SOCIAL JUSTICE
Our Call as Catholics

The Augustine Stewardship Fund
PAGE 9

Champions of Social Change
PAGE 4

www.norbertines.org
From the Abbot

This issue of Abbey magazine provokes and encourages reflection upon social justice. Those words are used by many people and organizations who define them in just as many ways. Dissertations have been written on the subject, elections won or lost on the issue, laws passed, and church and civil documents issued. We argue and disagree, and those less fortunate still suffer.

Jesus told us that we would always have the poor with us. "Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'" (Matthew 25:37–40)

St. Norbert, in his time, left very specific instructions: "A tenth of all that is owned or given to the brethren is to be given for the use of the poor." He even asked that Norbertines give their own garments charitably, providing a detailed list of what to offer, "whether cloak or fur or tunic or shoes," on which feast day.

St. Augustine in his Rule, to which we Norbertines adhere, states that we hold all things in common; food and clothing was to be distributed to each according to the individual need. "Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others."

The Norbertine Constitutions read: "Wherever we ourselves live, and according to our capabilities, we ought to promote the goods of life and family, social conditions, culture, the education of youth, economic affairs, liberty, justice and peace, especially for those people who because of racial or social conditions are virtually ostracized." (No. 74)

We, as vowed religious, are stewards of the gifts of God. They are ours to use and share while we walk this earth, and thus we need to live in a spirit of generous hospitality.

Our challenge to work for social justice in our world began with our baptism as we were joined to the Body of Christ. This is work that no single person or religious community can accomplish alone. This is truly collaborative ministry that brings its own priceless spiritual rewards.
Abbey Magazine is a biannual publication for the St. Norbert Abbey community that illumines life at the Abbey and welcomes readers into that life, mind and spirit.

Abbot
Fr. Gary Neville, O.Praem.

Publisher
Fr. James Herring, O.Praem.

Executive Editor
Judy Turba

Managing Editor
Lisa Strandberg

Art Director
Scott Mueller

Contributing Writers
Fr. Salvatore Cuccia, O.Praem.
Fr. Rod Fenzl, O.Praem.
Frater Graham Golden, O.Praem.
Marge Mattice
Fr. Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem.

Editorial Consultants
Fr. John Bostwick, O.Praem.
Fr. Salvatore Cuccia, O.Praem.
Fr. Tim Shilcox, O.Praem.
Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem.

Contributing Photographer
Jerry Turba, Turba Photography

Please submit letters, articles and inquiries to:
Judy Turba
St. Norbert Abbey
1016 N. Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
e-mail: stnorbertabbeypr@gmail.com
phone: (920) 337-4312
web: norbertines.org
Printed by Seaway Printing, Green Bay

DEPARTMENTS

4 all good works
Champions of Social Change

12 mississippi musings/
notes from new mexico

13 communio
Community News & Recognition

FEATURES

6 Catholic teaching
on social justice
Faith in Action

9 the Augustine
stewardship fund
Meeting a World of Need

NEWS & VIEWS

2 reflections/reflecciones
The Seedbed of Our Theology/
El Semillero de Nuestra Teología

10 the norbertine center
for spirituality
A Place for Everyone

11 book review
Jim Wallis’ “Rediscovering Values”
Seedbed of Our Theology

“We give ourselves in service to people in need, with special emphasis on service and advocacy for the poor.”
— St. Norbert Abbey

When my Norbertine brothers did mission work in Peru, we felt called to serve the poor even though we knew that we would never be able to live poverty at the level that they did. Nevertheless, one of our confreres, Fr. Lambert Baeten, O.Praem., insisted that we learn to relate with these folks, work with them, enjoy their presence and company — and at their level. He said their way of living their faith can give us valuable insight into our own faith journey.

Likewise, Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., a Dominican priest and world-renowned theologian, expressed his admiration for the members of his order serving in the violent barrios of Caracas and in the war-torn countries of Burundi and Rwanda, and called upon the rest of the community to support them. He wrote that we need to be in contact with these religious, to listen to them and learn from them, for “their experiences are the seedbed of our theology.”

We need contact with these special members of the community for any number of reasons. First of all, we are committed to bring hope to the poor by our obligations to the Gospel, which exhorts us to welcome all to the table, with a generous heart and without limit ... to give preference to the poor ... “invite beggars and the crippled, the lame and the blind” (Luke 14:12–14) ... victims of injustice who cannot repay you with anything in return.

Also, we Norbertines are bound by obligation to our word in our own mission statements:

“We give ourselves in service to people in need, with special emphasis on service and advocacy for the poor.”
— St. Norbert Abbey

“The Risen Christ sends us as apostles ... to loving service of the Church of Santa Fe, and especially to its poor and needy.”
— Santa Maria de la Vid Priory

Finally, we need contact with the poor, the handicapped, the incarcerated, victims of injustice — with all of these “second-class” members of our communities — to help us shape our own thinking and spirituality. As Fr. Radcliffe suggests, our personal and communal contacts with suffering people are the seedbed of our theology.

Without such contact, our spirituality will remain impoverished and our community life will also be weakened. As Fr. Radcliffe says, “A theology that remains untouched by the sufferings of our poor violent world has not begun its task.”
Cuando iniciamos nuestras obras en el Perú, nosotros Los Padres Norbertinos, sentimos una obligación de servir a la gente pobre y marginada, desde el mismo comienzo tuvimos que reconocer que era imposible para nosotros vivir la pobreza al mismo nivel que la gente a quienes nos dedicamos a servir.

Sin embargo, nuestro hermano el Padre Lamberto Baeten, firmemente insistía en que debemos aprender a relacionarnos con la gente, confiadamente trabajar con ellos, gozar su presencia y su amistad ... y al nivel de ellos. Decía Lamberto, que su forma de vivir su fe podría darnos valiosas perspectivas para nuestro camino de fe.

Una vez, el Padre Timoteo Radcliffe, O.P., como Superior General de los Predicadores de Santo Domingo, expresó su admiración por los miembros de su orden trabajando en los barrios violentos de Caracas y otras zonas peligrosas y conflictivas como Burundi y Rwanda ... e hizo una llamada al resto de las casas Dominicas para apoyar a estos misioneros tan valientes. Dijo el Padre Radcliffe que “nos hace falta tener contacto con esos misioneros ... escucharlos y aprender de ellos pues sus experiencias son como el semillero de nuestra teología.”

Una función de nuestras fundaciones, de veras, del mismo Orden Norbertino, es mantener contacto con el sufrimiento humano: gente pobre, los enfermos, los encarcelados, los incapacitados — gente que por razones múltiples se encuentran obligados a vivir en “las sombras” de la sociedad.

Nos hace falta tener contacto con estos miembros tan especiales de nuestra sociedad por varios motivos. Ante todo, quedamos comprometidos de traer esperanza a la gente pobre por el mismo Evangelio ... el cual continuamente nos exhorta dar la bienvenida a todos a la mesa con un corazón generoso y sin poner límites ... y dar preferencia al pobre ... “invita a los pobres, a los inválidos, a los cojos, a los ciegos” (Lucas 14,13) ... víctimas de la injusticia que no tienen con que pagarte.

Además, nosotros los Norbertinos, nos obligamos por el compromiso que hemos hecho por nuestra declaración de misión. Bien claro expresamos:

“Nootros nos entregamos al servicio de gente necesitado subrayando especialmente, servir y defender al pobre.”

— Abadía de San Norberto

“El Señor Resucitado nos manda como apóstoles ... al servicio afectuoso a la Iglesia de Santa Fe y sobre todo a su gente pobre y necesitado.”

— Priorato de Santa María de la Vid

Finalmente, nos hace falta contactar con gente pobre, con los inválidos, con los encarcelados, con los víctimas de injusticia — con todos estos miembros de “segunda categoría” — para ayudarnos pensar y así dar forma a nuestra espiritualidad. Como sugiere el Padre Radcliffe, nuestros contactos personales y comunales con el sufrimiento humano constituyen el semillero de nuestra teología.

Sin tal contacto con el sufrimiento humano, nuestra espiritualidad permanecerá empobrecida y nuestra vida comunitaria también quedara debilitada. Como dice el Padre Radcliffe, “una teología no tocada por el sufrimiento de nuestro pobre violento mundo, todavía no ha comenzado su tarea.”
If you know Br. Steve, you are aware he is everywhere at once with an unmatched dedication to working tirelessly on behalf of the poor and needy in northeast Wisconsin and beyond. “If there is a project or work taking place that promotes social justice and tries to make it real in this area, Steve seems to have been a part of it some way,” notes Dan Robinson of the Center for Community Service and Learning at St. Norbert College.

Baptized in the Melkite Rite of the Catholic Church, he has had a strong connection to the Church’s teachings on justice from early on in his faith journey. The educational emphasis in Norbertine formation helped bolster his intellectual ability to bring his faith and the contemporary world into dialogue.

“I have always been a politics and history junkie, so being able to connect social justice to Church ministry is natural,” he says.

During his early years of formation, Br. Steve recalls a series of classes given by Fr. Jim Putman of the diocesan social concerns office that he says “really helped me connect Catholic social teaching to justice.” This combined with an eye-opening trip to impoverished Cuernavaca, Mexico, solidified his dedication to ministering on behalf of the poor, oppressed and marginalized.

For Br. Steve, this dedication goes beyond the intellectual. It is a reflection of his identity and vocation as a Norbertine.

“As a vowed religious, I have professed poverty,” he says. “Poverty is more than receiving a smaller monthly living allowance than a professional salary. As one who has vowed poverty, I believe that I am called to advocate for the poor and vulnerable. In the realm of social justice, this means working within our culture to help change systems that are impoverishing people.”

Immigration reform, affordable housing and energy and climate issues have garnered the majority of his time as he leads the justice and peace ministry for St. Norbert Abbey and the social concerns office for the Diocese of Green Bay.

“I think the Norbertine vocation of ‘locality,’ committing to a particular place and its needs, connects well with Steve’s work. While the issues he deals with can be across the nation or the world, he does a good job of helping people to see the local connections,” observes Robinson.

“Whether it is advocacy for the homeless, on behalf of those exploited by payday lenders, or in calling attention to the need for better stewardship of the environment, Steve has led and inspired by example,” says John Huebscher, executive director of the Wisconsin Catholic Conference.

Adds Robinson, “Br. Steve energizes people to get involved and do what they can do to promote social justice.”

By Frater Graham Golden, O.Praem.

Christians everywhere pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Two Norbertines have dedicated their lives to enfleshing these familiar words: Br. Steve Herro, O.Praem., and Fr. Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem. Their efforts toward social justice aim to remove the blinders imposed by culture and society that all might see each other in the light of Christ.
It is impossible to meet Fr. Jeremy of St. Moses the Black Priory in Mississippi and not feel his warm heart through his strong embrace. Constance Slaughter-Harvey, the first African-American woman graduate of the University of Mississippi Law School, says, “I enjoy being in his presence and I know that we, Catholics and non-Catholics, black, brown, red and white, are better because Fr. Jeremy lives among us.”

Fr. Jeremy was raised in Rogers Park on the north side of Chicago amidst both Jews and Catholics. He attended Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago during the years following Vatican II and says that the faculty of CTU gave him “a love for the Bible that has grounded me all these years.”

While at CTU, Fr. Jeremy was thrust from the white north of the city to the black south. “Black Chicago and white Chicago could have been on different planets. It was a true learning experience and growth experience for me that shaped the course of my ministry,” he says.

Fr. Jeremy remebers a pivotal experience when he witnessed “a sweatshop … totally hidden from the pleasant neighborhood around it. … It was a Chicago summer. There was no air conditioning and poor ventilation. The workers had to get permission to use the restroom.”

Thus began a life dedicated to “trying to give a message of hope to people whose experiences give them a reservoir of strength to go the long struggle.”

Fr. Jeremy helped form the Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance. Like Br. Steve, he also works tirelessly to educate the public in issues of justice. He writes frequently for the Mississippi Catholic, the Clarion Ledger (Jackson, Miss.), the Jackson Advocate, the American Forum, the Mississippi Forum and ¡Ahora Si! (San Antonio, Texas).

His ministry, in its own uniqueness, has impacted and energized the African-American, Hispanic and Choctaw communities. He forced, in his own gentle and nudging manner, all to deal with real issues of discrimination and bigotry,” observes Slaughter-Harvey.

“My spirituality is Bible focused, especially on the prophets,” Fr. Jeremy says. “The struggle for justice is to live the death-resurrection of Jesus daily. Think how many centuries it took to destroy slavery and Jim Crow, and we’re still at it? My people teach me patience. It is a beautiful life!”

Fr. Jeremy finds strength to live that life in the example of St. Norbert.

“Our founder was a reconciler. He brought working parties to the peace table. What I do is work for reconciliation between the races and ethnic groups,” he says. “My call to religious life was parallel to my call to social justice.”
Catholic Social Teaching
In the 1970s and '80s, the rural poor flooded San Juan de Lurigancho, a farming valley just east of downtown Lima, Peru, in search of work. Fr. Nick Nirschl, O.Praem., was one of many Norbertines to serve a large parish in the region as pastor and social worker.

When he moved there in 1977, Fr. Nirschl says, “It was a big change in my life. You might say it was a second conversion to what things were important in life and what things were not important.”

Steeped in liberation theology — an interpretation of Christian faith through the poor’s suffering — Fr. Nirschl and his confreres collaborated with other religious in the region to distribute food, set up pharmacies, help workers find employment and advocate for honest wages.

Each week they also gathered parishioners at their six chapels “to educate them in Christian ideals and encourage them to help one another and work with other parishes in Lima,” Fr. Nirschl says. “It wasn’t so much to plan protests but to grow spiritually and find out what the Gospels tell us.

“It was all done in a good spirit, too, not a protesting spirit but a spirit of help. There is room for [protest] when it’s necessary, but much of the work can be done just by getting people organized and helping them take care of themselves.”

In 1988, Fr. Pius Yobuta visited Wisconsin for five weeks to preach about his work in the Diocese of Arua in Uganda, Africa. His stops included St. Joseph Catholic Church in De Pere, where Fr. Gilbert Jacobs, O.Praem., was a pastor. The two struck up a friendship.

Their correspondence eventually brought Fr. Yobuta, now rector of Ss. Peter and Paul Minor Seminary in Pocka, Uganda, back to Wisconsin many times between 1994 and the present, with Fr. Jacobs as his sponsor and host. Through mission appeal preaching in the Green Bay and Milwaukee dioceses, Fr. Yobuta has made connections invaluable to his impoverished school of some 170 seminarians aged 16 to 22.

“I knew of his circumstances and that they didn’t have anything there,” Fr. Jacobs says. “I just feel there’s a great need there, and I have the resources to help him out.”

He does so by financing Fr. Yobuta’s travel, arranging his preaching schedule and acting as custodian of donated funds. “As a result of his being here, a lot of people have been aware of his needs on a personal basis,” Fr. Jacobs says.

That awareness motivates them to help, with funds that his modest seminary has used over the years to renovate its dormitories, dining room and kitchen; improve its library; add technology; and update its curriculum. Though Fr. Jacobs has never seen these improvements for himself, he is grateful to have had the opportunity to help make them possible.

Abbey Magazine thanks the Office of Social Justice, St. Paul and Minneapolis, for permission to abbreviate and reproduce its summaries of Catholic social teaching principles. To read more of the organization’s material, visit: www.osjspm.org.

continued on page 8
In 1989, Fr. Brendan McKeough, O.Praem., traveled to Cuernavaca, Mexico, with 40 religious for an ecumenical retreat hosted by Bread for the World. His stay then was only a week, but when he retired as business manager at Abbot Pennings High School in De Pere three years later, he returned to Cuernavaca for 13 years to lead retreats like the one in which he had participated.

Like Fr. Nirschl, Fr. McKeough had long studied liberation theology, or “theology from the bottom up,” as he calls it. “I had read about it, but now I could see it,” he adds.

As a retreat facilitator, he led visits to the shantytown in the heart of Cuernavaca. The community of 7,000 people living in shacks with no running water was hidden from view by careful landscaping. The cooks, housekeepers and others who worked at the retreat center were among its residents.

“There wasn’t a day I wasn’t in touch with the poor,” Fr. McKeough says.

The thing that struck Fr. McKeough most about the Mexicans among whom he felt privileged to work was their generosity. “Despite it all, they share with you,” he says.

His time in Mexico was life-changing for him, and, he no doubt hopes, for the retreatants he welcomed. “It just brought alive the whole idea of being a Christian,” he says. “It’s being something and doing something.”

**Belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching. This principle is grounded in the idea that the person is made in the image of God.**

Some 10 years ago, a nun asked Fr. Bill Ribbens, O.Praem., to spend time with a terminally ill 8-year-old girl and her Spanish-speaking mother. For a month until the girl died, he visited the hospital daily. The relationship opened the path to social justice ministry.

“Whatever I could do to help these people feel a little less isolated — that’s where it started,” says Fr. Ribbens, who lives at the Abbey. Since then, he has been a voice and a presence for many isolated communities in northeast Wisconsin.

Fr. Ribbens advocates for children through his work with Family and Childcare Resources of Northeast Wisconsin, prompting state legislation and funding to evaluate child care businesses and improve the quality of care. He says Mass in Spanish for regional parishes and a seasonal migrant community. Recently, he was appointed by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to the new Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission, aimed at providing legal help in civil cases to people who couldn’t otherwise afford it.

“If someone asks me to give a talk on social justice, it’s pretty short,” Fr. Ribbens says. “It starts in the Old Testament, to take care of ‘the widow, the orphan and the stranger in your midst.’ That’s what Moses was saying, and Jesus said it many times.

“When you look at Jesus’ life, that’s what it’s all about — the poor, the forgotten — to tell them they’re important and valuable and help them have some hope,” Fr. Ribbens says. “How radically do we want to live that?”

**How we organize our society — in economics and politics, in law and policy — directly affects human dignity. The individual obligation to “love our neighbor” also requires a broader social commitment. Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to the good of the whole society.**

**The Church’s Call**

As believers, we are compelled to lives of mercy that reflect our adherence to the Gospel. But what constitutes mercy? The Catholic Church, among others, embraces the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy as expectations for its faithful.

**Corporal Works of Mercy**

- To feed the hungry;
- To give drink to the thirsty;
- To clothe the naked;
- To harbor the harborless;
- To visit the sick;
- To ransom the captive;
- To bury the dead.

**Spiritual Works of Mercy**

- To instruct the ignorant;
- To counsel the doubtful;
- To admonish sinners;
- To bear wrongs patiently;
- To forgive offenses willingly;
- To comfort the afflicted;
- To pray for the living and the dead.
Meeting a World of Need

Through its **Augustine Stewardship Fund**, the Community of St. Norbert Abbey supports social justice ministries around the globe.

When St. Norbert Abbey received a major gift some 25 years ago, the Community was moved by its mission to share that gift with the poor. The Order’s Augustine Stewardship Fund Trust (ASF), established in 1986, gives grants twice annually to poverty-related ministries in areas served by Norbertines or listed in *The Official Catholic Directory* or *Annuario Pontificio*.

Through the ASF, Norbertines have supported programs in 47 countries. More than 100 grant recipients benefit from ASF grants each year. A few ministries for which those gifts have made a difference:

**THE ST. WILLEBRORD EMERGENCY FUND** supports disadvantaged members of the Hispanic population at its eponymous parish in Green Bay, Wis., covering legal fees, rent, utilities, food, clothing and medical expenses on an as-needed basis.

**THE BANDRA EAST COMMUNITY CENTRE** serves the disadvantaged in Mumbai, India, with housing and vocational training for street children; child care for impoverished domestic workers and single moms; free medical services; and a microfinance initiative.

**THE SANTA BARBARA PIG FARM PROJECT** in Buenos Aires, Rivas, Nicaragua, trains families in animal husbandry and underwrites the cost of establishing self-sustaining pig farms that provide a source of food and income for the community.

**ZAMBIA OPEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS** ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children whose families cannot afford the country’s public school fees have access to a free, basic education in an environment conducive to learning.

Chicago-based **HARMONY, HOPE & HEALING** integrates choral music into the lives of shelter residents, offering dignity while helping women, men and children heal spiritually from domestic and substance abuse, homelessness and poverty.
THE NORBERTINE CENTER FOR SPIRITUALITY takes to heart the mission of St. Norbert Abbey, especially its call to serving the poor and marginalized. People of all faiths are invited to the Center, including those who are able to pay the requested fees and those who cannot. Almost every night of the week support groups for people with various needs, concerns and addictions utilize meeting rooms at the Center. The tennis court is used by physically challenged athletes training for national competition.

Outreach to our nation's veterans and their families has been offered for a number of years, including spiritual direction, special Masses and programs focused on healing. Retreats for the unemployed and underemployed have been developed. Presentations and book discussions that emphasize Catholic social teaching and the preferential option for the poor are consistently offered.

The Center continues to identify spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the local community and develop supportive programming to meet them. It remains a warm and inviting place for everyone, offering spiritual growth, healing and renewal.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION is a wonderful opportunity to grow in one's relationship with God. This one-to-one meeting with a trained guide provides a process for becoming aware of God's movements within oneself.

“It is a privilege to walk with people on their faith journey as they discover their own truths and grow in faith and trust,” shares Sr. Judy Miller, CSJ, one of the Center's spiritual directors. “It is sacred time that I have come to treasure.”

There are a number of spiritual directors available at the Center — both women and men, lay and religious. While there is a suggested fee per session, money is not meant to be an obstacle. To discuss spiritual direction or to make an appointment, call the Center at (920) 337-4315.

THE WINTER/SPRING/SUMMER BROCHURE IS AVAILABLE NOW.

Back by popular demand is the Morning of Spiritual Renewal for Women, to be held on Jan. 22. The highly regarded Lenten series also is offered, culminating in the annual Triduum Retreat April 21–24, facilitated by Fr. Andy Cribben, O.Praem., Fr. Conrad Kratz, O.Praem., Fr. James Neilson, O.Praem. and Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem.

For additional information or a complete list of programs and retreats, visit www.norbertines.org or call the Center at (920) 337-4315.
A VALUE PROPOSITION

Norbertine Lay Associate Marge Mattice reviews social justice advocate Jim Wallis’ book “Rediscovering Values On Wall Street, Main Street, and Your Street: A Moral Compass for the New Economy” (Howard Books, 2010)

In his book “Rediscovering Values,” Jim Wallis offers a fresh and much needed perspective on the current financial crisis. Wallis, a well-known theologian, preacher and author, proposes that we have been asking the wrong question with regard to this current economic crisis. Instead of asking “When will this crisis be over, and when will we return to normal?” the most important question government, Wall Street, churches, communities, families and individuals should be asking is “How will this crisis change us?”

Wallis unfolds for the reader the thinking that has led to this crisis, what the current reality is, how we can find our way out, and what the new reality might look like. He asserts that the current financial crisis is intertwined with a moral crisis, and that our response must be on a moral level. He draws a contrast between the values that got us where we are and the values that could get us out, offering hope to the reader.

Wallis does not call the reader to an unknown way of thinking; rather, he challenges readers to return to the values they already know, values that center around the “common good” and lie at the core of social justice teaching. According to Wallis, “Our cultural sins have found us out.” Wallis expertly brings together his pastoral concern and faith, Scripture and current social commentary to build his case.

The reader of this book is challenged not to a greater personal piety or holiness. Early on, Wallis suggests real change in the economic crisis will be possible when there is discussion and reflection among government and churches and Wall Street and families. To this end, Wallis concludes his book with a section called “Twenty Moral Exercises” that provides a springboard for such discussion in groups and families.

Wallis says, “Our current economic crisis presents us with one of those times that comes around only very occasionally. We don’t want to miss this opportunity.” And his book is one of those prophetic offerings that comes around only very occasionally. You don’t want to miss this read!
In Jackson, Miss., everything closes from noon to 1 p.m. for lunch break. But things don’t stand still. During this time the “advocates” meet: Members of the Human Services Coalition, including Norbertines, go over pending bills and advocate for just laws. While others relax, interfaith social justice is at work.

As products of the civil rights era, or what we in Mississippi call “the Movement,” the Rev. Rims Barber and Msgr. Elvin Sunds co-founded the Human Services Coalition and sister organization the Human Services Agenda in the ’70s. The groups, which drew Fr. Gene Gries, O.Praem., into social justice efforts when he became the first prior at St. Moses the Black Priory in 1990, remain very active today.

When the Rev. Barber and Msgr. Sunds began the Human Services Coalition, it was organized like the Movement meetings. It was open to representatives of public and private entities, concerned individuals and people of good will. Then as now, it focused on effecting change through the state legislature, which wields so much power in Mississippi.

The Human Services Agenda consists essentially of the Rev. Barber and his wife, Judy Barber. Judy had a long career as a social worker with the Mississippi Board of Health. They both became “policy wonks” and monitor the state legislature year after year.

The collaboration between Mississippi’s minority Catholics — with me, Fr. Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem., among them — and other denominations around social justice issues is one of the state’s many secrets. “This reflects the social justice teachings of the Church,” Msgr. Sunds says of the ecumenical partnership.

Adds the Rev. Barber, “We advocate for justice and fairness in our laws.”

notes from new mexico

By Frater Graham Golden, O.Praem.

From its founding, the Priory of Santa Maria de la Vid has sought to place the Church’s social teachings in the forefront of communal life. This is evidenced in the Community’s mission statement as we seek to “witness the reality and power of a Christian community . . . by loving service to the Church of Santa Fe, and especially to its poor and needy.”

Our efforts to live this mission are many. A few examples:

Fr. Gene Gries, O.Praem., is founder of the social justice committee at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Community. This committee has engaged issues at the state level in New Mexico, such as the death penalty (which was recently repealed) and access to affordable and nutritious food. It has also been a leader in archdiocesan fair-trade efforts, the fight for the just treatment of immigrants and environmental initiatives.

Frater Graham Golden, O.Praem., ministers in the Office of Social Justice and Respect Life of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe under the auspices of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. The office provides educational outreach to faith formation programs in parishes, offering presentations and resources on human dignity and Catholic Social Teaching.

This summer the Priory welcomed children and elderly from troubled and economically depressed backgrounds to learn the importance of the spiritual life in claiming one’s own dignity and respecting that of others.

To learn more about the social justice ministries of the Canons Regular of Prémontré in the Southwest, please visit www.norbertinecommunity.org.
FR. ROBERT CAMPBELL, O.PRAEM., has been appointed the director of vocations for Santa Maria de la Vid Priory in Albuquerque, N.M., in addition to his hospital and police chaplaincy ministries.

FR. JAY FOSTNER, O.PRAEM., St. Norbert College vice president for mission and heritage, participated in Harvard Graduate School of Education’s intensive two-week workshop for managers of colleges and universities.

BR. STEVE HERRO, O.PRAEM., social concerns director for the Diocese of Green Bay and an avid runner, placed 276th of 466 runners in his age division at the Bellin 10K Run in Green Bay, Wis.

FR. BINU JOSEPH, O.PRAEM., was appointed associate pastor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Community, Albuquerque, NM.

FR. AL MCBRIDE, O.PRAEM., concelebrated with Pope Benedict the beatification of Cardinal Newman in Birmingham, England, and attended the Pope’s address to the U.K. Parliament at Westminster Hall. On his return, Fr. McBride delivered the Cardinal Bernardin Lecture at the Franciscan Parish Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Manhattan for priests of the Archdiocese of New York. To read more about the experiences of Fr. McBride, visit: www.norbertines.org/homilies.html

FR. JAMES NEILSON, O.PRAEM., assistant professor of art at St. Norbert College, received first place for his sculpture “You Have to Tell Me About Your Future” at the Neville Public Museum’s 66th Art Annual exhibit in Green Bay, Wis.

FR. GEORGE PAVAMKOTT, O.PRAEM., was appointed pastor of St. Augustine Parish at Isleta Pueblo, N.M.

FR. DANE RADECKI, O.PRAEM., was recently honored with the title president emeritus of Notre Dame Academy, Green Bay. Fr. Radecki was the institution’s first president and returned in March 2005 to serve as Notre Dame’s CEO. He currently serves as pastor of St. Agnes Parish, Green Bay, Wis.

THE NORBERTINE VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY was highlighted in America magazine. The article “Will Work for Free” discusses faith-based volunteer programs around the country. To read the article, visit: www.americamagazine.org and search for “Norbertine.” St. Norbert Abbey is included in the 2011 Vision magazine for its eco-friendly practices. Both BR. STEVE HERRO, O.PRAEM., and FR. ANDY CRIBBEN, O.PRAEM., were featured. To read the article, visit: www.digitalvocationguide.org/vision and search for “go green.”

JAMES OWENS, JACOB SIRCY AND BRADLEY VANDEN BRANDEN were vested in the Norbertine habit on Aug. 27. They have begun their formation at the Norbertine Holy Spirit House of Studies in Chicago, where they will continue their education at Catholic Theological Union. To view a photo gallery of the new fraters’ vestition, visit: http://community.webshots.com/user/stnorbertabbey

SANTA MARIA DE LA VID PRIORY in New Mexico celebrates its 25th anniversary this fall. In the mid ’80s, moved by a desire to serve the increasing number of Hispanic Catholics in the U.S., the Community sought an appropriate setting for ministry in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Archbishop Robert Sanchez extended his welcome, offering the Norbertines pastoral responsibility for Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish on Albuquerque’s West Mesa, a mostly Hispanic, working class parish. On Sept. 8, 1985 — the Feast of the Nativity of Mary — the Norbertines of St. Norbert Abbey dedicated Santa Maria de la Vid (Our Lady of the Vine) Priory in a former convent at the parish. The name was adopted in memory of the first Norbertine abbey in Spain.

In 1995, the Priory moved to a former retreat house in Albuquerque’s South Valley, where it overlooks the City of Albuquerque and the Sandia and Manzano Mountains. There, the resident Norbertines have created a spiritual center, not only for themselves but also for their many guests. In its 25 years, the Priory has become an oasis in the desert for those seeking peace and refuge from their daily struggles.
2010-11 Winter/Spring Calendar for St. Norbert Abbey

DECEMBER
1 – The Rose and the Weeds: World AIDS Day (Dianne Wagner), 10–11:30 a.m. or 6:30–8 p.m.
4 – Advent Reflection: Saying “Yes” to God (Fr. Conrad Kratz), 9:15–11 a.m.
4 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Christopher Houlihan), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
19 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.

JANUARY
2 – Schola d’Arezzo Concert, Abbey Church, 2:30 p.m.
6, 13, 20, 27 – Lord, Teach Us How to Pray Series, 6:30–8 p.m.
11 – From Hero to Zero: A Call to Redemption (Fr. Jim Baraniak), 6:30–8 p.m.
16 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
22 – Morning of Spiritual Renewal for Women, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

FEBRUARY
2, 9, 16, 23 – Wednesdays for Women (Sr. Shawn Madigan, Sr. Judy Miller), 10–11:50 a.m.
3 – Introduction to Spiritual Direction (Msgr. Jim Feely, Sr. Judy Miller), 6:30–8 p.m.
9 – Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People? (Fr. David McElroy), 6:30–8 p.m.
15 – “Staying Faithful” (Fr. Al McBride, author), 10–11:30 a.m.
20 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
26 – Prayer Retreat (Sr. Judy Miller), 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

MARCH
3 – Dark Night of the Soul (Fr. John Tourangeau), 6:30–8 p.m.
8 – “Truth for the Mind”; “Love for the Heart”; “The Longing for God” (Fr. Al McBride, author), 10–11:30 a.m.
14 – Celtic Spirituality (Fr. David McElroy), 6:30–8 p.m.
11-19 – Solemn Novena to St. Joseph, Abbey Church
12, 19, 26 – Lenten Series: Sacred Words (Sr. Judy Miller, Fr. Tim Shillico, Fr. John Bostwick), 9:15–11 a.m.
20 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
24, 31, April 7 – Soup and the Soul: The Prodigal Son (Msgr. Jim Feely), 11:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

APRIL
2, 9 – Lenten Series: Sacred Words (Dr. Howard Ebert, Dr. Paul Wadell), 9:15–11 a.m.
9 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Peter Conte), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
17 – Lecture and Organ Recital: “Le Chemin de la Croix”/Way of the Cross (Fr. Michael Frisch), 2 p.m.
17 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
21-24 – Triduum Retreat: Table, Tree and Tomb (Fr. Andy Cribben, Fr. Conrad Kratz, Fr. James Neilson, Fr. John Tourangeau), 4 p.m. Holy Thursday through 10 a.m. Easter Sunday Liturgy

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.