

The Abbey Message

Subiaco Abbey

News of our Apostolates for Friends of Subiaco

Fall 2008

Subiaco, Arkansas, Vol LXVI, No.2

Monastic listening

by Fr. Brendan Miller, OSB

Recently, I was asked to write something on the essentials of monastic life, in view of our dwindling numbers. What do we need to be doing in order to live the monastic charism in such a way that it is seen as a radical and authentic response to the Gospel? I believe that 21st century people do want to respond to Christ and the Gospel very deeply. What does monasticism have to offer so that they might say “I can do that in a monastery.”?

I immediately went to the Rule of St. Benedict and found the answer there staring me in the face. The word that leaps out throughout the entire Rule is “Listen.” I also went to a commentary by Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB, *Wisdom Distilled for Everyday Life*, in which she says the same thing. That is, pay attention to the instructions of the Rule and attend to the important things of life. Let nothing go by without being open to being nourished by the inner meaning of that event. There is an Oriental proverb that teaches: “Take from death before it takes from thee.” In other words, if we do not live life consciously, we may not be living at all. St. Benedict says, “Keep death daily before one’s eyes.” Why? So that we may learn to live well, consciously, rightly, joyfully.

It seems to me that we need to pay more attention to this instruction of the Rule: listen.

This may restore balance to our way of life. We need to ask ourselves the question: Is our Benedictine way of life summed up by the concept of listening to God, and then following Christ? In listening to God, we listen to four realities: the Gospel, the Rule, to one another, and to the world around us. This is not done in an academic way, but rather by surrendering to the urgency of living life in the now.

For example, the other day at Mass, the homily dealt with St. Luke 10: 38-42, the story of Martha and Mary. You know the story of Martha complaining about Mary not helping her with the preparations for the meal. Jesus tells her that she is full of anxieties and worries and that Mary has chosen the better part. Jesus sees that Martha’s anxiety does not really come from having too much work; rather she has made herself anxious and troubled about many secondary affairs. The one primary necessary thing is to listen to the Word of God, that is, to Jesus. I believe that we Benedictines can learn from this passage, if we listen deeply, that we too are often caught up in externals and miss the true message. Our entire charism calls us to hear and apply such a Gospel passage to the experiences of our personal and community life.

Returning to the Rule, St. Benedict, in his opening words, urges us: “Listen carefully, my son, to the Master’s instructions. Attend to them with the ear of your heart. This is the advice from a Father who loves you. Welcome it and put it into practice.” (Prologue: 1)

LISTEN ...

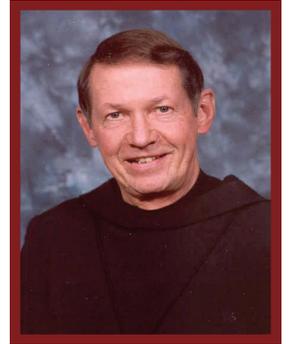
Rule of Benedict, Prologue

What are we listening to? This morning in Lauds we were admonished by Psalm 67: “Come, let us give thanks to the Lord, for his great love is without end.” We need to return to or be faithful to our *Lectio Divina* which helps us to listen to God speaking to us in such words. We need to listen also to what God is saying to us through those who come here to join us in our Benedictine discipleship, and to the people who join us every day in our apostolates. The Gospel, those around us, and the World all seem to be telling us that Benedictine monasticism and its charism of listening is a sanctuary for them, enabling them to hear God speaking to their hearts. Monasteries should provide a context in which we can hear God’s basic word: you are my son or daughter; I love you, and I will be with you always.

Vocation Trends

At the General Chapter of the Swiss-American Congregation of monasteries last July, one of the main sessions was devoted to the issues facing monasteries already small which are further diminishing in size. The General Chapter of abbots, ruling priors and elected delegates meets every three years in one of the Abbeys of the congregation. This summer’s Chapter was at St. Meinrad in Indiana.

Though the topic was the reduction in size of small communities, it soon became evident that all the communities are experiencing reduction, though this is not as noticeable in the larger communities. A review of community statistics in the congregation directories of 1998 and 2008 shows that all but one of the sixteen member monasteries of the Swiss-American Congregation declined in membership during the decade. Congregation membership overall declined at a rate of 19% from 715 to 578. Rates of decline in the member monasteries ranged all the way up to 29%. Subiaco’s change was from 71 to 53 members (25%). The situation was similar in the other large U.S. Benedictine congregation, the American Cassinese. Only one of the twenty member monasteries showed an increase over the decade, and overall the rate of decline was 22%, ranging in individual monasteries up to 29%.



“Above all, we must pray...
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faithful. That is our part,
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God.”

What does all this mean? One important conclusion is that the decline is not an isolated problem in a monastery here or there, but that it is a general trend. Our tendency is to look for reasons in local conditions or practices. But this trend is affecting large and small communities, in the inner city and in the country, with large institutions or no institutions, with various liturgical practices, devotions or no devotions, Latin or no Latin, all wearing monastic habits. Something larger is going on. Looking more closely, the rate of attrition is not different from what it has always been. The major losses have always been death, the departure of a few of the junior monks before solemn vows, and a handful in solemn vows. The rate of decline has not been affected by a change in those patterns, but by a change in the rate of new entrants. Up until the 1970s, communities could count on a steady stream of applicants to replace those lost by death, but suddenly that ceased. Vocations have still been coming, but in fewer numbers, certainly not enough to keep up with the

normal attrition. The rate of recent attrition is highest in the older communities because of deaths.

Community size did not vary much for a while, because advances in health care began to increase the lifespan of the elderly monks at just the same time, and that kept the numbers relatively stable. Up until the 1970s very few monks lived into their eighties; now the same percentage reach their nineties. But recently death has begun to catch up with those stalwart elderly monks around the congregations, and that is accelerating the rate of decline in numbers now. Here at Subiaco death has taken five of our stalwarts during the past year and a half: Fathers Harold Heiman and Raphael DeSalvo, Brother Martin Gocke, and Fathers Andrew Wewer and Paul Hoedebeck. Three were in their nineties and two in their eighties.

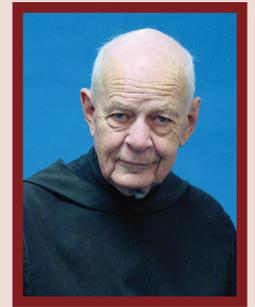
The diminishment of monasteries (and other religious communities) is a reality. It is happening in communities large and small. But participants at the General Chapter reported minor losses from the solid core of professed monks who are the main carriers of the life in the various monasteries. There is no mass exodus: the monks remain convinced of their vocation. And lately are coming to monasteries for spiritual renewal more than ever. During the recent years of fewer applicants, there have still been strong vocations, and quality prospects are still coming to discern the monastic life in our communities, men with many talents and options. We had a wonderful group here for our discernment retreat this past summer.

How many of the searchers coming to our monasteries will stay? Probably few, to judge from the present trend. But don’t count God out. This trend, after all, is not happening by accident. Our communities are going to be smaller for an indeterminate time and we will have to do some things differently. Rather than trying to recreate the past, we must live within the

present reality and respond to God's call as it comes. We must employ all the best practices to make our way of life known and attractive to those whom God is calling. Above all, we must pray, staying in contact with God, not just for new vocations, which is obvious, but for the discernment to know what God is asking of us now in the mission of the Church. And those of us who have been given the vocation of living the monastic life at this time and handing on the gift for the next age must be radically faithful. That is our part, and if we do our part, we can leave the rest up to God.

Abbot Jerom Kodell, OSB

In Memoriam. Fr. Paul Hoedebeck. 1915-2008



*Editor Note: Fr. Paul Hoedebeck died, at the age of 93, on July 26. He had been pastor of St. Joseph Church in Paris, Arkansas, at the time of its centennial celebration in 1979. At that time he penned an introduction to a parish pictorial directory. This tribute to Fr. Paul includes the opening paragraphs of the introduction to *The History of St. Joseph's Parish* (written by Fr. Hugh Assenmacher), followed by Fr. Paul's letter to his parishioners. He was a "hardheaded German" such as Fr. Hugh sees as the backbone of the parish, yet his letter reveals an expansive vision and a desire for a close and intimate community. These desires were also innate in Fr. Paul.*

From the introduction to *The History of St. Joseph's Parish*:

On May 27th, 1979, St. Joseph's Parish, Paris, Arkansas, celebrated its centennial. The parish was started as one of the many German parishes in Logan County, Arkansas in the 1870s and 1880s. While not really a part of the "Benedictine Colony" of St. Benedict's (Subiaco) and St. Scholastica's (Shoal Creek), St. Joseph's came under the influence of this movement. In fact, had it not been for the presence of Benedictine monks and nuns in the county at this time, it is doubtful if any Catholic Germans would ever have settled around Paris, at least not in the numbers in which they did.

In 1879, western Logan County was a wild country. The hills may have reminded these German settlers of the "old country," but little else did. The climate was especially hard on these newcomers, the soil was not as fertile as they had been led to believe, all the best land had already been homesteaded or bought by the time they arrived, their lives were very isolated and often they were more or less rejected or suspected by the native, English-speaking people who were the earliest settlers. That these German-speaking Catholics survived as well as they did is due to their faith in themselves and their future, their devotion to their religion, their ability to work hard and, undoubtedly, to their Germanic hard-headedness and plodding stability.

And now Fr. Paul's letter:

Dear Parishioners,

"I pray, Father, that all may be one, as you are in me and I in you; I pray that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me." (John 17: 20-21) "You are the body of Christ. Every one of you is a member of it. All the members, many though they are, are one body. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." (1 Corinthians 12: 7-27) These words of Sts. John and Paul capture so well our individual need to be supported by other loving persons in our physical, psychological and spiritual growth, and the need of the Church, and therefore of each Parish, to see itself as an intimate union of loving members. In order to grow, our faith must be talked about, shared and lived, complemented by the faith vision of fellow Christians. For our faith to move beyond an individualistic focus on self, for us to become actual members of the living Body of Christ and to share in our call to be missionaries, to fulfill a global mission, we need the complementarity, the challenge, the love and fidelity of a convinced community. We need to know one another, to reach out and support one another.

Our growth, thus far, as an intimate, caring Faith Community has been encouraging. This pictorial directory will hopefully help each of us to identify many more of our fellow Christians, our brothers and sisters in the faith. And as we come to recognize one another, we may more readily reach out and touch one another in deepening Christian love. We truly hope that it will help us more evidently become one in Christ, that the world may know that He is Lord!

Gratefully,
Fr. Paul

Abbey Journal

by Fr. Mark Stengel, OSB

July

The pleasant weather of June continued into July, with temperatures only approaching 90°. Rain came as needed, so that yards and flowerbeds were verdant. Somehow, rain just does a better job than any amount of artificial watering. No one seems to know why this is. Does rainwater contain dissolved nutrients lacking in filtered water? My own theory is that human waterers tend to judge by surface appearance, rather than reality. That is, we quit when the surface is wet, but no moisture has reached the root zone. A rainfall keeps on until it quits, regardless of how wet the surface appears or the amount of runoff. Anyway, the yards were the greenest that we have seen them.

Independence Day in our monastery is a low-key observance. Monks are free to take the day off from their usual labors, but the majority seems to devote at least a part of such holidays to work. Of course the liturgy will focus on the national holiday, and we can count on a traditional Fourth of July meal. In the past, the meal would have been an outdoor event. Nowadays, we have moved indoors to a level floor, air-conditioning, no bugs, and sturdy chairs. Eating inside certainly is easier; something of tradition is lost; so it's a tradeoff.

St. Benedict's spring feast day (March 21) fell on Good Friday this year, and so was not observed. At Subiaco, the July 11 Solemnity of St. Benedict also came and went with little fanfare. It was just a quiet "family" affair, even in the absence of a spring celebration.

The next day, Fr. Paul Hoedebeck, 92, fell in his room in the Health Center and broke his hip. He had been growing much weaker for the previous two months, and this fall was the last straw. Even though the broken bone was successfully pinned, his strength was gone, and he died two weeks later. We had begun sending a monk to be with him at night in the Fort Smith hospital, since he was so restless and disoriented. These were long restless nights for his helpers too, since Fr. Paul remained determined and feisty right to the end. He was buried on the hot (99°) morning of July 28. People commented that this was Fr. Paul's way of chiding us as wimps. He was often out working in such weather in a long-sleeved black clergy shirt! A separate article on page 3 gives a bit of insight into his character.

Fr. Camillus and Br. Thomas moved to rooms in the Health Center in mid-July. Both are experiencing increasing health problems and can use the extra attention in the Health Center.

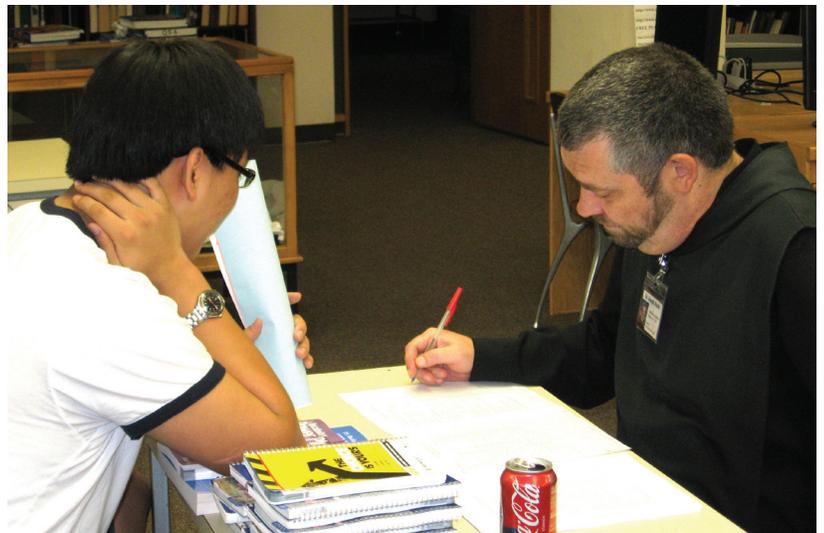
Fathers Nicholas and Bruno, Brothers Vincent and Louis attended a Fuhrmann family reunion in North Texas the weekend of July 25-27. Nine hundred relatives showed up!! I believe the Fuhrmann family name is secure!

August

Fr. Bruno reported a rattlesnake under the floorboards of the sawmill on August 1. He did not actually see it, but he heard its rattle, and he says that he knows a rattlesnake rattle when he hears it. This is quite some news, since a rattlesnake had not been reported right here on the grounds for a long time. It hasn't been seen since, so right now it holds the same status as the ivory-billed woodpecker: thought extinct, reported once, but not seen since.

The Academy football Trojans arrived for pre-season conditioning on August 3, the hottest day of the summer up to then, at 100°. The merciful coaches put the players on much the same schedule that our Black Angus cattle adopt in the heat: stay in the shade from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., spend some time in the water, and drink massive amounts of fluids. The cattle do this by instinct; we humans often act like we are not subject to the same physical laws.

After ten days in the 100s, and with every expectation that this could go on for another month, suddenly, on August 7, an extensive "rain event" began, with cool temperatures and five inches of rain. What a blessing! Fr. Harold used to refer to such a break in the weather as a "million dollar rain," since



Br. Joseph Heath & Senior Reagan Ryu during registration 2008

it assured the maturing of crops and the growth of another cutting of hay. This rain did ruin a hay meadow that had been cut just before the rain, but there were no complaints. Such ruined hay is still baled, to clear the land for the next cutting. It can be used for bedding, as mulch, and to provide at least some nourishment for the cattle.

Grapes were harvested after a rain delay on August 13. A spring freeze four months earlier had severely damaged the young grapes. The crop was about one-third of what it could have been, and the harvest took only one morning for the crew of a dozen volunteers. This left enough time to enjoy gathering in the cellar for a little home brew and tall tales—an enjoyable community event. So the grapevines have had a two-year rest. Whether such abortions deplete the vine's strength or permit a buildup of energy, I don't know.

Academy classes began on August 18, with drizzly and cool weather. The high temperature on August 20 was 71°, a record. What happened to global warming? However, the experts say that a feature of such warming will be greater variability in the weather, and that certainly has been the case this year.

Army worms invaded the pastures, the hay meadows, and some of the lawns during the final week of August. Their coming is like that of the Biblical plagues. All of a sudden, there they are in their millions (?), crawling and chewing their way across a field, eating every green thing in their path. Actually, they eat only the leaves, letting the stems standing like skeletons. The farm crew hastily baled several fields before the advancing hordes completed their pillaging. Then, as suddenly as they came, the worms are gone. They are not really gone—except into their pupal stage and they will be back if conditions are right, after two more stages in their life cycle.

September

Arkansas is in “tornado alley,” but hurricanes do not affect us. O, we do sometimes hope for a bit of late summer rain pushed here from the south by a hurricane, but that's supposed to be it. Gustav hit the Gulf coast on Labor Day, Sept. 1, then moved north along the Louisiana-Texas border, curved just eastwards into Arkansas, and decided to camp out here for a few days. All night of the 2nd, a steady wind of 40 m.p.h. pushed a driving rain into every crack and crevice. By morning, we had 4.78” of rain, and a lot of that had found its way inside the building, especially into the Abbey church. New headmaster Mr. Michael Burke was officially installed that morning. Wet-Vacs ran until the entrance procession formed up. Then Br. Michael laid down bales of towels in lieu of sandbags near the St. Benedict altar as a dike. Later investigation revealed the bell tower as the main source of all this water. A drain on the top level was clogged. Water overflowed and spilled down the tower stairs to the bottom level, where it found openings into the church proper. By the time Gustav passed on, we had 7.63 inches of rain and much ceiling and plaster damage, and plenty of downed limbs and trees outside. Ten days later, here came Hurricane Ike, preceded by even more dire warnings. However, this time our area was spared, although other parts of the state lost power and experienced flooding. Two hurricanes in ten days!! Maybe there really is something to this global warming!

The Academy Trojans won their first three games by lopsided scores. We don't know how to act! We had our resigned and long-suffering faces perfected. Now do we have to learn how to act giddy and magnanimous? Maybe not. The fourth game allowed fans to revert to a familiar routine.

Construction began on the headmaster's house on September 18. The location is just below (south) of the tennis courts. The site had appeared fairly level when we eyeballed it and staked out the site. We were amazed at the difference in elevation revealed by transit. Hopefully, Mr. Burke and family can move in for the 2009 school term.

Brother Thomas had been hospitalized at Conway and then at St. Vincent's Infirmary Medical Center in Little Rock. At St. Vincent's, he got special treatment from Oblate Theresa Vogler, who visited daily, and from Sr. Margaret Meisner, SCN, of the hospital staff. Between the two of them, Br. Thomas was pampered, even getting a special breakfast prepared just for him on the morning of his dismissal. He is now back at the Abbey, regaining his strength.

Following the two hurricanes, a wonderful period of tranquil weather set in. Windows could be opened, air conditioners turned off, and hay could be cut, cured, and baled as desired. Fr. Richard's two papaya trees flourished in the sunny weather. Surely we have the only papaya trees in Arkansas. One of these has bloomed profusely, and has set fruit. Sadly, it would take



Headmaster's House foundation in place - Oct. 1, 2008

several more months for the fruit to mature, and these large plants (at least 8 feet tall) could not possibly be moved inside. Someone suggested that Fr. Richard ask the maintenance department to build a temporary greenhouse around the tree. I doubt that he has dared make this request. At the same time as this mild weather, both the Farmer's Almanac and persimmon seeds predict a severe winter with lots of snow. For the uninitiated, I need to explain that persimmon seeds, split lengthwise, reveal a tiny shape inside of a spoon, fork, or knife. A knife means bitter, cutting temperatures, a spoon means heavy snow, and a fork predicts a mild winter.

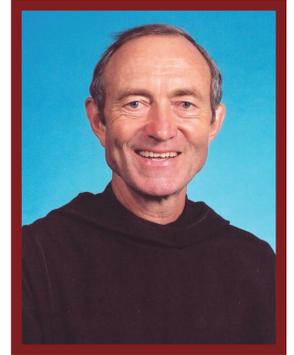
On September 30, a group of students participated in the 40 Days for Life campaign in Fayetteville, near the Women's Clinic, an abortion mill. They peacefully and prayerfully demonstrated on behalf of life, prayed for those entering and working in the facility, and learned restraint in the face of taunts and opposition.

This I Believe

The popular National Public Radio series by this title invites people of diverse perspectives to present a succinct summary of some guiding principle in their life. Visiting my niece at the University of Dallas, I attended Mass in the Cistercian monastery church just off campus. Angela sings in the Collegium Cantorum of the University, which performs Gregorian Chant to perfection. The music was heavenly, but the homily by Fr. Paul brought us back to earth. The first reading had been from the book of Job, and this liturgy came on the day that the financial rescue plan passed in the House of Representatives.

Fr. Paul told the familiar story about Job's world falling apart, and how at the end Job surrendered his need to understand and simply said: "I believe that my Redeemer lives, and that from my flesh I shall see God." (Job 19:25-27) In a somewhat parallel scenario, the whole financial structure of the country seems to be crumbling around us. What certainties might we hang onto? What do I believe? Monasteries are not immune to the crises affecting the rest of society. And we have our own unanswerable questions. As we see our ages increasing and our numbers dwindling, we, like Job, ask ourselves "Where is God in all this?" and "What will become of us?"

People have been asking me about the future of Subiaco Abbey, about our plans. Abbot Jerome's article, on page two, presents data on diminishing monastic vocations. Fr. Brendan also reflects on this question in the lead article of this issue of *The Abbey Message*. He does not present a precise plan, but rather tries to discern what God is saying to us in this time of uncertainty. What, deep down, do we believe and hang onto as certainties. We would like to see a healthy return on investments, to operate the Academy in the black, to fill the choir stalls with eager young monks, and to maintain vibrant good health to the end. These are all good goals, but are they the bedrock truths that we can count on? Job saw all such things disappear. If they are taken from us, what will remain so that we can bless God and not curse?



Fr. Mark Stengel



Several monks at the Abbey post blogs from time to time that can be found on the website: <http://www.subiacoabbey.blogspot.com/>

Below is a selection from a blog posted recently by Abbot Jerome that explains the picture to the left.

Several years ago Father Hugh Assenmacher and I were hiking on a Sunday afternoon in the forest south of the Abbey near Cove Lake. We passed a pile of fallen limbs and were struck by the formation of one limb sticking out from the rest. It looked like Jesus hanging on the cross or rising from the dead. I broke it off, brought it home, mounted it on a piece of burlap, and it has been hanging on my wall ever since. I show it to visitors as "The crucifix God made himself."

-Abbot Jerome



Year begins with new personnel

Mr. Michael C. Burke was officially inducted as Subiaco Academy's headmaster on Sept. 3. In an hour-long Mass, Mr. Burke received the medal of St. Benedict from Abbot Jerome Kodell, which was placed on one of the most special relics that the Abbey has in its possession, a plate from the original monastery in Einseideln, Switzerland.

Mr. Burke is the former president of the St. Joseph Catholic School system in Bryan, Texas, and has much experience in Catholic education as an administrator, teacher, and coach.

"I was talking to the alumni and I told them how happy I was to be headmaster here. I've been a Catholic schools administrator for 25 years, and this is a really special place," said Mr. Burke.

The new activities director is Mrs. Denise Reeves. She has been working with the students and staff to plan trips.

Mrs. Reeves said, "Opportunities open doors. I hope to provide many doors this year."

Mrs. Reeves has been planning a trip to Magic Springs for Sept. 20, but it is subject to change. She would like to take a group of students to the Buffalo River or to Devils Den over the fall break. Mrs. Reeves also hopes to have a religious retreat for each of the underclassmen grades.

She helped plan the pig roast held in conjunction with Homecoming Weekend. One other thing she wants to plan is the Fall Dance to be held in late October.

Several new teachers and faculty have been added this year.

Mr. Michael DePauw, the chemistry and physics teacher, is also an assistant soccer coach and dean in Heard Hall.

Mr. DePauw said, "A friend recommended the Academy to me, and I wanted a place where I could grow spiritually."

Mr. Bruce Reeves has taken two jobs at the school: the head dean of Heard Hall and the pre-algebra and physical science teacher for the eighth grade.

Mr. Reeves, a graduate of '84, said, "Subiaco showed me that I could be more than a high school dropout, and I wanted to be able to share with and help other kids here."

With a bachelor's from Kansas University and a master's from Mississippi State, he is working on a doctorate from the University of Phoenix. His major was atmospheric physics, and his two minors are in mathematics and theatre arts.

Mr. Jesse Kinney '99, who was in the Coast Guard for four years, is dean on the second floor of Main Building. As a graduate of Subiaco Academy and the son of the biology teacher Mr. Gary Kinney, the young Kinney already has much experience with Subiaco. Mr. Kinney said, "I just wanted to be able to give something back to the place."

On the same floor, Mr. Chris Harrison is weekend dean. "I think this place is offering me a great opportunity to have a

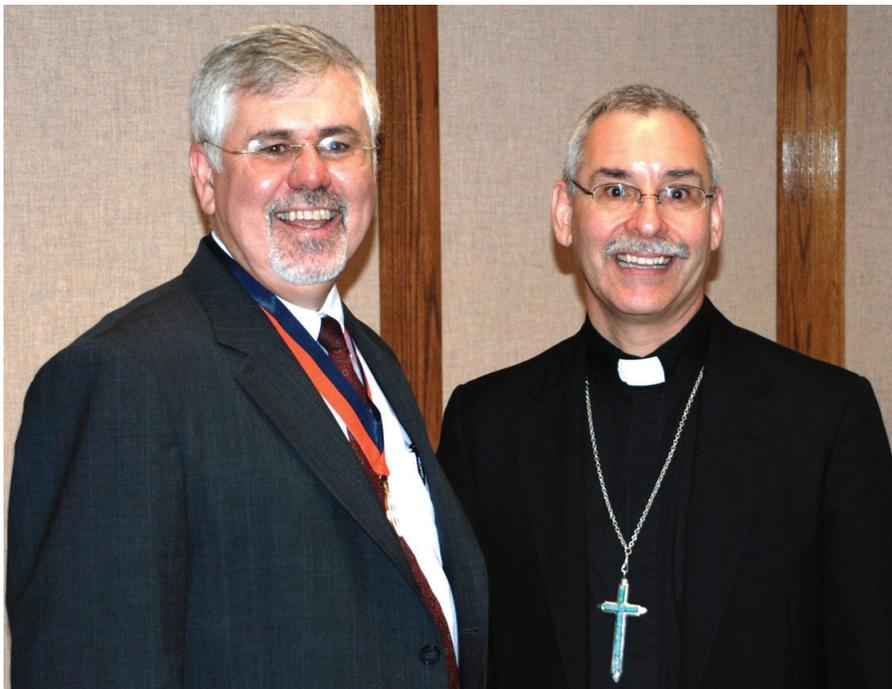
good job, while finishing my college degree. It's also going to look great on all my job applications."

Mr. Harrison is currently attending classes at the University of the Ozarks with a major in history.

Mr. Jason George '03, the junior high basketball coach and third floor dean, said he is happy to be here. "Subiaco offered me a better position here, and I think I'm going to like it."

He received a bachelor's from University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in kinesiology in 2007 and his master's in teaching in 2008.

He worked with the Arkansas Razorback basketball team from 2005-2007 and then became the assistant basketball coach and an intern teacher at Rogers High School.



Headmaster Michael Burke and Little Rock Diocese Bishop Anthony Taylor

Student Council leads school in activities

The leaders of the '08-09 school year expect to be involved in many of the activities on campus. Leading this year as president is John-Rex Spivey, a senior from Rogers, AR.

Other executive officers are Reagan Ryu of Seoul, South Korea, vice-president; Bill Heil of Paris, AR, secretary; Andres Martin-de-Nicolas of Austin, TX, treasurer; and Brit McKenzie of Rogers, AR, parliamentarian.

Class elections were held Sept. 8. Each candidate spoke to his class about his goals for the year.

Following are the officers.

12th grade: president Jude Ruesewald; vice-president Fred Jones; secretary Cole Robertson; treasurer Ji Young Ahn; and representatives Sam Gulutzo, Ian McKee and Will Kluempers.

11th grade: president Chris Trachier; vice-president Woo Hoon Chung; secretary Brendan Darby; treasurer Cathal Gilmore; and representatives Allen Freeland, Jimmy Ko and Danny White.

10th grade: president Blake Wallis; vice-president Gregory Frederick; secretary Feargal Gilmore; treasurer Tyler Schluterman; and representatives Jun Young Chang, Robert Elder, and Toby Fang.

9th grade: president Kye Hoon Jo; vice-president Uriel Medina; secretary Yong Beum Kim; treasurer Jerome Jaramillo; and representatives Joe Chanoine, Jody Chauvin and Nicholas Timmerman.

8th grade: president Beau Lacerte; vice-president Aaron Flake; secretary Jake Burrow; treasurer Abe Alexander; and representative Joe Willems.

The executive council began the year by organizing the class elections. Then the full Student Council organized the Spirit Week held in conjunction with homecoming. By all accounts it was a successful week, full of fun, participation by many and spirit. Each day had a theme dress and an activity during Teacher's Assistance period.



Snapshots of some Spirit Week activities



Senior class officer Ian McKee working on one of the run-through banners made for each home football game



Student Council sponsor Mrs. Dianne Hart gives directions to some of the class officers for the spin and run event held on Wednesday of Spirit Week. Classes received points for including the largest number of participants in order to encourage involvement by more students.



Student Council sponsor Mrs. Cheryl Goetz helping the executive officers John-Rex Spivey and Bill Heil set up the Trojan Cafe

Eighth graders return as students

Thirteen boys took on the challenge of coming to Subiaco Academy, making up the first group of students to potentially be five-year-students since the 1952-53 school year.

Admissions Director Scott Breed said, "Eighth graders are here to experience Subiaco at an earlier age."

The Academy Board of Trustees allowed eighth graders to enroll for the 2008-09 school year, citing several advantages. Since many were coming out of Catholic grade schools, the inclusion of eighth graders would "lessen the gap in Catholic education."

Another reason cited was to give students the chance to "adapt to the academic demands/grading of the academy" before the ninth grade when grades were recorded on college transcripts.

Most recognize the advantages in academics they will have here. Jacob Burrow believes graduating from a private school will give him a head start for college. He is also counting on getting a good scholarship.

Abe Alexander hopes his life-long dream of attending Notre Dame is a better reality by attending a more challenging high school than the public school system at home.

With the addition of eighth graders, Quiz Bowl sponsor Alane Freerksen is fielding her first junior high team. Three of the 7-member team are eighth graders.

Another of the advantages of beginning students in the eighth grade was the increased cohesion and therefore the hopes for an improved junior high athletic program. A "stronger feeder program for all sports teams" was one of the hopes of the Board of Trustees.

But being this young and being away from home certainly brings some challenges. Bruce Reeves, dean in Heard Hall where these young men live with 51 freshmen and sophomores, said, "They seem to be handling [being away from home] well. Several, though, he added, had suffered from homesickness. "In the beginning homesickness was there. But then they gained friends and got busy," he said.

Students felt they have handled the absence of home and family relatively well. Most have had limited previous experience away from home.

One skill most have had to pick up was laundry. Ben Jacobi said, "I've never really done my own laundry. It's a new experience."

Several were not exactly going to a strange place somewhere on a map. Most had a connection to Subiaco. Ben had been to Camp Subiaco four times. From Lake D'Arbonne in Louisiana, Ben heard about the camp first from his church bulletin; then his mom researched it online. Now, he said, "Subiaco is kind of like a second home." He looked forward to camp.

Beau Lacerte, from Florida, wanted to spend as much time as he could at his father's '82 and his uncle's '91 alma mater.

Joe Willems had been to three camps and one Discovery Weekend, but his connection to Subiaco goes much deeper. All the men in his family, more than 15, have graduated from Subiaco Academy. Both of his brothers did; his dad did; his grandfather did.



Eighth graders Ben Jacobi, Jackson Horn, Beau Lacerte, Austin Breed and Eric Siebenmorgen going over their roster as they prepare for the Spin & Run relay during Spirit Week





Where are they now?

Gerald Plafcan '76 recently changed jobs and is now working for Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Accounting. His office prepares the annual comprehensive financial report for the state.

John Zagurski '07 made the June Dean's list at the University of Central Arkansas.

In the May 2008 issue of *Columbia*, the Knights of Columbus monthly, **John Robbins '65** and his son Anthony, a second-year student at St. Meinrad Seminary, spoke about vocations and how KC members and their families influence and support religious vocations.

Jason Priakos '90 was recently promoted to senior partner development manager for Cognos Corporations. He is responsible for the recruitment and development of consulting companies to resell Cognos software.

Gene Hatwig '54 and several other Knights of Columbus volunteered their time and expertise on several improvement projects on campus in June.

Adam Schluterman '00 received the Doctor of Optometry from the Northeastern State University of Oklahoma College of Optometry. While at NSUOCO, Adam was a member of the NSU Honor Society and several optometric societies. He will practice in Ft. Smith.

Larry Paladino '48 won his 14th Island Country Club Men's Championship by more than 10 strokes. He has shot at or under his age 833 times.

Fr. Joachim Lally, C.S.P. '57 is now at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Grand Rapids, MI, having arrived from Manhattan. He will be on the staff there and also at the Catholic Information Center. Fr. Joachim will also serve as liaison with the Hispanic community.

Vicki and **Pat Wardlaw '49** celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in July.

A **Gerhart Thompson '81** Camp Subiaco photo appeared on the front page of the July 5, 2008, Arkansas Catholic.



Photo by Gerhart Thompson

Major General William Wofford '67 has been inducted into the Arkansas Tech University Hall of Distinction.

Working with his company **Bill Torp '81** has secured a highway billboard to promote the Academy in the Waco, TX, area.

Fr. Vincent Flusche '74 handcrafted a striking 10-foot cross, made of steel and copper which sold for \$2,600.00 at the annual fundraiser of the Women for the Arts Organization in Texarkana.

Johnny Hayes '82 is deploying to Iraq with his naval reserve unit in Mississippi.

Jay Sorrows '88 suffered serious injuries in a work-related accident in early July.

Vincent Tate '86 has announced his new venture, a CFO consulting service, based in northwest Arkansas.

Hemant Ramachandra '85 has co-authored a book: *An Implementers' Guide to SOA: Getting it Right*. Hemant is a Managing Director at Bearing Point, Inc. and a senior leader responsible for strategy, sales, development and delivery of Technology Integrated solutions.

The October 17-19 Literary Festival in Fayetteville, AR, will feature the work of poet **Frank Stanford '66**. Frank will also be honored at this year's Literary Symposium at the Academy.

Jack Willems '05 was named the recipient of the William Jennings Bryant Award of 2008 at the University of Arkansas. This award is given to the outstanding student in political science in the Fulbright College of Arts and Science.

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike harassed a number of Alumni including **Gary Clark '72** who fled to Baton Rouge and **Alcuin Paul Kubis '57**, who rode out Ike but then had to suffer 16 days without electricity. The most important thing is that all are safe.

Steve Duffel '65 was inducted into the Southern Tennis Association Hall of Fame.

Duffel played varsity tennis for the University of Arkansas from 1965-67 and went on to be a dominant tennis figure in Arkansas both on and off the court. He was inducted in the Arkansas Hall of Fame in 1998. Duffel continues to serve as a trustee to Arkansas and Southern Tennis Patrons Foundations. Major awards he has received include the President's Award from USTA Southern and USTA Arkansas for outstanding service. While spending most of his professional career in banking and finance, Duffel is now managing Markham House Suites, a hotel that caters to cancer patients who are being treated at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and their families.

Mundo-Tech was recently ranked among the top 100 manufacturing companies in the U.S. Mundo-Tech, run by **Mundo Harbaugh '87**, his 4 brothers and his father, is a manufacturer of precision-machined assemblies and components for the aerospace, medical, and commercial industries. The need for more MRAP (mine resistant ambush product) vehicles in Iraq has driven business growth. In 2007 they also started working with aircraft completion centers.

Obituaries

William Marion Hartz '41 died June 14 in Stuttgart, AR, at the age of 86. After graduating from the Academy he enrolled at the University of Arkansas but his degree work was cut short by entry in the service for World War II.

He retired as Vice President of Jacob Hartz Seed Company in 1983 at the sale of the company. During his career he was active in many seed industry organizations taking leadership roles in a number of them. He was also active and supportive of many civic and governmental organizations.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Sarah Broyles Hartz; his children, Beth Hartz Sparks, Hope Hartz, Greg Hartz, and Doug Hartz; eight grandchildren and four grandsons. He is also survived by two brothers, Jacob Hartz, Jr. and Alfred F. Hartz and one sister, Marjorie Ellen Hartz.

Stephen Heim Sr. '42 passed away July 28, 2008, in Ft. Smith, AR, at the age of 83. He was a member of Saint Boniface Catholic Church, a World War II Veteran and was a retired Civil Engineer in the coal mining industry. He is survived by his wife, Genevieve; three daughters, Patricia Reith, Kathryn Miller and Jayne Ann Kita, two sons, Robert Heim and Dr. Stephen A Heim. He is also survived by two sisters, Elizabeth Fox and Stella Mae Thron.

Paul Feistritzer '66 died in Danville, KY, on July 7, 2008, at the age of 60. He owned and operated Self Serve Storage, Big Daddy Auto Sales and Security Systems, Inc. He was co-founder of Skeeter Resorts and was a local racing legend. He was a member of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Danville.

Survivors include his wife, Linda Robertson Feistritzer; a daughter, Paula Renae Feistritzer; a son, Paul Jay Feistritzer; two brothers, Drew Feistritzer and Richard Feistritzer; four sisters, Emily Feistritzer, Kathy Feistritzer, Helen Milburn and Donna Hudson; and one grandchild, Paul Grant Feistritzer.

L. R. 'Bub' Fox '45 of Prairie View, AR, died August 3, 2008. He was a livestock dealer and co-owner of Ft. Smith Livestock Auction. He was a member of St. Meinrad Catholic Church.

Survivors are his daughters: Lawrence Ann Copeland, Gloria Kay Gooding, Carolyn Ward, Cindy Schluterman, Cherry Kremer, Nancy Neumeier, Debbie Berry, and Mary Koch; sons: John, Jim, David, Don, Richard and Mark Fox; a sister, Doris Jean Fritche; a brother, Charles Harry Fox; 31 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren.

Herbert Joseph Parker '37 died in Jonesboro April 30, 2008, after a brief illness. He graduated from Arkansas State College and University of Arkansas School of Law. After serving as a pilot in WW II he returned to Jonesboro and practiced law for a short time before entering the business world. He had interests in an auto dealership, a furniture store, egg farm and finally ended up in real estate development where he spent most of his life. He was very active in civic affairs in Jonesboro. His survivors include his wife, Marie; sons, Michael, Herbert and Matthew; eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

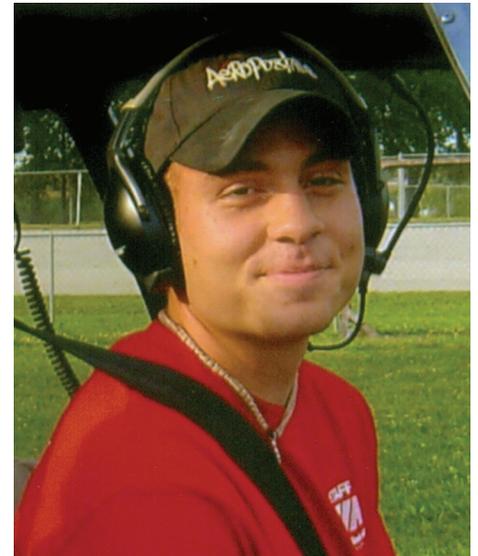
David Ridgley '60 died in Lamar, TX, May 19, 2008. His wife Mary and a son Eric survive him.

Cyril Paul Plafcan '39, of Stuttgart, AR, died September 22, 2008. He was a life long farmer and served on the Boards of Stuttgart Grain Dryer and the Prairie Farmers Association and Farm Bureau for many years. Mr. Plafcan was a member of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church and a charter member of the Slovak Council of the Knights of Columbus serving as the Grand Knight among other offices.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Helen; two daughters, Rebecca Johnson and Jennifer Bowe; one brother, George; two sisters, Frances P. Plafcan and Sister Dorothy Ann Plafcan. He has seven grandchildren, Sarah, Rick and Katherine Hatfield, Reb, Ryan, Zachary and Caitlin Bowe.

Wayne Holtmeier, Jr. '01 died in a helicopter crash September 5, 2008. He was a graduate of St. Louis University and was working as a helicopter pilot and instructor with plans to go to law school.

He is survived by his mother, Juanita Miner and his father, Wayne Holtmeier; two brothers, Sam and Werner; six sisters, Tina Webster, Lillie Irwin, Beth Holtmeier, Regina Holtmeier, Laura Holtmeier, and Tasha Holtmeier; and a number of aunts, uncles and cousins including an uncle, Fr. Richard Walz of the Abbey. Five of his 2001 classmates were pallbearers at the funeral.



Wayne Holtmeier, Jr. '01

New Academy Board Formed

by Jay Fredrich

After evaluation of the experience of other Benedictine abbeys and after consultation with attorney Mark Rust '75 and Canon lawyer Father Dan Ward, Director of Legal Affairs for Catholic Religious Orders in the United States, Abbot Jerome and the monastic chapter of Subiaco Abbey approved the establishment of a new Subiaco Academy Board of Trustees, effective July 1. The new Board, which replaces an existing Board, differs from its predecessor in the nature and extent of its authority over Academy operations and in its size.

The Subiaco monastic chapter retains control of the mission, philosophy, objectives and purposes of the Academy and over its name and insignia, but all other authorities previously held by the chapter, including financial oversight, policy formation, and oversight of Academy management, have been delegated to the new Academy Board. According to the new Academy Board by-laws the number of trustees must be five or greater and may not exceed nine, rather than twenty or more under the previous Board by-laws. Trustees are appointed for a three-year term, and trustees may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Although the new by-laws do not require that trustees be alumni of the Academy, Abbot Jerome initially appointed seven alumni to trustee positions.

At its first meeting on July 23-24, 2008, the Academy Board elected Jay Fredrich '57 of Little Rock as President, Mike Maus '57 of McKinney, TX, as Vice President and Steve Schmitz '91 of Gainesville, TX, as Secretary. Ron Blaschke '62, Pat Franz '78, Jim Limbird '69, and Br. Ephrem O'Bryan '60 are the other trustees. Abbot Jerome and Headmaster Mike Burke are *ex officio* members of the Academy Board.

At its July meeting the Academy Board also reviewed and proposed modifications to the new by-laws. The proposed changes were subsequently approved by the Board at its meeting on September 3, 2008, and will be submitted to the monastic chapter for approval at a meeting in early October. Among the more important changes was the establishment of six standing committees to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities: Budget, Plant and Facilities; Policy; Strategic Planning and Institutional Advancement; Student Life and Activities; Recruitment and Retention; and Religious Formation and Vocations. Each of these committees will include at least one Board member to provide liaison with the Board, but most of the committee members will be drawn from alumni, parents of current students, Academy faculty and staff, and other interested individuals. Formation of the committees is underway at the present time.

The Academy Board also requested that Abbot Jerome develop an appropriate ceremony for installing Mike Burke as the new Headmaster of Subiaco Academy. That ceremony was incorporated into a Mass on September 3 attended by Bishop Anthony Taylor, Diocesan Superintendent of Schools Vernell Bowen, the Subiaco Abbey monastic community, the Board of Trustees and the faculty and students of the Academy. A brief Academy Board meeting followed the Mass and installation ceremony.



Mike Maus, Vice President, Jay Fredrich, President and Steve Schmitz, Secretary



Development Director's Message

Many people are seriously worried about the economy in our country. And there seems to be good reason for this concern. As I write this at the beginning of October, several large banks and financial institutions have either failed or been bailed out by our government. The stock market has also taken a big hit. There is great concern that things are headed in the wrong direction.

Here at Subiaco we face these same concerns. To a large measure we are dependent on the generosity of many of you to keep our ministries going. Certainly Subiaco Academy cannot operate on the income from tuition alone. As in the past, we depend on the support of our many alumni, friends and benefactors to keep the school open and not allow it to end up as an exclusive school that caters only to those who can pay all that it costs to provide the opportunities that are available.

Hard times affect us because the cost of everything increases, but also because they affect you, our supporters.

Dan Conway, writing in *The Good Steward*, poses the following questions:

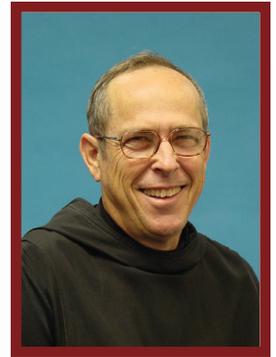
“How can our understanding and practice of stewardship help relieve the anxiety we feel about doing ministry in difficult times? How can stewardship principles serve as a source of hope and confidence in times of uncertainty like these?”

“One of the first principles of Christian spirituality is that God will provide. Stewardship builds on this principle. It reminds us that God's goodness and generosity are unlimited, the source of everything that exists. As the beneficiaries of God's abundance, we are called to 'receive gratefully' and 'share generously' all God's gifts (material and spiritual) in confidence and hope.

“Trust in God's providence does not mean that we can sit by and do nothing. As stewards of creation, we are called to work tirelessly, to develop and grow God's gifts, and to 'give them back with increase.' It's because we trust in God's faithfulness that we refuse to be discouraged or defeated during times of adversity. As Christian stewards, we know that Christ has already achieved the victory we are fighting for. He is the source of our confidence and hope. He is the absolute assurance that God will provide!”

We are confident that Subiaco Abbey and Academy will weather this storm just as we have during times of trouble in the past. We are confident because we have our trust in a God who provided in the past and continues to do so today. And we are confident because we know that there are many who share with us in these ministries of Subiaco Abbey.

God Bless you and may He guide all of us during the months and years ahead.



PRAYER HOTLINE

One of the primary ministries of monks is to intercede for the prayer needs of God's people. Subiaco Abbey instituted a Prayer Hotline in October, 2004. Rarely does a day go by that there is not at least one prayer request left on this hotline, which is always open. Every evening from 6:30-7:00 one of the monks is available to receive and bring your prayer needs to the monastic community. At other hours of the day you will be able to leave a message that will be picked up in the evening. We encourage you to make use of the Subiaco Prayer Hotline.

Let us join you in praying for your needs.

The number to call is:

1-800-350-5889

Giving thanks at year end/supporting Subiaco's mission

by Ken Sutterfield

Fall is traditionally a time when we express thanks for the many blessings we have received... and make plans for the future. For many, it can also be a time for sharing with others through charitable gifts. As you take the time to consider your year-end giving, please consider the many opportunities to support Subiaco Abbey and Academy. In this article we will present a number of opportunities for making a gift that will have significant impact in the life and ministry of Subiaco.

What is your legacy?

Toward the end of the year, many choose to review their long-range estate plans. This may include your will, life insurance beneficiaries, retirement accounts or other planned instruments that will offer special ways to leave a lasting legacy.

Consider joining the Abbot Paul Nahlen Guild

This guild has been established to recognize and thank a special group of alumni and friends who have designated Subiaco Abbey or Academy in their will or estate plan.

Planned gifts are gifts that are legally provided for during a donor's lifetime. The most common form of planned giving comes from one's will or bequest at the time of death.

We would like the opportunity to acknowledge and thank you now, instead of your family later. Please let us know your intentions.

Designated Endowment Giving

During the past several years multiple funds have been established to honor worthy individuals and assist in the financial support of designated areas of service and ministry.

We encourage you to consider supporting one or more of the following funds in your year-end giving:

Fr. Herbert Vogelpohl Scholarship

This fund was established by members of the Knittig family in the hopes that others will join in contributing to the scholarship fund in honor of Fr. Herbert. Many people here remember Fr. Herbert as the director of Coury House and our retreat movement for years.

Class of '91 Scholarship

Members of the class of 1991 have set a funding goal of \$100,000 to be completed by May of 2011, their 20th class anniversary date.

Fr. Paul Church Maintenance Fund

Members of the extended family of Fr. Paul Hoedebeck established a fund in honor of Fr. Paul with a family goal of \$100,000. So that this fund would be twice as valuable, we are trying to match this gift from friends and alumni. This fund is for the maintenance of the Abbey Church. Next year, 2009, marks the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the church.

Fr. Joseph Fuhrmann Scholarship

Members of the Fuhrmann family established the fund to honor Fr. Joseph, a Subiaco monk and uncle of many other Subiaco monks, who died in the early 1970s after serving many years in Abbey and parish ministries.

Fr. Hugh Assenmacher Endowed Faculty Chair

With the generosity of a \$125,000 matching challenge gift, we are nearing completion [\$23,000 remaining] of the Fr. Hugh Endowed Faculty Chair, the last in a series of four Endowed Faculty Chairs. When completed the four chairs will have secured one million dollars in perpetuity for the benefit of Subiaco Academy. The goal of the chairs is to retain and hire the best faculty possible for Subiaco Academy.

Health Center Endowment

With the aging population of the monks at Subiaco, the need and expenses to provide quality health care will continue to grow. Our desire and goal is to honor each monk for their life of service with professional care and quality facilities.

Student Aid Endowment

The cost of education continues to increase along with our desire to have a well-rounded student body. The need for Student Aid will continue to be a high value need. Supporting the Academy Student Aid Endowment will help secure the future for students and their families.

Thank you for your support of Subiaco. As the year draws to a close and you count your blessings over this past year, we hope that you will consider supporting Subiaco. With God's help and your generosity we know we can count on your valued partnership. Please let any one of us in the Development Office know how we can best come alongside you in your stewardship.

Br. Ephrem O'Bryan Endowed Faculty Chair completed

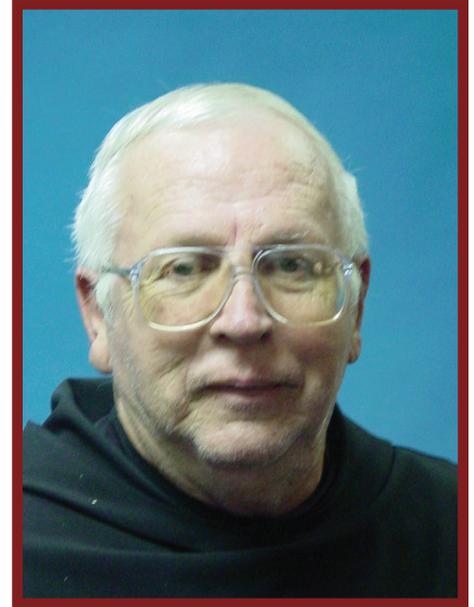
Subiaco Academy's third in a series of four \$250,000 endowed faculty chairs has been completed. The chair is named in honor of long time academy instructor Br. Ephrem O'Bryan who has served in various capacities including Dean, Headmaster, and is best known for his language instruction in French and Latin and as a tennis coach. Br. Ephrem currently serves as Public Information Coordinator for both the Abbey and Academy and as Subprior of the Subiaco community.

The catalyst for this initiative was the generous pledge of a \$125,000 matching challenge gift. This past September sufficient matching funds were received to complete the Br. Ephrem O'Bryan Endowed Faculty Chair which now joins the Fr. Robert Lazzari and Abbot Jerome Kodell Endowed Faculty Chairs. In addition to these three chairs we are in the final stage of completing the Fr. Hugh Assenmacher Chair which is only \$23,000 away from being fully funded. In total the four chairs will represent a one million dollar endowment for the benefit of the Academy's future.

The purpose of the Endowed Faculty Chair program is to retain and hire the best faculty possible. In addition the goal is to ensure and maintain high educational standards which will include faculty enrichment and facilities that enrich the life of the young men attending the Academy today and for generations to come.

Each year 5% of the \$250,000 fund balance for each chair will be used to provide approximately \$12,500, which will then be used to support and encourage the chosen chair holder and all full time faculty, and in turn will impact the young men attending Subiaco Academy.

For additional information on the Endowed Faculty Chair program, please call the Subiaco Development office at (479) 934-1001 and request a brochure describing the details and how you can assist in completing the Fr. Hugh Assenmacher Endowed Faculty Chair.



Br. Ephrem O'Bryan, OSB

ARE YOU RECEIVING THE MONTHLY
ALUMNI E-MAIL NEWSLETTER
"subi.org"?
KEEP UP WITH ALL THE NEWS
SEND YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS TO:
brephrem@subi.org

Development Tool Chest

As you consider your year end giving and support of Subiaco Abbey and Academy, please know we want to help you be the best steward possible. There are several "typical" ways that our supporters use to assist our mission and ministry.

1. Cash
2. Appreciated stocks and bonds
3. Insurance policies
4. Annuities
5. Charitable Trust
6. Appreciated Real-Estate
7. Charitable IRA's
8. Mineral Rights deeds

For all estate planning, our legal name is.... **Subiaco Abbey.**

Upcoming Retreats and Events at Coury House

November

- 6-9 Our Lady of Victory, Purcell, OK
- 7-9 Immaculate Heart of Mary Retreat
- 14-16 Catholic Campus Ministry Retreat
- 21-23 Diaconate Formation Retreat, DOLR

December

- 5-7 Dan Egan Retreat
- 31- Jan.1 New Year's Evening of Recollection

January 2009

- 7 Joplin Prayer Group
- 9-11 Serenity Retreat
- 16-18 Park Row Youth Group
- 23-25 Continuing Dialogue Workshop

Coury House Weekend Retreat rates include two nights and six meals.
A shared room: \$120. Private room: \$170. Married Couple: \$215.

Rates for private retreats, days of recollection,
and special groups are available upon request.

For more information or reservations, contact us at:
479-934-4411 or 479-934-1290 or FAX: 479-934-4040

The Coury House Book Store and Gift Shop
offers quality religious articles and books for spiritual growth and direction.

Call Donna Forst at: 479-934-4411 or 479-934-1292

Check our web site: www.subi.org or e-mail us at: couryhouse@subi.org
or chgifts@subi.org

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