

ON THE HILL

FALL 2023 • VOL. 62:4



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Nov. Andrew Levering, OSB, serves as the book holder during the first profession for Br. Jude Angel Romero, OSB, on August 6. Find more photos at <http://saint-meinrad.smugmug.com>

Monks' Personals

Fr. Lorenzo Penalosa began his studies at the Catholic University of America in August 2023. He is working on a Doctorate in Sacred Theology (S.T.D.) in Liturgical Studies.

Fr. Sean Hoppe, Fr. Simon Herrmann, and Br. Joel Blaize attended the priesthood ordination of Frs. Deodatus Satu and Gregory Sambu (Mvimwa Abbey) and Fr. Fraternalis Fidelis (Hanga Abbey) at Mvimwa Abbey in Tanzania on July 27. They also spent a couple of weeks in Tanzania touring the monasteries and the country.

Fr. Meinrad Brune retired as the archivist of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, The Swiss-American Congregation, and the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors on July 28. A retirement party was held for him in the Archives and the Oblate Office.

Br. Stanley Rother Wagner succeeds Fr. Meinrad as the new archivist. He also led a

retreat titled "The Shepherd Who Ran: Stanley Rother, Humility, and Long-Haul Grace" to the Catholic grade school teachers of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City on August 4, 2023.

Fr. Christian Raab wrote two chapters and served as the editor of the recent volume *Walk the Line: Rock Music and the Christian Imagination* (New City Press, 2023). The book also includes contributions from some Saint Meinrad faculty members and adjunct lecturers. See page 5 for more information on this book. He also attended the ordination and masses of thanksgiving of our students Ha Nguyen and Tuan Nguyen in the Diocese of Thanh Hoa, Vietnam, in August.

Fr. Jeremy King, as part of his work with the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Corrections Committee, is a regular contributor to the monthly feature, "Corrections Corner," in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis newspaper, *The Criterion*. He also helped to facilitate the Fifth World

Congress of Benedictine Oblates in Rome from September 9-16, 2023.

Fr. Harry Hagan published an introduction to and translation of nine poems by Silja Walter, a Benedictine nun (Sr. Hedwig), of Kloster Fahr, which is part of the Abbey of Einsiedeln.

Br. Martin Erspamer has recently been awarded the stained-glass commission for St. Peter and Paul Church in St. Paul, NE.

Fr. Adrian Burke directed a retreat for permanent deacons and their wives from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in September, and presented an adult spiritual formation class at the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville, KY; in October, he directed a retreat for priests in the Diocese of Tucson, AZ, and delivered talks on Christian hospitality to a meeting of the International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains in St. Louis; and in November, he will deliver a retreat at St. Thomas More parish in Chapel Hill, NC. ✚

Monastery News

Br. Jude Angel Romero-Olivas professes temporary vows



Br. Jude Angel Romero-Olivas

José Angel Romero-Olivas professed his temporary vows as a Benedictine monk in a ceremony on August 6, 2023, in the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church.

He has completed his novitiate, a year of prayer and study of the Benedictine way of life. As is the custom during the profession of vows, he chose a religious name. Novice Angel is now Br. Jude.

Br. Jude, 39, is a native of Mexico. He attended the Autonomous University of Chihuahua Law School.

Before entering the monastery, he worked at the Mexican Consulate and in law.

Temporary vows are typically for three years. This period offers a continuing

opportunity for the monk and the monastic community to determine whether monastic life is, indeed, the right vocation for this individual. ✝



Br. Jude is congratulated by his niece, Ximena “La Chula,” from California after his first profession on August 6.

Novitiate begins year of formation



Novice Andrew Levering

In a brief ceremony at the monastery entrance, two men were clothed in the Benedictine habit at Saint Meinrad Archabbey on August 5. They began a year of monastic formation,

including study of the *Rule of St. Benedict* and monastic history. It is also a year of discernment, and one novice has already discerned out.

Novice Andrew, 24, is a native of Libertyville, IL, where he was a member of St. Joseph Parish and attended Vernon Hills High School in Vernon Hills, IL.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in Christian theology from Hope College in 2021. After graduating from college, Novice Andrew worked as a forklift driver.

As a novice, he will take a year off from formal studies and trades. The novitiate is a time of prayer and learning intended to help a novice discern his vocation as a monk. At the end of this year, a novice may be permitted to profess temporary

vows of obedience, fidelity to the monastic way of life, and stability in the community of Saint Meinrad. ✝

Smugmug

*For more photos of
Saint Meinrad events, visit:*

saint-meinrad.smugmug.com

New director of annual giving named



Timothy Florian

Timothy Florian has been named the new director of annual giving for the Development Office of Saint Meinrad Archabbey and Seminary & School of Theology. He began his work on August 21.

In this position, Florian will be responsible for the organization, planning, and management of Saint Meinrad's programs for inviting annual support from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Florian has served Saint Meinrad since January 2021 as director of alumni relations. Previously, he was a teacher at Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School in Montgomery, AL. He graduated in 2018 with a Master of Arts in Catholic Philosophical Studies from Saint Meinrad. He also has a bachelor's degree in

business administration from the University of South Alabama.

He currently serves on the board of the Trotter House Lifeline Family Center and on the parish council at Precious Blood Parish, both in Jasper, IN. He has held leadership and volunteer positions for the Catholic Young Adults of Montgomery, AL, and St. Pius X parish, Mobile.

Florian lives in Jasper, IN, and is a member of Precious Blood Parish. ✝

Career built on a bigger purpose: Mary Jeanne Schumacher retires



Mary Jeanne Schumacher

Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, says the co-workers are one of Saint Meinrad's biggest strengths. Over Mary Jeanne Schumacher's 26-year career in the communication wing of the Development Office, she helped

promote the institution, telling the stories of the monks, students, and benefactors.

Mary Jeanne began work as the associate director of communications in June 1997, and she served in that role for three years before being promoted to director of communications. After 20 years in the journalism and periodical industries, she brought her strengths in writing, editing, and proofreading to aid in Saint Meinrad's communication efforts. She used those skills at work daily for the next 26 years, until her retirement on June 30, 2023.

"Mary Jeanne was one of those very faithful people who spent a career with us and did it cheerfully and competently and well," says Archabbot Kurt. "She was a

wonderful director of communications, helped us a number of times through some difficult situations, and we are most grateful."

She has many memories as a co-worker of Saint Meinrad. The first big event she was a part of was the dedication of the Archabbey Church in September 1997.

"It was a huge event, a milestone in the Archabbey's history," says Mary Jeanne. "It was well underway when I got here, but it was really fun to be part of something that's basically historic."

Other memories that stay with her are the abbatial elections of Fr. Justin DuVall, OSB, in 2004, and Archabbot Kurt in 2016, and the 150-year anniversary of Saint Meinrad's founding in 2004. But, she says, what sticks with her the most is the people.

"It was a wonderful place to work with a lot of people who were smart, engaging, funny, and very devoted to this place," she says. "I miss that most of all. Working in that environment is so life-giving."

During her tenure, Mary Jeanne oversaw the project to upgrade Saint Meinrad's

website from an unattractive, informational site, to a website that is engaging, colorful and up to date.

The *On the Hill* newsletter also went through several transformations under her direction, from a black-and-white publication to one that was larger and full-color, and finally to today's design that is livelier looking with engaging photographs.

As Mary Jeanne's retirement approached, there was a steady stream of monks and co-workers who stopped by her office to offer congratulations. She was well respected and built up a reputation for having a sharp editing eye. She was the go-to person to answer any grammar question or proofread any document, including books the monks wrote.

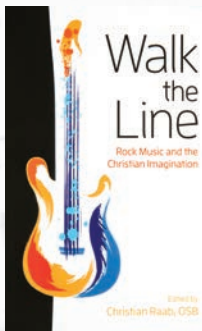
"How lucky I was to be part of a place that has a bigger purpose than just me," she says. "You always hope that the job you're doing is part of something important. When you look at a place that has more than 160 years of history and it's not slowing down, you're like, 'Oh, this is a pretty big deal.' You're standing on the shoulders of a lot of really great people before you, and you're hoping that continues." ✝



Photos: The annual evening prayer with the faculty blessing was held on the opening day of fall semester classes, August 28, in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel. Left, Dr. Kimberly Baker lines up outside of the chapel to lead a procession of faculty members and students into the chapel for prayer. Right, faculty members bow their heads during the blessing.

Noteworthy:

Newsworthy items about Saint Meinrad people and events



Walk the Line: Rock Music and the Christian Imagination, a new book edited by Fr. Christian Raab, OSB, was released in August. The book features a

compilation of essays written by theologians that explores the theological and spiritual themes in rock music from the last 50+ years.

The book is a resource for music fans to engage their favorite artists and songs with theological sophistication. *Walk the Line* is different from the many books which try to use rock music to get people into religion. Instead, it uses religious insights to help readers think critically and creatively about **rock music**.

Walk the Line includes contributions from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology faculty members, Dr. Robert Alvis, Dr. Keith Lemna, Dr. Nathaniel Marx, Dr. Chris Hackett, as well as Fr. Christian Raab.

The book, published by New City Press, is available to purchase online through [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

More than 70 people from neighboring dioceses gathered for a day of ministry formation in Spanish at Saint Meinrad on July 1, 2023. Representatives from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Diocese of Evansville, and the Diocese of Owensboro filled the conference room on the fifth floor of St. Bede Hall.

It was also the first day-long formation event on the Hill that was delivered completely in Spanish and led by diocesan directors of **Hispanic Ministry**.

Organized and hosted by Continuing Formation and the Office of Hispanic and Latino Ministry, supported by Young Adult Initiative, as well as the interns of “One Bread, One Cup,” the day made visible Benedictine hospitality, the fruits of collaboration within the School of Theology, and the manifold gifts the Spanish speaking community brings to the life of the Church. ✝



Fall semester begins with strong enrollment



Seminarian Kacper Wojcieszko, right, helps new seminarians move in on August 18.

The mornings have turned crisp on the Saint Meinrad campus, leaves are turning shades of red and yellow, and a new formation year is well underway. Twenty-nine new seminarians moved into the School on August 18, and classes began 10 days later.

Seminary enrollment remains strong with 116 students taking classes this fall. That is down five from last year's 121 students, but up 16 from the previous year's 100. The seminary community represents 21 dioceses and six religious communities. Saint Meinrad's propaedeutic program, El Camino, began its second year with 10 seminarians.

Cultural diversity among seminarians remains consistent with previous enrollments. This year, there are 30 seminarians who were born in other countries, representing 26% of the student body. The seminary community represents 13 different countries of origin.

Last year, there were 35 students born outside of the United States, representing 15 countries of origin. In 2021, there were 30 students born outside of the United States from 12 countries of origin.

"It gives us a sense that even though we are here in southern Indiana, we are part of a larger Church," says President-Rector Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB.

The School administration continues to assess the programs offered and look for ways to refine and perfect them, especially in light of the new Program of Priestly Formation released last year. In the spring, administrators approved an option for seminarians to earn a master's degree in theology along with an MDiv. Seminarians who opt to pursue both degrees, complete a concluding exercise while still in formation.

The **Graduate Theology Program** opened the fall semester with 81 students. There are three full-time students, 65 part-time, seven non-degree, and seven students auditing courses. This is an increase from last year's enrollment of 72 students.

A new Certificate in Liturgical Music has been approved in partnership with Saint Meinrad's Institute for Sacred Music. It can be completed independently or in conjunction with a Master of Arts in theology. The program is geared toward classically trained musicians who need a foundation in liturgical studies and active musicians looking to develop their musical background in the context of liturgical theology.

The **Permanent Deacon Formation Program** is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The program started in 1999 with the Diocese of Richmond as the first diocese, ordaining 49 deacons in

2003. Throughout the 25-year history, the program has served 25 dioceses, and ordained 722 deacon candidates with four wives receiving a certificate of completion.

For the 2023-24 formation year, there are a total of 195 students and 14 cohorts from 12 dioceses enrolled in the Permanent Deacon Program. That breaks down to 161 deacon candidates, 33 aspirants and one wife taking courses for credit toward a master's degree in theology.

The program now has the capability of providing formation entirely in Spanish. In addition, there are supplemental online courses in Spanish to augment instruction for native Spanish speaking students who are taking courses in English.

The new school year also brings some new faces to the Seminary and School of Theology.

Ana Perez, of Dale, IN, serves Saint Meinrad as the director of the Office of Hispanic and Latino Ministry. In her role, she creates strategic formation programming for seminarians, priests, deacons, and lay leaders around Hispanic and Latino ministry.

Perez, originally from Mexico, moved to the United States at the age of 15. She studied at Marian Heights Academy, Ferdinand, IN, before the school closed, for her sophomore and junior years of high school. She graduated in 2001 from Heritage Hills High School.

Perez studied social science at Oakland City University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 2005. She is currently pursuing a master's degree from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

Chase J. Cloutier, of Newburgh, IN, has been named the director of Graduate Theology Programs for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. Sr. Jeana Visel, OSB, who previously held the position, will continue to serve as dean of School of Theology Programs and

New School Appointments



Ana Perez



Chase Cloutier



Dr. Maggie Morgan

adjunct assistant professor of spirituality. Cloutier began work on August 16.

In this position, Cloutier will coordinate the administration of all academic and formation programs for lay students and permanent deacons pursuing degree or certificate programs at Saint Meinrad. He will also collaborate with the Office of Continuing Formation in coordinating non-degree or continuing education programs related to lay ministry.

Cloutier is a doctoral candidate in systematic theology at the Catholic University of America, having attained an MPhil degree. He also has a Master of Theological Studies from Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, and a master's degree in philosophy from Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Most recently, Cloutier has been a teaching fellow in theology for the First Year Experience program at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He was also a project manager in higher education event planning while working with ePosterBoards based out of Boston, MA. Prior to that, he worked as a theology teacher at Charlotte Catholic High School in the Diocese of Charlotte, NC, for two years.

Dr. Maggie Morgan, a Colorado native, began work in the Mader Learning Center at the beginning of August. The Mader Learning Center assists students in mastering both fundamental and advanced reading and writing skills. Special programs are also designed for students who are improving their English proficiency.

Dr. Morgan attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, earning a bachelor's degree in English with a minor in mathematics in 2005. In 2007, she received a master's degree in English from Auburn University in Alabama.

After teaching high school mathematics for a year in her hometown, Fort Morgan, CO, she returned to college. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in French from the University of Colorado-Denver in 2012 and, two years later, a master's degree in French from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 2015, Dr. Morgan moved to Washington, D.C., to begin a doctoral English program at the Catholic University of America.

In 2019, she returned to Fort Morgan to complete her dissertation project, but, after her grandfather's passing, she relocated to Golden, CO, for two years to remain with her grandmother and teach first-year composition for the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

She earned her doctorate in English in January 2023. Her dissertation project examining the influence of natural history upon early Romantic poetry is representative of her interests in both science and art.

Dr. Morgan was employed as a teaching assistant while completing her graduate studies; she provided instruction in both English and French at Auburn, the University of Nebraska, the Catholic University of America, and the Université Paris-Est Marne la Vallée in France. ✚

EVENTS ON THE HILL

October 23-27

Guest House Retreat: "The Sermon on the Mount: Matthew's Handbook for Living in the Kingdom of Heaven" (priests retreat) by Fr. Eugene Hensell, OSB.

October 28

Abbot Martin Marty Guild and Einsiedeln Society Day of Recollection.

November 21

Guest House Workshop: "Advent Workshop: It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!" by Fr. Jeremy King, OSB.

December 16

Guest House Workshop: "Organ Workshop and Concert" by Nolan Snyder.

December 24-26

Guest House Retreat: "Christmas Celebration at Saint Meinrad Archabbey."

January 22-26

Guest House Workshop: "Winter Chant Workshop: Chant Notation and Interpretation" by Br. John Glasenapp, OSB.

February 27-29

Guest House Retreat: "Women of the Word" by Br. Zachary Wilberding, OSB.

March 6

Guest House Workshop: "Created in the Image of God: A Woman's Day of Reflection" by Dr. Kimberly Baker.

March 8-10

Guest House Retreat: "Unpacking the Vocation of Marriage through Scripture and Married Saints" (married couples only) by Josh and Angie Greulich.

March 15-17

Guest House Retreat: "Sleeper Awake" by Fr. Adrian Burke, OSB.

For more information, call 812-357-6611 or visit our website www.saintmeinrad.org

Five join Saint Meinrad Board of Overseers

Five new members have been added to the Board of Overseers, the advisory board for Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

The board advises President-Rector Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, on matters related to the school's programs and performance and addresses strategic questions regarding the future of the school.

New to the board are Kyle King of Evansville, IN; John Lechleiter of Indianapolis, IN; Matthew Nix of Cynthiana, IN; Ryan Renoud of Louisville, KY; and Jeffrey Terhune of Lexington, KY.

New Board Members

Kyle King is an optometrist and owner of Evansville Eyecare Associates. He is a member of the American Optometric



Kyle King

Association and is a trustee in the Indiana Optometric Association. He is on the Development Committee for Habitat for Humanity and has held several professional

leadership roles. He is a member of Deo Gratias Society in the Diocese of Evansville, is a volunteer provider at the Evansville Community Health Organization Clinic, and does school vision screenings at various elementary schools in the Newburgh area.

Kyle attended Gibson Southern High School in Fort Branch, IN, graduating in 2003. He graduated from Indiana University in Bloomington with a bachelor's degree in biology in 2007, and IU School of Optometry with a Doctor of Optometry degree in 2011.

Kyle lives in Evansville, IN, and is a member of Holy Cross Church in Fort Branch, IN, where he is involved in music ministry.



John Lechleiter

John Lechleiter, retired in 2016 as CEO of Eli Lilly and Company in Indianapolis, after more than 37 years of service. He was chair of Lilly's board of directors from 2009-2017. He is an honorary

trustee of the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, a member emeritus of the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership and a member of the American Chemical Society. He serves on the board of directors of Battelle Memorial Institute (Columbus, OH), Indiana Economic Development Corporation, Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, Lilly Endowment, Inc., and the Hoosier Art Salon. He is a former board member of Great Lakes Chemical Corporation, Nike, Inc., and Ford Motor Company.

In 2016, John and his wife jointly received the Charles L. Whistler Award for service to the Indianapolis community. In 2017, they were each awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash by Governor Eric Holcomb. John was inducted into the Indiana Academy in 2019 by the Independent Colleges of Indiana.

John attended St. Xavier High School in Louisville, KY, graduating in 1971. He graduated from Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH, with a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1975. In 1980, he graduated from Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, with master and doctoral degrees in organic chemistry.

John and his wife, Sarah, live in Indianapolis and have three children, Daniel, Andrew, and Elizabeth, and nine grandchildren. They are members of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis.

Matthew Nix is the president and CEO of Nix Companies in Poseyville. He is a member of the Posey County Redevelopment Board and founding

chairman of Grow Poseyville. He is also on the Regional Board of German American Bank and a member of Legatus Catholic Business Executives.



Matthew Nix

Matthew graduated from North Posey High School in 2003. In 2004, he graduated from Vincennes University with a certificate in welding technology and completed a

certificate in executive business administration from Notre Dame in 2017.

Matthew and his wife, Lindsey, are the parents of three children: Charles Matthew, Mason Eugene, and Roman Tyler. They belong to Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Haubstadt, IN, where he is a member of the maintenance committee.

Ryan Renoud is a theology teacher and bus driver at Mercy Academy in Louisville, KY. He is also the owner of OK Awning Company and Crescendo Amazon. He is a member of the FBI Citizens Academy, Knights of Columbus, and past president of the Vatican's Pontifical University Student Representative.



Ryan Renoud

Ryan attended Sehome High School in Bellingham, WA, graduating in 1988. He graduated from Angelicum Pontifical University in Rome, Italy, with a Bachelor of

Philosophy degree in 2006, and a Bachelor of Theology in 2009. He received a Master of Theology Post-Master Terminal Degree from Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, in 2011.

Ryan lives in Louisville, KY, and is a member of St. William Parish. He has been involved in the ministry program as the director of religious education for five years.



Jeffrey Terhune

Jeffrey Terhune is a financial advisor at RW Baird & Co. His past positions include being a colonel in the U.S. Army (retired) and a Lockheed Martin Executive.

He graduated from Lexington Catholic High School in 1978. He went on to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, NY, with a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering in 1982 and a master's degree in leadership development in 1992.

Jeff is a certified financial planner and a past grand knight of the Knights of Columbus Council. He and his wife, Marty, have four children, Mary Hawks McCurry, William Hawks, Jeffrey Terhune, Danielle Terhune, and eight grandchildren. They belong to Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary in Lexington,

KY. Jeff has served on the parish pastoral council, is involved in RCIA, and is a member of the K of C. ✝



Eight join Alumni Board

Eight new members have been added to the Saint Meinrad Alumni Association Board of Directors. The Alumni Board works to nurture a lasting relationship between each alumnus and Saint Meinrad; inform alumni about the ongoing mission and work of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Seminary and School of Theology; listen responsibly and represent alumni concerns; recommend and evaluate alumni events, programs, and initiatives; and foster, enhance, and support Saint Meinrad in carrying out its institutional mission.

New to the board are Dcn. Mike Braun of Indianapolis, Andrea Byrne of New Albany, IN, Fr. Ross Caniglia of the Diocese of Sioux City, IA, Fr. Dale Cieslik of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, Lisa Covington of Copley, OH, Fr. Brian Emmick of the Diocese of Evansville, IN, Fr. Tony Pelak of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, MI, and Dcn. Peter Rendon of Taylorsville, KY.



Dcn. Mike Braun

Dcn. Mike Braun, PD'12 ('08-12), is a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He has served at St. Simon the Apostle Catholic Church since his ordination in

2012. He retired from Roche Diagnostics in 2010 after 31 years of service.

Dcn. Mike earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Purdue University-Indianapolis in 1979. He went on to earn an MBA from Indiana Central University (now University of Indianapolis) in 1985, and a master's degree in theological studies from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in 2009. He is a 2012 graduate of Saint Meinrad's Permanent Deacon Formation Program.

Mike and his wife, Wendy, have five children and thirteen grandchildren and reside in Indianapolis.

Andrea "Andi" Byrne, GTP'18 ('13-18), is a self-employed certified public



Andrea "Andi" Byrne

accountant who currently works with Catholic parishes. Previously she worked in corporate and public accounting and has volunteered for a variety of organizations over the years, including Our Lady of Providence High School. She currently serves on the board of Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Inc. in New Albany, IN.

She graduated from Bellarmine College in 1996 with a degree in accounting and earned her Master of Arts in Theology degree from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in 2018.

She's an active member of St. Mary of the Knobs, where she has served in a variety of roles, including past service on the Pastoral Council, Steering Committee, and RCIA team. She's currently a member of the choir and lives in New Albany, IN.



Fr. Ross Caniglia

Fr. Ross Caniglia, T'19 ('13-19), is a priest of the Diocese of Sioux City, IA, serving as the parochial vicar at Holy Trinity Parish and chaplain at St. Edmond Catholic High School in Ft. Dodge, IA. He

previously served as parochial vicar in the Catholic churches of Boone County, IA, from 2019-2022.

Fr. Ross is a graduate of Creighton University, earning a bachelor's degree in Atmospheric Sciences in 2010. He went on to work in Sioux City, IA, as a meteorologist and news reporter at KTIV, the market's NBC affiliate. From there he did pre-theology and theology studies at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of

Continued from Page 9

Theology. He was ordained a priest in June of 2019.

In his free time, Fr. Ross enjoys playing volleyball, basketball, piano, and writing liturgical music.



Fr. Dale Cieslik

Fr. Dale Cieslik, O'82 ('74-82), is a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY. Since 2012, he has served as pastor of Saint Francis Xavier Church in Mount Washington, KY. Since 2019, Fr.

Dale has served as historian for the Archdiocese of Louisville, and as chaplain for Bellarmine University Men's Basketball Team since 2005.

He earned a bachelor's degree in history from Saint Meinrad College in 1978 and a Master of Divinity from Saint Meinrad School of Theology in 1982.

He has served as pastor of several parishes in the Archdiocese, as chancellor of the Archdiocese from 1994-2002, and archivist for 25 years (1994- 2019). He co-created The History Center (museum) of the Archdiocese in 2006, located across from the Cathedral of the Assumption in Louisville.



Lisa Covington

Lisa Covington, GTP'07 ('04-07), is experienced in both pastoral ministry and teaching in higher education. She is currently the pastoral minister at Prince of Peace parish in Norton, OH, and the

parish catechetical leader at Guardian Angels in Copley, OH. Lisa is also a part-time instructor with the Philosophy and Comparative Religion Department at Cleveland State University, teaching classes in comparative religion and on women and religion.

Additionally, Lisa serves as a case specialist with the Tribunal for the Diocese of Cleveland. She earned her undergraduate degrees in pastoral leadership and theology from Marian University, and her graduate degree in theological studies from Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in 2007. Lisa and her husband Bob have two children and reside in Copley, OH.



Fr. Brian Emmick

Fr. Brian Emmick, T'12 ('06-12), is a priest of the Diocese of Evansville, IN. He has served as pastor of Precious Blood in Jasper and priest-delegate of Holy Trinity School

since July 2020. Previously, he was pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Princeton, IN, and St. Bernard Catholic Church, Snake Run, IN, for four years.

Fr. Brian is a graduate of the University of Southern Indiana, earning a bachelor's degree in biology. He earned a Master of Catholic Philosophical Thought in 2008, and a Master of Divinity from the Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in 2012.

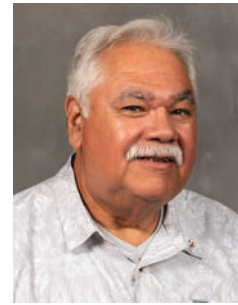


Fr. Tony Pelak

Fr. Tony Pelak, C'95 ('93-95), is a priest of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, MI. He has served as pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Grand Rapids since July 2023, and continues to serve

as the master of ceremonies for the bishop since he was ordained in 2003. Previously, he was pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Belmont, MI.

Fr. Tony earned a bachelor's degree in history from Saint Meinrad College in 1995, and a Master of Divinity from the Athenaeum of Ohio, Cincinnati, in 2003.



Dcn. Peter "Pete" Rendon

Dcn. Peter "Pete" Rendon, PD'20 ('16-20), is a graduate of the Saint Meinrad Permanent Diaconate Program, class of 2020, and serves as a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY. He

is assigned to All Saints Catholic Church, Taylorsville, KY, and St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, Fairfield, KY.

He is also engaged in several other ministries, including as a Catholic presence at Central State Hospital in Louisville, where he performs communion services; at Signature Healthcare, Taylorsville, providing communion to residents; and he visits the sick and homebound in his assigned parishes.

Dcn. Pete is also involved in pastoral care ministry, working with local hospital chaplains to provide a priest when needed as patient care requires, and with Mass of the Air. He is retired as an Aircraft Quality Control Specialist with the Kentucky Air National Guard, but currently serves with the Association of Civilian Technicians (ACT), Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, as chapter president and as executive vice president on the board for the National ACT in Washington, D.C.

Pete and his wife, Carmen, have two adult children, and two four-legged fur babies, Moses and Lucie, both Bichons. They live in Taylorsville, KY, and are members of All Saints Catholic Church, Taylorsville, and the Cathedral of the Assumption, Louisville. ✝

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[Meet the Student]

Isaac Siefker

Diocese: Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Hometown: Bloomington, IN

Q. *What attracted you to the priesthood?*

I was first attracted to the priesthood as early in life as I can remember because of my parents' devotion. I wanted to serve Mass as soon as I was able to and began to serve for my then pastor, Fr. Rick Eldred, at St. Vincent DePaul Catholic Church in Bedford, IN. I remember thinking how awesome it was that this man brought Jesus to us in the Eucharist. While serving Mass, I would have strong feelings of love and devotion which made me want to celebrate the Mass someday. I also saw Fr. Rick was a very happy person and someone I could see myself being like.

Q. *Who or what influenced you to begin study for the priesthood?*

Near the end of high school, I began to have second thoughts about the priesthood. I became nervous about celibacy, speaking in front of large audiences, and so forth. My older brother entered seminary for three semesters, and although he ultimately decided to get married and have a family, he was still able to help me realize that seminary is a place to discern and does not involve an immediate permanent commitment. So, I decided that seminary would be the right place to go in order to further explore my fears of and attractions toward the priesthood.

Q. *What were you doing before you came to the seminary?*

I lived with my parents for two years after high school, working part-time for the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat

Center and for neighbors, doing tree work, brush clearing, and miscellaneous groundskeeping. I was visiting religious communities, particularly with the thought of becoming a religious brother rather than a priest. I was also involved in various ministries, including pro-life work and St. Paul Street Evangelization.

Q. *Favorite saint and why?*

One of my favorite saints is St. Anthony Mary Claret. Reading his autobiography and seeing his love for Jesus and Mary, and his zeal to preach the Gospel for the salvation of souls, inspired me to look past my fears to what God could do with my life if I were to give it all to Him.

Q. *Favorite Scripture verse and why?*

Genesis 3:15, "Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius: ipsa conteret caput tuum." "I will place enmity between you and the woman, and your seed and her seed: she will crush your head." This verse has seen some variations in how it has been translated from the original Hebrew, and it deserves a very lengthy exploration to unpack all the meaning. One allegorical interpretation that is highlighted by the Vulgate translation is that Mary will be God's instrument to crush the devil's head.

When I made my total consecration to Mary according to the formula of St.

Maximilian Kolbe, as taught to me by the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, I became convinced that whatever I would do in life, God wanted me to do it all for and with Mary in order to play my small role in God's big plan to thwart the serpent and his plot to steal souls from heaven.

Q. *Hobbies?*

I love to chop firewood, which is no secret here at Saint Meinrad. I enjoy Ultimate Frisbee, weight lifting, any form of exercise or manual labor, studying languages, especially Latin and Spanish, and reading, especially about Scripture.

Q. *What aspect of seminary life has been most rewarding?*

Socrates famously said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Seminary has invited me to examine my life and relationship with God, which has been very rewarding, both spiritually and otherwise.

Q. *What aspect of seminary life has been most challenging?*

Coming out of my shell, my introverted nature's comfort zone, and allowing the formation program, my fellow seminarians, life's many adventures, and every other manifestation of God's grace to help me to fully realize the capacity that God has given me to do good.

Q. *Best advice you've heard in seminary?*

"Your knees should not become worn out from exercise or running, but from kneeling before the blessed sacrament," Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB. ✠

Alumni Reunion



Alumni Reunion



Photos, opposite page, from top, left to right: Saint Meinrad welcomed just over 153 alumni and guests on the Hill for the annual Alumni Reunion on July 31-August 2. Archbishop Peter Sartain presides at the reunion Mass on the second day of the Alumni Reunion. He was presented with the Distinguished Alumnus award at the reunion banquet that evening; Fr. Denis Robinson, OSB, gives an art tour starting in the Memorial Lobby on July 31; Cassie Schutzer, director of Saint Meinrad's Young Adult Initiative, presents on, "Known and Loved: A Relational Approach to Young Adult Ministry" on Monday afternoon; Tony Stephens and his 1974 college classmates look at their class composite on August 1; The High School Class of 1963 have Mass together in the St. Theodore Guerin Chapel on July 31.

Photos, this page, left to right: Fr. Meinrad Brune, OSB, greets arriving reunion guests on July 31; Lou and Linda Seng pray together during the reunion Mass. Lou was celebrating his 50th anniversary during the reunion; A golf scramble was held at Christmas Lake Golf Course in Santa Claus, IN, on Monday of the reunion; Fr. Jerry Schweitzer gives a homily to the High School Class of 1963 during Mass on Monday of the reunion.

ALUMNI ETERNAL

Mr. William E. Bassler, O'54, ('42-50), of Washington, IN, died on September 2, 2023.

Dr. Roger R. Baumgarte, O'73 ('61-66), of Charlotte, NC, died on June 8, 2023.

Mr. James A. Bell, O'59 ('47-49), of Louisville, KY, died on September 11, 2020.

Fr. Paul M. Dede, O'64 ('52-56), a priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, IN, died on June 19, 2023.

Most Rev. Joseph Hart, O'56 ('50-56), bishop emeritus of Wyoming, died on August 23, 2023.

Mr. James G. Mueller, O'67 ('65-67), of Cincinnati, OH, died on July 10, 2023.

Mr. Robert O. Murphy, O'55 ('47-49), of South Bend, IN, died on August 25, 2023.

Mr. Wilhelmus Jozef Maria Scheerder, S'94, of the Netherlands, died on July 14, 2023.

Fr. Herman Scherger, O'58 ('51-54), a priest of the Diocese of Toledo, OH, died on July 8, 2023.

John K. Wersing, O'66 ('55-60), of Pittsburgh, PA, died on April 12, 2023.

A key to the initials behind the names of alumni:

C: College

GTP: Graduate Theology Programs

HS: High School

MAT: Master of Arts (Theology)

MAPT: Master of Arts (Pastoral Theology)

MTS: Master in Theological Studies

O: Ordination

PD: Permanent Deacon Formation Program

S: Sabbaticant

SPH: St. Placid Hall

SS: Summer Session

T: Theology ✚

Saint Meinrad
DAY OF SERVICE

has been set for
March 9, 2024

Watch for more details!

Peanut Brother discontinues production

After careful consideration it has been decided to discontinue producing and selling Peanut Brother. It has been a fun adventure and helpful outreach for Saint Meinrad Archabbey, but is not sustainable in the long term.

We are grateful to the monks, co-workers, and customers that have supported us through this journey. We will continue to offer Peanut Brother for sale in the Gift Shop until current inventory runs out.



Sr. Mary Hope Billing, SS'83 ('77-81, '84), of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, has been serving in Japan for eight years at the university founded by her community. She taught English classes, and she now serves as a volunteer at the English language learning center on campus.

Most Rev. Christopher M. Carpenter, T'95 ('89-95), (Reformed Catholic Church), of Manchester, CT, was approved as a Board Certified Chaplain (BCC) by the Association of Professional Chaplains in June 2023. He currently serves as spiritual care coordinator and preceptor at Masonicare Home Health & Hospice in Hartford, CT.

ALUMNI NEWS

Fr. Thomas J. Extejt, O'73 ('65-73), a priest of the Diocese of Toledo, has been named the Dozynki Honoree for 2023 by the Toledo-Poznań Alliance. The award is given for contributions to the Polish community of Toledo and to the larger community. He also recently celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination and on July 1, 2023, began service to the diocese as a senior priest.

Mr. Gregory G. Layton, C'83 ('81-83), of Green Bay, WI, retired on June 30, as parish leader of SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Hortonville, WI. He spent 35 years in parish ministry and was appointed to SS.

Peter and Paul Parish by Bishop David Ricken in 2008.

Fr. Michael R. Maples, T'05 ('00-05), a priest of the Diocese of Knoxville, TN, recently led a pilgrimage through Switzerland for 20 people from the diocese. The group visited the Benedictine Abbeys in Einsiedeln and Engelberg.

Fr. Gladstone (Bud) Stevens, P.S.S., T'00 ('98-00), a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY, was appointed the 18th rector of the Theological College, the national seminary of the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in June 2023. ✚



Photos, from top, left to right: “One Bread, One Cup” intern, Claire Schomogyi, gives intern Ashton Hernandez the cup during communion at the July 6 internship Mass in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel; Archabbot Kurt Stasiak, OSB, gives Br. Jude Angel Romero, OSB, the sign of peace after Br. Jude makes his first profession of vows as a monk of Saint Meinrad on August 6, 2023; Sharon Schumann gives feedback to a permanent deacon candidate after he presented a practice homily during the homiletics week for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, WV, permanent deacon cohort on August 25; The candidacy Mass for seminarians was held on August 23, in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel; Br. John Glasenapp, OSB, gives a presentation on the sacred origins of music during the Institute for Sacred Music’s summer chant workshop on August 7; Agnes Kovacs lights Lisa Reed’s candle at the start of a prayer service during the Parish Catechetical Leadership Institute on July 20.



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Alumni Retreat Planned for January

Sharing in the Life of God

“Jesus came to give us life, to make us ‘partakers of the divine nature’” (2 Peter 1:4).



*Fr. Thomas Gricoski,
OSB*

Alumni are invited to attend an alumni retreat at Saint Meinrad on January 5-7, 2024. The retreat will be led by Fr. Thomas

Gricoski, OSB, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. He was ordained in 2010, and teaches philosophy in the Seminary and

School of Theology. Since 2021, he has served as the novice master in the monastery.

From the first moments of creation, God has been at work to draw us forth out of nothing and into the inner life of the Trinity, into God who is Love. By becoming human, Christ enables human beings to participate in divine life. We will reflect on the key moments of salvation history in Scripture and apply them to our own spiritual lives and ministries. ✝

Save the Date!

July 29-31, 2024

96th Annual Alumni Reunion

August 4-6, 2025

97th Annual Alumni Reunion

August 3-5, 2026

98th Annual Alumni Reunion