

Marmion Abbey News

A newsletter published by Marmion Abbey in Aurora, Illinois highlighting Marmion Abbey, Abbey Farms, and the Priory of San José, Guatemala.

The Abbey Gardens and Grounds

The following article provides information on the origin and project to update the gardens at Marmion Abbey established by the Joseph and Helen Rippering Marmion Abbey Garden Fund.

In January of 1996, **+Joseph '40 and +Helen Rippering** (parents of **John '64, +Tom '68, Dan '72, Tim '74**, Abbot Joel Rippering, OSB, and Mary Jo DiRe) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. To honor the occasion, they chose to establish the *Marmion Abbey Garden Fund* in order to provide funding for the care and beautification of the Abbey grounds.

The seeds for the Abbey Garden Fund were sown years earlier. Joe and his mother, Josephine, were avid gardeners. They were also devout, faith-filled Catholics who nurtured their gardens as a natural extension of their appreciation for God's gift of nature and their desire to reciprocate that gift by cultivating spaces of beauty for God's glory. They both, along with Helen, shared a deep love and devotion to Marmion and the Benedictine community, so it was fitting that they continued their legacy of creating beautiful spaces that reflect God's abundance on the Abbey grounds through the Abbey Garden Fund.

When +Joe and +Helen (both oblates) passed away in 2019, family and friends generously donated to the Abbey Garden Fund, posthumously named in Joe and Helen's honor. The contributions were used to revitalize the garden near the Church parking lot, as well as the areas surrounding the Abbey

Church and the entrance to the Abbey. Those projects were completed in 2023 and installed by HGTS Landscaping, under the supervision of Hugo and Anastasia Cardenas, parents of **Ernesto '18 and Christian '20**. HGTS Landscaping continues to provide maintenance and upkeep of the garden areas.

The goal of creating well-tended garden areas surrounding the Abbey and Abbey Church was in keeping with the rich Benedictine tradition of monastic gardens throughout the centuries.

It is hoped that these garden areas will:

- Be a source of beauty and meditation for members of the monastic community.
- Provide an affirmative first impression of the Abbey that will externally reflect the spiritual beauty within the monastery.
- Be a source of beauty and welcome for the community, oblates, visiting clergy, and laity.
- Provide an area of beauty and peace for students, families, and staff of the Academy.



For more information on the Abbey Gardens & Grounds and the *+Joseph '40 and +Helen Rippering Marmion Abbey Garden Fund*, please scan the QR code or visit Marmion Abbey's website at www.marmion.org/abbeygarden.



Left: Daprato Rigali installed the stone sculpture in the main garden whose shape mirrors the slope of the Abbey Church. The stone is from the same quarry as the stone of the altar in the Abbey Church.

Right: The statue of St. Benedict that now welcomes visitors coming from the church parking lot was gifted to the Abbey by +Joe and +Helen, who had it commissioned by a local artist. For many years the statue had residence in the backyard garden of their home (pictured, l-r: +Joseph '40, +Helen, and Abbot Joel Rippering, OSB at the blessing of the St. Benedict statue in Rippering's backyard on Nov. 22, 1995.)

Reflections on the Priory Community of San José

The Priory of San José in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala has seen a number of new developments in recent months. For much of the pandemic period (2020-2022), the Priory was forced to close its Guest House and its Language School. In 2023, it gradually opened the church to congregants again and did some minimal work with the Guest House and the Language School. There were three monks remaining in the Priory in 2023 and the future viability of the community was in question.

A plan was put in place to have three monks from the Abbey of Our Lady of the Angels in Cuernavaca, Mexico take up residence at the Priory. This plan was spearheaded by Fr. Konrad Schaefer, an American monk who had been superior of the monastery in Cuernavaca for some years and had overseen its growth into becoming an abbey in our Swiss-American Congregation of monks. Fr. Konrad planned to bring with him to the Priory of San José two monks from the Cuernavaca community and assist them in providing an injection of seasoned monks to renew the monastic life and apostolic work of our Guatemalan Priory. The plan received the approval of both the Marmion Abbey Chapter and the Monastery of Our Lady of the Angels.

On June 17, the three monks from Mexico arrived in Guatemala. They were Fr. Konrad (who is to serve as temporary administrator and superior), Fr. Benedicto Fernandes,



Pictured (l-r): Fr. Juan Francisco Peren Mux, Fr. Mauro Perdomo Angel, Fr. Benedicto Mireles Fernandes, Abbot President Justin Brown, Fr. Prior Konrad Schaefer Beyer, Fr. Armando Menchu Menchu

and Fr. Mauro Angeles. They joined the three monks of the Priory, Fr. Cristóbal Quic, Fr. Juan Francisco Mux, and Fr. Armando Menchu. Since their arrival, they have reinvigorated the apostolic life of the community, providing sacramental help as priest-monks in the surrounding parishes and drawing increasing numbers of people to the Priory Church and Guest House.

The Priory has been blessed in the summer months by the presence of Fr. Vincent Bataille, who lived with the community for several weeks in July and August, and the Abbot-President of our Congregation, Abbot Justin Brown, who stayed with the community as he was taking Spanish lessons. Fr. Konrad, as superior, is hoping to revitalize the monastic life of the Priory and attract new vocations. There are already

some young men who have spent some time at the Guest House in discernment. The future of the Priory is benefiting from a grant from the Swiss-American Congregation that will allow for the expenditure of funds for the monks from Cuernavaca.

Fr. Armando now has the position of sub-prior and is the head of the official corporate entity of the Priory, the Benedictine Association of Quetzaltenango. Fr. Cristóbal, the previous superior, has been forced to take some time away because of a serious illness.

In November the Priory is planning to host the annual retreat of all the Benedictine communities in Guatemala (there are four) and Fr. Konrad will conduct the retreat.

Summer Updates

Fr. Eusebius Martis, OSB '81

Since his departure for Rome, just after Easter this year, Fr. Eusebius has been engaged in the academic and cultural life in Italy. His first stop was Sant'Anselmo on the Aventine Hill, which is the Benedictine house of studies established by Pope Leo XIII and Abbot Hildebrand de Hemptinne in the late 19th century. The magnificent campus is adjacent to the Grand Priory of the Knights of Malta.



Fr. Eusebius arrived in the final months of the academic year and served on the academic juries for students defending their dissertations for licenses in theology. At the beginning of May, the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, of which Fr. Eusebius is a faculty member, held its annual conference with liturgists and theologians from around the world. He served as moderator of the discussions that followed the presentations. At the conclusion of the conference, he took up residence at the *Monastero di San Giuseppe* in Assisi. There he lived with Benedictine nuns while

he was studying Italian at the *Accademia Lingua Italiana Assisi*. For more than 30 years the *Accademia* has been helping laity, religious, and clergy learn Italian for research, study and daily life. The “*super-intensivo*” courses (six hours each day), group and individual lessons, were augmented by local tours and cultural events in Assisi.

Returning to Rome at the end of June, Fr. Eusebius inaugurated the opening session of the first Monastic Summer Studium held at Sant'Anselmo. The program consists of three one-week courses in English designed as continuing education for those interested in the monastic world. Students came from around the world to participate in the three courses offered by the international faculty. Sr. Manuela Scheiba, OSB, from the Abbey of St. Gertrude in Germany, offered a course on the Rule of Saint Benedict. She is one of the world's foremost scholars on the *Rule* today, but her full time work at her monastery is in writing icons. Fr. Mauritius Wilde, OSB, the Prior of Sant'Anselmo, presented a course on the life of St. Benedict as a model for contemporary spiritual life. Fr. Eusebius, in addition to directing the Summer Studium, taught a course on liturgy and monastic life. In addition to joining the monastic community daily for Mass and Divine Office, the participants also enjoyed excursions to local churches and a day-long trip to *Monastero di San Benedetto* in Subiaco where Saint Benedict first lived as a hermit.

At the conclusion of the summer session, Fr. Eusebius returned to Marmion and then traveled to Conception, MO, to present three continuing education conferences to the monks of Conception Abbey. The second week of August, Fr. Eusebius was the director for the annual retreat of the Canons of Saint John Cantius in Springfield, IL. On the final evening of the retreat, the Superior General of the Canons Regular, Fr. Joshua Caswell, SCJ, presented Fr. Eusebius with the Cantion Medallion, for his decades-long work in liturgical renewal. The motto of the Canons is *Instaurare sacra*, to restore the sacred. Fr. Eusebius returns to Europe at the beginning of September for more language study and research.



Fr. Theodore Haggerty, OSB

This past summer, I had a wonderful opportunity to be taught how to teach Latin as a living language and to be a student of Latin again. The Polis Institute, an organization based in Jerusalem, is devoted to making ancient languages like Latin, Greek, Coptic, and Syriac into living languages again. Their mission is to create immersive learning programs so that students might be better equipped to read and understand the ancient texts written in these languages.

My first encounter with the Polis Institute was in Niles, IL in June. The Institute presented a one-week workshop on how to teach an ancient language in an immersive way. Every class, every encounter between student and teacher outside of class would be in the language being taught. My classmates at this workshop included teachers from Northridge Prep in Niles, who have been using the Polis method in their required Latin courses. We were treated to some short videos of their students giving two-minute autobiographical speeches, entirely in Latin (without notes). These students (and hopefully ours to come) will be fluent in Latin to such a degree that in a couple of years, they will be able to read authors like Cicero, Suetonius, and Virgil.



My second encounter was a three-week course in Rome, which I was able to attend through the help of a very kind and generous benefactor (who is also an erudite teacher of language). While the city of Rome offered much for the study of Latin, the course itself was the gem. The first lessons progressed from elementary expressions of greetings and farewells, introductions and expressing one's feelings to more advanced narrations and discourses we composed ourselves. Toward the end of the course, we had a “field trip” (across the street) to a museum of ancient sculptures. Each of us had to describe, in Latin, a preselected sculpture to everyone, using limited notes. We all did well, and I would like to do something similar with my own students at the Art Institute of Chicago and/or the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.

Thanks to people like you who support the mission of Marmion in prayer and your material giving, I was able not only to be more ready to teach this venerable subject but to be enthusiastic and confident that our students will fall in love with Latin.

Fr. Antony Maria Minardi, OSB '08

“Gather the children in this wild country and teach them what they should know for salvation. Teach them their catechism, how to sign themselves with the sign of the Cross, and how to approach the sacraments; that is what I wish you to do. Go and fear nothing, I will help you.”

These were the words that Mary spoke to Adele Briese in New Franken, WI on October 9, 1859. Known as Our Lady of Champion, this is the only approved Marian Apparition in the United States, and I was blessed to visit the Shrine on June 29. Mary's last words to Adele, “Go and fear nothing, I will help you,” have been a theme throughout my summer travels and studies.

After leaving Our Lady of Champion, I continued to Detroit, where I spent the rest of my summer starting my studies for a Sacred Theology Licentiate (STL) degree at Sacred Heart Major Seminary. The STL degree is the second of three pontifical degrees that the Church gives. This program focuses on the New Evangelization and is designed to equip priests in active ministry to more effectively evangelize their local communities in our secularized time. In five weeks, I took three classes: The Letters of St. Paul and the New Evangelization (pictured below), Eschatology, and Models of Evangelization. These classes were extraordinarily enriching, and I will continue my studies online during the school year and in-person for the next three summers.



The highlight of the summer, The National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, came by means of two classmates. One classmate had extra tickets to the Congress, which he offered to us for free, and another classmate, from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, had a former pastor who had room in his rectory for me and another classmate. After our class on July 19, we drove to Indianapolis to join 60,000 Catholics in Indianapolis to worship Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. We processed with Jesus in the monstrance through the streets of Indianapolis on Saturday afternoon, and gathered in a packed Lucas Oil Stadium to adore Him in adoration that evening. The sheer number of jubilant people who were there gave me great hope for our future!

There are many struggles today, and we have many challenges to overcome here, but our Lord will conquer them all, and He is walking with us. Mary is not the only one who tells us, “Go and fear nothing, I will help you.” Mary speaks these words because these are the words of her Son, Jesus.

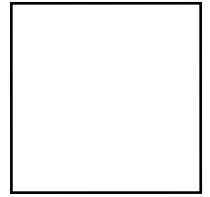
As we enter this new academic year, let's remember these words, be encouraged, and be courageous. The Church is alive, and the Church is young: the Holy Spirit is working here in America and here at Marmion! Let's spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to everyone, fearing nothing, because our Lord and His Blessed Mother will help us.



Our Lady of Champion, pray for us!

MARMION + ABBEY

850 Butterfield Road, Aurora, IL 60502



*“I came not to do
My own will,
but the will of Him
that sent Me”*

(Jn 6:38)



ABBEY FARMS

Growing Memories since 1949

Contact us at info@abbeyfarms.org or (630)966-7775
www.abbeyfarms.org

Pumpkin Daze

September 21st-October 27th



HOURS

SEPTEMBER

Saturday & Sunday Only
10 AM - 6 PM

OCTOBER

Wednesday - Friday
10 AM - 6 PM

Saturday
10 AM - 10 PM

Sunday
10 AM - 6 PM

Fun for the Whole Family!

U-Pick Pumpkin Patch • Fresh Baked Donuts
• 8-Acre Corn Maze • Live Music on Weekends

**Saturday Night Corn Maze
and Fire pit rentals
(Saturdays in October only)
(Corn maze not Haunted)**