The more things change...

Believing in Our Journey

Is Religious Life Still Relevant?

Your Guide to the New Mass

www.norbertines.org
No one who has ever walked the face of the earth has failed to experience change or transformation. It begins the moment we draw our first breath. Some transformation we accept and even initiate, like marrying and raising a family; some we try to avoid or reverse, like illness or growing old. Some change sneaks up on us; some smacks us in the face.

As a youngster I welcomed change, everything that was new. It made life exciting, and I was challenged to adjust and learn and be grateful for what I had. At times I tried to bring about change but was not always successful. (Losing weight comes to mind.) As we grow older, transforming ourselves becomes far more challenging and feels less secure, and it seems that we have less say in it.

Over the last three years I have lost my parents. As I write this, my siblings and I have just sold the family home that had been the center of celebrations and life for 50 years. Things were different after Mom and Dad passed away, and they are very different now that the place to which we were drawn to be together is no more. But there also has been joyous change over those 50 years, as the five children who grew up in that home welcomed 16 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren to the family. I see all that transformation from a very quiet place.

Change and transformation is present also in religious communities and the Church. The Spirit is dynamic. On this year’s Feast of St. Augustine, we vested two novices with the white habit of Norbert, and four fraters professed Simple Vows. Our Foundation in New Mexico awaits the granting of its request to become its own canonry. These are all reasons for joy and celebration.

With Advent, we also welcome changes in the Liturgy. And we as a Community are always looking for ways to follow more authentically the charism and teachings of Norbert, drawing inspiration from the Rule of St. Augustine. In the vows we profess, we promise “a life of conversion.” We know in our hearts that we are called to continuous transformation as we work to “become one mind and heart” on our way to God.

Robert Louis Stevenson penned, “To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end in life.” And Abraham Lincoln assures us that “in the end, it’s not the years that count. It’s the life in your years.” We have Jesus’ assurance that we are never alone as we face this life’s challenges. The Spirit is always with us as we seek to transform our lives so as to live out the Gospel values. May a successful journey be yours!

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The Vulnerability of Relationship

In ordinary human experience we know that when we engage another in relationship, when we invite or welcome another into our lives, when we become vulnerable to another, we will be changed. We cannot remain the same. Relationship always asks something of us, whether it is a friendship, community life, or a romantic relationship. To be involved with another will never leave us untouched.

And despite our rhetoric about valuing change and openness to growth, many — perhaps most — of us are reluctant to become so vulnerable. Change is good abstractly, but not yet, not too much. We do not want to surrender even to love. That takes incredible trust, faith and hope.

So this dynamic tension is even more true of our relationship with God. If intimacy with another person can be overwhelming, how much more so a relationship with God, the awesome, overwhelming mystery of the Holy?

What will that relationship ask of us? How will we be changed? While our faith teaches us that what God asks can only be for our good — not pain-free, but for our good — our human fears are not so sure.

Drawing Close to the Holy

The liner notes for Bob Dylan’s album “John Wesley Harding” tell a little story. Three kings want help in understanding Dylan’s music, so they approach a fellow named Frank who they believe holds the key to understanding. They ask him to open it up for them. Frank asks them, “Well, just how far in do you want to go?” The questioners look blankly at each other. “I don’t know,” they say. “Not too far — just far enough so’s we can say we’ve been there.”†

I think that captures the ambiguity of our very human response to God. We want Him — but not too much. How close do we want to get to the Holy? Not too close, just close enough so’s we can say we’ve been there.

†Quoted in James W. Douglass. Resistance and Contemplation. (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1972, p. 47)
“¿Exactamente a qué profundidad quieren ustedes ir?”

Por el Padre John Bostwick, O.Praem. Traducido por Hermano Terrence Lauerman, O.Praem.

Los escritores espirituales desde Agustín hasta Tomás Merton piensan en por qué las personas buenas y fieles se mantienen un poco apartadas de la intimidad con Dios. Estas personas valoran la oración. Quieren crecer en la vida espiritual; pero resisten la intimidad con Dios, y en un sentido, se alejan de Dios. Con toda probabilidad, “ellos” son nosotros mismos.

La vulnerabilidad de las relaciones interpersonales

En la experiencia normal de los humanos sabemos que cuando nos entramos en comunión personal con otra persona, cuando invitamos o damos la bienvenida a otra persona para entrar en nuestras vidas, cuando nos hacemos vulnerables, seremos cambiados. No podemos permanecer como antes. Relaciones amistosas siempre nos piden algo, si sea amistad, vida comunitaria, o un enlace romántico. Estar envuelto con otra persona, nunca nos deja sin tocar.

Y a pesar de nuestra retórica sobre el valor de cambio, abertura, y crecimiento, muchos — tal vez la mayor parte de nosotros — no tienen deseos de estar tan vulnerables. En lo abstracto, el cambio es bueno, pero no todavía y no tanto en la actualidad. No queremos rendirnos aun al amor. Esto requiere una confianza increíble, fe, y esperanza.

Así que esta tensión dinámica es aun más verdadera en nuestra relación con Dios. Si la intimidad con otra persona puede estar abrumadora, ¿cuánto más una relación con Dios, el misterio imponentísimo, abrumadorísimo de lo Sagrado? ¿Qué nos pedirá tal relación? ¿Cómo nos cambiará esa relación? Mientras nuestra fe nos enseña que lo que Dios nos pide es solamente lo bueno — no sin dolor, pero para nuestro bien — nuestros temores humanos nos hacen no tan seguros.

Acercándonos a lo sagrado

Los comentarios introductorios para el álbum de Bob Dylan “John Wesley Harding” nos dicen un cuentito. Tres reyes quieren ayudar a entender la música de Dylan, y por eso se acercan a un hombre que se llama Frank que creen que tiene la llave de entenderla. Piden que se la abran. Frank les pregunta, “¿Exactamente a cuánta distancia quieren ustedes ir?” Los preguntadores se miran un poco confusos. “No sé” le dicen. “No tan lejos — solamente lo suficiente para que podamos decir que hemos estado allí.”

Pienso que esto capta la ambigüedad de nuestra respuesta a Dios. Lo queremos — pero no demasiado. ¿Cuán cerca queremos ponernos a lo Sagrado? No tan cerca, solamente lo suficiente cerca para que podamos decir que hemos estado allí.

Keeping the Faith in a Changing World

By Lisa Strandberg

Is religious life relevant in contemporary society? In line with their founding principles, the Norbertines are not just contemplating that question — they’re acting on it.

Change can begin with the subtlety of a sunrise or the shock of a lightning bolt. In the case of Norbert of Xanten, the latter led him to reform his 12th-century life from one of wealth and comfort to one of poverty and transience.

When a storm’s wrath knocked the German nobleman from his horse, he heard the voice of God saying, “Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and follow after it.” The message awakened him to a new way of living, one counter to the culture of his place in society.

He prayed. He yielded his possessions. He wandered the European countryside preaching. In time, he founded the Norbertines, a religious community devoted not only to contemplating the will and wonders of God, but also to acting upon them in ministry.

Nearly 1,000 years hence, his brethren at St. Norbert Abbey seek to strike the same balance in a vastly different world. Like Norbert, they too must change. This time, the Order’s survival in a far more secular culture is at stake.

With the future of the Order dependent on energizing and increasing its membership, its brothers are taking steps to renew their ancient focus on relationships with God, each other and the world — steps that anyone wishing to enrich his or her faith might consider.

“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”

– Cardinal John Henry Newman

Painting by Wolfram Köberl
Connecting with the Source

Fr. John Tourangeau says, “There’s a greater call for a deeper authenticity in religious life today. Religious life needs to give a different kind of witness.”

There is, Fr. Tourangeau points out, no better model of that witness than Christ Himself. And connecting with Christ only comes through prayer, adds Fr. James Baraniak, O.Praem., pastor at De Pere’s St. Norbert College.

“Our prayer life together is our primary common apostolate. It is the font and summit from which and to which all of our ministry flows,” Fr. Baraniak says, quoting Vatican II’s Lumen Gentium No. 11. “No wonder this deserves our undivided attention. It’s a means for us to be at our best, celebrating Christ at our center.”

Strengthening Community

For the Norbertines, community is a founding principle with roots in the shared life of Jesus’ apostles. Again, the Rule of Augustine says, “The first purpose for which you have come together is to live in unity in the house and to be of one mind and one purpose for which you have come together.”

As with any relationship, staying connected requires ongoing communication. “We’re called to be men of prayer as Norbertines,” says Abbey vocation director Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem.

However, men of prayer struggle just as lay people do to balance demands on their time and attention.

“In many ways, an argument can be made to say that religious life has become identified with or over-identified with the culture of today,” Fr. Tourangeau says. “There’s a greater call for a deeper authenticity in religious life today. Religious life needs to give a different kind of witness.”

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Serving a New World

In a world made smaller by air travel and the Internet, the Church and its religious communities are challenged to think globally. Today’s Catholics encounter diversity unknown a century ago, let alone in St. Norbert’s Middle Ages.

Fr. Herring points out that at one time, the Church’s 70 cardinals all were Italian. Now, some 130 cardinals hail from Africa, China, India, Japan, Eastern Europe and North America.

“We have Catholic Christians all over the world who contribute to the Church in a very diverse way,” Fr. Herring says. “The Church is going through a schizophrenia. How do we be global but at the same time unified?”

Changing demographics have created changing needs on a local level as well. One example: Fr. Tourangeau says he first learned to speak Spanish so he could minister in Peru and Albuquerque, N.M. Now, Spanish language skills are just as vital in the Abbey’s immediate vicinity in northeast Wisconsin.

The diversity Norbertines encounter goes beyond language. There is also difference in what the young and the old expect from religious life.

Says Fr. Baraniak, “Young folks in today’s Church seem more interested in the liturgical, devotional and mystical nature of the Church, while [Order] candidates from the past were more engaged in peace and social justice activities.”

To bridge these cultural and generational gaps, the Order plans to focus on spiritual life as the impetus for social activism and to encourage its members to pursue ongoing education in fields like ethics and psychology. “The idea, says Fr. Herring, is for him and his brothers to be ‘well-formed and well-trained in the contemporary stuff of society.”

The hope; that from a place of understanding, a faithful Norbertine — or a faithful layperson — can remain relevant in today’s world while still offering the countercultural witness of Christian life.

Focusing on the Future

Ongoing discernment at the Abbey has brought into focus the following priorities as the Order makes bold changes intended to keep it relevant:

- Focusing on the mystical life and prayer
- Viewing communal life as a primary mission
- Embracing a lifestyle of stewardship
- Enhancing formation with continuing education
- Ministering competently amid cultural diversity
- Fostering a culture of vocations

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Ever Ancient, Ever New

For many of the country’s Catholics, a new English edition of the priestly “playbook” is transforming the Mass and the Christ parishioners encounter there.

Given St. Norbert’s love of the Eucharist, it’s fair to say that for him and his descendants, the “beauty ever ancient, ever new” to which St. Augustine refers in his Confessions (Chapter 10) is directly experienced in the Mass.

Advent 2011 sees new words and prescribed practices introduced in the Mass in the English-speaking world. The changes come with the publication of the third English edition of the Roman Missal, also known as the Sacramentary — the priest’s “playbook” for Mass. Published in Latin in 2003 by the Vatican, the Missal’s translation to the English in recent years has seen hard work and some controversy.

Its prologue, the General Instruction on the Roman Missal, establishes a more universal, formally prescribed norm for postures, gestures, furnishings, customs, vessels and vestments related to Mass. As one Midwestern bishop says, “The 40-year period of liturgical experimentation following Vatican II has come to a close.”

But beyond uniformity, the new edition serves a higher purpose: to recapture and cultivate a deep reverence and awe for the real presence of Jesus, Whom we encounter in the Eucharist.

A 40-Year Focus on Christ Incarnate

In the excitement of the changes of Vatican II, the Missal and its translations were hastily prepared. As noted liturgical scholar the Rev. Paul Turner, himself a pastor, recently explained to a group of 300 church workers in Green Bay, Wis., the 1970 Sacramentary was translated using a “dynamic equivalence” approach, with the sense of the message cast in contemporary, colloquial style.

In addition, with Vatican II’s renewed sense of the universal Church, the concept of “cultural adaptation” inspired a wide variety of musical, artistic and theological forms: the Missa Luba saw some texts set to African music; guitars and folk music from American culture were introduced; local designers, sculptors, seamstresses, tailors, artists, architects, carpenters and artisans were employed; and indigenous art forms and materials were translated into vesture and vessels. A sense that liturgy was “the people’s work” gave rise to a kaleidoscope of new expressions — all offered in good faith by those who spearheaded them.

These efforts reflected a “horizontal” sense of Jesus the Incarnation — that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14) as “one tempted in every way that we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). This sense of Jesus’ immanence, closeness and compassion had been obscured over centuries by the formal, rigid ways in which Mass had been celebrated. An increased “down-to-earthiness” and an emphasis on community emerged — a great blessing in many ways!

In retrospect, not all of these innovations were effective, however. Many were unable to carry the spiritual weight of the Mass. Some practices trivialized profound concepts; others set aside centuries-tested formulas and texts. Some — like the practice of tying balloons to casket handles at funerals — ran roughshod over Scripture, theology and grief.
The Re-Emergence of Christ Divine

With time, balance has emerged. The new edition of the Missal serves as a counterbalance, asserting a “vertical” sense of Christ Divine, He “who sits enthroned on high” (Psalm 135:5). With a language and a set of prescribed practices more formal and set apart from the ordinary, the Liturgy is rightly seen as “the work of God in and through the People.”

Several changes aim to accomplish this. For one, the new Roman Missal is translated using the “formal equivalence” method, according to Turner, which transposes word for word from the Latin to the English. The resulting changes in language, while subtle, are meant to carry a profound sense of reverence, respect and prayerfulness appropriate to this holy communion with Jesus.

Also called for in the updated Roman Missal is the placement of the tabernacle front and center in the sanctuary; the use of precious metals for vessels; the return of the kneeling posture as mandatory; and, in many dioceses, the reservation of the arms-outstretched orans posture during the Our Father for the presider as he functions in persona Christi — in the person of Christ.

In Norbertine parishes near the Abbey, this has spurred various changes. Old St. Joseph Church at De Pere’s St. Norbert College has installed kneelers and moved the tabernacle from an oratory into the church. St. Agnes Church in Green Bay has used the occasion to complete a church renovation, adding kneelers, relocating the tabernacle and creating a gathering space. Our Lady of Lourdes Church in De Pere switched from crystal and hand-thrown porcelain chalices to ones made of pewter. Anticipating these changes, Holy Cross Parish in Bay Settlement made similar modifications three years ago.

Interestingly, St. Willebrord Church in Green Bay, with many of its Masses said in Spanish, will see little textual change, since the Spanish translation always followed the Latin original more closely.

An Opportunity for Education

Choirs and cantors are learning new settings for the Mass parts and chant responses. The hope is that the Assembly will adapt to the changes more quickly if they’re sung rather than spoken.

Most parishes will take this opportunity to re-educate the faithful about the Mass in its rich dimensions of tradition, symbols and meaning. This catechetical effort has great potential to re-energize parishes. It may help draw more people to weekend Mass, a significant hope in a Church that has seen attendance decline over the last three decades.

Sunday Mass, after all, is the “main event” that Vatican II describes as “the source and summit of our life in Christ” (Lumen Gentium No. 11, Catechism No. 1324). At Mass, we are most powerfully the Church — the body of the crucified and risen Christ. There, we get all we need to live the Gospel in the world!

So yes — it’s a “new” Mass with words and practices that reflect a pendulum swing in theology, taste and even politics. But it is also the same ancient Mass celebrated every day around the world for 20 centuries at the command of Jesus: “Do this in memory of me.” (1 Corinthians 11:24)

Regardless of its external forms, what is essential is that we offer the Mass with “sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:8). Grateful for this “beauty ever ancient ever new,” we pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, we worship you, living within us and among us by the Sacrament of your Body and Blood. Strengthened by this gift from Heaven, we may offer to the Father our solemn pledge of undivided love. And may we offer to our brothers and sisters, our lives, broken like bread, poured out like wine, in loving service of that Kingdom where you reign with the Father and Holy Spirit forever and ever! Amen! (1970 Sacramentary, p. 348)

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Tried. True.

Updates to the English translation of the Roman Missal are bringing changes to the Mass beginning in Advent. Many of these changes mark a return to traditional practices in the Liturgy.

Tabernacle Placement

The Eucharist is central to Catholic Liturgy. As such, the tabernacle, in which the consecrated Host is placed, now will be located centrally in the sanctuary.

Eucharistic Vessels

Since Vatican II, vessels of crystal, ceramic, wood and other materials have been used. Going forward, vessels will be made exclusively of precious metals.

Prayer Postures

No longer will the faithful raise their hands heavenward as they pray the Our Father. Only the celebrant, acting in the person of Christ, will assume this orans posture.
Within this presentation, the change process is discussed: All change begins with endings and losses, followed by a time of uncertainty and questions, and concludes with new beginnings. When discussing difficult changes, Center director Fr. Conrad Kratz, O.Praem., often shares, “There is ‘gift’ in every loss or change, no matter how challenging.”

Since June, when Fr. Conrad suffered a stroke, we have reflected upon his words again and again. This beloved, faith-filled man has experienced one of the tragic challenges he often spoke about. While he is making strides daily and we have every hope he’ll return to the Center, it is indeed a time of questions. Needless to say, we are experiencing the change process at a most personal level here at the Center. The “gift” in all of this is still unfolding.

We keep reminding ourselves every day of the poignant words of Henri Nouwen: “… every time there are losses, there are choices to be made. You choose to live your losses as passages to anger, blame, hatred, depression and resentment, or you choose to let these losses be passages to something new, something wider and deeper.” Thank you for your prayers, love and support as we continue to search for the “gift” during this challenging time.

WINTER/SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAMS

Our new brochure is filled with inspiring programs and retreats.

We are honored to have with us Bishop David Ricken, Bishop Robert Morneau and Sr. Ann Rehrauer, OSJ, for the Lord Teach Us How to Pray Series beginning Jan. 12.

Early registration is encouraged for the ever-popular Morning of Spiritual Renewal for Women on Jan. 21.

Acedia, “an ancient term for suffocating gloom that robs one’s soul of joy in God,” is the focus of an all-day retreat facilitated by Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem., and Judy Turba on Feb. 11.

The highly regarded Lenten Series continues with presentations on Saturday mornings during Lent, which begins Feb. 22.

Dr. Howard Ebert, director of the master of theological studies program at St. Norbert College, is facilitating the Triduum Retreat beginning April 5.

This spring, Fr. Stephen Rossey, O.Praem., offers Spotlight Tours focusing on the architecture, windows and founding Fathers of St. Norbert Abbey.

For additional information or a complete list of programs and retreats, visit www.norbertines.org or call the Center at (920) 337-4315.
The first purpose for which you have come together is to live in unity in the house and to be of one mind and one heart on the way to God.

If someone you know may be interested in a purposeful life as a Norbertine priest or brother, please contact:

Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem.

e-mail: vocations@norbertines.org

phone: 920.337.4333

Young Norbertines Matthew Dougherty, Benjamin Newmann and Michael Brennan on their journey to the priesthood.
“Change is the end result of all true learning.” — Leo Buscaglia

Gardening helps feed neighbors in need

Fresh string beans, cucumbers and more were on the menu at Green Bay’s Golden House domestic violence shelter this summer thanks to the NORBERTINE VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY (NVC). In partnership with the Three Corners Neighborhood Association, the NVC oversees a community garden that has grown in more than the obvious way since its founding in 2010.

Nine of 10 garden plots available for lease were under cultivation this summer, helping residents in the low-income neighborhood grow their own healthy food affordably. In addition, business students from De Pere’s St. Norbert College funded and constructed three accessible garden beds with the NVC in May, and vacation Bible school students from the college’s Old St. Joseph Church created a garden-themed cookbook for Golden House residents. Says NVC director Ellen Mommaerts, “There are a lot of creative things coming out of it.”

The NVC welcomed three volunteers in August, each for an 11-month commitment: Koren Bandoch of Tomahawk, Wis., works in administration at Golden House; Stephanie Birmingham of Sturgeon Bay, Wis., rejoins the group for a second consecutive year, assisting the chaplain at the Brown County Jail, Juvenile Detention Center and Huber work-release program; and Bryan Stoppenbach of Burlington, Wis., cares for patients at AseraCare Hospice.

All three volunteers for 2011-12 are St. Norbert College graduates.

For more information about the Norbertine Volunteer Community, visit www.norbertines.org/volunteer_community.html or find NVC on Facebook.

For more information on shrine hours and tours, visit www.norbertines.org.

A perpetual Novena to St. Joseph, started by Durin, continues to this day. On Wednesdays at 3:15 p.m., a Novena to St. Joseph is said in the National Shrine of St. Joseph at the Abbey. The public is welcome to attend.

Individuals and smaller groups are welcome Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Parties of 10 or more are welcome Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Wednesdays from 12:30 to 3 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays by appointment. These large groups should schedule at least 10 business days in advance so that tours can be coordinated with other programs taking place at the Abbey.

The tour lasts about one hour.

On the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception in 2010, Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay declared official Church approval of Marian apparitions that occurred in Champion, Wis., some 20 miles from St. Norbert Abbey. The approval of what is now the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help brought with it an incredible increase in the number of pilgrims to the area from around the world.

Consequently, the National Shrine of St. Joseph, located at the Abbey, has also seen a dramatic rise in its number of guests. There were more than 900 visitors to the Abbey’s shrine from April through August, with hundreds more expected before year’s end. These prayerful people share interesting experiences and heartfelt stories, and are grateful for the opportunity to experience the Abbey.

The shrine, founded in 1892 and turned over to the Norbertines in 1898, was originally located in St. Joseph Church in West De Pere. Its pastor, Fr. Joseph Durin, had a deep devotion to St. Joseph. Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., shared Durin’s devotion, once saying, “Yes, I pray to God directly, to the Lord, and to St. Norbert as my intercessor, but St. Joseph is my choice in times of great need.”
When our brothers from St. Norbert Abbey in Wisconsin missioned us to the Southwest in 1985, it was to found a small, independent abbey. In 2010, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of our presence in New Mexico and took our first formal steps toward independence. We have come of age.

We made our case for independence to the annual Community Chapter of St. Norbert Abbey in June 2011. There, individual members had the opportunity to raise questions and make comments. We found the conversation very positive and affirming and took the concerns of our brothers to heart.

The next day, “having heard the Chapter,” Abbot Gary Neville, O.Praem., and his council approved our request. In the language of our Constitutions, titled “The Day of Pentecost,” we were “elevated to a new canonry.”

In November Abbot General Thomas Handgrätinger, O.Praem., and his Definitory, the four Norbertine abbots who advise him, met and added their consent to the decision of the Abbot and council. This approval is a sign of our union with the other communities of our Order. In 2012, we will seek the approval of the General Chapter of the Order to become an abbey.

Our Priory of Santa Maria de la Vid presently has 14 members, four of whom are in formation. The ministries in which we participate are numerous; we serve hospitals, schools, convents, prisons and social justice efforts.

We are well aware that without the personal and financial support of our brothers of St. Norbert Abbey and the presence of three of our Norbertine brothers from the Community of Mananthavady in India, we would not be at our present stage of development. We are grateful to them and to the many friends of the New Mexico Norbertines as we progress toward independence.

Fr. Sebastian Schalk, O.Praem., is active with hospital ministry, and serves the Hispanic community at St. Peter Cathedral.

Fr. Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem., remains active at St. Anne Catholic Church in Carthage, Miss., where he has performed numerous baptisms as well as Hispanic weddings.

Fr. Tobin also has done mission preaching at St. Thaddeus Church in Chicago, where he enjoyed a reunion with an old friend who pastors the church.

Fr. Onwuham Akpa, O.Praem., serves Canton, Miss., and Gluckstadt, Miss. The two parishes there also include Hispanic communities.

In Mississippi’s far-flung Diocese of Jackson, the Norbertines at the Priory of St. Moses the Black continue to reach out in various ministries:

- The school year finds Fr. Richard Chiles, O.Praem., active at Jackson State University. This year the institution’s freshman enrollment is about 1,000. Fr. Chiles says he is energized by another productive year.

- Abbot Emeritus Tom DeWane, O.Praem., recently celebrated a weekend with St. James Parish in Tupelo, Miss., some 200 miles northeast of the Priory in Jackson. The parish has a vibrant Hispanic ministry, and the people were truly hospitable, Fr. DeWane says.

- A new and rewarding prison ministry keeps Fr. DeWane busy in both Yazoo City, Miss., and Natchez, Miss. Fr. Norbert N’Zilamba Malonga Vindu, O.Praem., also ministers at the Natchez facility, a private prison that houses many deportees to Mexico and Central America.
FR. ANDY CRIBBEN, O.PRAEM., has been named pastor of St. Willebrord Parish, Green Bay, home to the largest number of Catholic, Spanish-speaking immigrants north of Milwaukee.

FR. MARK FALCONE, O.PRAEM., received a certificate of recognition from the Academy of American Poets for his steadfast membership commitment in support of American poets and in fostering a greater appreciation of contemporary poetry. Also, two of Fr. Falcone’s original organ compositions were performed in concert at St. Joseph Church, Appleton, Wis.

BR. STEVE HERRO, O.PRAEM., has accepted a position as manager of mission and ministry at Catholic Charities USA in Alexandria, Va.

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FR. DANE RADECKI, O.PRAEM., has been named secretary to the General Chapter of the Norbertine Order. Every six years, delegates from all Norbertine abbeys, priories and houses around the world gather in dialogue, consider proposals and assess their common life. From July 22, 2012, to Aug. 4, 2012, St. Norbert Abbey is hosting the international meeting, themed “Day of Pentecost.” Fr. Radecki is coordinating the 14-day event, with most meetings to be held at St. Norbert College. Representatives of the Norbertine Sisters and Norbertine Lay Associates also have been invited. This is only the second time in the history of the Order that the conference will be held in the U.S. The 1976 General Chapter also was held at St. Norbert Abbey.

There are some 1,400 members of the Norbertine Order living in 24 countries around the world, including South Africa, India, Australia, France, the Czech Republic, Great Britain and Brazil.

FR. AL MCBRIDE, O.PRAEM., received the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership award, presented annually to a person or institution in recognition of outstanding or exemplary contribution to the ministry of catechesis. The award states, “Fr. McBride has zealously promoted catechesis for decades through his teaching, writing and speaking. He has been a sterling example of dedication and fruitfulness in this great work of catechesis.” Fr. McBride has written more than 40 books and 200 articles on topics ranging from Church history, the lives of the saints, and the interpretation of the Gospels.

“We have always valued Fr. McBride’s contributions to religious education and were delighted he received this much-deserved award,” says Fr. James Herring, O.Praem. “Through his faith and writing, he has touched the souls of thousands of people throughout this county and beyond. His work and recognition bring honor to all of us.”

Vestition
MICHAEL BRENNAN AND BENJAMIN NEWMANN were vested in the Norbertine habit on Aug. 27 at St. Norbert Abbey during Solemn Vespers. Brennan and Newmann will participate in the first-year Norbertine novitiate at the Holy Spirit House of Studies, the Norbertine house of formation in Chicago.

FR. GERALD BERNARD KEMPEN, O.PRAEM., passed into God’s eternal kingdom on Sept. 17, 2011, at age 85. Fr. Kempen was born on July 23, 1926, in De Pere, Wis. He graduated from St. Norbert High School and St. Norbert College and was awarded two master’s degrees from Villanova University. He was vested as a novice on August 28, 1944, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 19, 1951. During a self-described “full and wonderful life” as a Norbertine, Fr. Kempen taught at St. Norbert High School, De Pere; Southeast Catholic High School, Philadelphia; and Abbot Pennings High School, De Pere, where he served as vice principal for six years. He also served as pastor at St. Louis Parish, Dyckesville, Wis.; St. Boniface Parish, De Pere; St. Margaret Parish, Cut Bank, Mont.; Holy Cross Parish, Green Bay, Wis.; and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Denmark, Wis. In addition, Fr. Kempen served as chaplain for the Knights of Columbus and Vicar-Vicariate VII of the Diocese of Green Bay.

In Memoriam


Profession of Simple Vows
On the Feast of St. Augustine, Aug. 28, FRATER MATTHEW DOUGHERTY, O.PRAEM., professed Simple Vows at St. Norbert Abbey. FRATERS JAIME AVILA-BORUNDA, O.PRAEM., GRAHAM GOLDEN, O.PRAEM., AND STEPHEN GAERTNER, O.PRAEM., professed Simple Vows at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church in Albuquerque, N.M.

To view a photo gallery of both events visit http://community.webshots.com/user/stnorbertabbey
2011-12 Winter/Spring Calendar for St. Norbert Abbey

DECEMBER
3 – Advent Series: Give God a Chance (Msgr. Jim Feely), 9:15 - 11:00 a.m.
10 – Advent Series: Mary as Priest (Fr. Tim Shillcox), 9:15 - 11:00 a.m.
18 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.

JANUARY
11 – God’s Communities and Their Artists (Fr. Andrew Ciferni), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
12, 19, 26 – Lord Teach Us How to Pray Series (Bishop Robert Morneau, Sr. Ann Rehrauer, OSJ), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
8 – Schola d’ Arezzo Concert, Abbey Church, 2:30 p.m.
15 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
21 – Morning of Spiritual Renewal for Women, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
25 – Wednesdays for Women (Sr. Shawn Madigan, Sr. Judy Miller), 10 - 11:50 a.m.
31 – Is Catholic Social Teaching Dead? (Fr. Brendan McKeough), 6:30 - 8 p.m.

FEBRUARY
1, 8, 15 – Wednesdays for Women (Sr. Shawn Madigan, Sr. Judy Miller), 10 - 11:50 a.m.
1, 8, 15, 29 – Four Great Sermons of Christ Series (Fr. Al McBride), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
9 – Abbey Lecture Series: Re-imagining Women in the Church (Dr. Bridget Burke Ravizza), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
11 – Acedia Retreat (Fr. John Tourangeau, Judy Turba), 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
19 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
25 – Lenten Series (Fr. Tim Shillcox), 9:15 - 11 a.m.
28 – Heaven: Is It For Real? (Fr. John Tourangeau), 6:30 - 8 p.m.

MARCH
6 – “The Shack”: A Novel View of Life (Fr. Mark Falcone), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
8 – Abbey Lecture Series: The Cost of Silence (Dr. Paul Wadell, Dr. Howard Ebert, Dr. Bridget Burke Ravizza), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
10 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Nathan Laube), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
11-19 – Solemn Novena to St. Joseph, Abbey Church
18 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.

APRIL
5-8 – Triduum Retreat (Dr. Howard Ebert), 4 p.m. on Holy Thursday through 10 a.m. Easter Sunday Liturgy
11, 18, 25 – Spotlight Tours: Abbey Architecture and Symbolism (Fr. Stephen Rossey), 6:30 - 8 p.m.
14 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Jonathan Dimmock), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
15 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
29 – Schola d’ Arezzo Concert, Abbey Church, 2:30 p.m.

The Norbertine Center for Spirituality winter/spring/summer brochure is available now, with a complete list of programs/retreats. Please visit www.norbertines.org/programs.html to view listings online or call (920) 337-4315 to receive a copy.