

**Dear Associates and Friends,  
The Lord be with you!**

**We have lost our Franciscans next door at Our Lady of the Angels Friary. Fr. Francis' heart trouble caught up with him, while he was riding his lawn mower. Fr. Shawn, the only other Friar there, found him a couple of hours later on the ground. Fr. Francis' funeral Mass and burial were held in his Kansas hometown, where there is a Franciscan section in the Catholic cemetery.**

**There were no other Friars free to be assigned there, so Fr. Shawn returned to his province. The Franciscans lived and kept improving the buildings at their House of Prayer and Retreat Center there for eighteen years. It was always a comfort and support to have the Friars as next door neighbors. For many years they were welcome helpers in our fruit cake bakery. Fr. Francis was also our usual main concelebrant at our Wednesday community Mass.**

**Now Fr. Basil and Br. Ambrose live there in the afternoon and at night. They come over here to the monastery for early morning Lauds and Mass, for bakery work, and noon meal. They continue the garden, which Fr. Francis and Fr. Shawn cultivated. Br. Gabriel is the main gardener here with help from others as needed.**

**Our gravel driveways and parking areas kept developing pot-holes and gullies. Fr. Alberic checked asphalt or cement possibilities and found them too costly. So he had dump truck loads of crushed limestone spread onto all the areas. In time that material gets packed down and hardened, so we have much better roadways now. This makes it more convenient for our retreatants, who are more numerous this time of year.**

**The Vietnamese Congregation of Cistercian monks celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They were approved and incorporated into that Order in 1918. A French missionary priest had founded their contemplative monastic life with the support of a local bishop. They would have joined the Trappist Order, but the early Trappists would not allow them to wear lighter robes and go barefoot as the common people did in their tropical country.**

**Fr. Thaddeus gave a weekend retreat to a Vietnamese community in Nebraska. This is an event, especially for the immigrant members, who still must wrestle with English. The Cistercians (O.Cist.) are contemplative monks, but a little more social and outgoing than Trappists (O.C.S.O.), so they may go out to give such retreats a few times yearly.**

**Both Fr. Thaddeus and Fr. Basil have received approval from the United States Department of Citizenship and Immigration for personal residence, i.e. their Green Card. This is the latest step towards becoming American citizens. They have been in our country some five years now. A person must have lived ten years in the United States to qualify for citizenship.**

**The pair of swallows who make their yearly nest under the roof of our courtyard's outside walkway, raised only one chick this time. The little bird has no siblings, so it seems to regard us as family. It will perch on the lintel of a window and watch a monk walk closely under it quite peacefully. The two parents join their youngster, especially at the beginning or end of the day. Sometimes they swoop in and out and around the columns of the walkway. Occasionally they chirp in a conversational way, or they carry on a lively family exchange, or they may squawk in irritation. All part of God's creation.**





**King Hezekiah was in a hopeless situation. Jerusalem was surrounded by the army of Assyria. Sennacherib demanded surrender. Hezekiah went into the temple of the Lord God and prayed. The Word of the Lord came to Isaiah the Prophet. God spoke, and a deadly plague decimated the Assyrian warriors that night.**

**See the power of God's Word! In the beginning God said, "Let there be light," and light was made. God spoke, and the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain. The Word of the Lord came to the prophets of old, and it accomplished the work which it was sent to do.**

**In the fullness of time the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. After accomplishing His work of salvation, He promised to be with us always until the end.**

**He comes daily in the Mystery of the Eucharist, bringing us salvation in a threefold manner: salvation through revelation in the Liturgy of the Word, salvation through redemption in the Liturgy of Consecration, salvation through union with God in the Liturgy of Holy Communion.**

**In the Liturgy of the Word we hear God speaking His divine powerful Word in the human words of sacred scripture, bringing us salvation through the revelation of His plan and work in history.**

**In the Liturgy of Consecration Our Lord Jesus renews His redeeming sacrifice by speaking His all-powerful Word through the priest; *This Is My Body, Do This In Memory of Me*, bringing salvation through redemption.**

**In the Liturgy of Holy Communion, we pray Our Lord's Prayer in union with Him, "Holy Father, give us this day our daily Bread." We eat His Body and drink His Blood in the Eucharist. He brings us salvation through union with God.**

**This is God speaking to us. On our part we try to receive the Word of God, allowing the light of His Revelation to penetrate our darkness, praying that the grace and mercy of His Redemption forgive and heal our wounded sinfulness, and trusting that the spiritual nourishment of the Eucharist strengthens and deepens our union with God.**

**In this way we cooperate with the living personal Word of God in His ongoing work of salvation, overcoming the power of evil and building up the Kingdom of Heaven for the glory of His Father.**

**In the Sacred Heart,**

**Your Ava monks**