From the Benedictine Monks of Silverstream Priory

Brother Placid McKee
at the ruins of Fore Abbey, Co. Westmeath
A WORD FROM FATHER PRIOR

DEAR FRIENDS & OBLATES OF SILVERSTREAM PRIORY, it hardly seems possible that a year has gone by since the last issue of In Cœnaculo. This silent interlude in no way means that life at Silverstream Priory has been uneventful. Quite the contrary!

Advent 2018 was marked by the vestition of Br Isaias on 8 December. We opened 2019 with the Simple Profession of D. Chrysostom on 6 January and the oblation of his mother on the following day. The feast of the Assumption on 15 August saw the Simple Profession of D. Thomas Aquinas.

Summertime is always marked by the arrival of young men eager to experience our monastic life for an initial three months; 2019 was particularly fruitful in this regard. We await the return of five men as postulants early in 2020. More recently, October saw a very successful “Vocations Weekend” requested by five fine lads from Cork; it is a heartening thing to see young men respond with enthusiasm to their first exposure to Benedictine life at Silverstream.

Throughout the year we are blessed by the frequent visits of the Bishop of Meath, Dr Tom Deenihan, and by an uninterrupted stream of priest visitors from all over Ireland and from abroad. See the Chronicle for details.

The monastery walls in no way alienate us from the life of the wider Church, both locally and universally. We are aware of the joys and sorrows of the Body of Christ and, by remaining in ceaseless prayer at the heart of Church, we bring the people and events entrusted to our intercession before the Face of God.

In his recently published book, The Day Is Now Far Spent, Robert Cardinal Sarah writes eloquently of the place of monasteries in the life of the Church today:

There is another place where we can have the experience of God who gives himself in the Church: the monasteries. We find there a concrete actualization of what the whole Church ought to be. I have often said so and I am not afraid to repeat it. The renewal will come from the monasteries. [...] [Monasteries] are the present and the future of the Church. God dwells there: he fills the hearts of the monks and the nuns with his silent presence, and all of life there is liturgical. It is nourished by faith and the Divine Office and on fire with love and the burning bush of the Divine Presence.

With regard to the construction of our monastic church: the architectural plans are completed; we have obtained the requisite approval from the Meath County Council; the ground has been cleared and is ready for construction. One thing alone delays the beginning of work: the lack of sufficient funds. We are, nonetheless, determined to go forward, trusting in Divine Providence and in your support and prayers. I am confident that the next issue of In Cœnaculo will contain photographs of the construction in progress.

In Our Lord & His Most Holy Mother,

Father Prior

IN THIS ISSUE

4
Becoming Christ’s Pure Bread
Homily at the vestition of Br Isaias, 8 December 2018.

6
Thy sons shall come from afar
Homily at the simple profession of D. Chrysostom, 6 Jan. 2019.

8
Choosing the Better Part

10
Monastic Chronicle; Refectory Reading
JULIAN, my dear son, nineteen years ago today, in Gaming, Austria, the saving waters of Holy Baptism flowed over your head. To the question, “Peter Julian Mariusz, what are you asking of God’s Church?” your godparents answered, “Faith.”

It is in the strength of this gift of faith, received from God, and lovingly cultivated by your dear mother and father, that you have grow up in wisdom, and age, and grace. It was in the strength of this gift of faith that you crossed the sea to Ireland and, like many of your elder brothers, you have come here today asking for the mercy of God, for a place in this house of the Lord and of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Cenacle, and for the holy habit of Saint Benedict.

Nineteen years ago today, Julian, you received your first taste of the salt of wisdom. The sign of the Cross was traced over your forehead. Father R. extended his stole over you and said, “Come into God’s sanctuary, Peter Julian, where you will be given a share with Christ in everlasting life”.

Today, dear son, I say to you again, “Come into God’s sanctuary.” For what is the monastery if not the sanctuary of God? You have waited for this day. Your soul has been longing and pining for the courts of the Lord. Your heart and your flesh have tasted joy in the living God. The Holy Ghost has taught you in a short time what men twice and three times your age take years to learn: that one day in the courts of the Lord is better above thousands.

You have chosen wisely. The pinch of salt placed on your tongue nineteen years ago has penetrated you deeply, causing you to choose abjection in the house of God over all of those passing things that glitter in the abode of sinners, and that leave the children of this age empty and disillusioned.

Come into God’s sanctuary, then. Come to be hidden with Christ in God. Come to enter into the obedience, and silence, and humility of the Host. Come to adore the One whose Face all the world desireth to see, as we shall sing at the First Vespers of Christmas, a Face veiled to the ken of sight as men see, but resplendent to the eyes of faith.

Come to spend yourself in singing the praises of God by day and by night. Come to practice the good zeal which will keep you from vice and lead you to God and to life everlasting. Prefer the least of your brothers to yourself. Patiently endure our infirmities, whether of body or of mind. Vie with your brothers in obedience. And always, at every moment and in every place, prefer nothing whatever to Christ.

Nineteen years ago, Father R. touched your ears and nostrils with spittle, saying, “Ephpheta, be opened, and perceive the fragrance of God’s loving ways”. Julian, you have perceived the fragrance of God’s loving ways in your life, and with the bride of the Canticle, you have said, Draw me: we will run after thee to the odour of thy ointments (Canticle 1:3).

Again, nineteen years ago, you were anointed with the oil of catechumens for a lifetime of spiritual combat. You have come to the monastery for this: to follow the glorious
example of Saint Antony of the Desert, of Saint Benedict at Subiaco and at Monte Cassino, and of all our fathers among the saints. You have come to the cloister not to escape from combat, but to put yourself in the front lines. About this, have no illusions. “Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).

Then, dear son, you were carried to the baptismal font, the tomb of the old man and the virginal womb of Mother Church, made fruitful by the Holy Ghost. The pure waters flowed over your head. You were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Father recognised in you the radiant image of His First-Born, a member of His Body, a sharer in His death and resurrection.

The old inherited corruption was washed away. A divine newness shone out of you: the refulgence of the indwelling Trinity. You were anointed with Holy Chrism, a pledge of the seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost, marking you for the day when you would, for the first time, taste the sweetness of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Dear son, much of what was enacted in mystery nineteen years ago in Gaming, Austria, is mirrored today in what we are doing here and now. What we are doing here and now will, by God’s grace and by the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, be brought to completion in due time by monastic profession and, then, by your consecration as a monk.

Until then, Julian, tend carefully the flame ignited in your soul today by the fire of Divine Love. Do nothing to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Seek rather to be the joy of God. This you will do if you live with the Immaculate Virgin, allowing her to be, at every hour and so often as the sun rises, the cause of your joy. Thus, dear son, will the prophecy of Isaias be fulfilled in you: Et gaudebit super te Deus tuus: And thy God shall rejoice over thee (Isaias 62:5).
My dear son, Brother Chrysostom, you know well what our father Saint Benedict says concerning the admission of men to the monastery: *To him that newly cometh to change his life, let not an easy entrance be granted, but, as the Apostle saith, Try the spirits if they be of God* (ch. §8). Shortly after you first knocked at the door of Silverstream, I wrote you an honest and hard-hitting letter. Do you remember it? I wrote:

“Men coming to Silverstream to be monks must not expect to find the tranquility of an established abbey with gleaming cloisters, spacious precincts, and well-established routines. A vocation to Silverstream is more than an ordinary monastic vocation; it is a call to enter generously into the hardships and sacrifices of living as monastic pioneers. Men who cling obstinately to their own conceptions of what Benedictine life ought to be will not do well at Silverstream. The will of God comes to us not in what ought to be, but in what is. Holiness, for us, here and now, lies in trusting abandonment to all that Divine Providence wills or permits. Men who are looking for the calm and security of a well-ordered life in which there are no surprises, no setbacks, and no interruptions, should not think of entering at Silverstream.”

You, dear son, were not daunted by what I wrote you. Quite the contrary. You replied to me:

“I am undissuaded by the material poverty of Silverstream, the lack of gleaming cloisters or spacious precincts, because it is not any of those things that have attracted me, but ability to do the one thing I have always longed to do, to give myself entirely to God, in complete union with the Host.”

I wanted to make certain that you were not deluded about what Silverstream had to offer you. And so, I wrote to you:

“We are poor at Silverstream, even as the Sacred Host is poor. We are fragile at Silverstream, even as the Sacred Host is fragile. We choose to be hidden at Silverstream, even as the Sacred Host is hidden. We try to be silent at Silverstream, even as the Sacred Host is silent. Our Benedictine life is to be offered and immolated, even as the Sacred Host is offered and immolated. The offering is joyful, and the immolation is a sacrifice of praise.”

Still you were not daunted, Brother Chrysostom. Your treasure and your heart were in the same place. This is, of course, the beginning of the making of a monk: the letting go of one’s most cherished attachments and accessories, and the unification of a man around The One Thing Necessary. You replied to me on 20 August 2016:

Adapted from a Sermon preached by Father Prior at the Simple Profession of Dom Chrysostom Maria Gryniewicz, Feast of the Epiphany, 6 January 2019.
“You say that the host is poor, fragile, hidden, silent, offered, and immolated: I would be those things as well. If I could [I would] be hidden in the rock with Moses or immolated with Saint Ignatius, becoming God’s pure wheat, ground by the teeth of beasts. If God permits, I would be all these things, because I have never known success in mediocrity, half-heartedness, or lukewarmness, and I have only ever found joy in giving without limits...”

Today, three years later, Brother Chrysostom, after having been tested, and after having shared our life, you are here, ready to sing what generations of monks have sung before you: Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum et vivam: Et non confundas me ab expectatione mea. “Take Thou me unto Thyself, O Lord, and I shall live: and let me not be confounded in my expectation” (Psalm 118:116).

Last evening, dear son, you came to me after Vespers — missal in hand — to share an extraordinary discovery. What you had to share left me grateful and amazed. It was striking evidence of what we like to call “the liturgical providence of God”. You reminded me that you arrived here in Ireland and crossed the threshold of Silverstream on 31 May 2017. It was the feast of Mary, Mediatrix of All Graces, and you walked into the oratory during the celebration of Holy Mass. The Alleluia Verse of that particular Mass was the very same passage that we heard just a few moments ago in the Lesson from Isaias given us for this feast of the Epiphany:

Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all these are gathered together, they are come to thee: thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side (Isaias 60:4).

No amount of human planning or foresight could have made this happen. If ever a confirmation you needed of the providence of God guiding your steps and bringing you to the place where He wants you to be, I think you have it. And, as is always the case, when God speaks to us through the sacred liturgy, He does so not merely by means of a text, but also by means of the context.

The prophet is singing of the restoration of Jerusalem, of the re-peopling of the Holy City, once forsaken, but called by God to a great rejuvenation. Lift up thine eyes and see ... they are gathered together, they are come to thee. The Church, singing these words in the light of the Epiphany, knows that they are mystically addressed to the Virgin Mother who, like a living monstrance, holds her Son and shows Him to all whom come to adore Him (Matt. 2:11).

There is a sense, then, dear son, in which the words that you heard on the very day of your arrival here, 31 May 2017, and that you hear again today on the day of your monastic profession are addressed to you: Thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side.

You will, by Our Lord’s grace — and this is my prayer for you today — grow as a man and as a monk into a spiritual fatherhood that, although it be hidden, and silent, and lowly, like the Host on the corporal and in the tabernacle, will be nonetheless generative, that is, mysteriously life-giving for the Church. Thy sons shall come from afar. Already, there are brothers who have come after you. Each one has his part to play in the Church’s procession towards the glory of the Lord.

You are ready, dear son, to make your offering. Give Christ the gold of your heart’s love. Give him the frankincense of your liturgical prayer, of your faithful presence in choir to sing His praises, of your silent adoration in the radiance of His Eucharistic Face. Give Him the myrrh of all that, in your monastic life, may prove bitter, or hard, or costly because it involves a death to the old man. Arise and be enlightened, for the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee (Isaias 60:1).
THE BETTER PART SHALL NOT BE TAKEN FROM HIM

Adapted from a Sermon preached by Father Prior at the Simple Profession of D. Thomas Aquinas Maria Borders, Feast of Our Lady's Assumption, 15 August 2019.

M Y D E A R S O N ,
Brother Thomas Aquinas, last evening as we chanted Matins, you were very much in my heart. One of the things that you will have learned here thus far is, I think, that the Opus Dei is more about listening to the Word of God than about producing sound.

It is not that the sound produced is negligible; it is, rather, that the hearing and the receiving of the Word of God is the inestimable grace, that by which the heart is purified, and healed, and sanctified, and lifted up, even into the heavenly places where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1), and with Him is His Most Holy Mother all glorious in the mystery of her Assumption.

Did not you hear in yesterday’s Gospel of the Vigil of the Assumption, Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it (Luke 11:28)?

In Psalm 8 we heard this: What is man, that Thou art mindful of Him? or the son of man that Thou visitest Him? Know this, dear son, and never doubt it: Our Lord is mindful of you. You are never forgotten, never far from the radiance of His Face. At every moment you are the object of His Heart’s attention. He visits you by day and by night. You may not always recognise the guise under which He visits you, but visit you He does, to lift you when you fall, to console you in sorrow, to correct you when you stray, to feed you and give you drink when you hunger and thirst for the sustenance that only He can give, even the mysteries of His adorable Body and Blood.

In Psalm 18 we heard this: The testimony of the Lord is faithful, giving wisdom to little ones. You have spent your retreat in the company of St Thérèse. I rather suspect that from her you will have learned something about choosing littleness over greatness, weakness over strength, and confidence over fear.

In Psalm 23 we heard this: This is the generation of them that seek Him, of them that seek the Face of the God of Jacob. By making your monastic profession today, you take your place in the generation of those who, as St Benedict says in ch. 58, truly seek God. The single great unifying desire of your life is to see the face of God.

Psalm 44 began with an irrepressible cry of jubilation: My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my works unto the king. Does not this “good word” go to the heart of what it means to be a son of St Benedict? “Benedicere.” Allow Our Lord to fill the storehouse of your heart with His own utterances, and you will never be at a loss for words of blessing.

In Psalm 45 we heard this: Be still and see that I am God. You were drawn, dear son, to our monastery by adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Something deep inside you quickened at the prospect of adoring stillness in the presence of the hidden Jesus. Learn to say,
more and more, with your patron, St Thomas Aquinas, Adoro te devote, latens Deitas. “Yearning, I adore You, wondrous hidden God.”

In Psalm 47 we have this: We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple. By your monastic profession today, dear son, you take your place among those whom the Holy Ghost has brought together to abide semper in templo, laudantes et benedicentes Deum (“always in the temple, praising and blessing God,” Luke 24:53). The enclosure of the monastery becomes for you the place wherein mercy is always at hand, the place wherein the praise of God draws you seven times a day and once in the night upward and out of yourself into the joy of Our Lady’s Assumption.

In Psalm 86 we heard this: Glorious things are spoke of thee. As you grow, dear Brother Thomas Aquinas, in the grace of your monastic profession, you will see ever more clearly the glorious things that the Word of God and the witness of the saints speak concerning the Mother of God. Never say, “I have learned, and seen, and repeated all that can be learned, and seen, and repeated concerning the Mother of God.” For every monk there is an inexhaustible spring of joy in the contemplation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And finally in Psalm 98 we heard this: He spake to them out of the cloudy pillar. The cloudy pillar was that mysterious sign by which God at once concealed His presence and revealed His presence to Moses, to Aaron, and to the children of Israel. For you, dear son, and for all of us, there is more than the pillar of cloud; there is the Sacred Host — all fragile, hiding the presence of God and revealing it, silent and yet speaking to those who are content to tarry in Its presence. Have no doubt that He who spoke once to Moses and to Aaron will speak to you face to face as a man is wont to speak to his friend (Ex. 33:11).

It was, as I said, last night during Matins, that this catena aurea (“golden chain”) of verses began to emerge from the psalms we were singing in praise of the Most Holy Virgin assumed into heaven. I offer it to you, dear son, in this hour of your first monastic profession.

Hold fast to it in the three years that lie before you until the day when, by Our Lord’s all-sufficient grace and the unailing intercession of the Mother of God, I pray that we will say amidst great rejoicing: Dom Thomas Aquinas hath chosen for himself the best part: which shall not be taken from him.
Through the season, we welcome a great number of guests for Vespers and Benediction on Sundays, including numerous priests of the diocese. In order to better accommodate visitors in the long winter evenings, D. Finnian installs new outdoor lighting around the monastery.

1 Dec. • Feast of St Nicholas. Fr Prior distributes gifts brought by St Nicholas for the community.

8 Dec. • Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V. Mary. In the Chapter Room after Prime, Julian Kwasniewski is clothed in the holy habit and given the name Brother Isaias Maria.

10–17 Dec. • Christopher Suen returns to Silverstream bringing gifts from the Holy Land. Before returning to Canada, he is clothed as an oblate novice. Fr Prior names him Brother Pierre Célestin, in honour of St Peter Celestine and the Chinese Benedictine, Pierre-Célestin Lu.

15 Dec. • His Lordship, Dr Deenihan, Bishop of Meath, visits the monastery and assists at the Offices of None and Vespers. Along with Fr Prior and several of the monks, His Lordship meets with Revd Mother Immaculata, Prioress of the Benedictine Nuns of Perpetual Adoration in Tegelen, Netherlands, to discuss possibilities for further collaboration between the two monasteries.

22 Nov. • Feast of Saint Cecilia. The community enjoys a festive meal in honour of American Thanksgiving. We are joined by several guests, including Rick Yoder, visiting from Oxford, and Fr John McKeever (Obl. Br John Fisher).

24 & 26 Nov. • The community and guests celebrate the birthday of Br Placid, and two days later the birthday of Postulant Br Julian.

26–30 Nov. • D. Finnian and D. Elijah spend a week at Glenstal Abbey in Co. Limerick, where they take part in a week-long course on early monastic hagiography.

28 Nov.—3 Dec. • Helen DeCant, mother of Dom John Baptist, visits bringing many gifts for the community.

30 Nov. • His Lordship Dr Michael Smith, Bishop Emeritus of Meath, visits the monastery for the first time since his retirement. All the brothers are happy to see him and to express their gratitude for his fatherly solicitude in the founding years of the community.

1 Dec. • A group of young missionaries from FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students), working in Dublin, spend the morning in prayer at Silverstream and speak with some of the monks. Andrej Kutarna (Oblate Br Samuel) from Czech Republic arrives for a retreat of several days.

2 Dec. • First Sunday of Advent. Throughout the season, we welcome a
nities of the Holy Night begin at 9:00 PM with Matins, which ends with the chanting of the Genealogy of Christ. Holy Mass is sung by Fr Prior, ending with a procession to the crèche. After 4 hours of contemplation and praise of the Incarnate God, the community enjoys a festive collation before retiring.

C 25 Dec. • As all priests may celebrate three Masses on Christmas Day, the early morning hours are filled with the repeated offering of the Holy Sacrifice in the Low Mass Oratory. At 10:00, D. Benedikt sings the Solemn Mass of the Day. At recreation, the brothers and guests open Christmas gifts, including both spiritual reading and useful clothing items.

C 28 Dec.—4 Jan. 2019 • Br Gregory’s mother Dianna and sister Chelsea make a post-Christmas visit.

C 31 Dec. • Br Chrysostom begins his retreat in preparation for profession. The same day, his parents, Tom and Ellen Gryniewicz, arrive at the monastery to spend the week with us. After Vespers the “Capitulum Pacis” is celebrated, in which the brethren ask and exchange pardon for the faults of the past year. The community spends the evening in adoration, singing Matins at 8 pm before beginning the new year with the Veni Creator and Benedictio at midnight.

C 31 Dec.—7 Jan. 2019 • Abbé Marcelo de Oliveira, ICRSS, makes a retreat, coinciding with the profession of his old friend, Br Chrysostom.

C 1 Jan. 2019 • Feast of the Lord’s Circumcision and Octave of his Nativity. The professed monks of Silverstream renew their vows during Holy Mass. Te Deum is sung before Benediction in thanksgiving for the graces of the past year. Fr John McKeever (Obl. Br. John Fisher) and Fr Paul Murphy (Obl. Br. Columba) visit in the course of the day.

C 6 Jan. • Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. At Holy Mass, in the presence of Bishop Tom Deenihan, as well as of his parents and friends, Dom Chrysostom Maria professes his simple vows.

C 13-19 Jan. • Fr David Abernethy, CO, of the Pittsburgh Oratory, gives the annual community retreat, with a series of conferences on St Isaac the Syrian (†c. 700). He is accompanied by Fr Paul Werley, CO. During the same week, Frs Martin Pletts and Neil McGarrity, from Scotland, visit for a retreat.

C 19 Jan. • Bishop Tom Deenihan visits Silverstream for Vespers, Supper, and Compline, accompanied by his secretary Fr Joe Campbell.

C 21-30 Jan. • Fr Prior, accompanied by D. Cassian and D. John Baptist, travels to Czech Republic to preach a retreat for the Cistercian abbey of Vyšší Brod. They also visit Prague to give a day of recollection for priests. The brothers return to Silverstream greatly inspired by the perseverance of the Czech monks in restoring monastic life in the wake of Communism. While they are away, back at Silverstream the roof is removed from the old cattle shed, which will soon be demolished to make way for the construction of the Bethlehem Oratory.

C 23-28 Jan. • Polish Fr Cesary Paciej visits Silverstream and tells the brothers about his ministry in Kazakhstan.


C 1-9 Feb. • Deacon Robert Healey from the Diocese of Tulsa spends a week at the monastery.

C 2 Feb. • At the invitation of Bishop Deenihan, the community travels to the Cathedral of Christ the King in Mullingar for Vespers of Candlemas, attended by religious communities from around the diocese. The schola sings the Responsory Adorna thalamum during the service.

C 8-15 Feb. • Two seminarists from the Pontifical North American College, Rome, make a retreat in preparation for ordination as deacons. During the same week, Fr Jim Lowe, of the Companions of the Cross, makes a retreat.

C 11 Feb. • Workers begin dismantling the stone walls of the old cattle shed. Before the end of the month, the site of the former building and the surrounding area have been cleared to prepare for the construction of the new church.

C 15 Feb. • Amma Philomena and Amma Gabriella, of the Coptic Orthodox monastery in Delvin, visit Silverstream for lunch and recreation with the community. The brothers listen eagerly as they share with us their experience of monastic life as it continues to be lived in Christian Egypt.

C 21 Feb. • Fr David Erickson visits Silverstream along with his nephew Fr Joshua Erickson. Fr David is pleasantly surprised to meet Br Isaias, who was his parishioner as a boy.

C 21 Feb.—1 Mar. • Rev’d Mother Scholastica OSB, Prioress of the Benedictine Nuns of Perpetual Adoration in Tororo, Uganda, spends a week at Silverstream. Each night, she shares with the community some of her insights into our Eucharistic Benedictine charism. She also teaches the brothers some lively African hymns.

C 22-25 Feb. • D. Benedikt visits Denmark, where he offers Holy Mass and the sacraments in the usus antiquior for the
Society of St Canute. He makes a return visit at the end of March.

12 and onomastico of D. Benedict Maria. (Passing) of Our Holy Father Benedict, Church History.

from Dublin and resumes his series and Br Gregory.

brate the birthdays of Dom John Baptist Spouse of the Virgin Mary. W e also cele

Mass, he blesses the community and a new generation of Irish saints. After

Sunday). Before a large gathering at Holy

cipal patron of Ireland (transferred from

Gerrit Engelmann).

Robert Ginter), and Br Ulrich (Fr Jan

W alter Simon), Br Rabanus Maurus (Fr

German Benedictines: Br Rupert (Fr

Prior entrusts them to the patronage of

they are clothed as novice oblates after

17 March, the Second Sunday of Lent,

many make a retreat at Silverstream. On

the monastery.

connecting the noviciate with the rest of

the Cross in the newly-renovated corridor

blessing and erection of the Stations of

Duffy, OFM Cap, performs the solemn

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

The community gives thanks with a

festa dies

ancient Greek chant

sung prior to the first Mass of Easter.

Prophecies are read and the Litanies are

chanting the

tum

of Mary and Benediction.

of Ireland to the Immaculate Heart

after V espers with the Act of Consecra

tion of Our Lady. The community has

Solemn Exposition throughout the day,

praying for an increase in fidelity to the

grace of our vocation.

Fr Prior, accom-panied by D. Finnian, travels to Connect-

cut to visit his ailing parents and other

friends of the monastery. They return in

time for First Ve řpers of Passion Sunday.

Birthday of D. Benedict. D. Hildebrand, accompanied by several nov-

ices, visits the Little Sisters of the Poor
to give a day of retreat for a gathering of superiors. On the way, they stop at Holy

Cross Church in Dundrum, where Bl. Columba Marmion was curate.

Three seminarians from the Pontifical N. American College arrive to

spend Holy Week at the monastery.

Palm Sunday. Fr Prior cele-

brates the Blessing of Palms, Procession,

and Mass. The Tract from Ps. 21 is sung in

full, and the Passion from St Matthew is sung by D. Benedict, D. Hildebrand, and Br. Gregory. The 40 Days of Adoration which began on Ash Wednesday conclude

after Ve řpers with the Act of Consecra-

tion of Ireland to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and Benediction.

Spy Wednesday. The Sac-

cred Triduum begins in the evening with the singing of Tenebrae, which will be

repeated for the next two nights.

Maundy Thursday. In the

morning Fr Prior performs the Manda-

turn (Washing of the Feet) in the Chap-

ter Room. The Last Supper discourse

from St John’s Goșpel is read by D. Ben-

edicť in the refectory. Fr Prior celebrates the Mass in Cena Domini, followed by a

procession outside to the Altar of Repose

in the Low Mass Oratory. Many of the

community and guests remain in adora-

tion until midnight.

Fr Prior celebrates the Mass of the Pre-Sančified of Good Fri-

day, which is preceded by the singing of the Passion according to St John and the

traditional “creeping to the Cross”, with

the singing of the Improperia.

The Paschal Vigil is cele-

brated by Fr Prior, with D. Benedict
canting the Exsultet. Many guests join

the community in keeping vigil as the

Prophecies are read and the Litanies are

sung prior to the fırst Mass of Easter.

Before Conventual Mass of Easter Day, the monks go in proces-

sion around the site of the future church building, singing the triumphant Salve

fella dies. The community begin singing the ancient Greek chant Χριστός ἀνέ

12
 prior to the grace before meals throughout the Paschal Octave.

**22 APR.** • Easter Monday. Four deacons from the North American College arrive for their retreat in preparation for priestly ordination. In the afternoon, Fr Prior and the brothers take a long walk to the beach at Gormanstown Strand, accompanied by our guests.

**24 APR.** • Sisters Shawn, Carolyn, and Colleen, of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart, visit Silverstream, bringing with them a first-class relic of their Foundress, Bl. Clelia Merloni.

**10 MAY.** • Bishop Tom Deenihan visits for Vespers and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

**13-21 MAY.** • Hieromonk Gregory Hryniw, from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, makes a retreat. During his stay, he celebrates the Byzantine Divine Liturgy for the community and shares with us his experiences as a Greek Catholic monk in post-Communist Ukraine.

**17-22 MAY.** • D. John Baptist’s mother Helen makes a visit to her son and his monastic brothers. During the weekend of 18-19 May, Br Thomas Aquinas’ sister Elizabeth makes a brief visit.

**20-22 MAY.** • The oratory is temporarily moved to the library while a team of monks and enquirers, led by Br Placid, gives the current oratory a bright new coat of paint. Shortly thereafter, the Low Mass Oratory is also repainted. The sacrifice simultaneously implement the use of higher quality candles which will not blacken the walls with soot.

**25 MAY.** • Feast of Pope St Gregory VII and onomastico of D. Hildebrand. Preaching at Conventual Mass, D. Hildebrand holds up his patron as a model of zeal for the renewal of the Church exercised in the humility of the monastic life.

**26 MAY.** • Bishop Deenihan visits accompanied by Dom Alban Hood, OSB, Prior of Douai Abbey in Berkshire. The two attend Vespers, followed by supper outside with the community.

**28 MAY-11 JUNE.** • Di Aylward, mother of D. Cassian, visits from Sydney; from 31 May to 8 June Michael and Shirley Houser, parents of D. Hildebrand, visit the monastery along with his sister Mary and brother Anthony.

**5-11 JUNE.** • Msgr Kasteel visits from Rome, accompanied by Fra Massimo Sansolini, and Madre Paola, formerly Prioress of the Benedicines of Perpetual Adoration in Rome. The tonsure and the Minor Orders of Porter, Lector, Exorcist, and Acolyte are conferred upon D. Elijah and D. Cassian. On 6 June, Bishop Deenihan visits and has lunch with our guests. On 9 June, Madre Paola renews her monastic profession on the occasion of her 60th jubilee.

**19-24 JUNE.** • Fr Radim, OSB, of the Abbey of Emmaus in Prague, visits Silverstream with Oblate Br Samuel (Andrej Kutarna) and his son Matouš. Throughout the week, Fr Radim inspires the community both by his example of prayer and humility and by his story of perseverance in monastic life throughout the years of Communist persecution. He tells us of the books that sustained him: St Thérèse’s Story of a Soul and Bl. Columba Marmion’s Christ the Ideal of the Monk.

**21-28 JUNE.** • Feast and Octave of Corpus Christi. After several days of preparation, the feast is celebrated with all possible solemnity. The procession after Holy Mass goes through the monastery’s forest, stopping at two beautifully appointed outdoor altars. With the generous assistance of lay adorers, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed continuously for adoration throughout the octave.

**21-24 JUNE.** • Oblate Br Luke (Cathal Steele) visits with several friends to undertake an intensive cleaning and repainting of the monastery’s kitchen.

**23-30 JUNE.** • Fr Sebastiano Jones and Br Illyed, from the Oratory-In-Formation in Cardiff, make a retreat.

**24 JUNE.** • Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, and onomastico of D. John Baptist. The brothers spend the afternoon on a long walk to the beach at Gormanstown Strand.

**24-28 JUNE.** • Stephen, a seminarian from the United States, visits Silverstream. During the same week, Oblate Br Martin (Joseph Wood) makes a retreat, and Tom Murphy from Galway visits for several days.

**27 JUNE—1 JULY.** • Fr Pius Mary Noonan, OSB, Prior of Notre Dame Priory in the Archdiocese of Hobart, Tasmania, visits with two junior monks, Br Bede and Br Gregory. The community is blessed by the presence in choir of these brethren from the antipodes.

**28 JUNE.** • Feast of the Sacred Heart. The number of monks in choir reaches an all-time high, as our guests from Tasmania are joined by D. Jean de Britto, D. Jean Marie, and D. Basil from the Abbey of St Joseph de Clairval in Flavigny, who remain through the weekend.

**3 JULY.** • The community enjoys an outing to the ruins of Fore Abbey, Co. Westmeath—destroyed in Henry VIII’s suppression of the monasteries. Spending most of the day at this site made holy by our Benedictine “forefathers”, the monks sing Holy Mass in the ruins of the abbey church. Bishop Tom Deenihan
and Bishop Emeritus Michael Smith join us for this historic occasion and for a picnic lunch. Before departing in the evening, we sing Vespers in the hermitage long occupied by anchorites, concluding with the Office of the Dead in the church of St Fechin.

**20 July** • Feast of St Isaias the Prophet. Br Isaias Maria celebrates his first onomaístico in the monastery.

**9-10 July** • His Eminence Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke visits along with Msgr James O’Brien (Cloyne) and Canon Patrick McCarthy (Cork and Ross). After assisting at Vespers and sharing supper with the community, the Cardinal offers words of encouragement about the importance of the monastic vocation for the Church in our time.

**9 July** • Dom Benedict returns to Silverstream from a short residency at the parish of Ramsgate, Kent, where he celebrates the traditional Mass in the Shrine of St Augustine, A.W. Pugin’s neo-Gothic masterpiece.

**9-15 July** • Dr Jennifer Donelson, Professor of Sacred Music at St Joseph’s Seminary, Dunwoodie, NY, visits with her fiancé Jacek. During her stay, she offers musical training to the members of the schola and other brothers.

**11 July** • Solemnity of Our Holy Father Benedict, and second onomaístico of D. Benedict Maria. The feast is prepared for by a novena each night in front of the statue of St Benedict, and followed by an octave during which the Filial Commendation to St Benedict is prayed each night.

**13 July** • D. Hildebrand and the members of the novitiate attend the “Evangelium” Conference held at the historic campus of All Hallows, Dublin. D. Hildebrand’s speaks of the Eucharistic doctrine of the Church as expressed in the Corpus Christi sequence, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, which the brothers sing for the participants.

**20 July** • Feast of St Elias (Elijah) the Prophet and onomaístico of D. Elijah.

**23 July** • Feast of St John Cassian, and onomaístico of D. Cassian Maria. Fr Brendan Kilcoyne and Fr Shane Sullivan visit Silverstream. Fr Matthew from Syracuse arrives to spend several weeks sharing our monastic life.

**24 July—1 Aug.** • Frs Peter and Cezar Winiarek, from Poland, make a retreat. Fr Peter Gruber, of the Pittsburgh Oratory, visits during the same days.

**29 July** • Work begins on a renovation of the monastery’s refectory. A temporary refectory is set up in the common room upstairs.

**29 July—2 Aug.** • The guesthouse is filled with more priest retreatants, including priests from Rochester, New York, Norwich, Connecticut, and Lansing, Michigan. On some days, as many as eleven Masses are celebrated at the monastery’s altars!

**5-8 Aug.** • In the evening, Br Thomas Aquinas begins his retreat in preparation for simple profession.

**6 Aug.** • Feast of the Transfiguration, and anniversary of the solemn professions of Fr Prior (1986) and D. Benedict (2015), as well as the simple profession of D. Hildebrand (2018).

**10-11 Aug.** • Over twenty young French Catholics spend the night camping on the property of Silverstream, led by Fr Gaspar of the Society of St Jean Marie Vianney. Joining us for Mass on Sunday morning, they join energetically in the singing of the Ordinary, as well as offering a beautiful rendition of *Je vous salue Marie* after Mass. Preaching in English and French, Fr Prior quotes the words of Scripture, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

**11 Aug.** • After Vespers, D. Benedict receives the blessing for a monk on a journey as he prepares to depart for a short time of study in New York under the renowned patristics scholar, Archpriest John Behr. Upon arrival, D. Benedict takes up residence in Annunciation Church in Crestwood, and at the request of the parish priest, begins to celebrate a daily traditional Latin Mass.

**14 Aug.** • Fr Sebastiano Hew, from Sydney, arrives for a retreat. After First Vespers of the Assumption, in Chapter, Br Thomas Aquinas makes his petition to be admitted to profession.

**15 Aug.** • Solemnity of the Assumption of the B.V. Mary. D. Thomas Aquinas Maria makes his simple profession during Holy Mass. A number of local priests and other friends of the monastery join us, followed by an outdoor reception. We also give thanks for the first anniversary of solemn profession of D. Finnian and D. Elijah.

**21-27 Aug.** • Br Kevin De Cubber, postulant at the Abbey of Affligem in Belgium, spends a week at Silverstream shortly before returning to Affligem to receive the holy habit.

**29 Aug.—5 Sept.** • D. Elijah travels to Tulsa, Oklahoma to visit his family.

**31 Aug.—6 Sept.** • Frs Jonathan Romanoski and Daniel Heenan, FSSP,
make a retreat at Silverstream. During the same week, Tom Murphy visits Gal-
way for several days.
*
15 Sept. Fr Prior travels to Con-
necticut to visit his ailing parents, accom-
panied by D. John Baptist.
*
8 Sept. Feast of the Nativity of Our
Lady. Our guest, Msgr Arthur Calkins,
preaches eloquently at Holy Mass about the
place of Mary in the divine plan of
salvation.
*
10 Sept. As we prepare to begin the
"Monastic Lent" (starting on 14 Sept.),
the community expands the hours of sol-
enn exposition of the Most Blessed Sac-
rament. Henceforth there will be contin-
uous exposition and adoration for most of
the day from Tuesday through Friday
each week. The brothers eagerly embrace
this next step towards the establishment
of perpetual watches of adoration in the
monastery.
*
14-17 Sept. Ron Sliwa, father of Br
Gregory, visits and joins the community
in some of the outdoor work.
*
17 Sept. With the blessing of His
Excellency, Bishop Lopes of the Ordin-
ariate of the Chair of St Peter, Dom Benedikt travels to New Britain, CT, to
preside and preach at Solemn Evensong
according to the Anglican liturgical rites
approved by Pope Benedict XVI.
*
18 Sept. A group of seminarians
from St John Vianney Seminary in St
Paul, Minnesota, make a brief visit before
beginning a semester in Rome.
*
22-28 Sept. We welcome retreat-
ants Fr Tom Ryan from Tipperary and Fr
James Fleming from Newfoundland.
*
24 Sept.-8 Oct. Revd Mother
Immaculata of Tegelen, Netherlands,
returns to Silverstream for her annual re-
treat. She is accompanied for the first few
days by Sr Justine from her community.
*
1 Oct. Feast of St Thérèse, pa-
troness of the noviciate. Priest-novice
Br Gregory celebrates the conventual
Mass and preaches a moving homily in
the form of “A Novice’s Letter to Saint
Thérèse.” At the end of the day, Fr Prior
announces the appointment of D. Hilde-
brand as Master of Novices.
*
2-10 Oct. D. Chrysostom travels to
Michigan to visit his family. While there,
he speaks to the students of Gabriel
Richard Catholic High School about his
monastic vocation. He returns with his
friend Peter, who stays at the monastery
for several days.
*
13 Oct. Dom Benedikt again pre-
sides at Anglican Ordinariate Evensong
in New Britain, Connecticut, and preaches
a homily on the occasion of the canoni-
zation of St John Henry Newman. One of
the occurring scripture readings, not
chosen for the canonization, provides
homiletical inspiration: “Jesus began to
speak to the multitudes concerning John.” (Matt. 11:7).
*
15-22 Oct. Msgr Michael Palud,
CO, from the Oratory in Port Antonio,
Jamaica, makes a retreat at Silverstream.
He recounts his experience at the canoni-
sation of St John Henry Newman and
also gives a conference to the community
on canon law for religious life.
*
18 Oct. The community returns to
the refectory after several months of
work. The improvements include the ad-
dition of several tables to accommodate
more monks and guests, a raised platform
for the Prior’s table, where special guests
can also be seated, and a raised pulpit for
the reader, adorned with a sculpture of the
Agnus Dei, a gift of Fr Michael Cahill,
PP of Johnstown.
*
18-20 Oct. Five young men from the
"Juventutem" group in Cork visit Silverstream for a vocation retreat, dur-
ing which they participate in the Divine
Office and outdoor work, as well as hearing conferences by the Father Mas-
ter and testimonies of several brothers.
The end of the retreat coincides with the
visit of Bishop Tom Deenihan—a Cork
native—who joins the young men for tea
before Vespers and remains for supper
with the community.
*
21-25 Oct. Fr Bernard and Br Ga-
riel, O. Ciś., from the Abbey of Vyšší
Brod, Czech Republic, spend the week at
Silverstream along with Oblate Br Sam-
uel (Andrej Kutarna) and Fr Dominik
(Obl. Br Benedikt of Vyšší Brod).
*
26-29 Oct. Tom Murphy visits,
bringing along his violin, which he uses
to entertain us at recreation with music
of Mozart, Puccini, and others.
*
27 Oct. Feast of Christ the King.
The Blessed Sacrament is solemnly ex-
posed throughout the week from Con-
ventual Mass until 9 PM, to intercede for
the spiritual needs of the country.
*
28-31 Oct. Fr Bernardino, Fr Jo-
seph Mary, Br Damien, and Br Seraphim
Marie, CFR, visit Silverstream.
*
1 Nov. Feast of All Saints, fifth
anniversary of D. Benedikt’s priestly ordi-
nation, and first anniversary of profession
of D. John Baptist.
*
2 Nov. All Souls Day. After the
Solemn Requiem Mass, the community
goes in procession to the cemetery of the
Visitation nuns located on the monastery
grounds, where Fr Prior performs the Ab-
solutions. In the afternoon, the brothers
walk to the Stamullen, where they sing the
Office of the Dead in the parish church
and visit the nearby cemetery with the
ruins of a medieval chantry.

Throughout the past year, numerous
works have been conducted on the build-
gings and grounds of the monas-
tery. In addition to the renovation of the
refectory, the summer and autumn
saw extensive work on the electrical
wiring of the house, as well as the
installation of an up-to-date sewage
treatment plant. Finishing touches
have been put on the noviciate build-
ing, and a new laundry room has been
set up to meet the needs of the growing
community. The sacristies for the main
oratory and the low Mass oratory have
been equipped with suitable cabinetry.
Bookshelves have also been installed in
several spaces in order to allow for
proper storage of the library collection,
an important aspect of the monastery’s
life. Meanwhile, the brothers have
worked continually at clearing and
beautifying the lands of the monastery,
providing a suitable atmosphere
for prayer and reflection for the com-
munity and guests. We are grateful to all
whose generosity has enabled these
works for the house of God.
Tuesday, 11 February 2020, the Feast of the Apparition of the Immaculate Virgin Mary at Lourdes, our Brothers PLACID M. MCKEE of the Archdiocese of Armagh & GREGORY M. SLIWA of the Diocese of Springfield in Massachusetts will make Simple Profession under the Holy Rule of Our Father Saint Benedict. We recommend Brothers Placid & Gregory to your prayers. The Lord hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men (Antiphon, Office of 11 February).