

Saint Andrew Abbey Vocation Newsletter

March, 2015

Brother Thomas Set for April 25 Deacon Ordination

Abbey seminarian **Brother Thomas Sanders, OSB** will be ordained to the transitional diaconate on Saturday, April 25, 2015 at Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica in Latrobe, Pennsylvania by Bishop Lawrence Brandt of the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Brother Thomas is completing his third year of theological studies and will pursue his fourth and final year of studies this fall at St. Vincent's while being assigned to weekend diaconate ministry at a parish near Latrobe. His priesthood ordination will be in Cleveland next year.



Brother Thomas, 36, entered the novitiate of our abbey in June, 2009. He professed his first vows on June 11, 2010 and his solemn vows on June 15, 2013. Born in Amherst, Ohio, he is the son of Gary and Joanne Sanders of Sheffield Lake, Ohio. He has a sister Shondra. He was a member of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Sheffield Lake and is a graduate of Brookside High School. He holds a bachelor of life science degree in biology and chemistry from Otterbein College in Columbus in 2003. After graduation he worked at Mt. Carmel/St. Ann's Hospital in Columbus in the Acute Care Center as a multi-skilled technician. He also worked in chemical research.

With a family background in music, Brother Thomas has honed his skills on the organ since joining the abbey and has worked with Fr. Cyprian Constantine, OSB organist at St. Vincent Archabbey. He is also a member of the Schola Gregoriana at St. Vincent's. When home at our abbey, he is one of the assistant organists. He made his deacon retreat with the Benedictine nuns at St. Emma's Retreat House in Greensburg.

Join the Monks for Holy Week Liturgies at the Abbey

Former participants of past "Living with Benedict" vocation retreat weekends, past visitors to the abbey, BHS alumni, and friends are invited to join the monks for the solemn liturgies of Holy Week. There are also limited guestrooms available for overnight accommodations for those wishing to make a private retreat.

Holy Thursday (April 2)....7:30 PM / Mass of the Lord's Supper / Washing of Feet / Eucharistic Procession

Good Friday (April 3)7:10 AM Lauds with chanted Lamentations from Jeremiah (Tenebrae)

3:00 PM / Liturgy of the Lord's Passion / Reading of the Passion, Adoration of the Cross, Communion service

7:05 PM / Office of Vigils (Readings) with chanted Lamentations

Holy Saturday (April 4) ..7:10 AM / Lauds with chanted Lamentations

8:00 PM / Solemn Vigil Mass of the Resurrection

Easter Sunday (April 5)..7:10 AM/ Easter Lauds (Morning Prayer) followed by Mass

The Abbey's Relationship to Our Lady of Sorrows

Upon entering the narthex of Saint Andrew Abbey, visitors are immediately struck by the stunning tapestry of Our Lady of Sorrows to the left of the entrance door to the abbey church. It is there for two reasons. The first is to honor the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association (FCSLA) which voted at a national convention in September, 1983 to make an historical gift of \$1 million to our abbey for the construction of our first Abbey Church. The tapestry depicts Mary as the Mother of Sorrows because it is under that title that the people of Slovakia in eastern Europe have honored the Mother of God for centuries. In the tapestry, woven by the wife of the creator of the stained glass window of Jacob's in the Eucharistic chapel, Robert Harmon of Arcadia, Missouri, each circle represents a symbol of the passion of Christ: the whip, the crown of thorns, the chalice, and the cross.

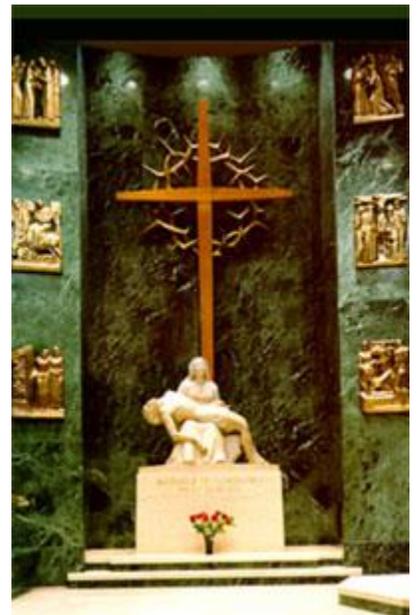
The second reason for this depiction outside of our Abbey Church is to acknowledge the Slovak Heritage of our monastery which was founded by monks either born in Slovakia or of American-Slovak



background in 1922 who came to Cleveland to work among the Catholic Slovak immigrants who settled here in the early part of the 20th century. Pope Benedict XIII proclaimed Our Lady of Sorrows patroness of Slovakia in 1717 at the request of the nation's bishops. A small country in the heart of Europe, Slovakia was one of the first Slavic nations to embrace Christianity. Because of its size Slovakia was prone to invasions and pillaging. The Slovaks bore these afflictions with courage, strengthened by their faith in God and devotion to the Blessed Mother. The predominant symbol of their Marian affection is the Basilica of Our Lady of Sorrows in the town of Sastin, completed in 1744 (the famous statue in that basilica is pictured to the left). Last year marked the 450th anniversary of that devotion at that sacred location.

This September marks the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the

Chapel of the Sorrowful Mother at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. (right). This chapel, a gift of the First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States, was dedicated Sept. 5, 1965. Above the altar a Slovak inscription reads: "Our Mother of Sorrows, patroness of Slovakia, pray for us." The seven sorrows of Mary are represented by a series of bronze reliefs and a life-sized sculpture of the Mary with the crucified Christ (often called a "Pieta," meaning mercy, in the theme of the famous statue by Michelangelo). The statue is the creation of Ernest Morenon and is noted for its simple lines, which reverently reveal the depths of Mary's grief. This chapel in Washington has won many awards for its artistic beauty.



Evangelizing Students through Example, Education, and Prayer

The following e-mail was sent to all of the monks on the Benedictine High School faculty by one of our senior after he returned from the Rite of Election at St. John's Cathedral on Sunday night, Feb. 22 2015:

Good Evening Clergymen of St. Andrew Abbey:

This evening I participated in the Rite of Election downtown at St. John the Evangelist Cathedral with Bishop Lennon as the celebrant. This took place after first signing my name in my parish's book of the elect at mass earlier this morning. The book was taken down to be presented to Bishop Lennon in the service. During Bishop Lennon's homily at the service tonight he talked about the four different types of people that were present there. First he talked about the Catechumens. Secondly, he talked about the Candidates that wanted to continue through the sacraments of initiation. Thirdly, he spoke about the RCIA team leaders that have helped the Catechumens and candidates along the way. The last group he talked about were the people that inspired the Catechumens and Candidates to choose to follow through and continue on in our faith development. When he spoke about this last group he mentioned that this person could be a parent, close friend, relative, neighbor, etc. He described it as anyone who has given us inspiration or who have had influence on our faith lives. Sitting there in the Cathedral with one of my team members filling in for my Godparent, I really couldn't decide who it was that led me to be sitting there tonight. It wasn't a friend or relative or even a parent for me. That's when I realized that it wasn't just a specific person. The reason I was sitting there was because of the inspiration and mark the Benedictine community- specifically the Monks- brought onto me. I want to officially thank the entire community of St. Andrew Abbey, specifically the Monks who teach and work at Benedictine. I really appreciate the lessons, support, openness, and respect that have been taught to me over the past four years at Benedictine. Specifically I'd like to thank Abbot Gary, Fr. Timothy, Fr. Michael, Fr. Paschal, Fr. Finbar and Fr. Gerard. In some way or another you were the reason I made it through this process so far. With the theological education and first-hand witness that Benedictine has provided for me, I now humbly sit ready and eager to receive the sacraments of initiation this Easter. I just wanted to take a brief moment of my time to thank the men who have helped drastically shape my faith; it's the least I owe to you all.



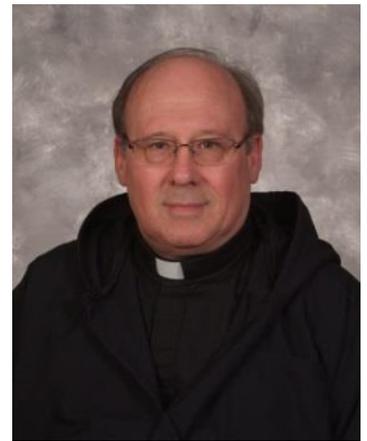
Fr. Finbar meets a BHS freshman in 2012.



Medieval monk checks his student's parchment

We hear thatFr. Paschal became the first monk of Saint Andrew Abbey to preach a bilingual English/Spanish parish mission when he accepted an invitation from his cousin **Fr. Leo DeChant, CSJ** to lead a Lenten mission this year at Blessed Junipero Serra Parish in Lancaster, California where Fr. Leo serves as pastor. Soon the parish will have to modify its name since Blessed Junipero will be canonized a saint this fall. Many years ago some monks of our abbey were popular preachers of parish missions in English and Slovak.....

Abbot Gary made a traditional 30 day retreat using the famous Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola during Lent at Loyola Retreat House in Clinton, Ohio. Retired **Abbot Clement**, chaplain at Loyola and **Becki Haller**, director of Loyola served as his mentors for the retreat.....**Fr. Anselm**, chaplain at Walsh University in Canton was featured in the February 22, 2015 issue of **Our Sunday Visitor** national Catholic newspaper in a feature article on chaplains at Catholic Universities. One student from Walsh interviewed in the story said, "Our chaplain Father Anselm Zupka, has made his presence known to all in such an admirable and humble lifestyle. He fulfills his call as a priest at Walsh University bring the person of Christ for each person he meets. I am definitely blessed to know him and to have shared the last four years with him during my undergraduate work.



Fr. Paschal, OSB



He has influenced me to wake up each day and to place all my trust in the Lord by praying and living out that prayer. I am very appreciative for and hope to model his willingness to always put others before himself for their benefit."

(Left – photo from *Our Sunday Visitor* of Fr. Anselm speaking with two students)

Fr. Anselm was also the celebrant of a Mass to dedicate the new **Saint John Paul II Center for Science Innovation** at Walsh on Friday, March 13. The Mass included a special address by the internationally known Catholic writer and philosopher **Michael Novak.....**

Brother Peter and Brother Paul have been out and about giving various presentations on Benedictine life at parishes that are organizing events for the Year of Consecrated Life. Both monks went to St. Martin of Tours Parish in Valley City on February 1 and **Brother Paul** also spoke at St. Anthony's Parish in Akron on February 9...**Father Gerard** is preaching three-night Lenten missions at Our Lady, Queen of Peace Parish (formerly Our Lady of Good Counsel) and at St. John's Cathedral.... **Brother Conrad's** patron is **St. Conrad of Parzham** whose feast is April 21.

