

# From the desk of Fr. David

September 2007

*A lot has happened since the last newsletter I sent out back in April.*

## Norbertine Chaplains

Fr. Steve Vanden Boogard, O. Praem., who had been serving with the troops in Iraq, got back to us in one piece, thank God. He is getting some rest and will be back out in Iraq again soon. Another Norbertine priest, Fr. Mike Weber, has been called to active duty in Kabul, Afghanistan. We pray for them and all our troops.

## Home to God

On the home front, Fr. Bob Hyde, O. Praem., died on June 25. He had reached his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in December, and told us every day that he was ready. We joked with him and told him God wasn't ready! Fr. Bob would frown, and then laugh! But God was ready for him; we miss his presence around now.



*Fr. Bob Hyde, O. Praem.  
1916-2007*

## Anniversaries and Special Events

We are getting ready to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the present Abbey building, and 875 years since St. Norbert's death. We have some special events and surprises over the next year or so.

There will be compact discs available from the Archives with beautiful Gregorian chants; we have special St. Norbert medals and lapel pins, and of course the beautiful prayer book of St. Norbert College too. Some

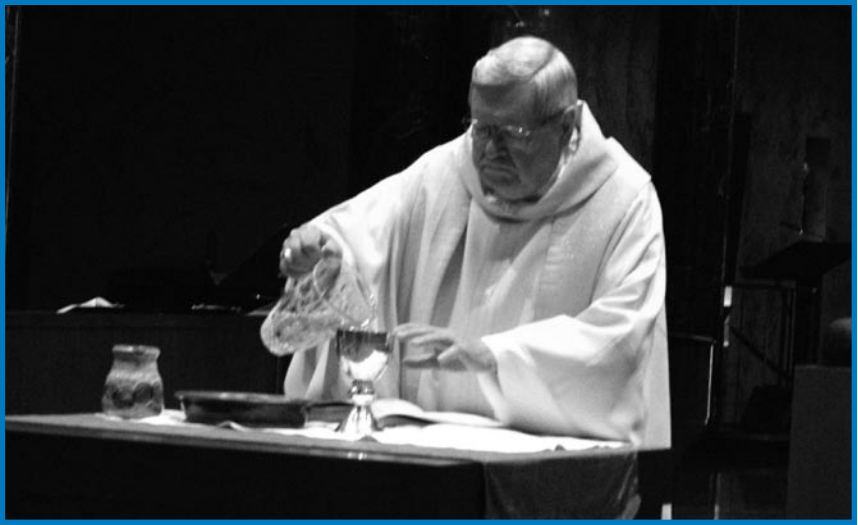
of you have called and asked about a card for St. Joseph. Rest assured, our designers have been at work, and we will print a beautiful "Spiritual Bouquet of St. Joseph" card soon. We will also have a matching one for the Blessed Mother.

Many of you have called asking for cards for your grandchildren. We hope to have some very special children's cards soon.

On another note, we

celebrate Mass for YOU (our benefactors) and your intentions every day, and we also remember you at morning and evening prayer. Each year during our Chapter meeting, usually before St. Norbert's feast, we celebrate a special Mass for all our benefactors who have died; we

also do this again in November. This year, Abbot Emeritus Jerome Tremel celebrated that Mass, and it was particularly memorable, with so many Norbertine Priests and Brothers home. The choir stalls were packed for this special concelebrated Mass.



*Abbot Tremel prepares the cup at Mass.*

## *Sisters, Brothers and Nuns!*

Two of our Norbertine Sisters from Hungary came to our Abbey to learn English. It has been a delight having their sweet voices at Mass and Prayer. The Sisters go to St. Norbert College each day for their English classes, and can be seen in the library and many other places learning their vocabulary. I took the Sisters out for a special outing to the local Barnes & Noble; they

were amazed at the size of the store and, of course, we had to have coffee! (Not Irish coffee, of course!) The Sisters teach at a special school in Hungary, and they work with the poorest of the poor.

As many of you may know, we have two types of women religious in the Norbertine order—the Nuns, who are enclosed in the cloister, and the

Sisters, who are active outside with parish and diocesan work. Since the fall of Communism, the Sisters and Nuns have begun to flourish again in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. It was wonderful to meet so many of them at the General Chapter last year at the Holy Father's old house in Munich, Germany. We have invited many of the Sisters to visit us to help with their learning English. This is so important for them now as they teach English at school.

A cloistered group of Norbertine Nuns also exists in California; they are under the authority of Abbot Eugene from the Abbey of Orange.

In May I went to Albuquerque, New Mexico, for a retreat at our Priory of Santa Maria de la Vid (Our Lady of the Vine). It was a very special time. I remembered you all each day at the Eucharist, and it was a particularly prayerful experience away in the desert.

The confreres are working very hard at the Priory, and are presently building a new library and spirituality center. The peace and tranquility there really helps with a contemplative spirit. One of the Norbertine Brothers from the Priory has decided to become a priest; we are delighted to celebrate his Ordination to the Diaconate in September and his Ordination to the Priesthood in 2008. This brother is Bob Campbell. (I managed to get a



*Brother Bob Campbell, soon to be ordained as a Norbertine priest*

quick photo of him at the Chapter in June).

Brother Bob has been working as a hospital chaplain in Albuquerque and lives at the Priory there. He is originally from Massachusetts, and his parents are now retired in Florida. Needless to say, with the many confreres at the Priory who are Green Bay Packers fans, Brother Bob cheers quietly for the New England Patriots! I can't tell you how delighted we are to have an ordination in the Community. It really lifts our spirits!

Last month we had another Brother come to stay with us at the Abbey in De Pere. Brother Vaclav Kittel is from the Abbey of Strahov at Prague in the Czech Republic. He is also here to learn English, and is starting from scratch! He asked me to help with his homework. I told him that I wasn't the best person

to ask, since I still have an Irish Brogue, and spell everything differently! I made an express visit with him to Barnes & Noble, we drank coffee, and he of course was happy with the easy readers in the children's section. He is coming along nicely, and is very happy to perfect his English!


I think the Sisters have been helping him in secret, because he is catching on to some things too quickly! Brother Vaclav is with us for the year. I hope to bring him to visit the parish where I work, because the Pastor speaks Czech and they could converse.

## Other News

Many of you will notice that all our products (with the exception of the Rosaries) are now being made in the USA. We are very aware that there are many cards and religious objects out there that are not the best in quality, so we made a decision to make sure all our cards and supplies are made here in the USA. This is our effort to safeguard jobs at home. Our Rosaries are made in Italy, but we are looking to see if the Cloistered Norbertine Nuns would be able to make them too. They make beautiful vestments, but we will see if they can help us.

Many of you write to us asking for prayer for your sons and daughters who are looking for a job. We are actively encouraging as many people as possible to buy in the USA. This is a practical way in which we can help, and many people are beginning to listen. You will also notice that the price of postage has gone up. Our costs for the Rosaries have gone up too, so all in all there is a little bit of change afoot.

That seems to be all the news for now. I am saving the photos of St. Patrick's Day and the news from the Ireland trip for later. You will be surprised!

  
Father David McElroy, O. Praem.

*I hope you have enjoyed hearing our news. I'll be writing you again soon with more updates from your friends at St. Norbert Abbey.*



## Norbertine Fathers

St. Norbert Abbey

1016 N. Broadway • De Pere, WI 54115-2698

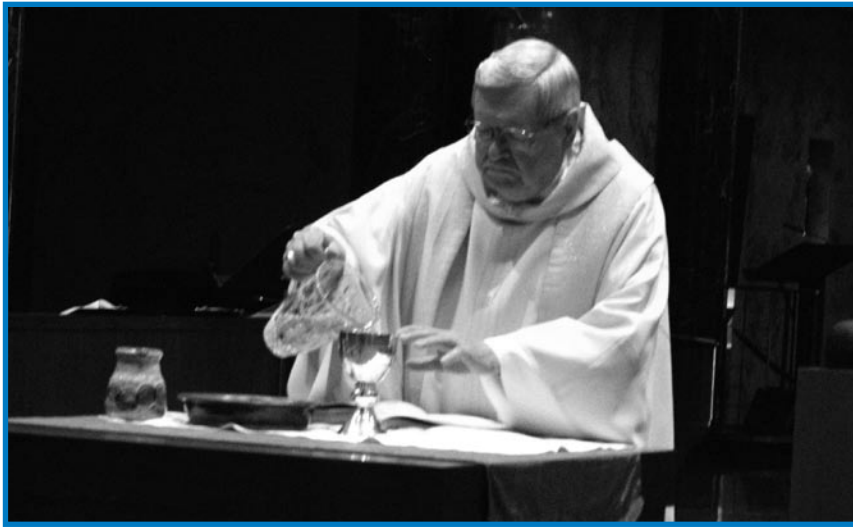
(920) 337-4307 • [www.norbertines.org](http://www.norbertines.org)

(Calling Hours: 7:00am-3:00pm CST Mon.-Fri.)

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