

WINTER 2023

# THE CLERESTORY

A Great Venture of Christian Discipleship | ST. PROCOPIUS ABBEY

LEGACIES





## FROM THE EDITOR

First, I begin with an update about our abbey building renovations. You may recall that we have to replace every pipe in the house for domestic water, drinking and bathing, and HVAC units and their pipes. As of early December, we were still in the middle of renovating the Lady Chapel, the lobby bathrooms, the Guest House, and yes, the refectory kitchen. This tedious project is a legacy we hand down to future generations. It also helps us to be good stewards of an abbey church and building, for according to our Holy Father St. Benedict, we are:

“to regard all the utensils of the monastery, including property, as if they were the sacred vessels of the altar.” —RULE OF BENEDICT, CHAPTER 31

Secondly, this 2023 issue of *The Clerestory* is a bit different. There is no big story that starts our magazine. Instead, this issue is a travelogue highlighting celebrations, travels, visits, and the passing of one of our “younger” confreres. In June, we hosted many monks of St. Andrew Abbey, Cleveland. In September we hosted the granddaughter of Dorothy Day. Then, Abbot Austin and Fr. James toured our farmlands in Nebraska as they made their way to the Congregation’s General Chapter at St. Benedict’s Abbey in Kansas. The stories of this issue highlight abundant “legacies,” as my assistant editor/designer, Mary Kay Wolf, says. Here you will find stories of faith and family, community and stewardship, saints and statues, and even stoicism in the face of a cancer diagnosis.

As we move into the new year, know of our prayers, not only at the celebration of the Eucharist, but also at our Divine Office. Thank you very much for your end of the year giving.

Happy New Year!

God bless you,

Fr. T. Becket A. Franks, O.S.B.  
Director, Abbey Advancement



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of the Monks of St. Procopius Abbey

# THE CLERESTORY

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## SHARE OUR MISSION

You can assist the monks in their great venture of Christian discipleship. If you are interested in giving to the monastic community, there are many options, such as:

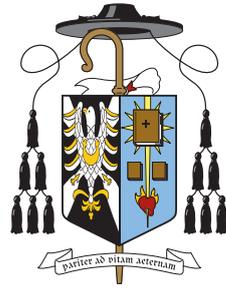
- **Cash gifts**—You can make out a check to St. Procopius Abbey.
- **Stock gifts**—In making a gift of stock you may be eligible for a tax benefit.
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- **IRA Rollover**—A charitable rollover from your IRA may be a convenient way to make a gift to the abbey. Please call to receive more information about the potential benefits of this type of giving.

Our F.E.I.N. (Federal ID#) is 36-2169184. We are a tax-exempt institution and listed in the Official Catholic Directory under the diocese of Joliet, Illinois. Bequests, etc., are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes. Call the office of Abbey Advancement for assistance with a donation or for more information at (630) 829-9253.

Online Giving is available on the abbey website—[procopius.org/giving](http://procopius.org/giving).



THE RIGHT REVEREND AUSTIN G. MURPHY, O.S.B.,  
ABBOT



**DEAR FRIENDS,**

Here at the abbey we are still under construction. The current construction project is to repair the pipes and air-handling units for heating and cooling as well as the pipes for domestic water. We have also done smaller projects that were worth undertaking along the way. Moreover, during construction we discovered that our boilers needed to be replaced—and fortunately the new ones were up and running just in time for the cooler temperatures this Fall.

The project began back in the Fall of 2020 and we are hoping to have it finished in February 2023. The project is divided into six stages or sequences that cover the whole building. As one sequence is underway, a certain part of the complex is off-limits due to construction work. For example, as I write, the Lady Chapel where the monastic community usually prays its Divine Office (or Liturgy of the Hours) is off-limits, so we are now praying in another location.

Is going through this project tiresome? Yes. I will be very glad when it is done! But at the same time, I am very grateful that we are able to do the project, which will allow us to live the monastic life here for years to come. I am especially grateful to God for having the finances and the people to carry out this task. Our maintenance staff, business manager, maintenance committee, and the many construction workers deserve our gratitude.

At the same time, I am grateful to you who have generously donated to support this work. Your financial support is much appreciated. It has enabled us and will continue to enable us to do the things necessary for continuing the monastic life here at St. Procopius Abbey. Thank you!

Peace in Christ,

Rt. Rev. Austin G. Murphy, O.S.B., Abbot



# Madonnas & Children

## From Mother to Daughter to Granddaughter— A Legacy of Spirituality, Service, and Peace Activism

by Martha Hennessy

SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

*Martha Hennessy, American peace activist and member of the Catholic Worker movement, visited with the community. She was in Lisle to screen the film *Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story* and give a lecture at Benedictine University. Hennessy is the granddaughter of Dorothy Day—founder of the Catholic Worker movement, Benedictine Oblate of St. Procopius, and candidate for sainthood in the Catholic Church. The following are reflections Hennessy shared one evening about her upbringing and spirituality.*



My visit to St. Procopius in September of 2022 was a blessed respite from a busy world of family, travel, community life, and a recent prison experience. I have a large family. I travel a lot to speak about peace, the immorality of war, drones, and poverty. Often I visit and work at Mary House, the original Catholic Worker House of my grandmother, Dorothy Day, “Granny” as we called her. Moreover, I protest the possibility of the unthinkable—the possession of and the use of nuclear weapons—a topic for which I spent time in prison, and am still under supervision.

The silence and daily prayer schedule of the abbey rejuvenated my soul and spirit in subtle yet overwhelming ways. Praise be to God for this oasis of sustained prayer and constant devotion to His promise of Christ with us. The monks were delightful company, given

these times of tumult and the spiritual challenges of a secular world. The Abbey, surrounded by old oak trees and fields full of wildlife, provide a sanctuary for people and creatures alike. It is sad to see both St. Procopius Abbey and Sacred Heart Monastery communities shrinking as the Catholic Church also is in the United States. This kind of community living, with *ora et labora*—prayer and work—are so needed in these times. Maybe this is the same type of deep prayer that Granny experienced when she visited the monks in 1940 and then again at her oblation in 1955 in New York City.

While in the chapel and in my room at the abbey I often prayed my favorite prayer.

*Gracious and holy Father,  
grant us the intellect to  
understand You,  
reason to discern You,  
diligence to seek You,  
wisdom to find You,  
a spirit to know You,  
a heart to meditate upon You.*

*May our ears hear You;  
may our eyes behold You,  
and may our tongues  
proclaim You.*

*Give us grace that our way  
of life may be pleasing to You,  
that we may have  
the patience to wait for  
You and the perseverance  
to look for You.  
Grant us a perfect end—  
Your holy presence,  
a blessed resurrection,  
and life everlasting.  
We ask this through Jesus  
Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*





HENNESSY ENJOYED TIME IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM WITH BRS. KEVIN, GUY AND AUGUSTINE (PAGE TWO). HENNESSY WITH FR. BECKET AND ABBOT HUGH.



A TEENAGE HENNESSY, WITH HER GRANDMOTHER, DOROTHY DAY.

*“It took many years for me to begin to see that her [Dorothy’s] faith was the foundation of her lifetime’s work for social justice.”*

I am from Vermont where I have spent a lifetime with family, self-sufficiency farming, and work as an occupational therapist. My grandchildren are now growing up where I and my children, who were born here, grew up. What a blessing this small plot of land has been over the years. I am so grateful to my parents, David and Tamar, for finding and moving to this precious place in 1957.

As a child, I associated the image of the Madonna and Child with all mothers and children. I feel a direct link to the Blessed Mother through my mother and grandmother. We would say the short version of the Rosary at bedtime as we young children settled down for the night. Dorothy would add a list of those we were currently praying for in our family and community. The Divine Feminine at the heart of the Church is always with me.

It is a hard lesson as I to continue to learn about my baptism and its relevance in my life over the years. Reading the Gospel teachings was difficult while attempting to connect them to my current way of living. Dorothy’s conversion as an adult, after giving birth to my mother, is a very powerful story. Tamar was raised Catholic, unlike Dorothy, and there is a big difference. I feel a sense of having both experiences, raised Catholic yet rather unchurched, returning through an adult conversion, and possessing “baptized eyes” for a clearer understanding of the practice of my

faith. I saw how Dorothy practiced the values of social justice, but as an adolescent I became uncomfortable with her piety. It took many years for me to begin to see that her faith was the foundation of her lifetime’s work for social justice.

Christianity in the United States takes on a whole different meaning when we study Dorothy’s life. Of course, the core lesson is how to overcome the rancor, the war in our own hearts if we pursue our own desires, and self-will without heed to the small voice of God giving us direction and grace. We are called to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Then there were the Benedictine influences that Dorothy practiced and passed down to her family. We come to see that there is a demand within a balanced tension amid the paradoxes of life. I witnessed this in both Dorothy’s and Tamar’s lives as they coped with family life, community living, the giving of oneself to others, along with self-care. Living and acting in a lay movement with all the varied roles required of these two women was astounding. They gave an example of obedience to life that is God-given as we find and practice our own vocations. The charism of *ora et labora* is such a practical approach—do what is needed at hand, do it with humility and prayerfully, and God will do the rest! Experiencing work as prayer makes everyday life sacred.

The Benedictine value of stability, the giving of one’s life over to others, putting our lives into the hands of God, was very clear in both Dorothy’s and Tamar’s lives. Even the enduring of a failed married life that brings incredible family instability was handled by them gracefully. Dorothy’s perseverance in her work, and Tamar’s consistency in our Vermont home life, were such gifts.

Dorothy’s belief in the power (priesthood) of the laity was a fine example for many of us. To be willing to self-initiate the works of mercy with Gospel teachings to guide us carried immense power and a leap of faith. God will provide if we give our “yes!” to Him.

I was told to pay attention to the suffering of others, to care and act on the part of the most vulnerable. We learned of the imperative of the dignity of work, choosing work for the common good to realize a better social order—to find one’s vocation, as I did with occupational therapy and also with nursing for several of our family members.

Another spiritual theme envisioned in my family was that of self-sacrifice. Giving birth, bringing a child into the world with a lifelong commitment of caring for that child is one of woman’s greatest acts. The literal sharing of one’s body, oneself, through motherhood is a miracle. Dorothy’s giving birth to Tamar is what set her



*“Pacifism is a necessity and truth of Christian life.”*

on the road to a living joy with God. Her exaltation led to this incredible expression of the Catholic Worker movement as becoming one body in Christ. My definition of family was stretched far beyond simply biological. We came to experience the Catholic Worker community as extended family with all the joy and humor, the difficulties and rewards. We learned that everyone has a gift to contribute.

Both Dorothy and Tamar had an uncanny ability to read others, to hold an awareness of others’ needs, to maintain a capacity for long-term relationships, and to hold onto one another no matter what. Still, I felt a certain loneliness in them and in myself despite being with others—this sharing of life. For them there remained an appreciation for solitude, for a contemplative life among all the business of the day, and to maintain a quite listening.

Dorothy had a sensual love of ritual and the beauty of the Mass. She loved to visit old churches, enjoyed religious art, and studied and celebrated the lives of the saints. I grew up with beautiful religious art, icons, paintings, stained glass pieces, and statues.

Tamar gave me a love of nature, gardening, animal husbandry, and an awareness of being frugal. She taught me the manual arts of spinning, knitting, and weaving. Working with one’s hands for creativity and self sufficiency is a blessing.

From childhood I was exposed to hospitality, the healing arts, and the sharing and retaining of faith, hope, and love. Seeing the divine in the ordinary enriches our lives exponentially. The lessons of tolerating failure, both personal and institutional, are invaluable. We learn that we don’t condemn people forced into participating in flawed systems, we try to live an alternative, and set a good example as best we can.

The message of our nonviolent Jesus, especially in the face of modern war and weapons, rang out loud and clear from both my mother and grandmother. Pacifism is a necessity and truth of Christian life. There is no just war with modern weapons; the killing is indiscriminate. Dorothy maintained this stance despite the personal cost during numerous wars in her lifetime. As a Catholic in the United States, an empire nation, she carried a leadership that helped to save the soul of the Church in the face of the nuclear era.



## *Ora et labora*

I conclude from a Dorothy Day Reading | Meditations—May 1941, *Manual Labor*

“We should write more about manual labor. It’s another one of the foundation stones of the work, of the social edifice we are trying to build. Manual labor, voluntary poverty, works of mercy, these are means of reaching the workers and learning from them, and teaching them. Besides inducing cooperation, besides overcoming barriers, and establishing the spirit of brotherhood (besides just getting things done), manual labor enables us to use our bodies as well as our hands, our minds. Our bodies are made to be used, just as they are made to be respected as temples of the soul. God took on our human flesh and became man. He shared our human nature. He rose from the dead and His disciples saw the wounds in His hands, His feet and His side. They saw His body, that it was indeed a body still. He was not a disembodied spirit. We believe in the resurrection of the body, free from fatigues, from pain and disease and distortion and deformities, a glorified body, a body transfigured by love. All those are reasons for respecting the body, and using it well, not neglecting it by disuse.”



BR. GUY WITH MARTHA HENNESSY IN THE ABBEY REFECTORY.



# A Memorable Centennial and the Founding of St. Andrew Svard Abbey

by Fr. James

JUNE & SEPTEMBER 2022

The Chronicle that Father Procopius Neuzil maintained for our community contains the following entries for 1922:

*[The Chapter] also decided to accept the proffered Slovak parish of St. Andrew in Cleveland with the intention that, after a time, a Slovak Benedictine Monastery would be founded there. [January 9]*

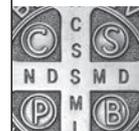
*Rev. Father Stanislaus Gmuca, O.S.B., our capitular and up till now, assistant in St. Michael's Parish in Chicago, was sent to Cleveland, where on Sunday, in the Church of St. Andrew Svorad, he formally announced the taking over of the parish for the purpose of founding a Slovak Monastery. [February 19]*

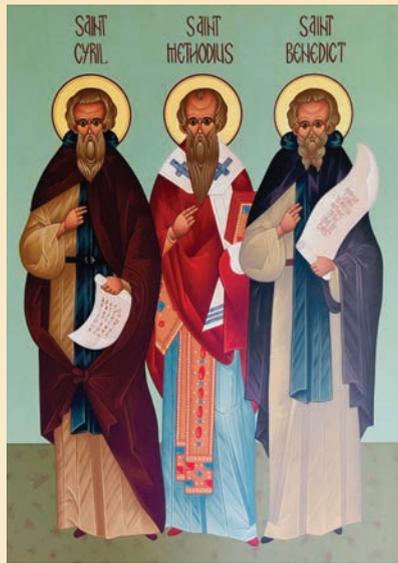
So began a further development of the vision of Archabbot Boniface Wimmer, one that had first taken root in western Pennsylvania three-quarters of a century earlier: the strengths of Benedictine monasticism would be recruited to preserve the Catholic Faith among immigrants to these shores.

Just before Wimmer's death in 1887, the Holy See approved his request that to the German-American monasteries he had already founded around the country would be added the Czech house of St. Procopius in Chicago. In 1922, then,

several Slovak monks who had joined St. Procopius Abbey began the venture that in time would bring about the Slovak monastery of St. Andrew Svorad in Cleveland.

The year of grace 2022, therefore, marks the hundredth anniversary of this community, and Abbot Gary Hoover approached Abbot Austin more than a year ago with the proposal that the Cleveland monks "return" to Lisle in June 1922 for a joint retreat with the St. Procopius monks. We were very happy to agree—though our ongoing construction project posed real challenges in finding room for the sixteen St. Andrew monks who would make the journey to Illinois. Space was located, and with monks all over the house, some of the Procopian monks remarked that it was like old times when there were many more monks around. They even brought with them picture books from their archives and other historical artifacts. We spent a fine week together as our retreat was preached by Fr. Joel Rippinger (Marmion Abbey), whose profound knowledge of American monastic history permitted him to include reflections upon our histories. In the middle of the week, the St. Andrew's monks found time to visit the St. Procopius Abbey Cemetery located on the grounds of Benedictine University. There they visited the grave of Abbot Valentine Kohlbeck who was abbot at the time of their founding.





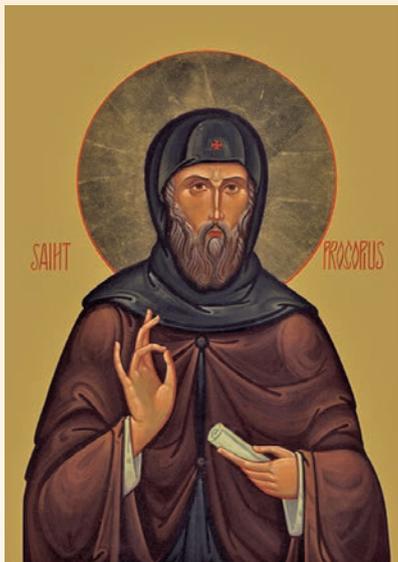
Loving God,

At your inspiration Andrew Svorad and Benedict  
withdrew into the silence of solitude so as to serve  
You more perfectly by prayer, work, and silence.

By their intercession, help us amid  
the distractions of this world  
to be attentive to Your voice  
and constantly follow Your will.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



We Pray,

O, God, you called Saint Procopius  
to gather to himself those who  
desired to draw closer to you through  
prayers of praise and service to their neighbor.

By his intercession guide us also  
to pray and work in such a way  
that we may ever live in union with You.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with You  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Three months later, on Sunday, September 18, there took place the main celebration of St. Andrew's centennial. Two days earlier, Abbot Austin, Prior Guy, Br. Kevin and I drove to Cleveland to participate in the event. On Saturday morning, Fr. Finbar Ramsak provided a tour of the both the Abbey building and that of Benedictine High School, which has an enrollment of about 270 young men. In the afternoon, Fr. Gerard Gonda drove Abbot President Jonathan Licari and the four of us to see various important sites from the century that St. Andrew Abbey has ministered to the Catholics of Cleveland.

We were especially happy to visit the monastic cemetery and the graves of such as Frs. Gregory Vanisak (who had provided the primary impetus for the foundation of St. Andrew Abbey, but who could not move to Cleveland in 1922 because the Church in Chicago much needed the leadership he was providing St. Michael the Archangel Parish) and Fr. Stanislaus Gmuca (who in 1934 became the first Abbot of the new monastery).

Many hundreds were to attend the Centennial Mass on Sunday afternoon, which because of space was celebrated at Assumption Parish in Broadview Heights, which the monks have staffed since 1977. Bishop Edward Malesic of Cleveland presided, and a fine historical presentation of the challenges of the Abbey's first century was provided in the homily by retired Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland Roger Gries, who had served as the Abbot of St. Andrew from 1981 to 2001. As well as Abbot President Jonathan and Abbot Austin, the Abbots of Belmont (North Carolina), St. Gregory's (Oklahoma), and Newark (New Jersey) concelebrated.

A banquet for about 470 guests followed at the Embassy Suites Hotel, and the many speakers made clear the good done by the Benedictines in Cleveland over the last hundred years and the continuing relationship of the monks with the local community. The impact made by St. Andrew Abbey has long gone beyond the Slovak community to embrace the entire metropolitan area, though the remarks from several Slovak fraternal associations demonstrated the ongoing impact of the monks upon the ethnic community of their foundation.

When Fr. Gerard, Fr. Michael Brunovsky, and Br. Gregory Coyne visited Lisle in 2021 to present Abbot Gary's suggestion, they did so also to see documents from our archives on their community's beginnings. Amidst our discussions, they informed me that their house's legends recall that our Fr. Procopius told their founders, "What we have done for the Czechs, you must do for the Slovaks." I had not been aware of this, but the generous evangelical spirit manifested by these words perfectly accords with everything I have learned about the man who provided dynamism and leadership to our community from almost its earliest days. May God bless the monks of St. Andrew Abbey, and may the present generation of both our houses exhibit the vision and courage that so marked the lives of our founders!



## Abbot Austin | Remarks At St. Andrew Abbey Centenary

SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

I am very happy to be here on behalf of St. Procopius Abbey, the mother house of St. Andrew Abbey. Also here from St. Procopius are Prior Guy Jelinek, Subprior James Flint, and Br. Kevin Coffey. With them and all the monks of St. Procopius Abbey back in Illinois, I extend to the monks of St. Andrew Abbey our heartfelt congratulations on your centenary. We are very happy for you and proud of you.

I think it was Cardinal Ratzinger, before becoming Pope Benedict XVI, who noted that faith does not exist apart from a culture. You cannot find the Catholic faith just floating out there apart from a particular culture, such as an ethnic culture. We see that in our congregation of Benedictine monasteries. With the first monastery of our congregation, St. Vincent Archabbey, the faith existed in the Bavarian culture. With St. Procopius, it existed in the Czech culture. And in the case of St. Andrew Abbey, we find the Catholic faith rooted in the Slovak culture. And it is impressive how you have kept that heritage alive.

Now, if the faith only exists in a culture, then it follows that it only spreads by moving from one culture into another. We see this in the history of our Catholic faith: the Catholic faith spread from the Jewish culture, to the Greek culture and to the Roman culture, and then into other cultures, such as the Slavic culture.

Every ethnic group's culture has good elements in it and what the faith does is bring those elements out more fully. It takes the good elements and amplifies them. Yes, it is also the case that every culture also has bad elements, but the faith purifies them over time.

The Catholic faith for centuries has found a home in the Slovak culture and St. Andrew Abbey has been a part of this important history. Of course, St. Andrew does not only serve Slovaks, but people from other cultures. So, my prayer for St. Andrew Abbey, as you continue in your history, is that the Catholic faith that has found a home in your Slovak heritage may continue to spread into the other cultures that you serve, and indeed, into our broader American culture. May the faith that is alive in your monastery bring out what is good in our American culture, even while purifying it from bad elements.

So, again, congratulations to St. Andrew Abbey and may God continue to use you as instruments of evangelization.

ABOVE: CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION MASS OF ST. ANDREW SVORAD ABBEY. PRESIDING IS BISHOP EDWARD MALESIC. VISIBLE CONCELEBRANTS ARE (FROM LEFT): ABBOT AUSTIN MURPHY, ABBOT GARY HOOVER, ABBOT PLACID SOLARI, ABBOT AUGUSTINE CURLEY, BISHOP ROGER GRIES, ABBOT PRESIDENT JONATHAN LICARI.





# Of Farmers & Physicists

## An Excursion to the 'Bohemian Alps' of Nebraska

by Fr. James

JUNE 2022

Abbot Austin and I were driving to Kansas for the General Chapter this past June, so we decided to visit two farms that the Abbey owns in Nebraska along the way. While these are relatively recent acquisitions, there is a lengthy connection between the monastery and the parcels of land.

The properties had been owned by the Shonka family, who hold a prominent role in the twentieth-century history of the monastery. Three of its members (Frs. Emilian, William, and Richard) were monks of the Abbey, another brother (Francis) was a renowned professor of physics at our college, and of the two girls, one (Sr. Aemilia) became a member and superior of Sacred Heart Monastery in Lisle, and the other (Mother Marie) was the founding and long-time superior of the Missionary Oblates of St. Scholastica, who lived near and worked with the monks, especially helping our Chinese Mission and the Church Unity work. The remaining brother (Adolph), an architect, settled in Indiana, and one of his daughters remains an oblate of St. Procopius Abbey to this day!

The ownership of the family farms had come into the hands of Mother Marie Shonka of the Oblate group just mentioned. Before her death in 1996, she set up a trust for the support of the remaining Oblate Sisters, and these farms were among its assets. After the last of the Oblates died in 2018, what remained from the trust was inherited by the Abbey. Since I serve as the monastery's treasurer, Abbot Austin had long intended that he and I should visit

**St. Procopius Abbey receives support today from a legacy of land originally donated by the Shonka family. The family migration from rural Nebraska to Lisle, Illinois, left a lasting legacy impacting generations of students, scientists, lay people, and religious brothers and sisters.**

the properties, but the pandemic messed up our plans. Now, with the General Chapter in nearby Kansas, it seemed a good opportunity finally to visit and meet the farmers who have long rented and worked the land.

Happily, in that general vicinity there happens to be another Benedictine community, the monks of Christ the King priory in Schuyler, Nebraska. So we made arrangements to stay at this house of the Otilien congregation. That grouping of monasteries, founded in Germany, has always been explicitly missionary in orientation, and it today has a number of large foundations in such places as Tanzania and South Korea. The community in Nebraska was founded to assist with fundraising efforts in the United States, but today it also maintains a large and modern retreat house that has become a major spiritual resource for Catholics and others in the Great Plains. A very impressive site!

To return to the farms...the Shonka family was only one of thousands from the Czech provinces who settled in Nebraska during the late nineteenth century. The area about



**Fr. Emilian Shonka, O.S.B.** (1895-1969), taught at St. Procopius Academy and College. He inspired and helped form the Missionary Oblates of St. Scholastica.



**Sr. Mary Aemilia Shonka, O.S.B.** (1898-1988), third Prioress of Sacred Heart Monastery (with her brother, Fr. Richard).

ABBOT AUSTIN AND FR. JAMES VISITED ERNIE AND HENRIETTA NEKUDA, WHO HAVE LONG RENTED AND BEEN GOOD STEWARDS OF THE FARM PROPERTY NEAR LINWOOD, NEBRASKA. THEY GROW CORN AND BEANS ON THE TILLABLE SECTIONS OF THE 212-ACRE FARM. THE SECOND FARM PROPERTY, IN SAUNDERS COUNTY, IS FARMED BY KENNETH SOUSEK.



twenty-five miles west of Omaha continues to sport the name, “Bohemian Alps,” because the rolling hills reminded the settlers of their homeland. Czech names are still plentiful thereabouts.

And, in truth, the roots of St. Procopius Abbey in a real sense go back to these pioneers, in that Archabbot Boniface Wimmer’s early planning for a Czech monastery in America was focused on settlements in Nebraska, on whose behalf the Bishop of Omaha was pleading for priests who could preach and administer sacraments in the Czech language. In response, the Archabbot in 1877 sent Fr. Wenceslaus Kocarnik, who ministered to several Czech communities, at one of which, Plasi, he dreamed of building a Czech monastery.

In the end, Archabbot Boniface determined that it would be better to found the community in an urban setting, where the monks would be less scattered (especially during the severe winter months). Accordingly, St. Procopius Parish in Chicago was chosen as the site for what became our abbey. But even after Fr. Wenceslaus was transferred there in 1885, friendly contact with the Nebraska Czechs continued. A number of monastic vocations (the Shonkas very much included!) came from ethnic parishes in the area, and several of these were staffed by monks from Lisle during the 1930s to 1950s.

In all, a fine prelude to the General Chapter, acquainting ourselves with the farms while experiencing sites that were part of the St. Procopius story!



**Fr. William J. Shonka, O.S.B. (1902-1967),** earned a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Chicago in 1933, and taught math and physics at the College until 1967.



**Fr. Richard Shonka, O.S.B. (1904-1990),** helped obtain the early grants from the National Science Foundation to begin the computer science program at Illinois Benedictine College.



**Dr. Francis Shonka (1906-1970),** educator, physicist, and inventor, is renowned for his pioneering work with ionizing radiation measurement devices and equipment.



**Mother Marie Shonka, O.S.B. (1912-1996),** the founding and long-time superior of the Missionary Oblates of St. Scholastica in Lisle.



# Sts. Cyril & Methodius

## A New Home For Some Old Friends

by Fr. James

JULY 2021

In 1942, on the feast day of St. Procopius [July 4], our patriarchal Abbot Procopius Neuzil recorded in the chronicle he kept for the community:

*St. Procopius' Feast Day, the patron of our monastery, was a festive day of Church unification of all Slavs in the Catholic Church. A Mass was celebrated in the Greek Rite in the Old Slavonic language, concelebrated by our members Fr. Chrysostom Tarasevicz and Athanasius Reszecz, O.S.B., which was served by our clerics of the Slavic Rite: Ven. Frater Methodius Royko, O.S.B., and Demetrius Kovalchik, O.S.B. The participating singers of the Latin Rite, under the direction of Rev. Fr. Vladimir Vanchik, S.Th.D., of Eastern Rite, performed the Chants in the Old Slavonic language during the Mass and in honor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius during the blessing of the statues of Sts. Cyril and Methodius.*

The Church Unity work, which in practice meant the effort to heal the rift between Catholics and Orthodox, was very near to the heart of Abbot Prokop, and I have little doubt that he was the prime mover in the installation of these statues of the brothers Cyril and Methodius. These were placed in the grove overlooking the sunken garden between College Road and Benedictine Hall, and there the saints presided over the life of St. Procopius College for close to sixty years.

Around the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, a series of decisions brought about a massive transformation of the campus. Two new halls were placed between Benedictine Hall and the road, and the sunken garden and all that it included disappeared. For the statues of Cyril and Methodius, there began a twenty-year period during which they lacked a secure home.

I'm not sure I can recall all their temporary dwellings, but the following come to mind:

- an outdoor storage area, where they shared space with other objects that had lost their original campus location;
- the outer office of the Literature and Communications department, one of whose faculty had taken an interest in the statues;
- outside Lownik Hall, which gave them a prominent location, but never seemed quite right, without them being on a pedestal or some such.

In the spring of 2021, on Good Friday, I walked to the Abbey cemetery, and I was a bit distressed to see Cyril and Methodius lying outside the gates, looking abandoned and



FATHER JOSEPH approaches shrine of St. Cyril and Method to pray. Shrine is situated in front of St. Procopius abbey.

CHICAGO'S AMERICAN, OCTOBER 5, 1961, STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS STATUES IN FRONT OF ST. PROCOPIUS ABBEY.

most forlorn. This sight was a reminder, certainly, of the vanity of all earthly renown!

Happily, all unbeknownst to myself, other plans for the future of the statues were maturing. For some years now, the Czech Mission in Brookfield, Illinois, perhaps fourteen miles from the Abbey, has sought to preserve a close relationship with my community, whose heritage, of course, is also Czech. Before the death of Fr. Odilo Crkva in 2015, both the director of the mission, Monsignor Dusan Hladik, and many of the congregation would come to the Abbey for our monthly Czech Mass.

Though more rarely after the death of Fr. Odilo (he was the last here in Lisle to have a real speaking ability with Czech), the Mission several times a year would come to pray at the Abbey and its cemetery. Perhaps on one of these visits the plight of the Cyril and Methodius statues was noted. In any case, the administration of the University was approached as to its willingness to donate them to the Czech Mission. Agreement was reached, and not long after my walk to the cemetery, the statues were moved to Brookfield.

A few months later, on Sunday, July 11, 2021, Abbot Austin and I drove to Brookfield to attend and concelebrate at the Mass (offered in Czech—but we did our best!), after which the Abbot formally conducted the blessing of the two statues in their new location.





SUNDAY, JULY 11, 2021, ABBOT AUSTIN FORMALLY CONDUCTED THE BLESSING OF THE STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS STATUES IN THEIR NEW LOCATION AT THE CZECH MISSION IN BROOKFIELD, ILLINOIS. ABOVE, ABBOT AUSTIN (CENTER) WITH MSG. DUSAN HLADIK (LEFT), FR. JAMES (RIGHT) ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF THE MISSION.

Monsignor Dusan Hladik's sermon at Mass was in Czech, and so I could only follow it in very general terms. However, it clearly included an historical survey of the importance of these saints, both in their own time and for the Slavic peoples in the eleven centuries since. One comment struck me forcibly: in the same summer of 1942 that these statues were first installed at St. Procopius Abbey in Lisle, Hitler's armies were driving eastward towards Stalingrad.

That got me to thinking about all that the world was going through at that time. 1942 might seem very far away to me, but then I remind myself that this was the year in which my parents were married! Abbot Dismas Kalcic was present as a thirteen-year-old at another of Abbot Procopius Neuzil's activities that summer, the blessing of the Lidice memorial in Crest Hill, Illinois, near Joliet. Lidice, of course, was the village destroyed—all men shot, the women and children deported—by the National Socialist regime in retribution for the assassination in Prague earlier that year of Reinhard Heydrich.

It is not my intent to claim that Americans of my own and succeeding generations have had an easy time of life. I am not sure that any generation since the Garden of Eden has had an "easy time." Ease, in the sense of the fullness of peace, is not part of the postlapsarian human condition! Individually and collectively, each generation has its sorrows.

That said, I still feel gratitude and relief to have been spared in my experience the horror that extended over so much of the globe during the Second World War and the years immediately following, when countries such as Czechoslovakia were obliged to endure one tyranny in place of another. One of those I spoke with in Brookfield after the blessing was a gentleman who remembered gratefully my monastery giving him a job, and indeed a home, after he was obliged to leave his Czech homeland in the years after the war. Many people during that era had far less happy endings to their stories.

All of which should lead Americans to be thankful to God for his blessings on their land. Germany's Otto von Bismarck grumbled words to the effect that God in a special way looks out for infants, drunks, and the United States of America. The Iron Chancellor did not mean that altogether in an admiring sense! And yet, what greater compliment could be spoken of any nation? All of which should occasionally move Americans to an examination of conscience, as to how well we have cooperated with God's goodness in our regard.

Personally, I was thrilled by what seems a most happy ending to the tale of the statues! Circumstances change, and it cannot be expected that every shrine important to one generation shall remain significant indefinitely. But it is very good that, when such occurs, creative thinking allows a way to preserve the best of the past.



# Meet Our New Vocation Director

## Br. Kevin Coffey, O.S.B.

Since coming to St. Procopius abbey in the year 2000 to become a Benedictine monk, I'm always taken aback by my journey towards God and His will for me. I never intended to become a religious. Since between the ages of three and five all I ever wanted to be was an artist. The desire stems from a particular event when my mother woke my brothers and I up one morning and told us to gather all the sheets, pillow cases and curtains from our bedroom and bring them downstairs to the backyard. We were met with a plethora of large jars filled to the brim with wondrous liquid colors. We then proceeded to fold and tie the various cloths and plunge them into the dyes. A few days later our bedroom was filled with brightly colored tie-dyed wonders. Since then I began diving into anything related to the visual arts—drawing, painting, sculpting, etc. I couldn't get enough. Art was, and still remains, an avenue of expression that opened my eyes to wonder, beauty and mystery. The journey towards my faith, my relationship with Christ, wasn't as immediate.

I was raised Catholic, received the sacraments, attended parochial grade schools and high schools, first in Chester, Pennsylvania, during my grade school years, then in Calvert County Maryland during my high school years. However, this was only something I did because it was the expected thing to do in my family. It wasn't something I did due to a fervent faith, my heart wasn't invested in it at all. That all changed after high school.

After graduating high school I attended a local college part time (St. Mary's College of Maryland), taking only art classes, while earning a living cooking at a local seafood restaurant and painting murals. It was during this time that a specific question began overwhelming my thoughts, "Did I believe that Jesus was God?" It completely took me aback. Every night after work it would invade my thoughts. My first instinct to have an idea how to answer such a question was to pray. Ten Hail Marys, that's what I started with. As the weeks went by, ten became



Hear Br. Kevin share the story of how he first heard about St. Procopius Abbey. Watch this and more videos at [youtube.com/@StProcopiusAbbey/videos](https://youtube.com/@StProcopiusAbbey/videos)

twenty, twenty became a hundred, and so on. Praying became a usual evening event.

After about a month, I was spending hours praying the rosary daily. I knew then that I believed that Jesus was God. I delved into my faith as passionately as I could. Reading the bible became a necessity for me throughout the day. I attended Mass on weekdays. And I began to actively participate in various parish activities. It was the first time in my life I felt truly alive with a deep knowledge of who I was and who I was meant to become—a child of God, serving and listening to Him as best I could. Eventually this life of prayer and art led me to my current life as a monk here at St. Procopius Abbey.

Painting murals led me to painting religious icons. A visitor to one of the homes I was doing a painting at invited me to a weekend retreat painting icons. The iconographer leading the retreat enjoyed my work. After a few more retreats over the span of half a year he offered me a job in the Pittsburgh area of Pennsylvania painting with him. After accepting the offer, I moved to Jeannette, Pennsylvania. While there I befriended a monk at one of the retreats. He was a seminarian at St. Vincent's Archabbey in Latrobe but was a monk from St. Procopius.

Through our friendship, I visited St. Procopius. My vocation revealed itself through praying at the abbey with the monks and working with them. Even my own personal prayer times led me back to the monks of Lisle. After several more visits during the course of a year, I joined.

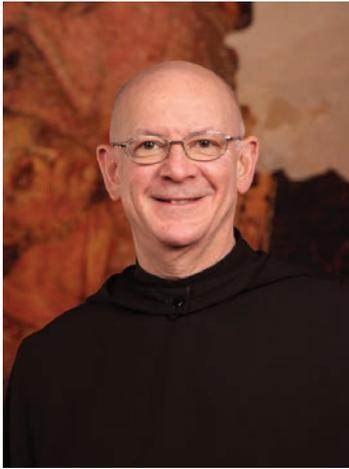
I believe that God has a purpose for everyone. Everyone has a vocation. God longs for each of us and we each have the ability to respond and say yes to His longing for us. Some are called to marriage, some to the priesthood, some to being single, others to religious life of one order or another. There are many types of vocations. Have faith that God will reveal yours in His time, in His will.

If you're a man between the ages of 21 and 45, have been intentionally practicing the Catholic faith through prayer, scripture, the liturgy, and allowing the church's teaching to guide your life, maybe God is calling you to a vocation as a monk here at St. Procopius Abbey. Or maybe you know someone who you suspect to have a monastic vocation here. Do not hesitate to reach out to me to find out. I am not just here to find monks. I am here to pray and serve the church—that includes you.

Br. Kevin Coffey  
630-969-6410, ext. 273  
[kcoffey@procopius.org](mailto:kcoffey@procopius.org)

# In Memoriam Monachorum

A lighted candle burned brightly in front of a standing crucifix at his place at table in the refectory. May he rest in peace!



**BR. CHARLES HLAVA,  
O.S.B.**

BORN  
AUGUST 10, 1951

PROFESSED A MONK  
AUGUST 11, 1973

DIED  
MAY 7, 2022

Our confrere, Br. Charles Hlava, after a three-year struggle with cancer, died at the Abbey in the early evening of Saturday, May 7, 2022, just after the community joined at his bedside for the prayers of the dying. Born in Chicago on August 10, 1951, he was raised in Cicero, Illinois, and graduated from St. Joseph High School in Westchester. He came to St. Procopius College as a mathematics major in 1969. Three years later, Charles entered the novitiate of the Abbey, and he professed vows on August 11, 1973. A talented musician, he was soon an assistant organist for the Divine Office and Conventual Mass. After obtaining his degree in 1974, he taught mathematics at Benet Academy for four years. He then studied at Marquette University in Milwaukee, obtaining a master's degree in Mathematics in 1979. Returning to Benet, now as a counselor as well as a math teacher, he obtained a license in adolescent counseling from the State of Illinois in 1981. A year later, when Fr. Hugh Anderson was assigned to St. Joan of Arc Parish, Br. Charles succeeded him as Assistant Principal of the Academy. He served in that role for the next fifteen years, under three principals. Following a sabbatical in 1997-1998 that allowed him to study in Rome, Jerusalem, and Berkeley, California, Br. Charles returned to counseling and teaching at Benet.

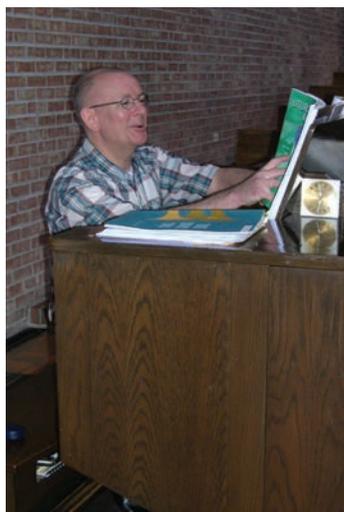
His talents included considerable organizational ability, and over the decades he served the Abbey and schools in various other ways: Gardener, 1975-1976; Socius of Novices, 1979-1980; Music Coordinator at the Abbey, 1979-1983; Alumni Moderator at the Academy, 1982-1995; Director of Building and Grounds at the Abbey, 2003-2004; and for many years a member of both the Benet Board of Directors and the Benedictine University Board of Trustees.

The onset of cancer obliged Br. Charles to leave the classroom at Benet in the spring of 2019. Treatment slowed the progress of the disease, which he bore stoically, and he continued to serve the community as assistant organist until just after Easter 2022, at which time his condition rapidly declined. He is survived by his community, and his two brothers, James and John. In memoriam, a candle burns brightly at his place at table in the monastic refectory.

*The Abbot and Monks received his body at Vespers at St. Joan of Arc Church on Thursday, May 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. The Community celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial at St. Joan of Arc Church on Friday, May 13, 2022, at 10:30 a.m., with interment in the abbey cemetery on the campus of Benedictine University.*

*Please remember Br. Charles in your prayers.*

“SINCE THE AGE OF FOUR, BR. CHARLES AND HIS BROTHERS PLAYED ORGAN MUSIC THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE AND IN PARISH CHURCHES. AS A REGULAR ORGANIST AT SACRED HEART MONASTERY CHAPEL, BR. CHARLES RAISED THE BAR OF ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY OF THAT EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHAPEL. AT THE ABBEY HE ASSISTED BR. AUGUSTINE AT THE DIVINE OFFICE AND SOMETIMES AT HOLY MASS.” — FR. BECKET



# A Practical & Stoic Monk

## The Eulogy for a Confrere, Br. Charles Hlava, O.S.B.

by Fr. Becket, O.S.B. | The Vigil Service | May 12, 2022

We monks thank you for joining us in grief over the death of our brother. These days of the Easter season remind us that we are not people of the tomb. We are people of the Resurrection and these cards, the abundance of these cards sent to Br. Charles, proves to me that God claims victory over sin, death, and cancer. So, tonight, all I can say is thank you for disturbing your busy schedules to praise God for a life that somehow, in some way, touched all of our lives. While all of us monks are grateful for your support tonight, we know that this is a tough one to bear. A number of us monks joined the abbey in the 1970s. In a sense, we grew up together. Br. Charles is the first to go.

These cards here attest to a person who touched your lives in one way or another. Br. Charles hired many Benet faculty and staff. He hired Bryan Kibiloski thirty-eight years ago, and he now retires in a few weeks. Interesting that both of them are ending significant journeys together. When Mary Allman, secretary in the principal's office left for a higher paying job, Br. Charles left the campus to go and bring her back. How do we begin to speak about the many years of teaching of Mathematics at Benet, until 2019, and how much he hated, HE HATED, grading papers? Where do I begin to name the many friends he made from the classes he taught, many of you, many of them as his dining partners? Joe Schneider once said that he took the longest time dissecting and eating that crispy duck dinner. How do I describe his dedication to the boards of Benedictine University and Benet Academy and the many friendships he formed there? Whenever I had the chance to attend the university board's Christmas parties, I marveled at how Br. Charles worked his magic, moving throughout the crowd and regaling people at the tables. Whether in cards, or in texts, or on his cell phone, or in person, this congregation is a great witness to the goodness within his heart that not all of us saw, including us monks.

In these last few weeks, people asked me about how Br. Charles dealt with the cancer. In his necrology, Fr. James named it as "stoic." I would agree, but I would also add, "practical." A stoic is a "person who can endure pain or hardship without showing their feelings or complaining." This might be how he dealt with his cancer, but stoic is not how Br. Charles dealt with life. He certainly had his strong opinions about a lot of things.

On a personal note, I am not quite sure why I am up here preaching the eulogy. His best friend was Br. Columban. He should be here doing this eulogy. But he preceded him in death. Now they share eternal life together. What I can tell you is that I have known about this eulogy since last year. On the afternoon of Tuesday, December 14, I descend the stairs to my old room in the abbey cloister only to have my eyes spot an envelope dangling from a magnet on my doorpost. The abbey envelope read simply, "Becket," in Br. Charles's handwriting. "Oh no," I thought, "What did I do now?"

Opening the envelope, inside I find a cheap piece of writing paper (remember, this is Br. Charles) and my eyes dart up and down the hand-written note. The note reads:

*Becket—*

*As I continue to wrap up my affairs, I was wondering if you would be willing to deliver the eulogy at my funeral vespers service. Why? (Remember, this is Br. Charles)*

- 1. You know me as well as anyone in the community.*
- 2. You will prepare.*
- 3. You will say more good things about me than bad! :)*

*Thank you for your consideration.*

—Charles

Even in the face of death, Br. Charles remains in control. Now that is a Stoic!

Br. Charles chose the many mansions of the heavenly kingdom of St. John's Gospel as his favorite Bible passage. Guess why? "It's practical," he said. "We always ask, are there places prepared for us?" We ought to ask, "Are there places available?"

His "considerable organizational ability" (as written by Fr. James) was practical. He often asked, "Will it work?" If something did not work, expect Br. Charles to lead the attack against it. Yet, he was the time-tested administrator who asked those crucial questions about our schools and about our community. Yes, his personality often viewed the glass half-empty, but his practicality often made sense. Maybe this is why he loved watching—yes, it's true—"Judge Judy." One day as he recovered from shoulder surgery in the infirmary, I walked into his room where he was watching TV. "Charles," I blurted out, "Why are you watching Judge Judy?" "I like how she talks to people." No stoicism there.

Spending lots of time in his room caring for him, there were lots of things we found in his room that proved his practicality. On the wall, and on the desk were five clocks, all at the exact same time, working perfectly. Moreover, neatly arranged on his shelves in the closet were bottles after bottles of Irish Spring shower soap, bottles after bottles of liquid Dial, bars after bars of Dial soap, boxes upon boxes of Kleenex. For years the previous nurse, Sheri Young, could not figure out why the supply cabinet and the monastic store were so empty all the time. Mystery solved! This Stoic was not only squeaky clean, he had a fine nose.

Speaking of a fine nose, we have to recall all of his favorite meals and dining places: crispy duck at Golden Duck and Bohemian Crystal restaurants, lobster and shrimp at Red Lobster and Chinn's on Ogden Avenue, sliders at White Castle, cheap Italian food at Olive Garden, and shopping at Walmart (those apps are on his phone).

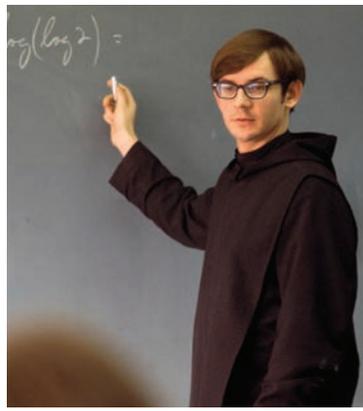


When it came to his prayer life, Br. Charles never missed morning prayer. He didn't wear his faith on his sleeve. He hated long homilies and long liturgies. He hated Latin at Mass. But in the last few weeks as nurse Megan Gallagher McCatty and I ministered to his health needs, I found treasures on his desk and in the pockets of his habit. In many piles of papers, and deep in the pockets of his habit, lived pieces of prayers. He saved many sheets of paper of his Lenten practices. It was a very personal feeling just to pick up his so-called diaries. For his Lenten penance, I read things like, "Charity and kindness, optimism, and avoid snacks." This year his penance was to ponder the Book of Job, "be more positive, re-read his little book, "One-minute Prayers for those with Cancer," and, "limit snacks." How practical!

I began this eulogy with the story of Br. Charles asking me to preach the eulogy. I didn't tell you the ending. After reading the cheap piece of paper he wrote on, I dialed his room phone. "This is Br. Charles, please leave a message at the beep. Thank you." "Charles, this is Becket. I got your message on my door. I'll make you a bargain. I will do your eulogy if you promise me to work on your anger." It wasn't anger that he was dying. I meant the anger that is masked as sarcasm or complaining all the time. We never talked about that phone call. (Remember, this is Br. Charles.) But after April 26, the date he remained in his room, something began to change. He did. He began to let go...when he began to deteriorate physically. For some reason, whether it be existentially or spiritually, the anger moved into humor. (Remember, this is Br. Charles...and humor was usually sarcastic.)

In the first week of May, the abbot suggested that we pray and anoint Br. Charles. As we prepared to gather the community, I told a very anxious Br. Charles that the abbot and community would gather on time at 12:45 p.m. outside of his room. "Want to bet?" A few days later I was under orders from management, a.k.a., the abbey nurse, to get a night light installed in his room into an electric strip behind his bed. Spending minutes upon minutes searching the room for an available electrical strip, I kept talking to myself about the lack of light in the room. Just then I heard a voice from the bed, "Did you find that \$1,000,000.00 you're looking for?" Then, one morning our abbey maintenance engineer, Dan Basic, stopped by to help Megan clear out the room for medical equipment. As he finished, Dan asked him, "Do you want anything?" Immediately, Br. Charles blurted out, "Vodka gimlet." Finally, the morning of his death, in and out of a deep sleep, I kept vigil at his bedside until Megan got to work. I sat down on his old rickety desk chair. I forgot that many of these old metal chairs squeaked loudly as you turned in the seat. Sure enough, I turned around to pick up my coffee cup only to have the noise of the chair wake him. He mumbled, "What in the hell are you doing?" Needless to say, I apologized profusely.

He might have been a stoic with his cancer, but Br. Charles demonstrated to us the emotion caused by great organ playing. Since the age of four, he and his brothers played organ music throughout the house and in parish churches. Earlier today, his organ professor, Fr. John Palmer came to pay his respects. The body of Br. Charles was not here yet but he remarked to me that Charles was the most brilliant student he ever taught. As a regular organist at Sacred Heart Monastery Chapel, Br. Charles raised the bar of architectural beauty of that early twentieth-century chapel. At the abbey



BR. CHARLES TEACHING MATH AT BENET ACADEMY. SAILOR LAKE, OCTOBER, 1984, (FROM LEFT) BR. COLUMBAN TROJAN, FR. BECKET, AND BR. CHARLES.

he assisted Br. Augustine at the Divine Office and sometimes at Holy Mass. At our Mueller organ, his favorite organ piece was Charles Widor's *Toccata Symphony for Organ Number Five*. The movement of his long fingers and nimble organ shoes belted out that famous tune. A few months ago in the infirmary office I reminded him of his movements with that *Toccata* he played. That is when I sensed we were taking a turn for the worst. He didn't recall the piece right away.

As the evening hours of Saturday, May 7 progressed, Megan and I knew that the end was imminent. The abbot summoned the community to his bedside. The time was about 7:15, 7:20 p.m. His family, Jim, John and his wife Sheila, and their daughter Vanessa, stood with us as we began the prayers. We all prayed the Litany of Saints: Sts. Peter and Paul, pray for him. St. Mary Magdalene, pray for him. St. Charles, pray for him. Abbot Austin prayed the prayers of final commendation. Finally, we all intoned the *Regina Caeli*, the Marian hymn of Easter, forgetting that Br. Charles hated Latin. The monks said their good-byes leaving his room one by one. Out came the oil of the sick as the final anointing. Ten minutes later, at 7:34 p.m., our confrere, our brother, and our friend, Br. Charles Richard Hlava, Monk, Stoic, and Practical Person, passed into eternity with the angels of God, who accompanied him to that place prepared for him by our Crucified Risen Christ.

This past Monday, as I prepared his clothes for burial, which includes the "cuculla," the choir garment he hardly wore, I found a well-prayed holy card. On the front is a prayer composed by St. John Paul II which I redid on Brother's holy card. But on the back of this worn card is a prayer to St. Peregrine for cancer sufferers. The end of the prayer reads:

*Obtain for me the strength to accept my trials from the living hand of God with patience and resignation. May suffering lead me to a better life and enable me to atone for my sins and the sins of the world.*

*Amen.*

Br. Charles, seventy years old, forty-eight years a monk, may he rest in peace! May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace! Amen! Alleluia!

Rest in Peace, Charles.

Thank you for the privilege of caring for you and preaching your eulogy. Thank you for trusting me. I hope I did you well.



# Abbey Adventures

Chronicling our great venture of Christian discipleship



■ It is easier now, more than ever before, to stay in touch with the community at St. Procopius no matter where you are located, thanks to social media and email options.

While we would love to have you come to the Abbey to see us in person, we know that is not always possible.

So, we are happy to offer some alternatives for those who may find it difficult to visit.

Here are a few of the email options:

- **Abbot Austin** sends a daily email every morning at 6:00 a.m. It includes a *Lectio Divina* for the day, a recent news item that Abbot found interesting and suggests for your reading, a saint of the day, and any special celebrations or remembrances at the Abbey.
- **Fr. James** sends a weekly newsletter on Wednesdays on a variety of topics related to Church or Abbey history.
- The Abbey also sends a weekly email on Fridays that includes homilies and sermons from the prior week, and twice-weekly *Lectio Divina* emails (usually Mondays and Wednesdays).

You can subscribe to one or more of these lists at <http://bit.ly/SPA-subscribe> (case-sensitive).

In addition, we encourage you to connect and “follow” or “subscribe” to us on any social media service that you use.

We can be found at:

[facebook.com/StProcopiusAbbey](https://www.facebook.com/StProcopiusAbbey)  
[instagram.com/st\\_procopius\\_abbey](https://www.instagram.com/st_procopius_abbey)  
[youtube.com/StProcopiusAbbey](https://www.youtube.com/StProcopiusAbbey)



■ December 1-3, 2022, **Abbot Austin** traveled to Mexico to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Benedictine abbey, Abadia del Tepeyac (above), by the monks of St. John’s Abbey, Minnesota. COVID delayed the celebration by one year.

■ Christmas and winter at the Abbey.



■ Our 2022 Christmas card featured this exquisite piece of art from The Art Institute of Chicago (below): *Adoration of the Shepherds*, Bededetto Buglioni, about 1520, Florence, Glazed Terra-cotta | 114 × 79 in., Gift of Kate S. Buckingham, Lucy Maud Buckingham Memorial Collection. Included was this sentiment from Dorothy Day. “I’m so glad that Jesus was born in a stable. Because my soul is so much like a stable. It is poor and in unsatisfactory condition...Yet I believe that if Jesus can be born in a stable, maybe He can also be born in me.”



## Abbey Prayer & Worship

Masses in the Church at St. Procopius Abbey are open to the public.

Renovations are ongoing, so please follow any instructions posted on signs.

### The Conventual Mass

Monday-Friday..... 4:50 p.m.

Saturday..... 7:00 a.m.

Sunday..... 11:00 a.m.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Abbey. Please visit our website for the full schedule [procopius.org/mass-and-prayer-times](http://procopius.org/mass-and-prayer-times)

Sometime soon we will return to the Lady Chapel for the Divine Office.

■ St. Procopius Abbey is supporting, as a member of the host committee, the West Suburban Catholic Culture Series, presented by the Lumen Christi Institute. This year's series will focus on: "A Catholic Vision of the Person and the World." **Abbot Austin** was a presenter for the series in 2021, and now returns in a more permanent role.

■ **Abbot Austin, Br. Guy, Fr. James** and **Br. Kevin** attended the 100th celebration of St. Andrew Svorad Abbey in Cleveland on September 18, 2022.

■ As a member of the planning committee for the Benedictine Development Symposium, **Fr. Becket** attended the workshop at the St. Benedict Center in Schuyler, Nebraska, June 27-July 1, 2022. While the symposium is composed of many Benedictine men and women from across the world, the center itself is staffed and administered by the monks of Christ the King Priory, founded by the Abbey of Muensterschwarzach in Germany. They belong to the Missionary Benedictines of the Congregation of St. Ottilien.

■ **Fr. James** had two pieces published in the June 2022 *American Benedictine Review*: an article, "On the Eve of War: Letters from Sant'Anselmo, 1937-1941," on the experiences in Rome of two of our monks, Frs. Martin Horak and Philip Bajo; and a book review of *Benedictine Options: Learning to Live from the Sons and Daughters of Saints Benedict and Scholastica*, by Patrick Henry.

## FEEDBACK

*From the Advancement Office:*

**We would like to update our records. Please respond if applicable.**

- I am receiving duplicate copies of *The Clerestory*.
- My name and/or address are incorrect on the mailing label. *Please make corrections to the mailing label on the other side of this form and we will update your information.*
- I would like to make a voluntary subscription to *The Clerestory*. *If you wish to help defray the costs of producing and mailing the magazine, you may enclose a tax deductible contribution, payable to St. Procopius Abbey.*
- I wish to be removed from your mailing list.

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■ **Abbot Austin and Fr. James** attended the 54th General Chapter of the American Cassinese Congregation at St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, Kansas, from June 20-25, 2022.

■ April brought the return to the cloister courtyard of Poimen and her drake, who successfully hatched and raised a 2022 brood.



■ **Fr. Philip** had an article published in *The American Benedictine Review*, March 2022, "A Contemporary Account of a Tenth-Century Encounter Between Greek and Latin Monks at Monte Cassino: Background and Commentary."

■ Along with Abbot President John Klassen, **Fr. James** took part in the Visitation of Newark Abbey from December 28-30, 2021.

## 2022 Jubilarians

65 YEARS OF ORDINATION

**Fr. Kenneth Zigmund, O.S.B.**

**Fr. Joseph, O.S.B.**

65 YEARS OF

MONASTIC PROFESSION

**Fr. David Turner, O.S.B.**

60 YEARS OF

MONASTIC PROFESSION

**Fr. Philip Timko, O.S.B.**

50 YEARS OF

MONASTIC PROFESSION

**Prior Guy Jelinek, O.S.B.**

25 YEARS OF

MONASTIC PROFESSION

**Abbot Austin G. Murphy, O.S.B.**





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