

The Navigator



The Newsletter of the Monastic Fellowship of Saint Brendan's

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A Disciplined Faith: Worship

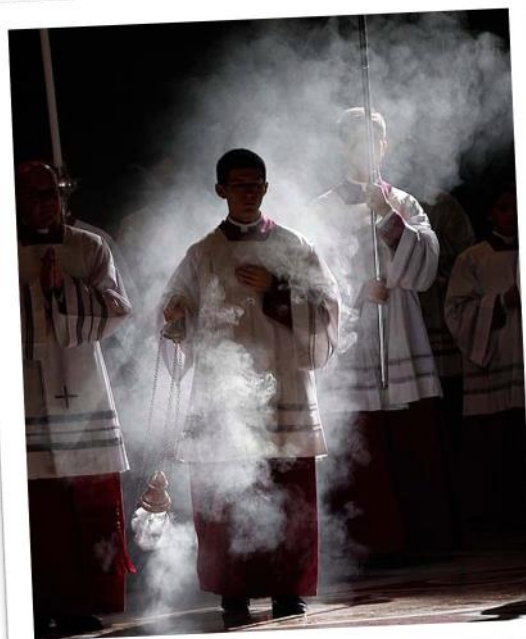
Fr. Alan Andraeas, Prior

*“Worship Him who made the heavens,
the earth, the sea, and the fountains of the deep.”
Revelation 14:7b*

As we move through the corporate disciplines of our Fellowship's *Rule of Life*, we've reached, perhaps, the most visible and obviously corporate act of faith there is: worship. We require the corporate discipline of worship for all members of Saint Brendan's not just because we think it's a good idea but because the Bible demands that believers participate in corporate worship wherever they live (Hebrews 10:25)! And who are we to reject what Scripture mandates?

The rub, however, comes in trying to define 'corporate' and 'worship', especially where the two intersect. For example, we know what corporate means—the sense of being unified *in company* with others for a common end—but that doesn't seem to translate very well in a worship context. In this case, corporate for some can mean gathering together with others in a church; for others it can mean curling up with a cup of coffee and watching the *700 Club* on CBN or a celebration of the Eucharist on EWTN (that whole “I-can-worship-God-with-others-from-the-couch-in-my-living-room” argument). Obviously, the meaning of corporate is up for grabs.

And what of worship itself? Well, depending on who you are, it could be anything from a walk through the woods and sensing God's thumbprint on nature, to a Christian rock concert, to a pipe organ and incense while a priest intones the absolution in Latin. It's a patchwork quilt of definitions and opinions and, frankly, many of them are not authentic worship at all. So, we need to take some time to explore what the *Rule of Life* means by corporate worship. Among the many facets of worship, there are two key considerations where Saint Brendan's is concerned. And the best place to understand the first consideration is...at the beginning.



Scholars often appeal to something called the “Rule of First Usage.” That's when a theologically significant word or principle appears in the Bible for the first time. It sets the foundation for how that concept is understood throughout the remainder of Scripture. Our English word *worship* appears in the Bible for the first time in Genesis 22:5. It's that defining moment when Abraham describes to his servants what he and Isaac were about to offer God on the mountain of His own choosing—sacrifice (i.e., “the lad and I will go yonder and worship”). Thus, from its theological inception, authentic worship has never been defined apart from the reality of sacrifice.

What does that mean? Two things; the sacrifices we bring and the sacrifice that Christ brings. Our worship must include our sacrifices (e.g., the sacrifice of our reputation for being num-

IN THIS ISSUE OF “THE NAVIGATOR”

A Disciplined Faith: Worship	1
Monastic Muse	2
Holy, Holy, Holy	3
Holy Hymnody	6
The Final Word: The Apostolic Constitutions	6
Life at the Priory House	7

bered among Christian believers, our time given to attend a service of worship, our mental attention in hearing the Word, our spiritual participation in the prayers, our stewardship in faithful giving even in times of lack or want, even our own dying with Christ as we acknowledge our sacramental vows of baptism).

Such sacrifice draws us to the place where we can enter and receive the greatest act of worship of all: the sacrifice that Christ brings; His own broken body and shed blood enshrined for us in the elements of the Eucharist. Authentic worship must embody sacrifice.

This is hard to do in a contemporary Christian climate where many of our gatherings are orchestrated to emphasize either celebration, formation, instruction, prayer, or fellowship (all good things to be sure). But without sacrifice—especially receiving the sacrifice of Christ—we divorce ourselves from God’s primary revelation of sacramental grace imparted to our first parents; namely, the skins He used to clothe Adam and Eve. In other words, the death (i.e., sacrifice) of one for the ‘cover’ and forgiveness of another; a ‘cover’ re-emphasized to us every time the Bread and Cup of Communion are offered to God’s people.

If the first consideration of worship is sacrifice, the second consideration of true worship is warfare. So long as the Church, the Body of Christ, remains on earth, our role is that of the “Church Militant” (or *Ecclesia militans*). We don’t become the “Church Triumphant” (or *Ecclesia triumphans*) until we are finally drawn up into heaven to be with Christ forever. Until then, we push forward as soldiers of the cross against sin, the devil, and “against the powers of this dark world” (Ephesians 6:12). And as soldiers of the Church Militant we are given powerful weapons of spiritual warfare (cf., 2 Co-

“Where God is enthroned—particularly in our worship—the enemy cannot stand!”

rinthians 10:4). Chief among these weapons is true worship. Worship presses the kingdom of heaven against the gates of hell. Saint Ignatius (Bishop of Antioch and the direct disciple of the Apostle Peter, 37-107 AD) wrote at the beginning of the second century:

Take heed, then, to come together often to give thanks to God and show forth His praise. For when you frequently come together in the same place, the powers of Satan are destroyed, and his ‘fiery darts’—which urge us to sin—fall uselessly back to the ground. For your concord and harmonious faith serve as his destruction and unleashes torment upon his vile assistants.

(This quote, by the way, is printed on the opening pages of our liturgy, *Celebration of the Eucharist*, used here at Holy Trinity Chapel.)



Why is worship so torturous to the enemy? I’ve heard it said that, while God makes His presence known to all kinds of people and in all kinds of places, there are only two places in all of creation that He actually inhabits as His home. The first is eternity (it’s the only place large enough to contain Him) and the second, according to Psalm 22:3, is praise (it’s the only condition that feels like home to Him). And believe me, where God is enthroned—particularly in our worship—the enemy cannot stand!

MONASTIC MUSE

muse \ ‘myüz \ 1: *vb* to turn something over in the mind meditatively, 2: to think reflectively, 3: *n* a state of deep thought...

“Safe?” said Mr. Beaver ... “Who said anything about safe? ‘Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”

“He’s wild, you know. Not like a tame lion.”

—C. S. Lewis (1898-1963)
The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe

There are lots of other considerations in our worship. Mountains of books have been written about it (I've added two to the number: *One Glad River* and *Sacra Domus* for Amazon Kindle—yeah, a shameless plug). So let me briefly wrap up our discussion with a few more highlights.

Our corporate worship can occur whenever two or three are gathered together in the Name of Christ (Matthew 18:20) for His adoration through the ancient five-fold pattern of hymn, confession, instruction, prayer, and communion. Authentic worship doesn't require a cathedral or a Plexiglas pulpit. It requires the people of God to be worshipping God.

Our corporate worship—the spiritual service and work of the people in the forms God has specified (cf., Exodus 25:9,40; 1 Corinthians 11:2 (NKJV))—is also that time when the Holy Spirit enters our collective midst and reveals Himself to us (Acts 13:2), working in us and directing us toward those things that are pleasing to the will of the Father and the Son.

Finally, our corporate worship is bolstered by another corporate act when Christians regularly gather to pray the Daily Office. This is an adjunct of eucharistic worship through prayer that draws us into the work of God—the *Opus Dei*—which has sustained and undergirded the life of the Church for nearly two

millennia. It enfolds us into the heartbeat of God throughout the week, thus preparing us for a more complete sacrifice of worship on the Lord's Day.

What does all of this look like for members of the Monastic Fellowship of Saint Brendan's? The *Rule of Life* requires that members of the Fellowship make it their practice to enter into corporate worship on a weekly basis with their parishes and churches, and receive the Eucharist at every opportunity (the traditional standard was every week and more often whenever available). This should normally occur on Sunday, the Lord's Day, and must be viewed as the absolute minimum standard unless prevented by sickness or extraordinary circumstances.

Aside from everything else the Church is commissioned and commanded to do, the sacrifice of worship stands as our preeminent gift to God, our sign of heavenly citizenship to the world, and our sword against the ruinous plots of Satan. It is the crowning jewel in the life of the Church.

In the next edition of *The Navigator*, we will explore the corporate discipline of spiritual direction.

Rejoice!
Fr. Alan Andraeas

Holy, Holy, Holy

Sue Andraeas

*"Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking;
if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in
to you and eat with you, and you with me."*

Revelation 3:20

FINALLY! An easy topic. None of this pouring over the unnerving transparency that can accompany confession, or the isolation inherent in many of the individual spiritual disciplines. Worship is great! The toughest part is getting out of bed. Then we can just sit back in church, heed the call to *worship*; listen to or join in the rousing or contemplative *worship* music led by a talented *worship* team that has prepared to usher us into the flow of *worship*; followed by an intellectually stimulating, faith-building, spiritually uplifting, *worship* message; followed by prayers of *worship*, praise, and intercession. We leave the *worship* service spiritually fed, happy, and blessed. Talk about an easy discipline! Right? Hmmm. It sounds almost too easy.

Personally, worship has been the most difficult of all disciplines to wrap my brain around, maybe because I have provided worship music since I was twelve—even younger if you count the children's choir I joined when I was 8. I have, since I was in my 20's, been involved in leading worship in liturgical and non-liturgical services, often as the music di-

rector, and I have been very aware of the proximity it has placed me with God's altar. For me, that is not a comfortable place to be. Let me explain.

In my childhood Evangelical United Brethren Church, my teachers, parents, and especially my grandmother, instilled in all of us youngsters, from the time we could run, that the Sanctuary is God's house and there was to be no monkeying around in there—no running, no joking, no talking. God didn't approve of that sort of funny business. We were to be reverent! I can remember, as a high school student, needing to be in the sanctuary alone at night to practice on the organ, and I was afraid with a holy fear of being alone with God in His house. The air felt static, and every little noise seemed very loud in the profound silence. (The acoustics in that place are FANTASTIC!)

I remember returning home after being away for years, and it was obvious that the 'no monkeying around' teaching had ceased. A group of young children were in the sanctuary running and laughing—all the way up to the altar!—and I feared

**"We speak only to God in there—
after all, it is His house."**

for their lives. I was sure that God would smite them right then and there! Intellectually, I knew that wouldn't happen. Spiritually...not so sure. Several more years passed and I saw children and adults in various churches, talking and laughing, selling eve-

rything from Girl Scout cookies to Avon to raffle tickets, and leaning on the alter as though it were a piece of furniture in their living room. And all of that with no smiting happening.

I was just deciding that maybe God doesn't really care how we conduct ourselves in His house when I attended a church where NOBODY talked in the Sanctuary outside of worship except for very necessary conversations concerning worship. As a visitor, no longer remembering how to behave, I began a conversation with someone before worship. The woman smiled, took me by the arm, led me out of the sanctuary, answered my question and then let me know rather firmly that, "We speak only to God in there—after all, it is His House." Returning to worship, I sensed it—that static in the air, the silence. Oh, how I had missed that!

At first, it's alarming because your own thoughts become uncontrollable and huge. But after you settle in to prayer (and isn't this the whole purpose of the rote prayers we learn? So that we can use them to calm the bombarding worldly thoughts and force them out of our heads while we enter the presence of God?) the holiness of a Sanctuary preserved for meeting our Lord and Creator,...well,...if you haven't experienced it, seek hard to find such a place!

I have thought about this a lot. If I, as a musician, am 'leading worship,' what am I leading? Am I leading people? Leading them where? To do what? What *is* worship?!? The dictionary wasn't much help. It only states that worship is 'reverence shown to a divine being.' Reverence is defined as 'honor or respect felt or shown; profound admiration; awe.' In our vernacular American slang, and before everything became "n-i-i-i-ce," it was "awesome." With that, our God became *awesome* just like getting an A on an exam, or a touchdown, or a date with someone cool was awesome. Even a slice of pizza could be awesome. (Satan is slick to re-define and re-mold our words in order to reduce God's power and awesomeness to common, everyday things. Don't fall for it!) Let's look at this from another angle for just a moment and see if we can put the Awe back into Reverence—and Worship.

In 1972, my parents and 2 sisters and I visited the Grand Canyon. I'm sure my mom remembers better than I do how fearfully absent guard rails were at that time. So there we would all be, standing on the very edge of the cliff, looking out and down at the magnificent canyon, little pebbles shuffling under our feet and falling to their doom. It was beautiful. Awesomely beautiful! I remember standing on the one precipice for a very long time, watching a little donkey parade on a trail far be-

neath us, and wishing I could do that, wishing I could go to the very bottom of this vast canyon—and a hand grabbing the back of my shirt as I leaned over to watch them disappear beneath trees and rocks directly below me. I was in awe. Mom was in fear. The emotions, I'm sure were vastly different but caused by the same experience!

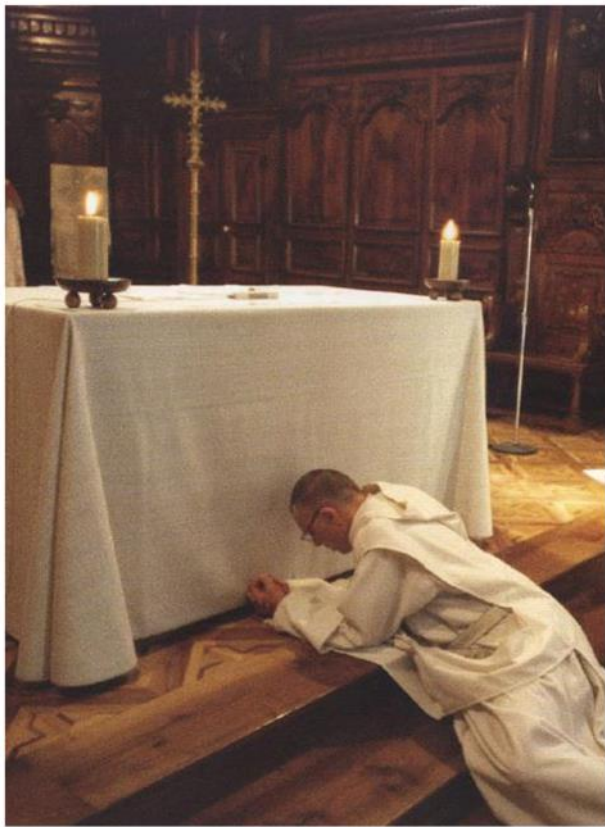
I've seen pictures of that spot recently. There's a hefty guardrail right where I was standing, and the picture I saw showed a family leaning against that rail, taking selfies with their cell phones. Backs to the *awesome* canyon, documenting without truly looking, preserving the moment without being in the moment. What a waste of a cliff. The perceived safety rail removed the fearful, wonderful, awe-full canyon. Have we done the same with worship? Have we made it too friendly? Too safe?



God is not safe. True worship has no guard rails. We are dangerously close to falling into the hands of a loving but mighty God every time we enter a sanctuary. But oh, how often we turn our backs on Him to look at ourselves; the talent and skill in our musicians, the charisma of our pastors and priests, the heavy burdens in our intercessions. How often has our noise and distraction removed the awe? How much time do we spend talking *about* worship, or *preparing* for worship without actually worshipping? How often are we truly aware that God is present and demands not just our joyful presence but our silent attention? We say we are God's sheep, but why do sheep enter the Sanctuary? There's only one reason: to be sacrificed! How can we say God is in control of our lives when we can't even allow Him to control our actions and voices when we are in His house? (A noisy, restless child who doesn't heed the teacher in a classroom is called disrespectful. Hmmm....)

Someone told me once, and I wish I could remember who it is, that people never worship something that has no power over them. We only worship what we fear because it is more powerful than we are. That's why idols can be something we're addicted to, things we have no power over—people, substances,

"We say we are God's sheep, but why do sheep enter the Sanctuary? There's only one reason: to be sacrificed. "



technology, emotional highs or lows. In our age, people are addicted to all sorts of things ranging from drugs to sugar to social media. But to God? It sounds very wrong, doesn't it? We cannot be addicted to God because He will not control us against our will! THAT IS WHAT FREE WILL IS!! It is God's gift to us, allowing us to make up our own minds, on a daily (or hourly) basis whether we will allow Him that control over us or not.

Worship is, at its core, acknowledging that God is so much more powerful, mighty, holy, loving—awesome—than we are, and that we bow our wills and lives and whole selves to Him. Willingly. We actually can't even do that without His help. And that is why, in liturgical worship services anyway, there is a Call to Worship. Who is calling? God is! He is calling us back from the world and into His presence. But we can control whether we go or not, and if we go laughing and monkeying around as if there is a guard rail between us and God, or if we go in silence, reverence and holy fear. (The curtain that kept the Jews safe from the Holy of Holies was torn when Christ died. The guard rail is gone! Think about it next time you enter your sanctuary. There is NOTHING between you and God!!! You are on Holy Ground. You are on His turf!)

The verse from Revelation at the beginning of this article is usually used on the context of bringing others to Christ. If you look at its context, however, you'll see that it is Christ's words to a church—the one in Laodicea. He stands there, calling us to

worship; calling us to join Him as His Church! God waits for us to sacrifice our immediate concerns, cares, and thoughts to willingly worship Him, loving Him with ALL our heart, ALL our mind, ALL our soul, and All our strength, having no other gods (addictions) before Him. All the while we struggle with just respect. We are called by Him into congregational worship, to stand in solidarity with others, to profess that He alone is God—in the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

When the angels worship, they never mention themselves, their concerns, or their activity. All they talk about and sing about is God. You can find many examples in the New Testament Book of Revelation. I dare you to look through your hymnal or collection of praise songs for lyrics that match this degree of worship. Pay attention to the syntax—who is speaking, and to whom—and about what. Even the Doxology is a command to "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow." It is not necessarily praise itself. (I'm not saying to throw it out! It is indeed very possible to worship while singing the Doxology. I'm just saying... we as human beings really struggle with this!)

Perhaps the best two examples of pure worship in our contemporary worship services—and only if our hearts match our words—are the Gloria Patri ("Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen. Amen") and the Sanctus ("Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.") How often do we privately pray with this sort of total focus on the Lord? How often do we corporately focus entirely on the Lord? What would happen if we would, even for a few minutes each day? What if, for just those few moments, we would truly be in awe of our God, fully devote ourselves to thinking about Christ's



sacrifice—not just what He accomplished for us but what He experienced in obedience as HE fully worshipped His Father? Let's try.

Let's, as a Fellowship, devote a few minutes each day to voluntarily 'being addicted' to God, and at the point where in our spirits, 'withdrawal symptoms' allow us to

think about nothing but God—not what serving Him costs us, not what we're hoping He'll do for us, not even praising Him for the 'high' that comes from being His child. Just Him. Then take that worship to church with you on Sunday. Corporate adoration and worship. Come, let us adore Him!

Rejoice!
Sue Andreaas

**Holy is Your name in all the earth /
Righteous are Your ways, so merciful /
Everything You've done is just and true /
Holy, holy God are You / Holy, holy God are You.**

"Holy"

**Text and music: Brenton Brown.
2001, Vineyard Songs (United Kingdom); CCLI #3233773.**

The Final Word: Apostolic Constitutions — Collection of apostolic prescriptions for Christian behavior, liturgy, and church organization; compiled from 90-380 AD.

When you call an assembly of the church, let its head be to the east. In the middle, let the bishop's chair be placed. On each side of him, let the presbyters sit down and let the deacons stand near at hand. Let the laity sit on either side, with all quietness and in good order. In the middle, let the reader stand upon some high place. Let the deacon oversee the people, that nobody may whisper, slumber, laugh, or nod. For, in the church, all souls stand wisely, soberly, and attentively, having their attention fixed upon the Word of the Lord. After this, let all rise up with one consent and, looking towards the east—after the catechumens and penitents are gone out—pray to God. As to the deacons, after the prayer is over, let some of them attend upon the oblation of the Eucharist, tending to the elements of the Lord's Body with fear. Then let the men give the men, and the women give the women, the Lord's kiss. After this, let the deacon pray for the whole church. Finally, let the sacrifice follow, the people standing and praying silently. And when the oblation has been made, let every rank by itself partake of the Lord's Body and precious Blood, in order. Let them approach with reverence and holy fear—for they are approaching the Body of their King. But let the door be watched, lest any unbeliever, or one not yet initiated, come in.



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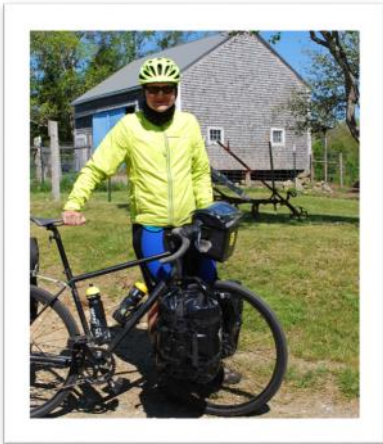
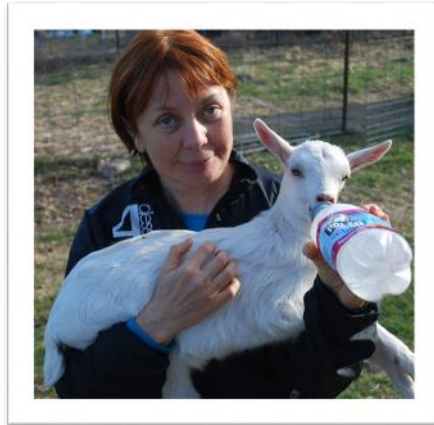
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WE COVET YOUR PRAYERS!!!

Please continue to pray for Saint Brendan's and these various needs:

- Praise God for our continued strength and healing.
- For strong and willing hands to come alongside of our labor; short-term or long-term.
- Praise God for the ability to minister to local people through the gifts of heating oil, fuel, food, transportation assistance, and hospital visits.
- For necessary remodeling of the Priory House so that we can host more retreatants and guests.

Life at Saint Brendan's



TOP LEFT: A local team of roofers installs a new metal roof on the barn; a nice update to the 214-year old barn. **TOP MIDDLE:** Lena Faber, a Russian cyclist (currently living in South Africa), stops at Saint Brendan's during her bicycle journey from Maine to the Florida Keys. **TOP RIGHT:** Fr. Kevin Martin, Roman Catholic priest and rector of the Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Parish, assists Fr. Alan during a funeral in Holy Trinity Chapel for one of our parish members. **MIDDLE LEFT:** Petr Kramar, a cyclist from the Czech Republic, gets ready to leave Saint Brendan's after a two-day visit. **MIDDLE CENTER:** Saint Brendan's receives delivery of a 20' cargo container to use as extra storage space on the property. **MIDDLE RIGHT:** Fr. Alan's sister, Susie, brother-in-law, Dale, nephew, Caleb, and niece, Becca, visit Down East Maine for a week; and what a delight to have them spend some time with us! **BOTTOM LEFT:** Retreatants, Boyd and Adele Mackey, from Alabama finish a week-long visit to the Priory House. **BOTTOM MIDDLE:** Jane Hertenstein, a religious worker for a street mission in Chicago, took some time to tour New England by bike. A part of her trip included several days at Saint Brendan's. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Fr. Alan's niece, Becca, settles into an MK-38 (a Navy version of the M242 25mm 'Bushmaster') autocannon while on a tour aboard the USS LASSEN, a guided-missile destroyer which visited Eastport during the 4th of July.



Holy Trinity Chapel at Saint Brendan's now has the start of a basic Facebook page. If you would like to keep up with the happenings at the chapel of Saint Brendan's, you can find the page at:

[www.facebook.com/holytrinitychapel.maine.](http://www.facebook.com/holytrinitychapel.maine)

If this works out (this is our first attempt at any kind of social media), and if we can overcome the learning curve, we might be able to produce a Saint Brendan's Facebook page as well.