



FROM THE RULE:

“The ninth step of humility comes when a monk restrains his tongue from speaking, and out of love for silence does not speak until he is asked a question.”

Chapter 7, Verse 56

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To live is to change—thoughts on conversion and the life of the disciple

By Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB

(On October 4, 2008, Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, was inaugurated as the 14th president-rector of the School of Theology.)

“In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”

The often-quoted axiom of John Henry Newman is found in the ninth chapter of his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. The insight is not about the spiritual life per se, but a highly technical observation related to the mutability of doctrinal statements in the Church.

For Newman, however, the theological and the spiritual, the intellectual and the everyday, were not so easily distinguished. For Newman, theology must always point back to the daily reality of the average Christian. I hope that holds true for these reflections.

Conversion is undoubtedly the theme that runs through all of Newman’s writings. Daily, even momentary, conversion is a necessity. I would like to consider Newman’s thought on conversion as the central theme of Christian living in four main points.

1. Conversion is a necessity because of the nature of the God we worship.

Christians worship and pattern their lives on the example of Jesus Christ. Christianity is not a religion of the book or of ideas and ideals. Rather, it is a religion based upon a relationship with a person. Moreover, this person is not merely an interesting or inspiring historical figure. He is living, active, working and intimately involved with the world, the Church and our lives.

Yet, God, even in the person of Jesus Christ, remains mysterious to us. We can know God intimately, in Newman’s estimation, so intimately that he physically inhabits our body in the Eucharist, but we can never know God completely. The totality of God is beyond our understanding.

God is mystery, not in the sense of that which cannot be known, but in the sense of that which is infinitely knowable. Relationship requires work, and Newman insists that this getting to know God requires us always to be expanding our horizons, changing our perspectives, looking ahead, beyond and around.

We must always be getting to know God through continuous prayer and worship,

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through reading, through study, through intimate conversations, through investment in the life of the Body of Christ, the Church, through service to the sick and the needy, through love for the lonely, through compassion, which is united to his endless compassion.

Not to change in this sense is to worship a God we recognize only as small and meaningless, malleable and ultimately useless. When we recognize among us the living Christ, we fall in love, and falling in love implies a willingness to bend, to accommodate, to get to know.

2. Conversion is never ending.

For Newman, conversion, as he understands it, is not a momentary event, that is, a once-in-a-lifetime, Paul-on-the-road-to-Damascus revelation. It is rather a way of life, and it affects us throughout our lives. Any attempt on the believer's part to delineate a solitary event of conversion was contrived.

Indeed, it contradicted the known actions of the agent of conversion, the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is thought of as a catalyst for conversion, forever stimulating reevaluation, rejuvenation and growth. The Spirit pleads with us continually and approaches us, first from one angle and then from another.

Newman admits that this constant movement, adjustment, conversion is hard work. It is gradual. It can be frustrating. It is never complete. It has many reverses and is never perfected. Every new day is a new horizon, every confession of sin a new beginning, every new neighbor a new community. Every apology is a fresh start, every Mass a new liturgy, every psalm a new opportunity.

Conversion is the repeated event of daily Christian living in the very mundaneness of that living. It is the engine of discipleship. It is not our second nature, but our primary nature.

The presence of the Divine subverts any delusions of natural human com-

pleteness. We are never finished products. We are always growing up, growing deeper, growing more profoundly into God. To be a lively Christian is to change. It means we can never become "set in our ways," convinced of the perfection of our opinions, closed to growth in ourselves, or in our brothers and sisters.

3. Conversion involves the whole person.

Reflecting on this reality, Newman asks the question: What does faith have to do with life? It is a very pointed question for the situation of modern humanity, which tends to see religion, faith, the practice of faith as an aspect of life, an accessory to the many other parts of our lives.

But Newman believed this could not be so. If God is God, if Christ is Christ, our response to faith must permeate every aspect of our being, even the most ordinary. It seems to me that if Benedictine spirituality can be defined, it is in this insight. It is wisdom distilled from the daily.

In this context then, there is certainly a Christian way to pray and worship. There is a Christian way to study and work. There is also a Christian way

see To live, p. 6

A POINT TO PONDER FROM THE RULE

"The ninth step of humility comes when a monk restrains his tongue from speaking, and out of love for silence does not speak until he is asked a question."

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 7, Verse 56

In community silence, St. Benedict is condemning loose, easy talk or speech that is "not watchful." He encourages silence, and we interpret that loose talk is to be avoided, but that silence in itself is meritorious.

Benedict has two principal objections to wordiness: (1) excessive talking inevitably goes along with sinning and (2) talking prevents us from discovering our authentic roots in God. As oblates, silence roots us. It helps us to become established in God. The practice of silence is an essential outward expression of humility.

Silence in the secular world is seldom a gift. We must fight for exterior silence to achieve interior silence. Using excessive words can lead us away from God, so that we drift like the gyrovague monks enslaved by our own wills. As lay monastics, we internalize the monastic value of silence. We don't just keep quiet; we are quiet.

Benedictine Oblate is published four times a year by Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

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Designer: Jo R. Bishop
Oblate Directors: Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB
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INSTITUTES & OBLATIONS

August 25, 2008, Oblation—**Mrs. Denise Monica Palm** of Newport News, VA.

September 1, 2008, Oblation—**Ms. Ninieva Therese Magbilang** of Farmingdale, NY.

September 1, 2008, Investitures—**Ms. Winifred Farrell** and **Miss Margaret Morehouse**, both of Farmingdale, NY.

September 4, 2008, Investiture—**Ms. Dolores Pictor** of Bloomington, IN.

September 5, 2008, Investitures—**Mr. Caleb Crisler** and **Mr. Timothy Crisler**, both of Muncie, IN.

September 21, 2008, Investiture—**Ms. Linn Robison** of Louisville, KY.

September 25, 2008, Oblation—**Ms. Silverhorse Gabriel Turner** of Worthington, OH.

September 25, 2008, Investiture—**Mr. William Richards** of Pickerington, OH.

September 27, 2008, Oblation—**Ms. Beth Juliana Hirtzel** of Tipton, IN.

September 27, 2008, Investitures—**Ms. Linda Grant** of Kettering, OH, and **Mr. Stephen Richey** of Centerville, OH.

September 28, 2008, Oblations—**Mr. Timothy Maurus Grant** of Batavia, OH, and **Ms. Joan Louise Hildegard Von Bingen Redd** of Cincinnati, OH.

September 28, 2008, Investiture—**Ms. Patricia O'Hagan** of Knoxville, TN.

October 4, 2008, Investiture—**Mr. John Rasche** of Bonnyman, KY.

October 5, 2008, Oblation—**Mr. Bob Joseph Thompson** of Bucyrus, OH.

October 9, 2008, Oblation—**Mrs. Eydie Benedict Tyer** of Cordova, TN.

October 11, 2008, Investiture—**Mrs. Sharon Olson** of Indianapolis, IN.

October 14, 2008, Investiture—**Mr. Gary Phillips** of Brandon, MS.

October 16, 2008, Investiture—**Deacon James Wilson** of Rossville, GA.

October 19, 2008, Investitures—**Mrs. Esperanza Fracker** and **Dr. Martin Fracker Sr.**, both of Converse, TX.

October 20, 2008, Investiture—**Rev. Dr. Andrew Headden** of Cameron Park, CA.

October 21, 2008, Oblation—**Mrs. Mary Jo Monica Dopson** of Clinton, IA.

November 8, 2008, Oblation—**Mr. James Anthony Pfaff** of Indianapolis, IN.

November 8, 2008, Investiture—**Ms. Gerardine M. Waggle** of Indianapolis, IN.

November 9, 2008, Investitures—**Mr. John Holmes** and **Mrs. Frances M. Holmes** of Granger, IN. ♦

DEATHS

Mrs. Sally W. Parker-Schutta of Malverne, NY, died on September 23, 2004.

Miss Rita Wargel of Newburgh, IN, died on May 4, 2007.

Mrs. Mary Dolores Klemenz Bass of Louisville, KY, died on October 27, 2008. ♦

HAPPENINGS

August 2008—Oblate Irene Muhs became the Nassau Vice-Chairman of the Long Island Coalition for Life, Inc.

August 31, 2008—Remie Cabanilla, co-coordinator of the Bronx, NY, chapter, is giving up her position due to the need to be with her mother in Australia. We thank her for her good work and welcome Elisa Testa, who is the new co-coordinator with Carmen Flores.

August 29-September 1, 2008—The 68th annual oblate retreat was attended by 45 oblates at the Mariandale Retreat Center in New York. Retreat master Fr. Harry Hagan, OSB, of Saint Meinrad presented "An Overview of Things in the Rule," and Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, interacted with the participants. The conferences produced an atmosphere that was conducive to prayer and meditation, and the liturgies were celebrated with two final oblations and a novice investiture. The retreat was organized by Paul and Irene Muhs, coordinators of the Farmingdale Chapter, as well as Carmen Flores, coordinator of the Bronx/ Westchester Chapter.

*Fr. Tom D'Angelo, oblate
Bronx, NY*

see Oblate News, p. 6



The Oblate Council gathers after its meeting at Saint Meinrad on October 18, 2008. From left: Jennie Latta, Patrick Phillips, John Pelletier, Albert Kovacs, Dennis Skelton, Christopher Topa, Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, Gerald Campbell, Gail Chambers and Janis Dopp.

Oblates of Saint Meinrad Archabbey write poems of faith

Poetry has always been a vehicle for emotional and spiritual expression. The psalms are an excellent example of how spirituality is vented through prose.

Although the spiritual poetry found in the psalms differs greatly from that to which the modern poetry reader is accustomed, it still has one feature in common with all spiritual poetry—the expression of a soul attempting to share with others a living experience that is so tremendous that it extends beyond the boundaries of prose. Such poetry is necessarily permeated with consciousness of the living God, a relationship that cannot help but lift the mind and soul on the wings of prayer.

Spiritual poems can teach us to pray and, at the same time, receive the word of God within our innermost hearts. These poems reflect the infinite beauty appearing everywhere in the natural and spiritual worlds. Spiritual poets often express their deepest psychological reality that is inherent in the structure of the soul itself.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey is blessed to have oblates who write poems of faith. Some have published their poems as collections in book form. Others have had their poems printed in church bulletins or in their diocesan newspapers.

In this article, we introduce you to three oblate-poets, selected because of their continual publication of poems over the years. They are Dorothy Colgan, Catherine Tittmann and Thomas J. Rillo.

Dorothy Colgan is 92 and could be considered the poet laureate of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis if such a title existed. In the past two years, Dorothy has had more than 18 poems published in the “My Journey to God” column of *The Criterion*.



Dorothy Colgan

Her poems have included tributes to Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and St. Theodora Guerin. She has contributed a four-part reflection on the mysteries of the rosary as well as a meditation on the Stations of the Cross published with a photo essay of the ornate stations at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis.

She is the mother of seven children, including Fr. Tobias Colgan, OSB, prior of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, and she is a member of St. Meinrad Parish in St. Meinrad, IN. In fact, Fr. Tobias says he never ceases to be amazed at her ability to rhyme words into poems that convey such deep meaning for the reader. Dorothy continues to write poetry with simple words and simple concepts. Here is a sample of her poetry:

Prodigal's Plea

I may be late, dear Lord,
So, please, don't close the door.
And would you leave a light?
(I've lost my way before.)

I'm one of your stray sheep,
Bewildered, filled with fright.
I've feasted on wild oats
And now regret each bite.

With foolish days behind,
Ahead I see my goal.
Will you have a shoulder
For this repentant soul?

Catherine Tittmann of Farmingdale, NY, lives the word of God. She is 89 years old and has been writing poetry since she was in her 20s. Her inspiration comes from God, and she believes that He wants His message of love to be shared. In her 50s, she was part of a Word Gift Ministry for diocesan prayer groups.

She has been encouraged by priests and laity, writing her poems joyfully praising Him. Her poetry has been a part of conferences, religious education classes, retreat meditations and even homilies at Masses. She still treasures the “little psalms” composed by third graders she once taught.



Catherine Tittmann

Her collection of poems, appearing in *The God of the Universe Dances in Trees*, was published by iUniverse, Inc. in 2007. Written over a period of 30 years, the poems reflect her devotion to God and His Son Jesus. She has referred to her poems as prayer-poems. Catherine is a member of the

Farmingdale-Long Island Oblate Chapter. Here is one of her poems:

You are the Apple of His Eye

This prophecy was told to me.
I pass it on to you,
Hope Mark and Matthew
aren't miffed
But this is Good News too.

You are the apple of His eye
The treasure of His heart
So very precious in His sight
His lovely work of art.

For long ago He fashioned you
To laugh with Him, not mourn
And knowing you'd delight Him now,
God danced when you were born.

Thomas J. Rillo, 81, is a retired Indiana University professor who began writing poetry many years ago as a result of his visual experiences while teaching in the mountain wilderness of Wyoming. Interacting with the natural beauty of God's creation, he found inspiration came easily.

While earlier poems reflect his interest in the natural world, he was inspired to write poems of faith as part of his continued appreciation for the work of God in human life experiences, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all of his endeavors. He recently published *Deepening Faith through Poetry*, a collection of spiritual poems written during the past ten years.

His poetry has appeared in *The Criterion* (the Archdiocese of Indianapolis newspaper), in church bulletins and in various other places. Tom's poetry is an illustrated portrait of his ongoing conversion into a stronger faith life—fueled by participating in Cursillo, becoming a Benedictine Oblate and developing a fuller prayer life. Here is one of his poems:



Thomas Rillo

God Has a Soft Voice

God has a soft voice
As soft and full as a summer breeze
He forgives me for the things I do
God eases my troubles as I pray
God has a soft voice.

Although I cannot see Him
I love Him
His voice comes to me
in quiet moments
Like a whispering breeze
I hear His voice
Moving through the room
like moonlight
God has a soft voice.

God's voice penetrates the darkness
of my soul
He speaks to me in tones
that caress and soothe
At times He is firm and unrelenting
Urging me to come closer to Him
God has a soft voice.

*Thomas Rillo, oblate
Bloomington, IN*



Booklet for Benedictine Oblates

The Oblate Office has copies of a book titled *Saint Benedict for Busy Parents* by Fr. Dwight Longnecker. The book employs the wisdom of St. Benedict and is useful for those interested in the Benedictine spirituality of being an oblate. If you would like a free copy, contact the Oblate Office. There is a \$1 charge for handling/shipping. ♦

VOLUNTEERS

Recent volunteers in the Oblate Office have included Monina Abrera, Jerry Campbell, Ruth Engs, Barbara Krick, Wayne Moore, Joan and Tom Rillo, Dennis Skelton, Joe Teague, Tom Lehr, Chris Topa and Jerry Maillet. ♦



Mr. Dennis John of the Cross Forcoff of Massillon, OH, makes his oblation on August 20, 2008, while Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, looks on.

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(even a Benedictine way) to eat, to clean the floor, to brush one's teeth, to talk, to laugh, to read, to write, to cry, to drive, etc.

In life, then, everything must be explored, turned over in our minds, brought to prayer, considered and reconsidered to be authentic to the God for whom we are seeking. Newman remarks: Nothing will be lost and everything gained by exploring everything. All of us, even those of us most advanced in the life of discipleship, glimpse the truth only dimly as in a mirror. We are ever in the process of getting to know God by more perfectly recognizing his complete and utter dominion over every aspect of our being.

In all of this, the presence of the community is essential as a corrective, for resources, for conversation, for encouragement and growth. Indeed, we must recognize in those around us the very voice, the person of God. "I say that Christ, the sinless Son of God, might be living now in the world as our next door neighbor, and perhaps we not find it out. And this is a thought that should be dwelt on."

4. Finally, Newman knows that the goal of this intense, minute and continuous conversion is holiness.

It is a turning from darkness to light, from fear to love; it is an expansion of the limitless horizons of the person as he or she lives into God. Newman's famous poem speaks volumes:

Lead, Kindly Light, amid
the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far
from home—
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not
ask to see

The distant scene—one step enough
for me.

I was not ever thus, nor pray'd
that Thou
Shouldst lead me on.
I loved to choose and see my path,
but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and,
spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not
past years.
So long Thy power hath blest me,
sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag
and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those
angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since,
and lost awhile.

Questions for Reflection

1. When faced with change, do I allow for reflection to keep my heart open to do God's will?
2. Do I recognize the need for help in my conversion? In the times I struggle, will I allow and pray that the Holy Spirit work within me?
3. As I start my work and through its completion, is God present in my mind?
4. In my neighbors, especially those I may find difficult, do I allow the Holy Spirit to bend my will so that I may love them as I would Christ?
5. Having everything to gain by exploring everything, do I share my insights with others so that we may grow together?

**Pray for
vocations**

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September 5, 2008—Oblate William C. Hine, dean of the School of Continuing Education at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, gave a workshop based on his book, *Pathway to Peace and Joy: A Workbook for the Busy Professional*, at the Kentucky Regional Assembly of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ in Owensboro, KY. He also gave a workshop at the Indiana Regional Assembly of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ on October 12 in West Lafayette, IN.

September 6, 2008—Despite the remnants of Hurricane Hanna that produced a deluge of water, 14 hardy Lancaster, PA, oblates celebrated a day of recollection. Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, presented "Changing of Lifestyle: Attempting it with Small, Realizable Activities." The three talks kept the group mesmerized, noting there are real steps we can take. The day began with Mass in St. Joseph's main church, followed by coffee and doughnuts, two talks, lunch, and quiet prayer and reconciliation. The final talk ended about 3 p.m., with everyone braving the rain to head home.

*Sharon Ogden, oblate
Lancaster, PA*

September 14, 2008—Linus Mundy of Abbey Press has announced the creation of a new booklet series, tentatively called "Notes from a Monastery: The Sacred Way Every Day." Br. Francis Wagner, OSB, is one of the editors of the series, which is expected to present Benedictine themes and values that will assist ordinary people seeking God in their everyday lives.

October 17, 2008—The Oblate Finance Committee reviewed the fiscal year income statement for the year ending June 30, 2008, which showed an end-of-year deficit. Efforts by Oblate Director Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, continue to control expenses, but rising prices of supplies and services have raised expenses, which contributed to the deficit.

A narrative, prepared by oblate Jerry Campbell at the direction of Fr. Meinrad, which included a discussion about the oblate program income and expense accounts, was shared with the committee. The narrative also discussed assets related to the oblate program, including the money market account where certain cash receipts for the oblate program are deposited and money is disbursed to cover oblate program expenses.

In addition, attention was given to the Archabbey General Endowment Fund, which has been designated by Archabbot Justin DuVall, OSB, to produce income for the oblate program to help cover the cost of educational activities. The Oblate Finance Committee members expressed gratitude for the abbot's continuing strong support for the oblate community and its director. The committee reviewed the final budget for the fiscal year 2008-09.

October 18, 2008—The Oblate Council met with Oblate John Pelletier, a communications consultant, and discussed the formation of a communications advisory group for the oblate program. The discussion included: guidelines for the advisory group, determination of the communities/audiences to be reached, regular evaluation of current communications, alternative methods of communications/channels and process.

Oblate Director Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, reported that the monastic visitation went well. The visitors from other monasteries gave special recognition to the support the monastic community gives to the oblate community.

Fr. Meinrad distributed copies of a proposal by Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, for the 2009 meeting of chapter coordinators and representatives. The workshop will include two goals related to the topic of leadership: recognizing the fine leadership experiences of the existing coordinators and providing methods for encouraging more oblates to take leadership responsibilities.

Oblate Jennie Latta reported that permission had been received to use the psalms in the new Liturgy of the Hours book for a small fee and preparations are being made to go to press.

Oblate Albert Kovacs discussed general information about the young adult oblates questionnaire and offered some insights for finding new ways to reach out to young adults about the oblate community.

Oblate Gail Chambers presented information about the structure of the customary and ritual book, which will include sections on home, seasonal, oblate and life rituals.

A discussion was held about the general status of oblate chapters, including references from the Report of Chapter Evaluations received at the last meeting and previously established guidelines for the formation and continuation of individual chapters. The Oblate Council reaffirmed its understanding that the oblate director, with authority from the archabbot, makes the decisions regarding these matters.

Updates and reports were also received about the oblate video, oblate database and oblate finances. Fr. Meinrad reported that Jennie Latta will join oblate Janis Dopp as a delegate to the World Congress of Benedictine Oblates in 2009.

The afternoon session included comments from consultant Dr. Tom Walters on the direction statements of Saint Meinrad Archabbey's Oblate Community, including the Oblate Community Philosophy Statement, the Oblate Community Vision Statement and the Oblate Personal Rule of Life, which were discussed and will receive further attention. ♦

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 20-22, 2009—Fr. Prior Tobias Colgan, OSB, will lead the oblate retreat on "Facets of Benedictine Spirituality." There will be a concert by classical pianist Diane Rivera, oblate from Bloomington, IN, on the evening of March 21.

May 16, 2009—A day of recollection for the Ohio oblates will be held at the Shrine of the Little Flower in Columbus, with Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, presenting "Fidelity to the Monastic Way of Life."

June 15-18, 2009—Oblate Study Days at Saint Meinrad Archabbey will have as a theme "Obedience and How an Oblate Lives It" presented by Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB. He will explore the Benedictine approach to obedience. Sessions include discussion, prayer and time for interaction among the oblates.

July 10, 2009—A day of recollection for oblates will be held at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Fr. Vincent Tobin, OSB, is the presenter, and his topic will be announced. Included will be a Mass, three conferences, quiet time for prayer, lunch and the sacrament of Reconciliation.

July 17-19, 2009—The meeting of chapter coordinators and representatives, held every five years, will be at Saint Meinrad Archabbey. This will be the fourth meeting. Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB, will be the presenter and facilitator. The topic will be "Looking to the Future: Leadership."

September 4-7, 2009—The New York Labor Day weekend retreat will be held for oblates of New York, New Jersey and the Connecticut area. Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, will be the presenter on "Obedience and How an Oblate Lives It."

September 12, 2009—The Lancaster, PA, day of recollection will be held at St. Joseph Parish in Lancaster, with Fr. Brendan Moss, OSB, presenting "Obedience and How an Oblate Lives It."

November 9-18, 2009—Br. Maurus Zoeller, OSB, is hosting a Holy Land pilgrimage, visiting Haifa, Tiberias, Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Contact him for more details on the tour: Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad, IN 47577; phone (812) 357-6674; or e-mail: mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu. ♦



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Reading Room

In *Conversations in the Abbey*, editor Ruth Clifford Engs interviews 11 senior monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey who have lived through the greater part of the 20th century, all of whom were born in 1930 or earlier. At the start of 2007, the oldest monk interviewed was 106 years of age, and the youngest monk was 76.

An oral history of the senior monks was originally conceived by Edward L. Shaughnessy, an alumnus of Saint Meinrad College and a retired distinguished professor of English literature at Butler University, Indianapolis, IN. At the time of his death in January 2004, Shaughnessy had interviewed three of the senior monks. Ruth Clifford Engs, a semi-retired professor from Indiana University, incorporated his interviews with her own work.

The interviews contain reflections on their early childhood, early life in the monastery, careers, spiritual life, and the perceived changes in the Church and monastery, both pre- and post-Vatican II. It was interesting to note that most of the senior monks felt that changes within the Church and the monastery were for the best, and that Vatican II was beneficial to both the Church and the monastery.

Some of the primitive living conditions facing the young novices, such as the absence of air conditioning, the group sleeping accommodations and the centralized toilet facilities, were humorously described. The reverence of stability and humility was manifested in each interview, with each monk demonstrating a unique personality and characteristic spiritual humility. Despite the diversity of academic degrees, monastic careers and vocational skills, the thread of humility and hospitality was always evident.

Three historical essays, on finances and fund raising, Abbey Press, and the land, were included, focusing on the work of the monastery. Most of the monks interviewed for this book were involved, in one way or another, with one of these areas.

This book is an ideal way for readers to obtain a first-hand perspective on the pulse of Saint Meinrad Archabbey and the community of monks who work and pray there. It is a slice of history and a reflection of the prayerful faith of men who have lived 50 years or more in the monastic community.

*Thomas J. Rillo, oblate
Bloomington, IN*