, which he has done.

September 19, 1993 -- Sunday

Father Dan Ward asked to see me at 9:30 a.m. He reported to me his conversation with the advocate, Maxine Barnett-Cermele. At about 4:40 p.m. I called Prior Mel in the Bahamas to tell him, and we talked about the best way to approach Richard. Since in these cases there is the remote possibility of suicide we tentatively decided that we would find a way of having Richard come in from Andros to Nassau and I would fly in on Wednesday, September 22, confront him with the case, and accompany him to a treatment facility if possible, or back to Minnesota if unable to get him into a treatment facility right away.

September 20, 1993 -- Monday

9:15 a.m. I called St Luke's Institute, talked with Delia, the office manager. I told her the case and suggested I thought it important that we get him into evaluation and treatment as soon as possible. She was to call me back. My alternative plan is to call Father Liam Hoare of the Paraclete Fathers and ask the possibilities there.

c.9:45 a.m. I called Bishop Lawrence Burke in Nassau, Bahamas and alerted him to the fact that I am withdrawing Father Richard from his assignment, but that he should keep this under his hat until I have had a chance to speak with him face to face. My inclination as of today is to perhaps go directly to Andros, have Prior Mel meet me there and together go to Richard, inform him, help him pack, and return to the U.S. directly from Andros. [Father Mel can then read a prepared statement to the monastic community in Nassau informing them of the action and, in general terms, the reason for the action.]

10:30 a.m. Talked with A.W.R. Sipe. Did not give him Richard's name but asked for alternatives to St Luke's and Paraclete's. He suggested Institute of Living in Hartford, Ct with Father Jim Gill, or Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas with Glen Gabbard.

c. 1:30 p.m. Dr. Carol Farthing of St Luke's called with news of arrangements for Richard to go to St Luke's on Oct. 3 for evaluation and in November for residency program if so evaluated. I then talked with Delia, office manager, about various

OSB ECKROTH_00235

arrangements as included here.

EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR RICHARD ECKROTH

At St Luke's Institute
Suitland, Maryland

Date: October 3, 1993 between 1 and 4 p.m. at Washington National
(best if he not arrive on Saturday)

October 8, 1993 feedback;
1:30 p.m. team meets
2:30 p.m. team with Abbot Timothy and Richard
Richard should not arrange for airport departure till 6:00
p.m. or later.

Admission not until November

What to bring: street clothes, comfortable shoes, umbrella

Convey travel information to: Tracey at (301)420-7395

CHRONICLE (con'd)

Aug 7 - Fr Fintan is off to Bimini today, via Chalk's sea-plane, for the weekend Masses there and from there to Cat Cay by boat for a Sunday noon Mass.

Aug 9 - Pope John Paul II visited Kingston, Jamaica, today.

Aug 19 - Oblate William McWeeney was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit of Doctors' Hospital today after suffering heart problems. He has since received a pace maker and is recuperating at home.

Aug 20 Br Novice Herard is working with two of our guests on renovating the guest rooms on the lower floor of the guest department, where the floors are being re-tiled and some of the plumbing replaced. His two helpers are from Nigeria and Grand Bahama, both students at the College of the Bahamas.

Aug 25 - This morning at 8:30 during an electrical storm a bolt of lightning struck the water tower. Only slight damage to the tower, which no longer stores water but houses one of the two auxiliary generators needed during electrical outages. No damage to the generator, but the organ in church was put out of commission as was also part of our new phone system.

Aug 27 - Fr Paschal Atomari of Nigeria who assisted Fr Elias as college chaplain last year will do so again this year. He lives in our guest department. Fr Paschal is now well known to our students and also assists with pastoral work on the islands on weekends.

Aug 31 - Br Barry and Fr Fintan are putting in long hours in the administration building trying to cope with the record number of students registering for the fall term. Fr Mel has been commuting to Cat Island and San Salvador on weekends, Fr Silvan to Bimini and Cat Cay, Fr Paschal to Andros. Fr George goes to Georgetown, Exuma, every weekend, where he is pastor of St Teresa's Church.

OUR NEXT OBLATE MEETING WILL BE SEPT. 19,
beginning with the Holy Hour for Vocations
at 4:00pm.

OSB ECKROTH_00220



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S MONASTERY

POST OFFICE BOX N-3940
NASSAU, BAHAMAS
TELEPHONE 809-324-1811

THE BAHAMA BENELECTINE

Vol. 28, No. 8

September 1993

MEET FATHER RICHARD



Fr Richard Eckroth, OSB

He comes to St Augustine's from the island of Andros about once a month and stays just long enough to do some shopping and attend the monthly meeting of priests, deacons and pastoral ministers of the diocese. Always positive, always upbeat, he's the proverbial ray of sunshine to his flock wherever he happens to be stationed.

His name is Fr Richard Eckroth. You'll know him by his ready smile, a 67-year-old monk who makes every day count for something. He spends only two or three days a month here in his monastic home, and even when

here he's in and out shopping and running errands for people. Sometimes he comes to Nassau to meet guests whom he takes to Andros to meet the people there.

Although a good "community" man himself, Fr Richard is presently the only "Bahama Benedictine" of St Augustine's residing outside the monastery. However, the Benedictine Sisters of St Martin Convent have four nuns on the islands, two on Bimini and two on Grand Bahama, where they run schools and assist in the pastoral ministry.

Helping build community and family spirit is something Fr Richard has been engaged in since coming to St John's

Abbey as a student fifty years ago, and it is something he promotes with untiring zeal in the six mission communities that come under his care on Andros. Another community builder is Sr Mary Miller of the Sisters of Mercy, his co-worker on the island. Both are aware of the powerful instrument for building community and fostering ecumenism that can be found in the celebration of the Church's liturgy and in joyful attention to family events like weddings, anniversaries and holidays. Funerals too are important events in a family's history and the care and dignity with which the priest conducts them, and his genuine compassion for the survivors are never forgotten.

Earlier this year, on February 25, Fr Richard invited Bishop Lawrence A. Burke, SJ, ordinary of the Diocese of Nassau, to come to Andros to offer the Mass of Thanksgiving for the centennial observance of the opening of the first Catholic mission on the island.

One hundred years ago, on February 25, 1893, Fr Chrysostom Schreiner had visited the island and offered the first Mass on Andros in the home of a Canadian family named Green. The Green's were operating a sisal plantation in the area then known as Salvador Point.

Fr Chrysostom was moved by the simple life and spirit of the people, and the next year he assigned the newly ordained Fr Gabriel Roerig to Andros Island. Fr Gabriel stayed on Andros and worked with the people along the 100-mile coast of the island until a few months before his death 56 years later.

Fr Gabriel left lasting monuments in the buildings he built and in the faith communities he founded along the whole coast of Andros from Mastic Point in the north to Mangrove Cay and South Andros in the south. Restoring some of these buildings has occupied whatever spare time Fr Richard has had in the past two years.

Before coming to the Bahamas in 1977 Fr Richard taught for 26 years at St John's Abbey and University. As a young professor he was also a familiar figure in the carpenter and plumbing shop at the abbey, assisting in the dozens of repair jobs that general maintenance requires. Making altar candles and altar wine also captured his interest.

For the past 16 years, since coming to the Bahamas, he has been engaged in pastoral work, first at Holy Family Church,

Is it possible that . . . even had the courage to thank God for the privilege of sharing Christ's passion and redemptive work for the salvation of souls? We don't know how much of all this was really clear in her mind, but we know that now at last she has a clear notion of why God had chosen her to endure what others are no longer able to bear. The sick who suffer in a Christian spirit are our deliverers; they make it possible for us to live in light and give ourselves up to joy. Pray for . . . and to her.

Yours faithfully,

Father Silvan

CHRONICLE

June 1 - Highlight of the month of June in our diocese was the ordination of five men to the permanent diaconate by our ordinary, Bishop Lawrence A. Burke, SJ. Ordained today were Gregory Harcourt Taylor of Holy Family, Samuel Mitchell of Our Lady's and Denis Mackey of St Bede's. Patrick Darville of Long Island was ordained June 5 and Theophilus Rolle of Andros on June 18. (A sixth permanent deacon, Jeffrey Hollingsworth of Freeport, Grand Bahama, will be ordained September 6).

June 5 - This is Saturday. Every Saturday morning our diocesan pilot, Br Barry, ferries priests and sisters to their weekend assignments. Today his passengers were Fr Mel on his way to Cat Island and Bishop Burke and Fr Pat Holmes enroute to Long Island for the ordination of Pat Darville.

July 10 - Independence Day. Public Holiday.

Aug 3 - Prior Mel left for a 10-day visit to St John's Abbey. Br Novice Herard is acting guestmaster. Br Neal is in charge of the kitchen while Fr Theophil is on holiday. Br Henry continues to supply us with the staff of life in the form of his now famous monastery bread. The bakery lights are often lit as early as 4:30am. Fr Theophil will resume his teaching duties with the fall session of school.

IN MEMORY OF

DEAR OBLATES,

On August 23 died after being an invalid for 25 years. Before that she had been a faithful organist at St Francis Xavier Cathedral. I used to drop in and visit and had done so a few days before her death. If the smile and exuberance that came over her whenever she had a visitor was any indication, she must have understood her vocation of suffering with Christ to bring light to others.

who knew by personal experience a great deal about affliction, sickness, failure and mental and physical collapse, wrote a preface to the Notebook of his invalid sister. In it we read: "O my sister, while I in my devotion to the positive forces of the universe, was roaming over continents and oceans, you, stretched out motionless on your bed of sickness, were silently transforming into light the most grievous shadows of the world. Tell me, in the eyes of the Creator, which of us will have chosen the better part?"

From the time she was interested in music and she used music to overcome the darkness of the world and to bring light and joy into the life of children and grown-ups.

What must have gone through her mind during this past quarter century as she lay helpless in her bed? Did she continue to understand her vocation of bringing light and joy into the world? Every Christian has this vocation. The world is full of gloom, confusion and darkness. Did understand that God was calling her to combine those kinds of darkness in her own life, and to endure them patiently? Did she understand that God has destined her to concentrate in herself the burdens, darkness and weight of the world and to transform them into God's joy?

It surely seems so, because even a few days before her death she could still shout for joy at the sight of a visitor. By bearing the obscurity and darkness of the world in her own person, but at the same time opening her own darkness to the light of Christ, she has made the world happier and brought us all a little nearer to heaven. Understanding this, she probably did not need to be told anything more about the mystery of human suffering.

Fr Burton Bloms, OSB

priest and teacher, a tireless worker for academic excellence and a skilled athlete. He came to the Bahamas to succeed Fr Frederic Frey as Headmaster of St Augustine's College, which position he held for the next four years, when Fr Bonaventure Dean succeeded him. Fr Frederic died on Christmas Day, 1963. Fr Burton had taken on the duties of headmaster in October '63.

At that time we were not thinking of independence yet, but only enlarging the school and making it our chief source of income, since it was where all of our monks were involved directly or indirectly. With Fr Burton the student enrollment was increased from 174 to 1,000 and the teaching staff was enlarged from a dozen to over 50, mainly lay men and women.

Fr Burton broadened the curriculum to include general studies, supervised the building of the library, the administration building, twelve new classrooms, an athletic building with swimming pool, and new kitchen and dining facilities.

then on South Andros, then at Bimini, and now back on central Andros.

Now a survivor from hip surgery and arthritis, Fr Richard walks with a decided limp, but in place of a cane his usual walking companion is a chain saw or a box of tools.

THIRTY YEARS AGO

Thirty years ago there appeared on the Bahamian scene Fr Burton Bloms (left), a man whose educational vision has captured the imagination of the missionary areas in which he has worked - Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas.

Here was another community builder - a zealous monk,

In four short years Fr Burton obtained vast support through a Board of Directors and personal contact with business and financial leaders in Nassau. He demanded quality performance from students and teachers alike and was not disappointed. His building plans and his organization of the fund-raising activities was a daring venture, but he soon demonstrated his genius for organization and won the confidence, not only of big donors but also of other headmasters and educators in the Bahamas, just as he had in Mexico and Puerto Rico. Also, he respected what Prior Frederic had done in the nineteen years of his administration and, instead of supplanting it, built on the established foundation.

There were those (in 1963) who warned Fr Burton that if he raised tuition the parents would take their children out of St Augustine's and put them into free government schools. He doubled the tuition fees and the next year enrollment went from 176 to 400 students.

Today, at 73, this energetic monk has a few more wrinkles than our photo of 30 years ago, but he is still active as the chaplain of St Theresa Home, a large retirement center for senior citizens in Minneapolis.

WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS

We hope that while you are our guests you will feel that you are part of our Benedictine family where we live together, work together and pray together. Monks do not live in the monastery in order "to get away from it all," but rather to make a needed contribution to life in our times and in our country. We do this by living a life that combines prayer and work.

We hope you will feel comfortable as our family guests, free to discover your own humanity and goodness and to share them with us. If we have any authentic voice in your presence, it is only the voice which speaks to your own experience and to your own hopes for mankind. Perhaps during your visit to St Augustine's we can, together, understand better the thirst for life and growth which is so much a part of modern man's search for meaning. We believe that a monastery should be a place where the most important values about man and his life are preserved, expressed and encouraged.

OSB ECKROTH_00223



Photo courtesy THE BEACON, St Augustine's College

As Prior of the monastery and Chancellor of the college, PRIOR MEL TAYLOR bears the ultimate responsibility for both. He keeps in daily touch with administrators, teachers and students. Keeping in mind that the head of the monastery has the place of Christ in the community, the Prior has the difficult task of "mingling gentleness with sternness." Students soon get the message and appreciate the love and attention.



My dearest ones,

September, 1993

The calendar may read mid-September as I type this page, but the thermometer reads hottest summer. My only consolation is that I do not have to spend time in the classroom as the kids here have to already. It is said that these hot summer spells are part of the reason for hurricanes to be generated into such powerful forces of nature. Just a couple weeks ago all the Bahamas anxiously tracked the major hurricane EMILY. It was with much relief that it tracked north of the Bahama Islands and then happily veered out to sea just before it was due to strike the North Carolina coast. But since we are only half way through the hurricane season, and the second half has the worst history, there is still much apprehension. You can be sure that every Sunday Mass has a special petition to God to spare us again. And there is no one reluctant to answer AMEN to that one.

The above photo was taken this spring when my friends from visited here. It nicely shows the big church bell we have here at Fresh Creek. I do not know if it was ever mounted in a bell tower; I doubt it; but it is sturdily mounted on a cement base. One cannot swing it as most bells are sounded, but with a rope one pulls the striking hammer against the lip of the bell to create a very satisfying gong that sounds all through the settlement. It is certainly the biggest and loudest bell in this part of the Bahamas. It would be interesting to learn the origin of the bell... There is a recent change in the scenery, for about a week ago three of my friends from the Navy Base came after their regular work, and with a much better chain saw than I have cut down that big double-trunk cauarina in the background. I was always fearful that a good storm or hurricane might someday topple it onto the church roof. It is a fast growing species of pine, also called the Australian pine, but it is not a lumber tree. Wood carvers like it, for the heart of the trunk is a rich red color, and the outer several inches of wood is white; so a good carver can create interesting sculptures from this wood. It took me only 2 days of burning before I had the whole tree put away to ashes, for open burning is permitted in the Bahamas. I think that when it was first planted so close to the church it was planned to top it off every couple years; but that must have ceased about 15 years ago, and soon the top was towering over the church.

In that open flat area in the background I recently came upon 4 openings in the rock, the openings to what amounts to caves. Some friends suspended lights into them and decided that they probably were never used by the original native Indians for habitation or protection. One was about 8 feet deep, but another was at least 12 feet deep, and a third one had lots of water in the bottom of the cave, and we could not figure out whether it was sea water that came through an underground channel or whether it was simply an accumulation of rain water, of which we have had lots lately. One of the stone openings was too small for any of us to fit through, and the other caves did not seem that interesting to be worth the effort of squeezing in. There has been talk among the kids that are caves back in the heavy brush which covers about half of the church property. So with machetes we hacked our way through the brush in several areas, got plenty of scratches for my efforts, but did not stumble into anything like the reputed caves. But it is not just the kids who claim the existence of such caves in the church yard, for some of the old timers also claim they played in the caves when they were youngsters. So you know the stories have been around a long time. We did stumble upon someone's marijuana plant in a pot ready for quick removal. And we also came upon some old cement walls of a house totally overgrown with trees and vines and smaller brush. They did pick up an old type of saucer of metal, but coated with porcelain, white with a blue edge. Interesting!

Mr. Richard

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
FROM: Abbot Timothy Kelly, O.S.B.
RE: travel plans
DATE: September 27, 1993

I spoke with the folks at St Luke's in Suitland, Maryland, this morning. If I let them know where you will be staying in Washington they will arrange to have you picked up at that motel. Let me know and I will phone them tomorrow.

They suggest that you bring street clothes, comfortable shoes, an umbrella.

Unfortunately I have discovered that on October 8 I am expected to be here for the blessing of Sexton Commons. Therefore I will not be able to be with you and the team for the closing session. When I talked with them today they gave their o.k., especially since I have been there before and know their procedures and will more easily understand their reports and recommendations. I would have preferred to be with you to be a support and I have judged it better that I not ask someone else to substitute for me. They will give me a report on the telephone first, and then a written report later. Believe me, I will be with you in prayer the whole way. If you want to stop in and talk about any of this feel free to do so. Peace.

OSB ECKROTH_00237

EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS FOR RICHARD ECKROTH

At St Luke's Institute
Suitland, Maryland

Date: October 3, 1993 between 1 and 4 p.m. at Washington National
(best if he not arrive on Saturday)

October 8, 1993 feedback;
1:30 p.m. team meets
2:30 p.m. team with Abbot Timothy and Richard
Richard should not arrange for airport departure till 6:00
p.m. or later.

Admission not until November

What to bring: street clothes, comfortable shoes, umbrella

Convey travel information to: Tracey at (301)420-7395

Bonnie Connor
admissions →

SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY

BOX 2015
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA 56321-2015

OFFICE OF THE ABBOT

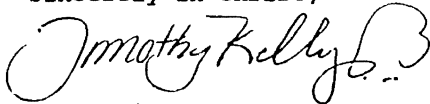
September 27, 1993

Dr. Catherine Turner
St Luke Institute
Suitland, Maryland
FAX: 301-967-3953

Dear Dr. Turner:

Following is a page of confidential notes concerning Father Richard Eckroth in preparation for his evaluation at St Luke's. Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely in Christ,


Abbot Timothy Kelly, O.S.B.

3 pages including this one

PHONE 612 363-2544  FAX 612 363-3082

OSB ECKROTH_00239

Report on phone from Steve Montana at St Lukie's
Oct. 8, 1993

6 or 7 yrs. ago - allegation; ~~spoke~~ about someone talked to father
Need residential treatment - don't know if it would help.

Seems - in massages - lower back, calves, thighs - admits to this
doesn't see it as sexual or problematic.

Not able to talk about it. Not able to bring himself to admit it.

2nd possibility - giving massages, maybe more & felt to buy like he uses drugs to
penetrate them. None registers in him as sexual.

Has serious problem. If not telling, or not seeing it as sexual - problem

1. residential treatment

2. a test to determine

3. carefully monitored treatment for 30 days.

Behaviors - had to be guaranteed that no contact w/ miners

aggression, anger

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Mr. & Mrs. , with Maxine
October 10, 1993 3:00 P.M. to c.4:00 P.M.

Met with Mr. & Mrs. and son along with Maxine. Mrs. is stepmother, his mother having died in the early 70s. Mr. held a job in the Twin Cities and wasn't home much in those days because he had to support his family. He said his grandmother had moved in to take care of the children. I'm not sure if he meant grandmother or Mr. grandmother. lives in He is , but under medication that seems to be working. He is looking to move into his own apartment when he can get the subsidy he needs for this. He is working, I believe he said it was for a former Fingerhut building, where he packs knives, forks, spoons, for shipping. It is, it seems, a less than minimum wage job but he believes he is the best worker there. He does a lot of volunteer work for neighbors, especially for one older woman, because he wants God to see that he is doing good deeds. He used to do drugs, but it was not clear to me whether this was hard drugs or pot or a combination. He now smokes one cigarette a day and laughs about wanting to quick the habit altogether. He sees his counsellor once a week who assures him that he is not homosexual nor a bad person.

tells what happened to him about 20 years ago. He says he was about 6 or 7, now he is 27, I believe. He began by saying he didn't remember the name of the priest but Richard sounds right to him. At one point he called him Robert. The incident he recalls was a trip to a cabin. He described it as a place on a hill with a slope down to the lake. In the cabin there was a loft where the boys and Richard slept while a girl slept on a top double decker bed in the lower part of the cabin. He says he was in bed with Richard as was one of the boys. It seems brother was in another bed. In the middle of the night, he says, Richard placed hand on Richard's penis. felt it but then pulled away. After that, was on his stomach and Richard got on top of him and placed his penis in "my butt." It hurt and he started whimpering. Richard, he says, placed a pillow over his head to quiet him. He says that after it was over they prayed for awhile and thinks Richard knew it was wrong and wanted to pray now. When this praying happened isn't quite clear to me. The next day when went to the bathroom he bled and saw blood in his stool. He was afraid he was bleeding to death. When I asked him about the bathroom he couldn't remember whether there was an outhouse or if they just went in the woods. They went swimming and the water made it hurt all the more. He didn't want to be in the water. They were playing a game of dunking each other. Richard had told that if he told anyone what happened it would be a great sin and thought that if a priest said this it must be true. In the dunking game Richard held in the water and he got some water in his lungs, he says. Richard told him that accidents do happen especially if someone commits the great sin of telling. He never told anyone of this later on but did have nightmares about it.

OSB ECKROTH_00240

Later on he remembers that Wilma the housekeeper at St Augustine's rectory told him that if he wanted candy he should get it from her and not from Richard. He thinks Wilma knew something funny was going on with Richard and was trying to protect him from anything bad happening. Nothing further happened to him and that was the only time he went to the cabin with Richard. He thinks Wilma talked his grandmother into not letting Richard take them anymore, though this seems very speculative. He spoke of Richard as a good priest who had this one problem, who would have been a good priest if it hadn't been for this mental illness. He admired Richard because he was so good with the kids, and he referred to him at one point as playing the guitar.

 became conscious of this when he heard about the Porter case. His father showed him an article in the paper and his reaction was intense. He threw the paper aside and said he didn't want to think about this. Then he heard about the boys through his stepmother who had talked to . Since this happened to the boys, according to her, he believed that it happened to him as well, that his nightmares were founded in a painful reality, that he wasn't making it up. I believe he said he has not talked with the boys (now men) about it.

Mr. has real problems with all of this. According to his wife of 12 years he sleeps poorly and rehearses it often. He needs counselling, she says. Part of the problem antedates what happened to or his knowledge of what happened to . He was in the service -- and I'm not certain for which war -- and was a volunteer on occasion to go with a group to wipe out what I would interpret to be snipers. He hinted broadly that his involvement was in killing those who had killed our men and that he had done this on a volunteer basis, clearly a matter that disturbs him to this day. Add to this what happened to his son and you have a man who is in need of counselling. understands his own mental illness as something he cannot control alone, while he says that Richard's he should be able to control.

We all encouraged Mr. to seek counselling and Maxine said she would help him find someone suitable. I offered to have Maxine and Dan Ward work out an agreement whereby we would pay for this counselling. In the name of the community I asked forgiveness for what happened to and promised to help where I could. I told them I had gone to the Bahamas and returned with Richard and that I have had him evaluated and will pursue the necessary course of action with him. I did not add any evaluation of what the conclusions were in his regard.

Father Richard Eckroth, O.S.B.
October 9, 1993 in the morning (Saturday)

Father Richard called me and asked to see me. He came to my office to talk about the evaluation he had had the day before at St Luke's Institute in Suitland, Maryland. He is prepared to return there according to their recommendations, or to another such program if the abbot judges that best. St Luke's can't take him until around Christmas time, so he will pursue having his hip surgery taken care of. He should be up and around in time to go. I made it clear that I cannot place him somewhere that would pose a danger to anyone else. He thought that if he could go back to the Bahamas and live in the monastery that he would not be endangering anyone and I told him I would have to evaluate that. He agreed to finding someone in the community with whom he can talk and the likelihood is that will be R.P.



Saint Luke Institute

CONFIDENTIAL

October 22, 1993

Right Reverent Timothy T. Kelly, OSB
Abbot and Chancellor
St. John's Abbey
PO Box 2015
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

RE: Reverend Richard Eckroth, OSB
SLI NO: 12814

Dear Abbot Kelly:

Thank you for your referral of Father Richard Eckroth who is, as you know, a 67 year-old Benedictine priest from St. John's Abbey in Collegeville. Father Eckroth was referred to Saint Luke Institute for evaluation following allegations that were made against him that stemmed from incidents that occurred approximately 19 or 20 years ago. According to Father Eckroth, the complainants allege that he had sexual contact with two different boys, both of whom were approximately seven years old at the time. Father Eckroth states that these allegations came to him approximately two weeks before the evaluation. Father Eckroth denies having sexual contact with either of these two boys and, in fact, denies having sexual contact with anyone in his life. It is important to note that there is another complaint that had been lodged against Father Eckroth approximately six or seven years ago. Father Eckroth is somewhat vague about the nature of this complaint, except that it was "something sexual." In light of these allegations, it was thought that a complete psychological and physical evaluation at Saint Luke Institute was justified.

Father Eckroth came to Saint Luke Institute on October 3, 1993 and completed his evaluation on October 8, 1993. Although Father Eckroth was somewhat defensive on the psychological testing component of the evaluation, we nevertheless believe that we were able to make an accurate assessment of his current psychological functioning.

When we evaluate an individual who has been having emotional and/or behavioral problems, we include an assessment of a wide variety of motivations, developmental experiences and physical factors. Our assessment protocol includes the following elements:

1. Psychosocial interview.
2. Clinical interview.
3. Physical and neurological examination.
4. Electrocardiogram.
5. Chest x-ray.
6. Psychological testing including personality and projective tests.
7. Neuropsychological testing including intelligence tests, memory tests, the Halstead-Reitan neuropsychological tests.
8. Spiritual assessment.

The final step in the evaluation process is a discussion among the evaluation team members about the client. We then meet with the client to report our findings and recommendations. This report will outline the results of our interviews and testing and will detail our recommendations.

PSYCHOSOCIAL HISTORY: We take a detailed background history from our clients in order to understand the impact of past events on current attitudes and behavior..... Although we gathered many details about Father Eckroth's background, we will include only the clinically relevant information in this report.

Father Eckroth was born on June 21, 1926 in North Dakota. He is the ninth oldest of fourteen children; the two children born just ahead of Father Eckroth both died when they were very young. Father Eckroth reports that their deaths, in addition to his being a somewhat sickly child, made his mother quite concerned about his health.

Father Eckroth describes his mother as a beautiful, shy and gentle person who was orphaned at age six when her own mother drowned. He describes his father as a gentleman who was honest and never seemed angry.

Father Eckroth does not recall any separation problems when he began school. He recalls that he enjoyed elementary school and liked his teachers. He was, reportedly, a good student and reports that he had several friends.

Because the allegations against Father Eckroth are sexual in nature, we took a detailed sexual history from him. Father Eckroth states that there was very little talk about sexuality in his family. He reports that there was very little open affection between family members but, nevertheless, there was a strong feeling that he was in a loving family. Father Eckroth denies any early peer sexual contact. He says there was no discussion with peers and no experimentation with his peers around sexual matters. He recalls that, in eighth grade, he got a pamphlet about sex from his mother. He says that he started to enter puberty at approximately age 13 or 14. He reports that he was embarrassed about nocturnal emissions at that time. Father Eckroth reports that he would occasionally touch himself in order to become sexually

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aroused, but avoided stimulating himself to the point of ejaculation. He recalls that in prep school an older boy tried to get in bed with him, but Father Eckroth, reportedly, rebuffed him.

Father Eckroth states that when he did start engaging in masturbatory activity, it occurred approximately twice a month. Father Eckroth denies ever having sexual contact with an adult while he was young.

Father Eckroth states that he went to St. John's Prep in Collegeville, graduating in 1944. After that he attended St. John's University before going to Rome to study philosophy. He then returned to St. John's and was ordained in 1952. Father Eckroth reportedly taught philosophy at St. John's until the mid 1970s. After this he went to the Bahamas and did parochial ministry and missionary work. He describes his ministry assignments in very positive terms and states that he is happy with his present work load.

Regarding the allegations against him, Father Eckroth states that he used to enjoy taking children on outings. He reports that the Abbey owned a log cabin and that he would usually bring between five and seven boys at a time for overnight trips. He states that most of these boys were approximately ages 10 through 12, but he would sometimes bring younger children if they were accompanied by an older sibling. Father Eckroth also mentions that, at times, he would bring both boys and girls on the trip.

One of the people bringing the complaint against Father Eckroth states that Father Eckroth sexually abused him at the cabin. He reports that he was approximately six years old when Father Eckroth had anal intercourse with him. This person also reports that Father Eckroth kept a pillow over his head while the abuse occurred. He also notes that Father Eckroth warned him not to report this information to anyone else.

Another person who brings allegations states that Father Eckroth sexually abused him while at the cabin when he was six or seven years old. This person notes that Father Eckroth put his hand over his mouth while he was being sexually abused. This person reportedly feels that he was intimidated by Father Eckroth and that he was afraid that Father Eckroth might harm him if he told anyone.

Father Eckroth acknowledges that there is a similarity in the stories reported by these two men. He denies that he had sexual contact with either of these boys. He states it is not "in my nature" to be threatening to others. Father Eckroth has no explanation about why these people would bring allegations like this if they were untrue.

OSB ECKROTH_00228

Father Eckroth does admit that he would bring boys into the sauna at the cabin and that both the boys and Father Eckroth would often be naked. Father Eckroth also notes that it would not be uncommon for one of these boys to request a massage. Father Eckroth states that he and the boys in the sauna would give this person a massage on their back. He says they would touch the person's back, legs, thighs and calves. Father Eckroth notes that sometimes he would request this kind of a massage and the boys would similarly touch him. Father Eckroth says that he may have touched the buttocks of some of these boys; he points out that it was very dark in the sauna because it was lit only by a lantern light. When questioned more closely about this behavior, Father Eckroth claims that he noticed nothing sexual nor felt anything sexual involved in this kind of behavior.

Father Eckroth admits that there was another allegation that surfaced approximately six or seven years ago about some inappropriate sexual incident with a boy. Father Eckroth states that the Abbot at that time spoke with the father and with the young man about the incident. The incident reportedly occurred a little after the alleged events described above. Father Eckroth was not able to remember the details of the allegation.

Regarding his sexual orientation, Father Eckroth states that he is attracted to adult women. He denies any sexual activity with any adult women or anyone else. He denies any sexual attraction to male minors. Father Eckroth states that he does not regularly engage in masturbation. He says that if he has an erotic thought, he will sometimes touch himself, but will attempt to avoid ejaculation.

PSYCHIATRIC HISTORY: Father Eckroth denies any family history of mental illness. He denies any emotional problems in himself. He denies any history of depression or anxiety. He denies any psychotic symptoms.

Father Eckroth states that he drinks rarely. He says he will have a rum and Coke before bed at times. He denies any drinking occurred while he was at the cabin with the boys. Father Eckroth says there have been no complaints about his drinking from others. There are reportedly no legal, physical or social consequences secondary to his drinking behavior.

In the interviews, Father Eckroth was completely oriented. There was no indication of disturbance in thought content or process. His affect was somewhat restrained; he seemed to take a cognitive approach to the allegations.

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT: As part of the assessment process, Father Eckroth underwent a spiritual assessment interview with Father Bill Stumpf. Father Stumpf reports that Father Eckroth appears to have a very disciplined prayer life. He is

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reportedly faithful to the Liturgy of the Hours on a daily basis. He reportedly takes a yearly retreat with either the monks at a nearby abbey or the local diocesan clergy.

Father Stumpf notes that Father Eckroth's spiritual life and work seems to have found energy around building projects associated with parish. He believes this is part of the reason he has always admired St. Joseph.

Father Eckroth reportedly notes that one of his continual spiritual challenges is patience. He sometimes reportedly finds that his parishioners exhaust his patience. Father Eckroth notes that he lives alone and has tried to adopt a very efficient use of his time. He reportedly feels more comfortable with a good deal of structure and order in his life.

Overall, Father Stumpf feels Father Eckroth is to be affirmed for his very disciplined prayer life. Father Stumpf believes that there is a certain detachment in Father Eckroth's approach to life and wonders whether this is similarly true of his spiritual life.

LEGAL STATUS: Father Eckroth states that there are no civil or criminal charges against him at this time.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND LABORATORY EXAMINATION: As part of his evaluation, Father Eckroth underwent a thorough physical examination by our consultant in internal medicine. Our internist notes that Father Eckroth is in excellent health except for prostatism. He, currently, takes Hytrin, 5 mg. a day, for his symptoms. Father Eckroth underwent a prostate biopsy in May, 1993 and the results were negative. Our internist reports that Father Eckroth has been hospitalized in the past for a left hip replacement and hernia repair.

On examination, Father Eckroth is six feet tall and weighs 185 pounds. His pulse is 72 and his blood pressure is 124/70. Examination of the head and neck is normal with no evidence of thyroid pathology. Chest and cardiovascular examinations are within normal limits. An abdominal exam reveals no liver or spleen enlargement or other abnormality. His extremities are normal. Neurological exam reveals good reflexes and coordination. His EKG and chest x-ray are normal.

As part of his evaluation, Father Eckroth underwent a thorough laboratory examination. Most of the laboratory values are within normal limits. Father Eckroth's PSA is elevated, a finding taken into account by our internist who notes the prostate problems as mentioned above.

Other laboratory values are within normal limits. There is no elevation in Father Eckroth's glucose level. Liver enzymes and thyroid values are also normal. There is no evidence of any drugs in Father Eckroth's system. There is no evidence of past or

OSB ECKROTH_00230

current sexually transmitted diseases. A special test of a hormone known to be related to sexual urgency is within normal limits.

Father Eckroth's cholesterol level is slightly elevated at 227/mg/dl. It seems important that Father Eckroth follow a low cholesterol diet.

Overall, our internist states that Father Eckroth is in good health. He notes his prostatism, which is currently being medicated. He also notes the elevated PSA, which seems adequately handled with a prostate biopsy four months ago.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION: As part of our evaluation, we examine the functioning of the brain since the brain mediates all perception and experience. This was particularly important in Father Eckroth's case because it is now well documented that neuropsychological impairment is correlated with sexual behavior disorders.

On the testing Father Eckroth receives a Verbal IQ score in the very superior range, a Performance IQ score in the very superior range and a Full Scale IQ score in the very superior range. Analysis of test scores reveals that Father Eckroth has no difficulties in attention and concentration tasks.

Tests of memory function show mixed results. Father Eckroth demonstrates mild impairment on delayed recall of verbal material. His facility with complex verbal material is within normal limits but, compared to his superior IQ, his memory for complex verbal material is relatively impaired.

Father Eckroth's nonverbal memory seems adequate for immediate recall but he shows mild problems in delayed recall. This is particularly true of his abilities for remembering complex nonverbal material.

Father Eckroth shows no difficulties on tests that measure abstraction and complex nonverbal problem solving. There is no evidence of sensory perceptual deficits except left ear hearing problems. Motor skills are within normal limits. Tests that measure mental flexibility and a higher level executive judgement are also within normal limits.

Overall, our neuropsychologist states that Father Eckroth shows mild impairment in verbal and nonverbal memory tasks but otherwise is neuropsychologically intact. It will be important for Father Eckroth and his therapist to take note of his memory difficulties and devise strategies that will help him get the most out of his treatment.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING: Psychological testing is an important part of our evaluation procedure. It allows us to compare responses that our clients make to objective norms and to validate our interview impressions through test data.

Psychological testing is composed of two different parts. Personality testing assesses a client's personality traits and the strengths and weaknesses that accompany those traits. We can also assess the level of psychological distress a client is currently experiencing. Projective tests assess a client's habitual ways of handling thinking and emotional processes. It can also point to specific psychological conflict areas.

On one personality test, the MMPI-2, Father Eckroth produces a valid, although somewhat defensive, profile. The profile is similar to people who are described as somewhat shy and with social inhibitions. People like this are usually excessively sensitive about what others think and inhibited in their personal relationships. The tests also suggest that Father Eckroth has a limited range of interests especially as compared to most priests. He is likely to be less interested in the expression or discussion of feelings than his peers. There is no evidence of clinically significant levels of depression or anxiety. There is also no evidence of any psychotic disorders.

On another personality inventory, the MCMI-2, Father Eckroth again produces a valid personality profile. Several major personality trends emerge from this testing. The testing suggests that Father Eckroth greatly values meeting the expectations of others, especially those in authority. Conforming to the rules and values of others will likely be emphasized in most areas of his life. The test results suggest that this personality trait is present to such an extent that Father Eckroth will be at risk for sacrificing his more independent and negative feelings in order to minimize any conflict he feels with those in authority. Father Eckroth's wish to gain the affirmation of others, the tests suggest, will help him ease interpersonal tensions but will also cause him to sacrifice expressions of resentment or of difficult feelings. The testing also suggests that Father Eckroth's tendency towards social withdrawal will thwart his ability to get his dependency needs met by peers. It is probable that this has contributed to Father Eckroth's using his relationships with minors as a way to satisfy these needs.

The projective testing suggests that Father Eckroth has a marked tendency to simplify complex information so that he may not recognize the nuances or social demands involved in these situations. An example of this may be Father Eckroth's understanding of what it meant to be so physically intimate with minors in the sauna. Although Father Eckroth's assessment of the situation may be correct, it is limited because it does not include the sexual nature of these physical contacts.

The test results also suggest that Father Eckroth is at risk for distorting or misinterpreting information more than most adults. This will probably be more exaggerated when Father Eckroth is confronted with complicated emotional situations.

Test results further suggest that Father Eckroth has a tendency to avoid emotional stimuli when possible. People such as this are usually quite uncomfortable around emotion and are at risk for becoming socially isolated. The test results also suggest

that Father Eckroth has unusual high capacities to withstand stress. Although this is a positive characteristic in people who do not have prominent psychological problems, it also suggests that people with psychological problems will be more difficult to change. It will be important for Father Eckroth and his therapist to find ways for Father Eckroth to experience sufficient stress for him to motivate the behavioral changes necessary to overcome his difficulties.

DIAGNOSES:

- | | | |
|----------|----|--|
| AXIS I | 1. | Sexual disorder not otherwise specified - unintegrated sexuality. |
| | 2. | Rule-out pedophilia - homosexual type. |
| AXIS II | 1. | Personality disorder not otherwise specified with compulsive, dependent and schizoid traits. |
| AXIS III | 1. | Prostatism. |
| | 2. | Circumscribed neuropsychological deficits in memory functioning. |
| | 3. | Status post hip replacement. |

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: We recognize that there are several specific allegations against Father Eckroth concerning sexual activity with latency age males. The similarity of these allegations and the specificity of them suggests that they are quite credible. In addition, there is another allegation regarding a sexual complaint that occurred at another time in Father Eckroth's life. We therefore believe there is a strong possibility that Father Eckroth has engaged in sexually inappropriate contact with these people. However, we take note of Father Eckroth's denial that this activity took place. We therefore cannot with certainty diagnose sexual attraction to minors. Our diagnosis above reflects our understanding that more information is needed to determine if Father Eckroth indeed has this sexual orientation.

We nevertheless believe that there is substantial evidence that Father Eckroth has been sexually inappropriate with minors. His admitted behavior with the male minors he brought to the sauna suggests that he was touching them inappropriately and allowing them to touch him in the same way. The sexual nature of these physical intimacies cannot be overlooked. Father Eckroth's lack of awareness of this component of his interaction with these minors suggests to us that, at a minimum, his sexual feelings are quite unintegrated with the rest of his personality.

The evaluation has elicited several psychosocial and psychological factors that have put Father Eckroth at risk for development of a sexual problem. His early experience of sexual repression and the interruption of the sexual developmental history are risk factors for these problems. We also believe that Father Eckroth's personality structure

Rt. Reverend Timothy T. Kelly, OSB
RE: Reverend Richard Eckroth, OSB - SLI NO: 12814

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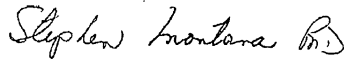
that inhibits his social interactions and gratifications from peers has probably contributed to these difficulties as well. In addition, the psychological testing reveals several risk factors including Father Eckroth's tendency to misinterpret important information.

Our recommendation is that Father Eckroth come to Saint Luke Institute for residential treatment of his issues particularly his sexual problems. We recommend that Father Eckroth undergo additional testing as soon as he begins his treatment in order to help him and the treatment staff understand his sexual orientation more completely. This testing can be accomplished in the initial stages of his residential stay. We understand that Father Eckroth has some physical problems that might delay his entry into residential treatment. It may be that resolution of these physical problems will be appropriate before he begins his psychotherapeutic treatment. Until Father Eckroth begins treatment and makes substantial progress we recommend that he have no unsupervised contact with minors. We hope to stay in touch with you to form a treatment plan that will meet Father Eckroth's physical and psychological needs.

Father Eckroth has several important strengths that will help him in his treatment. Father Eckroth's intellectual strengths and spiritual strengths will certainly be important factors in his psychological growth.

We hope this report is of help to you and to Father Eckroth. If you have any questions or if we can be of other assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Stephen Montana, PhD
Director
Outpatient Clinical Services

SM/ng
cc: Reverend Richard Eckroth

OSB ECKROTH_00234