

## Wife's surprise gift will keep on giving



Charles R. (Bob) and Claire Baker

When Charles R. (Bob) Baker opened the envelope containing his wife's gift to him on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, he was speechless.

"In the 49 years I have known this man, I have never seen him speechless," Claire said. Inside the envelope was a certificate informing him that Claire had established an endowment in his honor at Saint Meinrad.

"Certainly, it was a surprise," Bob agreed. "But it was the best gift she could give me."

The Bakers live near Zionsville, IN. Bob was a chemical engineer

who worked for General Motors in aerodynamics before he retired in 1980. Claire taught for many years at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis and now is coordinator of adult faith formation at St. Joseph Parish in Lebanon.

Their relationship with Saint Meinrad began with Bob's mother, Mary Baker, who grew up in nearby Cannelton. She was a longtime supporter of the Archabbey and, after she died in 1997, Bob decided to set up an endowment in her memory.

Mary had made gifts to support the education of priests, so Bob established the endowment so its earnings would be used for priesthood education.

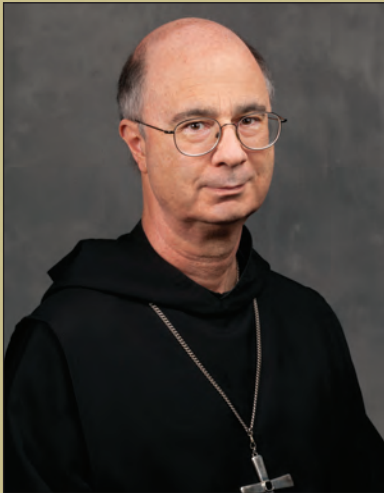
Not long after he set up the endowment, Bob brought Claire to Saint Meinrad. "I had heard about Saint Meinrad, because I grew up part of the time in the Indianapolis Archdiocese," she said. "I wanted to see southern Indiana and Cannelton, and so we came and it was kind of like love at first sight. And we've been coming back ever since."

Later, Claire decided to seek a master's degree in theology, so she enrolled in Saint Meinrad's Lay Degree Program and began taking weekend courses in 2004. She graduated in 2008.

Bob came along on every trip and they both enjoyed the time away—Claire attending classes and Bob exploring the buildings and grounds. "I have never seen

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**Rt. Rev. Justin DuVall, OSB**  
**Archabbot of Saint Meinrad**

Dear Friends,

With each issue of *The Gift Planner*, my confreres and I are greatly honored by the individuals whose stories are featured. We are grateful for their generosity, certainly. But we are also grateful for their willingness to tell their story about what led them to share their resources with us.

Each story is unique with regard to how the planned gift or endowment was established and the occasion that prompted them to do so. What is most striking to us, however, is the consistency in the “why” donors choose to honor us through their special gifts. Without exception, it is the donor’s deep commitment to our work and mission that motivates them to take their support to the next level.

My brother monks and I are deeply grateful and humbled by the extraordinary generosity demonstrated by people like Bob and Claire Baker. They are a wonderful example of the many thoughtful philanthropists who have made Saint Meinrad’s 160-year history possible. Their endowment, as well as the many other endowments established on our behalf, will help to ensure the continuation of our work and mission.

To them and to all of you who have supported us over the years, thank you. And may God continue to bless you in all ways.

+ Justin DuVall, OSB

anybody who didn’t smile, say hello and go out of their way to make sure you had just what you needed,” Claire said.

Those years of lay degree classes prepared Claire for her current work in faith formation at her parish, but it also seemed to influence Bob.

When Claire established the endowment in Bob’s name, the one thing she didn’t do was decide what program or project it would support. That was up to Bob. “I said, ‘Now, this is your decision. You’ve got to decide where this is going to go,’” she recalled.

After some thinking, he decided the endowment would support Saint Meinrad’s lay degree programs. For years, priests were the only thing most people thought of when supporting a seminary, according to Bob, but today lay ministers are just as essential in doing the Church’s work. “We can’t run the Church—the parish—without lay ministers.”

Although Claire refused to weigh in on the decision, she said, “I can’t deny that it made me very happy.”

Over the years, they have watched Saint Meinrad’s programs expand and change to serve new needs in the Church, pointing to the “One Bread, One Cup” youth liturgical leadership program and the Institute for Priests and Presbyterates as examples.

“We see Saint Meinrad doing what is necessary to keep the Church going these days,” Bob said. “They see a need and fill it,” agreed Claire.

Claire is pleased with the endowment. “It’s permanent. Saint Meinrad can use the proceeds, but the principal is going to continue to produce support.

“Long after we’re gone, those endowments will still be here providing support.” ♦



## Your will: A good way to continue your support of Saint Meinrad

How many of us spend our time reading the comic pages or solving word search and crossword puzzles in the daily newspaper, but spend minimal time working through our long-term estate needs?

A gift by will is the easiest and most popular way to support Saint Meinrad without parting with assets during your lifetime. Gifts can take several forms: specific bequests of property, bequests of a stated dollar amount, bequests of a percentage of your estate, or bequests of the remainder of your estate after you have provided for your loved ones. At your designation, these gifts can be used to create a named endowment or added to an existing endowment.

The organizations and good causes you have assisted during your life, such as Saint Meinrad, will miss that help when you are gone. However, through your will you can continue to provide that support. By making a bequest, you may find that you

can play a much larger and more significant role in our work than you ever thought possible while still maintaining your current obligations.

People who have spiritually and financially supported Saint Meinrad throughout their lives should know if they don't make specific arrangements, no charitable gifts will be made from their estate.

If you desire to make a charitable bequest to Saint Meinrad as part of your estate plan, we would be happy to send you information, or assist you and your attorney or financial advisor in making your estate plan what you want it to be. But don't wait.

If you don't have a will, or it is has been some time since you reviewed it, it's time to make *your* final statement. Let it be your final testimony to the values that have guided your life. God certainly will bless you for your stewardship of the resources He put at your disposal. ♦

*“Working with Claire Baker in establishing this endowment in honor of Bob’s 90th birthday has been one of the highlights of my work on behalf of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. Helping people fulfill their deepest philanthropic goals is a great privilege. And helping to ensure Saint Meinrad’s ongoing work for the Church is an even greater privilege and blessing.”*

Barbara Balka, Director of Planned Giving



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# Help us carry on God's work.



*Your last will and testament can be an eloquent statement of what was most important to you in life. A bequest to help educate priests, permanent deacons and lay ministers at Saint Meinrad is a good way to thank God for your faith and to pass it on to those who follow you.*



*Saint Meinrad*

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