

Dear Friends and Visitors

The Lord be with you this Easter Season—

Our three months of Spring got off to a good start with the LAC (Lay Advisory Committee) meeting. Some ten men and women (plus three monks) gathered here for the daylong sharing on April 18. After general introduction by Martha Fly, we divided into 3 groups. Each group focused on specific topics, such as Employee Handbook, Employee Benefits, Sexual Harassment Policy, Student Volunteer Project, Guest House Renovation and Operation, Vocations Report, and the Assumption Abbey website. We all gathered afterwards to hear each group's minutes, and formulated conclusions, along with resulting tasks. This input from different viewpoints is a catalyst for our monastery and community to keep growing in the right direction.



Fr. Justin, one of our transitional oblates, has been bitten by the "Rose Bug". His cousin sent many small rose bushes and other decorative plants, complete with pots and holders. The three climbing rose bushes started by Fr. Mark have blossomed fully—two white and one red in the middle. They are adorning central pillars in our cloister garden. Now Fr. Justin's rose bushes and flower pots are at the base of all the other pillars. The juniors' final touch was to beg, borrow, or steal a two-

foot white statue of Our Lady from Br. Boniface's wardrobe, and place it under the central window of the infirmary chapel, between two modest bushes. The inner quadrangle has become Our Mother's Garden.

The Cistercian monks of the Common Observance have a monastery, Our Lady of Springbank, near Sparta, Wisconsin. In the spirit of fostering the unity of charity with the Trappist branch of the family, Fr. Bernard McCoy, their superior, invited someone from Assumption Abbey to visit their community. He even sent a plane ticket. I spent a long weekend there, meeting and sharing with their monks. A tornado blew past the Springfield Airport terminal 10 or 15 minutes before scheduled takeoff time. Otherwise, a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience. In many ways, our two monastic communities resemble each other.

Fr. Donald is plagued by recurring moderate medical afflictions, but keeps his buoyant spirit. He is happy with his life at the Heart of the Ozarks nursing home. Jill, our health care worker, stops there daily for treating and wrapping his legs.

Gena and Tom Valli continue their sister and brother construction work on our Guest House rooms. The major things are finished, except for renovating the number 3 and 5 rooms with handicapped accessible doorways, shower and toilet facilities, and a hospital bed. The Ozark Independent Living Organization at West Plains learned of our work to provide suitable accommodations for handicapped guests or retreatants. They gave us a generous grant to help pay for this project. The organization serves 8 to 10 counties in Southern Missouri.



The small-time vandals got carried away with their pranks. Having broken into our largest warehouse, they set fires inside, which destroyed our cartons of new cans and lids, the packaging flats, and a large number of wooden pallets, and choir stalls. There is also a large amount of smoke and heat damage to other things that had been stored there. The fire was so hot that it consumed the insulation under the very high steel peaked roof. The sheriff called the fire marshal who is

offering a \$5000.00 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the one(s) responsible for this damage. Fortunately, with a lot of scrambling from Mike Melton, our general manager, and Michael Hampton, our assistant bakery manager, we will be able to continue production of our fruitcakes. We are also going to start construction of a new warehouse inside the enclosure behind our bakery.

Nothing like the quiet hidden life of a contemplative monastery in the peaceful hills of the Ozarks.

In the Sacred Heart,

Fr Cyprian



1st row..left-right: Bro. Dominic, Bro. Boniface, Bro. Thomas, Fr. Alberic
 2nd row: Bro. Francis, Bro. Lazarus, Richard, Fr. Cyprian, Fr. Justin, Paul, Bro. Andrew