

# The Navigator

The Newsletter of the Monastic Fellowship of Saint Brendan's  
Volume III, No. 1 — Winter 2008

## Saint Brendan's Annual Report "YOU ARE HERE!"

*May the favor of the Lord our God  
rest upon us; establish the work of our hands  
for us — yes, establish the work of our hands.*  
Psalm 90:17

Happy New Year! Every 365 days we get an opportunity to start again. It's a new year on the calendar which means a good start to a new Church year and — off we go! But there's only one way to be sure we're heading in the right direction, and that's to be sure you know where you're starting from. If you don't know where you are, how can you tell the way to get where you want to be? (Isn't that why the big maps at parks and malls always have the arrow that says, 'YOU ARE HERE!'?)

So, you ask, as the Monastic Fellowship of Saint Brendan's, where are we going in 2008? Let's begin by looking at what we accomplished in 2007 so that we have our bearing. Sometimes when we hear from members of the Fellowship we can sense your frustration at



how long things are taking to get established. We feel it too, and it's easy to assume that we are not making progress because...moving at the speed of prayer — at the speed God moves *us* — seems to be so much slower than we could move ourselves. But looking back at our journals, accounting records, and photos, it's obvious that God is moving even when we see no immediate proof. Here's a synopsis.

### ADMINISTRATIVE:

- Filing for not-for-profit status with the State of Maine using new name (Saint Brendan's *Monastic Retreat Community*) which incorporates the monastic fellowship, the future community and future Retreat Center.
- Receiving a Library of Congress copyright for the Breviary and nearly finalizing the provisional version for professional publication.
- Nearly completing the first draft of *The Rule*, the guidelines (modified Benedictine) by which our Oblates will strive to discipline their lives.
- Devised a "Goals and Expectations" chart for Oblates and Friends of Saint Brendan's, the application forms, and a publicity brochure which explains the work of Saint Brendan's.

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- Began to revise the website in a way that reflects our affiliation with the Communion of Corpus Christi (rather than the CEC) and more accurately emphasizes the monastic elements of the Fellowship.
- Published 6 newsletters and developed a list of books for which to create study guides to be used by Oblates and Friends.
- Increased sale of prayer ropes and chaplets.

#### **PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT:**

- Continued work in the Refectory (kitchen/dining area); built and installed 5 kitchen cabinets and have 4 more ready to install in spring.
- Contractors built a new BIG door on the barn.
- Expanded the garden by nearly 40% without the aid of machinery or power tools; built a fenced-in chicken yard and coop, and currently have 21 hens and 2 roosters; designed and began construction on dairy goat barn.
- Heated the entire Priory House (even on the days when temps hit -14 degrees) with only the woodstove, removing our dependence upon foreign oil. (Good stewardship begins at home... ☺)

#### **FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

(Note: Figures are rounded to the nearest \$10.00.)

- Received over \$10,000.00 in tithes, donations, and sales – not counting donations of supplies and time.
- Returned \$1,200 in tithes to the Communion of Corpus Christi.
- Spent \$1,100 in office supplies, copying expenses, publishing and mailing of newsletters; \$720 for outsourced copying of the Breviary for Fellowship members (this includes the purchase of the machine that put the comb bindings on the books); \$1,190 in building supplies/expenses; \$1,500 in the Saint Brendan's vehicle repair/insurance/registration expenses; \$300 in Prior/Prioress travel expenses; \$50 for website (we personally pay for internet and phone expenses); \$200 for food/supplies for retreatants, and \$1,000 in farm/garden/livestock expenses which will be a part of the monastic labor for those who come here on retreat.
- Disbursed \$76 of the travel scholarship fund, for a current balance of \$1,730.

#### **PRIOR/PIORESS PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND STUDY:**

(Note: It's important that our example is more than

just talk.)

- Read, as a family, 8 faith-based books plus our personal devotional books.
- Maintain a rather consistent schedule of 6 Offices per day for 4 days of the week, Morning/Evening Prayer for 2 days, and Sunday with 2 Worship services. (We did not keep the Offices for 2 weeks during Christmastide, spending private time in devotion and meditation instead.)
- Continued work on post-secondary degrees: Fr. Alan should be able to finish his PhD this year, and M. Sue completed another 9 credits toward a Masters in Divinity. (We are not saying this to be 'superior' but to show that we are moving forward in our faithfulness to complete the tasks God has given us to do.)
- Researched extensively our nation's abuse of farm land through chemical fertilizer/pesticides; livestock and how it is abused both during its care and the manner of its slaughter for food. (If you are wondering what that has to do with Christian life and spiritual development...stay tuned). Also researched the stability of America's overall food supply.

#### **SPIRITUAL WORK:**

- Apart from our work with Saint Brendan's, we have assisted a small, local church (Fr. Alan preaches there nearly every week; M. Sue teaches the adult Sunday School), the local food pantry, and needy neighbors in Dennysville; involved ourselves with 2 local schools for access to the children and non-churched members of our community. (Again, we would not ask you to do something we are not doing ourselves.)
- Ministered to 8 retreatants, 6 guests; offered spiritual direction/heard confession through over 100 phone calls (not just to chat, but to direct and pray), and answered over 1,200 emails requesting prayer/guidance (most from the fellowship, but from

*(Continued on page 3)*

#### **HOW TO CONTACT US**

**Father Alan L. Andraeas, Prior**  
**Mother Susan G. Andraeas, Prioress**

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some people contacting us through the website – from as far away as China!)

- Began assisting needy local residents with food, heating fuel oil, and other necessities in Jesus' name.
- Mother Sue was a speaker at a diocesan women's retreat in MD.

### FELLOWSHIP

- Received 14 applications for Friends memberships from those previously in the Society of St. Seraphim (from the CEC).
- Received an additional 5 applications for Friends memberships from new members of the Fellowship (from the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, the Charismatic Episcopal Church, Disciples of Christ, and an independent, nondenominational church. WELCOME, FOLKS!)

### TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

Ok. That's where we've been in 2007. It seems, sometimes, that we are getting nowhere. Once we can look at it all in print, though, I think it becomes evident that the Lord is laying a good foundation – and we are NOT just putzing around. ☺ What comes next? Here's where we feel the Lord leading us for the coming year (in no particular order):

- Complete the filing requirements for a federal 501(c)3 tax-exempt status.
- Fr. Alan and M. Sue will take Life Vows to serve God through the monastic work of Saint Brendan's; from that point on, we will be able to accept Oblate applications.
- Complete the goat barn and add dairy goats to the livestock here.
- Finish the kitchen cabinets! Have a new electrical box installed, upgrading from 100 to 200 amps. Replace antiquated and failing plumbing. Change entrance into the home, adding a mud room and porch to the entrance. Begin fixing leaky windows and loose, exterior wall shingles and any water damage behind them (remember, this is a 200-year old farmhouse).
  - Increase the garden size again, adding feed crops for livestock and root crops to last us through the winter. Add nut and fruit trees, fruit shrubs, and herbs.
- Begin construction for professional office and additional bathrooms.

**“Most importantly, we are desiring to learn more intimately what this call to monastic life is all about”**

- Create more study guides for those in the Fellowship to use.
- Continue work on the website.
- Offer more book reviews in the newsletter (any volunteers?)
- Fr. Alan plans to be a speaker at a men's retreat in MD, this year.
- Fine-tune list of members in the Fellowship. (We will not be financially able to continue sending newsletters to people who are not in the Fellowship. Your membership cost is the ONLY financial demand we place upon members, and we collect none of it personally; we receive no salary; we cannot carry the financial expenses ourselves.)
- Begin establishing small groups within the Fellowship based upon common geographic location, shared gifts and talents, and interest. Devise an operating structure for those groups.
- Most importantly, we desire to learn more intimately what this call to monastic life is all about, how to love Jesus in our times of quiet devotion and meditation, prayer and intercession, and order our service in such a way that it flows out of our devotion to Christ rather than parallel to it or separate from it. We have all learned to *DO* so well; our prayer now is that the Holy Spirit teach us to *BE*. If we can help you with this same monastic call, we will be satisfied with the work we accomplish in this coming year!

What about you? What have YOU accomplished in your monastic walk this past year? What intentional ways have you ordered your life in order to please God? What are your spiritual goals for the coming year? Take some time to pray about it – to ponder where God is leading you – then come up with a plan for faithful execution. Without a plan, how will you know what to do? And without a “YOU ARE HERE” arrow, how will you know where to begin? ✕

**!!! ATTENTION !!!**  
**OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED TO...**  
**SAINTBRENDANS@PWLESS.NET**

Book Review —  
**Connecting With God:  
A Spiritual Formation Guide**

Reviewer - Marcia Landwehr

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*Connecting With God: A Spiritual Formation Guide.*  
Lynda L. Graybeal and Julia L. Roller; Introduction by  
Richard J. Foster (Harpercollins: San Francisco, 2006),  
ISBN-13 978-0-06-084123-2.

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Summary: This is a very valuable workbook that is one of Renovare's resources. For those folks unfamiliar with Renovare, it is the in-frachurch movement founded by Richard Foster, which is committed to the renewal of the Church. This book is for use by individuals and churches with balanced practical effective strategies for spiritual growth through the study of the Holy Scripture.

This study guide is best used by small groups or individuals and provides a basic introduction to some elements of the intentional ways we can "open" ourselves up to a growing relationship with the Lord and with others. One notable aspect of its format is that there is not just one designated course leader (that could feel weighted responsibility to carry the study.) Each session can be lead or facilitated by one member of the group on a rotational basis. This element is quite user friendly, as the focus points to the Lord leading the time. The "facilitator" follows simple yet specific directions that are printed in the margins of the chapters. This shared responsibility in itself draws each person into an interactive and participatory role that has tremendous benefits. The overview that is presented in *Connecting With God* is much like a primer and is written in a fashion designed to draw people into an interactive place where, some times, new and more meaningful ways of "connecting with God" are cultivated.

There are 12 chapters, each of which is about 10 pages in length. The amount of reading and work is manageable, and the group can agree

on how often to meet to go over what has been learned and experienced. The chapter titles are as follows:

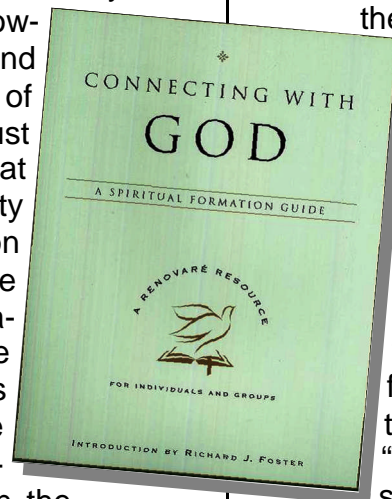
- Living with God
- Talking with God
- Meeting God in Scripture
- Listening To God through the Creation
- Hearing God through Other People
- Perceiving God in Circumstances
- Seeking God in Silence
- Seeing God in Dreams and Visions
- Sensing God's Presence
- Encountering God's Messengers
- Wrestling with God
- Walking with God

The material has been specifically designed for participation and with the purpose of members spending time devoted to learning how to apply what has been presented in the chapters. This application and learning process can be supported by journaling and reflection, along with the sharing of experiences when the group meets each time. The opportunity for each person to share about how the application process unfolded is quite valuable in the growth process, as others may have insights or receive great encouragement.

A good summary of what is contained in the various chapters is found in the following abstract from the book's introductory section--,"This book is dedicated to nurturing spiritual formation through the study of Scripture. Devotional excerpts from the writings of ancient and contemporary Christians: questions for reflection; and exercises centered on Spiritual Disciplines, such as study, prayer, solitude, meditation and silence; supplement and illumine the biblical text."

I want to thank Marcia for her willingness to share this book review with the Fellowship. If you have been blessed by a book in the area of Christian growth or monastic spirituality and believe that others may find it of value, please let me know. I may ask you to prepare a book review for future publication in *The Navigator*.

— Fr. Andreaas





# Fellowship Happenings



Top-Left: Marcia L. and Mother Sue bring in produce from the Saint Brendan's garden. Top-Middle: Clay and Marcia L. visiting Lubeck, Maine - the eastern-most town in the US. Top-Right: Allison S. displaying her homemade bread (she even ground the wheat berries for the dough!). Middle-Left: Father Alan and Mother Sue do the stern-faced pose for their version of the classic "American Gothic" - Saint Brendan's style! Middle-Center: Allison S. makes a 6:00 AM check on the chickens for egg collection. Middle-Right. Our son Zachary sets the rafters in place on the new dairy goat barn; the barn will be 28 feet long and 10 wide with room for hay storage, goat stalls, and a milking parlor. Bottom-Right: Saint Brendan's official notification that the Library of Congress has granted a Copyright for the Breviary. Two copies of the Breviary are now housed at the Library of Congress (check them out on your next vacation to Washington DC!).

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Certificate of Registration

This Certificate issued under the seal of the Copyright Office in accordance with title 17, United States Code, states that registration has been made for the work identified below. The information on this certificate has been made a part of the Copyright Office records.

*Marybeth Peters*  
 Register of Copyrights, United States of America

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 JUL 25 2007

DO NOT WRITE ABOVE THIS LINE. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, USE A SEPARATE CONTINUATION SHEET.

1 TITLE OF THIS WORK  
 The Breviary  
 PREVIOUS OR ALTERNATIVE TITLES

NATURE OF THIS WORK  
 Prayer book including several, musical chant texts and hymnody.

2 a NAME OF AUTHOR  
 Name: St. Alan C. Anderson  
 Was the contribution to the work "made for hire"?  
 Yes  No   
 AUTHOR'S NATIONALITY OR DOMICILE  
 On  Citizen of USA  
 On  Alien  
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b NAME OF AUTHOR  
 Name: St. Alan C. Anderson  
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 Yes  No   
 AUTHOR'S NATIONALITY OR DOMICILE  
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 Date: 2007  
 DATE AND LOCATION OF FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS PARTICULAR WORK  
 Date: 2007  
 Location: USA

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## **IMPORTANT REMINDER...**

Thank you to everyone who has filled out and returned their applications for membership in the Monastic Fellowship of Saint Brendans. We'll publish a Fellowship list in the next edition of *The Navigator*. For those who have not returned an application, this will be your last complimentary newsletter.

Please call us if you have any questions - - 726-5129.

**The Navigator**

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