



# PAX REGIS

Vol. 82 No. 1 December 2022

The cover: (L to R): Bishop David Monroe, Bishop François Beyrouiti and Abbot Alban Riley, OSB

## Alban Riley Blessed as Fourth Abbot

For a visitor to Westminster Abbey on September 14, the grounds had a festive air. Approaching the abbey church, he would have passed two expansive, white tents erected in the parking lot - prepared for the outdoor reception that was to follow the blessing of Father Alban Riley OSB as fourth abbot of Westminster Abbey. The tower bells rang out a joyous greeting; ringers from Vancouver and Seattle joined the ranks of monastic ringers for the occasion. As the liturgy commenced, a glance at the assembly revealed Oblates of the abbey, consecrated men and women from the Archdiocese, friends of the monastic community and alumni of the seminary, some fifty clergy, about a half-dozen mitred

prelates (the bishops of Victoria, Prince George and the retired bishop of Kamloops, as well as the abbots or representatives of neighbouring abbeys in Saskatchewan, Washington and Oregon), and lastly, Archbishop J. Michael Miller CSB of Vancouver, the main celebrant.

The day was at once solemn and familiar. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is the anniversary of the founding of this monastic community in 1939. Four monks of the founding abbey of Mount Angel in Oregon were present as witness of Westminster's membership in the long lineage of Benedictine monastic life. This was the moment in which to invoke God's blessing on the newly elected shepherd of this community. In keeping with the rite of abbatial



**PAX REGIS – Biannual publication of Westminster Abbey and the Seminary of Christ the King, Box 3310 Mission, B.C., Canada V2V 4J5. [www.westminsterabbey.ca](http://www.westminsterabbey.ca); [info@westminsterabbey.ca](mailto:info@westminsterabbey.ca)**

**Publications Mail Agreement Number 40012235 Subscription: \$5.00 a year. ISSN 0031-3335**



blessing, after his homily Archbishop Miller prayed, “Let him realise, Lord, how demanding is the task to which he now sets his hand, how heavy the responsibility of guiding the souls of others...Let him seek to help his brothers rather than to preside over them...”

Abbot Alban was inspired by this very text, drawn from the Rule of St. Benedict, in choosing his abbatial motto, *Prodesse*, meaning “to be helpful” or “to be of profit to (his brothers)”. The fact that the archbishop himself was celebrant at this liturgy blessing was a visible sign of the communion that unites the monastic community to the local church. The presence of so many familiar faces among the clergy and faithful was a resounding “Yes” attesting to that bond. At the end of the liturgy came Abbot Alban’s turn to speak. Seeing both the hand of God and the hand of man in this weighty moment of his life, he thanked God for having laid upon him this cross and he thanked his monastic confreres for having laid it upon him by their election of him on July 11.

The news of Abbot Alban’s election circled the globe as far as the town of Schwäbisch Gmünd in southern Germany. A letter arrived on the very morning of September 14 from the mayor of the town, expressing satisfaction that a son of this town should have attained such a distinction. He invited him, moreover, if ever he should pass that way, to stop in and discover the hospitality of his fellow townspeople. A word is in order about the early years of Abbot Alban’s life. He is the eldest of the three children of Anthony Riley and Maria Walter. Curiously, Anthony and Maria first met under the gaze

of a statue of Marshal Tito while each was separately pursuing a vacation in the communist Yugoslavia of the mid-1950s. Family life soon followed in Schwäbisch Gmünd, a staunchly Catholic enclave in Swabia and a free town in the former days of the Holy Roman Empire, where the Walter family had lived for centuries. One hears of Swabians that they are a people at once independent and productive (Albert Einstein and Mercedes-Benz both saw their beginnings here), at once cordial and shrewd. The eldest child of the family was baptised Christopher and lived here his first six years. His father, however, who hailed from Nottinghamshire in England, had by then completed his doctoral studies in German literature and obtained a professorship at Queen’s University in Kingston, ON. So, the family immigrated to Canada and there Christopher grew up.

It was while he was himself completing



Kiss of Peace (L to R): Fr. Dunstan and Abbot Alban

university studies at Queen’s University (BA in History) that Christopher discerned his monastic calling. As he was leafing through the family’s encyclopedia set one day, his eyes fell on a picture of white-robed monks in procession and an inviting thought came to him, “Why not me?” He knew then that God was calling him to consecrate his whole life. But where? After receiving spiritual guidance and visiting several religious orders, he decided to look up Benedictines in the *Canadian Catholic Directory*. When he wrote to Westminster Abbey, a letter came back from Father Prior Wilfrid suggesting that he come for a year as a layman, perhaps teach a class in the minor seminary, and see what it was like. It wasn’t long before he was on the train from Kingston to Mission, BC.

After two years as postulant and novice, he

made his temporary vows on August 27, 1981, taking the name Alban. His patron, St. Alban Roe, was an English Benedictine of lively and cheerful disposition martyred in 1642. At the gallows, he joked with his executioner and explained to

onlookers that his only crime was his religion, then joined his fellow prisoner in reciting the Miserere before the cart was pulled out from under them.

After priestly ordination in 1985, Father Alban returned to the Pontifical

Athenaeum of Sant’Anselmo in Rome to complete a licentiate in sacramental theology. Back at the abbey, he exercised a variety of responsibilities in the monastery and the seminary. At the time of his abbatial election, he was subprior in the monastery, member of the abbot’s council, director of Oblates, registrar in the seminary and professor of numerous courses. Over the

last 35 years, he has taught subjects at both the high school and the college level ranging from liturgical and Church history to French and Latin, from World Religions to English. Students appreciate his breadth of knowledge, his clarity and his fairness. As abbot he continues to teach a course in each of the departments in the seminary and monastery. In the monastic community, his self-effacing and reliable service has been a steady support for his confreres. An instance of this was



(L to R): Fr. Subprior (Anthony), Abbot Alban, Fr. Matthew



Confreres with Benedictine Guests (L to R): Fr. Mark, Abbot Neil Roth, Br. John, Prior Vincent Trujillo, Br. Paschasius and Abbot Marion Nguyen

the annual drafting of the academic timetable during the summer break: it had to fit and align the rhythms of three (sometimes even four) communities into one seamless schedule so that life here on the hill could go on in synchronised fashion.

With a gift for languages and a love of the liturgy and of Benedictine tradition, Father Alban launched out on a hobby project of his own a few years ago. Might it be possible, he wondered, to adjust the universal liturgical calendar which Benedictines follow to a more Benedictine stamp? So many saints have been added over the decades that one tends to lose sight of the typically monastic contemplation of the Lord's life and ministry in Ordinary Time. After mining the liturgical sources on this question, he presented his findings to Benedictine authorities and has since been appointed to a commission tasked with bringing the matter before the worldwide Benedictine Confederation and, hopefully, the Holy See.

Perhaps the most drastic change in the somewhat predictable life-journey of a monk is to be elected abbot. But sometimes God gives a gentle reassurance to the neo-elect that he will be there to sustain him in this onerous task. That delicate divine touch came to Abbot Alban when he was shown into the abbot's quarters

after his election. There, the monk who had prepared his room had hung a tapestry that he thought depicted the Blessed Virgin Mary. In fact, it depicted Walther von der Vogelweide, the most famous medieval German poet, as he appears in an illumination from the renowned Codex Manesse. Father Abbot's grandmother had made the tapestry – one family member thought (mistakenly, it so happens) that Walther was an ancestor of theirs. As a dutiful monk, the then-Father Alban received this gift many years ago and had presented it to the abbot for him to do with it as he pleased. It disappeared into a storage space for some fifteen years only to have been unwittingly chosen as wall ornament in his abbot's bedroom!

If song gives voice to the stirrings of the heart, perhaps a fitting conclusion to this narrative can be to let the words of the Communion motet at the abbatial blessing speak. Abbot Alban selected these words from Psalm 33 and a polyphonic choir of monks sang it while the Eucharistic Lord was coming in person to each of those present for the occasion:

*Look towards him and be radiant;  
let your faces not be abashed.  
This poor man called, the Lord heard him  
and rescued him from all his distress.*



Abbot Alban and members of the CWL from Assumption Parish

# Bishop François Beyrouti

Father François Beyrouti ('93) is the 6th Eparchial Bishop of Newton for Melkite Greek Catholics in the United States. Newton is in Massachusetts, but the diocese covers all of the United States, with 35,000 Catholics and 51 parishes.

His consecration took place October 12, and thanks to the generosity of a couple who are friends to both the Beyrouti family and Bishop David Monroe, Father Abbot was able to accompany Bishop David to North Hollywood, CA and take part in Father François's episcopal ordination. A substantial number of Eastern and Latin prelates took part, as well as many clergy and a full co-cathedral of laity. Principal consecrator was His Beatitude Patriarch Joseph Absi, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East for Melkite Greek Catholics, who came from Syria for the occasion.

Bishop François was born July 3, 1971, to Elias and Maggy Beyrouti in Hadeth-Beirut, Lebanon. He has two brothers, Joseph, who passed away in 2004, and Anthony. The family immigrated to Canada in 1976, settling in North Vancouver, where Father David Monroe was their pastor for a number of years.

He attended St Edmund's Elementary and St Thomas Aquinas High School. He then entered the Seminary of Christ the King in 1989 where he completed a B.A. in 1993. While he was here, he was encouraged to strengthen his Eastern Catholic roots by taking external courses, such as Arabic.

Moving to Ottawa, he completed in 1996 a Civil and Ecclesiastical Baccalaureate in

Theology in Eastern Christian Studies at the Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies at Saint Paul University. In 1997, he completed a Master of Arts in Theology, Biblical Studies concentration, and in 1998, a Licentiate in Theology, Biblical Studies concentration, both at Saint Paul University, Ottawa.



On October 4, 1998, Bishop Sleiman Hajjar ordained Father François a priest. He was the first diocesan priest ordained for the Melkite Catholic Eparchy of Saint-Sauveur, Montreal, where he served as Vocations Director and member of the College of Consultors.

Bishop Sleiman appointed him assistant pastor of Saints Peter and Paul Melkite Catholic Church in Ottawa where he ministered until January 31, 2010. There he focused on building up pastoral programs, developing strong children, youth, and young adult ministries, leading marriage preparation programs, media work with newspapers, radio, and TV stations, and engaged political leaders on religious topics. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth to the throne, Father François was awarded the Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002.

In 2013, he received a Ph.D. (The University of Ottawa) and D.Th. (Saint Paul University, Ottawa) for his thesis on Origen of Alexandria's Commentary on the Gospel of John, focusing on Jesus's encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4. During these studies, he attended and presented at academic conferences and published articles and book reviews in academic journals.

He was incardinated into the Melkite Catholic

Eparchy of Newton, USA, on December 2, 2011, and served on the Presbyteral Council and College of Eparchial Consultors. Since November 2012, he was pastor of Holy Cross Melkite Catholic Church in Placentia, California and since 2015 served consecutive terms as president of the Eastern Catholic Pastoral Association.

He has taught the following courses: “Christianity in the Middle East” (2000), “Hermeneutics and Exegesis in Eastern Christianity” (2000, 2003, & 2015), “The Synoptic Gospels” (2008), “The Eastern Catholic

Churches at Vatican II” (2014), and online courses on the Gospel of Saint Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, the Bible in the Divine Liturgy, the Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus, and Foundational Bible resources. He has also given retreats for parishes and groups of priests. His weekly Sunday homilies appear on YouTube. com/MelkiteTV

To congratulate Bishop François and assure him of our prayers, we want to say *ad multos annos*, but in honour of the Byzantine Melkite Rite we sing *is polla eti, Despota!*

## Bishop Andrew Souksavath Nouane Asa

Father Andrew Souksavath Nouane Asa '02 was appointed Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Paksé, Laos, by the Holy Father on May 31. He was ordained a bishop on August 15. Souksavath was born in 1972 in Paksé where he attended the minor seminary from 1988 to 1991. He studied from 1992 to 1996 at the Pedagogical University of Vientiane, obtaining a licentiate in English teaching. The Archdiocese of Edmonton and Father John Hesse supported him for his philosophy studies here at the Seminary of Christ the King from 1998 to 2002. He did his theology studies at St Joseph Seminary in Edmonton, obtaining a bachelor's degree in theology in 2005. He was ordained a priest on December 30, 2006 for the Vicariate Apostolic of Paksé.

Father Souksavath served as pastor in charge of ten mission stations (2007-09); youth director of the vicariate of Paksé (2007-12). He then carried out further studies in dogmatic theology at St Vincent School of Theology, Adamson University in Manila, Philippines (2008-10). He had charge of twelve mission stations (2010-17) and since 2012, was visiting professor of philosophy at St Jean-Marie Vianney Major Seminary in Savannakhet, Laos. Since 2017

he was pastor of ten mission stations in the Bolivene Region and also since 2017 was apostolic administrator of the Vicariate of Paksé.

Since 2019 he was the Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Laos and Cambodia.



His classmate, Father Nicolas Tumbelaka, writes: “It was a great joy when early one morning Father Souksavath from Laos called me about his appointment as the bishop of Paksé in Laos. From my years in the seminary with him, I knew him to be a genuine, simple person without pretence, a true friend. He was serious in his study, joyful and had a great love for the church and his Catholic Faith. He was also good in sport,

especially soccer.

“Often Souk shared about the condition of the church in his country. I told him ‘looks like the church in Laos has prepared you to be a bishop’ and sure enough when he told me about his episcopal appointment, I was not surprised. Knowing his character, I pray that the Lord in His wisdom will guide Bishop Souksavath to shepherd the people of Laos with love and truth.”

We wish Bishop Andrew Souksavath many years of fruitful harvest in his vicariate. He is the eighth alumnus of SCK to be made a bishop.

# Solemn Profession

“Seigneur, mon coeur ne s’est pas exalté... Dès ce moment, et à jamais.” [Lord, my heart is not proud...from this moment and forever] - Psalm 130 (131): thus, our two new solemnly professed, Brothers Isidore McDonald and John Climacus Bruneau, asked for permanent membership in our community. On September 4, 2022 the community prayerfully participated in their transition from a temporary state into permanent vows. The journey of these confreres, however, began long before.

Brother Isidore (Andrew McDonald), the eldest of two children, was born in Vancouver on September 21, 1981 to Keith and Neda McDonald. In the context of family life, Brother Isidore received the foundations of the gifts that he brings to the community. His family valued education and cultivated sensitivity to the cultural riches of the world. Brother made this inheritance his own in a variety of ways: through seven years of study, he acquired bachelors degrees in English and Psychology and a certificate as a library technician; he sang in a professional choir, graduating from alto to baritone; he served as a hotel clerk in the Hampton Inn Suites; he traveled around the planet: from Iceland with its rugged landscapes to Japan with its ancient pagodas, back to Galway Cathedral in Ireland where, to his surprise, he heard the Lord’s call to follow him.

When asked about some of the highlights of his monastic life thus far, Brother Isidore shared memories of the hard and rugged ways of his postulancy. During this stage of formation, he moved from being someone with no confidence in his abilities regarding manual work to contributing in ways he never expected. Delving into the history and spirit of monastic

life and its tradition, as a novice he found balance in human and intellectual formation. As a temporary professed monk, Brother Isidore held on to what he called the “string” of hope of belonging to the monastery; a string that helped Brother to recognize his own shortcomings and embrace the strains of living in a community of men, who themselves have their own shortcomings. But in all this Brother Isidore grew to speak boldly with his heart, gave himself to the community and grew in the freedom that following Christ brings.



Brother John Climacus (Thomas Bruneau), the youngest of six children, was born in Maillardville, Coquitlam on July 5, 1999 to Denis and Liane Bruneau. Growing up in a family involved in missionary work

for several years in Peru, and obtaining lessons of simplicity from such an experience, Brother John grew up acquiring an affection for the simple things of life: the land and its people. After finishing high school at the Seminary of Christ the King, Brother John spent his last summer before entering the monastery serving the Dene in the Northwest Territories.

When Brother John thought back to his first year as a postulant in the monastery, he recalled the family atmosphere of singing Christmas carols with the community, particularly hearing Brother David with his lively jubilations and Father Basil with his masterful improvisations. Reserved, Brother John found in this family gathering a way of joining in, a way of belonging. A memory from his novitiate was learning the art of English change ringing. Brother John described ringing itself as easy, but frequently being told “you’re off” for the first few months tested his perseverance. Brother John pushed through. During his three years of temporary profession, Brother found

himself struggling in discernment. He was trying to listen to God, asking Him “What do You want of me?” and “What do I want?” He prayed a novena to St. Therese to help him discern. He asked for white roses if God wanted marriage and red roses if God wanted him to be professed forever as a monk. And then roses of various colours started appearing everywhere (by the statue of Mary at the shrine, in the garden, etc). How was he supposed to know? By God’s grace, Brother John got a bit wiser, and heard God telling him, “You choose.” Brother John went to the statue of St Benedict in the monastic cloister and chose a rose which to this day can be found in

the crucifix of his monastic cell as a reminder of his choice to follow God in monastic life. During the days of his “entombment” (i.e. the two days when a monk remains in his cell following solemn profession, sharing in the dying and rising with Christ), Brother found a pot of pink roses placed in his cell. The pink roses were perhaps God’s way of communicating to Brother John that his choice involved both marriage, a spousal relationship with Christ, and monastic life.

With great joy, the monastic community prays that the Lord may grant Brothers Isidore and John many years of faithful and humble service in the Lord’s school of fraternity.



Parents and sons (L to R): Denis Bruneau, Br. John, Liane Bruneau; Neda McDonald, Br. Isidore, Keith McDonald

## Simple Profession

During the morning Mass on September 8 Frater Novice Isaac Mack freely united himself with Christ through temporary vows, receiving his monastic name Charles after St Charles de Foucauld.

Born and raised in Everett, Washington, USA, Frater Charles is the sixth child of Kevin and Sherri Mack. His family is extensive, including seven children in his immediate family and 17 nieces and nephews. His early education was through Catholic homeschooling, but for Grades 9-12, he studied at the Seminary of Christ the King. A life of holiness was not foreign to him as he wished to give his life to God at the tender age of five. The concept of martyrdom was especially appealing, and aided him in making the ultimate decision to enter the monastery. This decision was by no means easy; even during his

years of education and formation in the seminary, there was a lack of attraction to the monastic life. Eventually, Frater Charles attained the docility to recognize God’s will and follow it.



Frater Charles with his parents, Kevin and Sherri Mack

## Monastic and Seminary Communities



### Ordination of Frank Sharma

Father Frank Sharma, OCD, was ordained as a Carmelite priest by Archbishop Richard Smith at St. Joseph's Basilica in Edmonton on September 3.

Born in Chilaw, Sri Lanka in 1981 and baptized Frank, he attended St Bernadette College in Chilaw, Sri Lanka from 1987-1994, St. Peter's College, Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 1994-1997, and Alethea International School, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka from 1998-2000. He entered Christ the King Seminary in 2005 and graduated with a BA. He continued his theological studies at Christ the King for one year (2012-2013). Frank took time to discern a vocation with the order of Discalced Carmelite Fathers and made his first profession of vows in 2018. As a Carmelite, he continued his theological studies at the Pontifical

Faculty of Theology Teresianum in Rome from 2018-2021 and graduated with a STB.

He offered his first Mass at the parish of his family St Thomas More Catholic Parish in Edmonton, AB. During his formation, he participated in various levels of work in diverse parishes around the world: teaching parish catechism, RCIA, engaging in First Nations ministry, Youth/Young Adult ministry and serving at a soup kitchen.

He enjoys dance, music, painting and the restoration of statues. He has been assigned as assistant director for the Mount Carmel Spirituality Center in Parkland County, AB.

May our Blessed Mother bless Father Frank with many fruitful years in the Lord's vineyard.



Ordination Mass: (L to R): Archbishop Richard Smith, Fr. Frank Sharma, Fr. Paul Kavanaugh

# Major Seminary Diary

## September 2022

9: Today saw the start of another year at SCK. We were all excited to begin the year which always has joys and challenges. One aspect of this year is the small size of our community, with only eight major seminarians in residence. We hope to grow as brothers in Christ this year and this small community will certainly make that possible, although one difficulty we do foresee is sports. We barely have enough players for one hockey team, let alone two! We will have to figure it out, but none the less we are all happy to be here and pray for another blessed year.

30: We were given the opportunity to go to the Men's retreat, put on by Life Restoration Ministries at RockRidge Canyon Centre near Princeton. It was a great weekend with many talks encouraging us to face the challenges of our life with boldness and to seek the help of and journey with friends. It was inspiring to see almost three hundred men who wanted to grow in their faith and as men. The location of the retreat centre



Major seminary student executive: Paul Vo, Luis Duenas, Paul Raine

was also spectacular, situated next to a beautiful lake. We are very grateful to have gone and hope to go again next year.

## October 2022

15: Today we went for a hike near Stave Lake on a trail named Monastic Peak. The hike began well enough, with us walking down an old logging road, but soon the hike became more difficult. The road came to a dead end but the GPS map continued into the bush. We continued up the



Seminary communities went to the movie theatre to watch *The Chosen* Season 3: Episodes 1 and 2

mountain, bushwhacking as we went, hoping we would find a continuation of the road. We eventually did find the road, but it was completely overgrown and covered in dead trees. The road was almost indistinguishable from the rest of the mountain! After about 4 hours of hiking we were still far from the top and made the decision to turn around and head back so we would make it in time for Vespers. The hike tested us but all in all we had a good time. Next time we will make sure there is a trail all the way to the top!

23: All the majors attended the third annual Upper Room Conference for the Archdiocese of Vancouver today. The purpose of the conference is to give people tools, skills, and motivation to go out and make disciples. We served at the Mass celebrated by Archbishop Miller to begin the conference and then listened to the talks the presenters gave. It was amazing to be with so many people who have passion for evangelisation and the gospel that our society needs to hear. One talk in particular on the theme of abandonment to and trust in God was very moving for many of the seminarians. It reminded us that if we place our trust in God he will never let us down.



Majors altar serving at the abbatial blessing

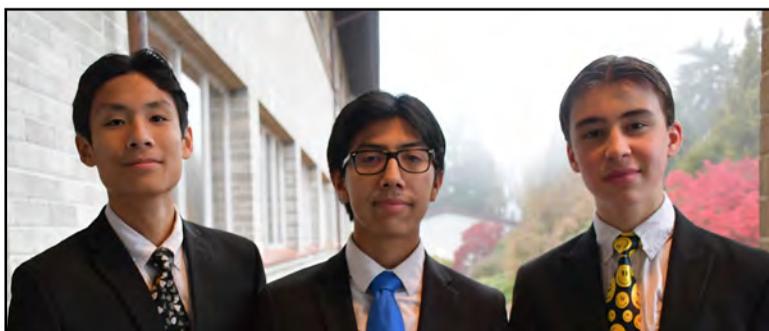
## *Minor Seminary Diary*

### September 2022

While wreaking havoc on the surrounding ecosystem, September's record-breaking heat brought lots of fun; seminarians gladly enjoyed hockey, and swimming became a near-daily activity. It also provided many picturesque sunrises over the Coast Mountains.

7: The dawn of a new school year brought lots of excitement to both new and returning Seminarians, including 7 Grade 8s.

14: The Abbey church was packed with priests and laity alike for Abbot Alban's abbatial blessing. It was quite a special occasion for all, with good



Minor seminary student executive

sandwiches at the end too. Grade 8 Dominic Lefebvre made a guest appearance in a BC Catholic article about the blessing, while others starred in the backgrounds of photographs.

26: We received word that Gordon Mac



Southby, SCK 2017-18, was killed in a motorcycle accident in Glastonbury, Connecticut on Sunday 25. A 15 year old girl was killed in the SUV he collided with. We offer our deepest condolences from the whole minor seminary family, and will continue to pray for both the deceased victims and their families.

29: Bullfrogs are an invasive species that have colonized Mary Lake, making it uninhabitable for other frogs, trout, and ducks. Damien took matters into his own hands, eliminating his 100th bullfrog of the month today.

30: The seminarians headed down to Heritage Park shortly after breakfast to set up for the Truth and Reconciliation event being held there, but on learning that there was little to be done, spent the rest of the morning playing Grounders and Ultimate. We prayed Midday shortly before the program began; there was Native singing and dancing, and a few elders shared their stories while

we sat in the dry grass, eating some homemade salmon sandwiches alongside Father Peter's kombucha.

30: The Grade 8's and 9's left Heritage Park shortly before the event was over and hiked back up to the Seminary to grab their

bags and go to Salsbury Lake. There they set up camp; some built their own shelters; others chose no shelter at all. They had lots of fun, many of them jumping in the lake at midnight.

**October 2022**

2: Without the majors in town, it was up to the minors to jog our way into downtown Mission for Life Chain. A few slurs were thrown at us, but we had many honks of support which was nice to see.

7: The first home weekend of the year. We were off to Thanksgiving turkey. It felt odd to be going home with the weather still well over 20 degrees. First-years got to be seminarians at home for the first time, some of them meeting the age-old problem, "How do I act like a seminarian?"

14-15: The Grade 10s headed up Mt. St. Benedict for an overnight hiking trip to the summit. After a 20-minute drive northeast of the Seminary, the 7 boys (accompanied by P. Leo and

Brother John) trekked 2 hours up a trail and logging road and camped the night. The next morning, they made their way to the summit, where Dominic Nguyen described the views as "quite nice."

20: The Grade 11's and 12's headed into Abbotsford for the annual Celebrate Life Gala. They enjoyed delicious chicken (cooked in white wine) and listened to the powerful story of Carol Everett, a former manager of multiple abortion clinics in Texas. They finished the night by clearing the venue of tables



Minors perform in Margaret Wood's play *Robert of Sicily*

and décor.

30: Our fall program turned out to be a huge success; our MC (Major Seminarian Luis Duenas) called it the best band performance in his 5 years at the Seminary; the monks were impressed with the Wellerman song presented by a group of 6 boys. To top it all off, Theo Vance and Josef Rego starred as Aldermen Grim and Glum in the comedic tale of *Displeasure Beach*.

31: We celebrated the Eve of All Saints by watching the movie *Coco*, followed by a

thrilling scavenger hunt in the dark planned by the Grade 11's.



Minors perform in Margaret Wood's play *Robert of Sicily*

## Clearwater & Wells Gray Park Excursion



The grade twelve class, accompanied by Father Leo & Brother Joseph, departed for the annual Clearwater camp trip on Friday, Sept. 30. A good portion of the trip was spent meeting the locals.

Lessons learned included some of the history of Clearwater, the tips and tricks of training a horse, and how to use a lasso. The class was delighted to meet the pets of the locals as well: two big bear-faced Akitas, four small dogs and one fat cat.

They spent an afternoon touring Dawson, Helmcken, and Moul Falls. Helmcken, the most famous of the three, plummets an astounding 141 metres down, over three abbey belltowers high.

While it is normal that every year the grade 12 group hikes up to Trophy Meadow, this group set out to be the first to climb to the summit of Trophy Two. After a steep climb up rocky slopes, they succeeded in their mission and were treated to the beautiful panorama of the surrounding rivers, lakes and valleys.

The class was delayed on their return when a five-minute sightseeing trip to Spahat Falls became a half hour wild goose chase. It began with parking at the incorrect parking lot, followed by the loss of Father Leo somewhere on the trails. After a great deal of searching and waiting, the group was finally reunited and back on the road. Either way the view was still worth it.

## Camping at Salisbury Lake

The grade 8 and 9 camping trip this year, with Brothers Bartholomew and Maximus and Francis Vuong, was full of surprises. When we arrived at Salisbury Lake we found that the campsite was already occupied. So we all just set out together, walking around the lake. Eventually we found a spot with a little bit of flat area between the lake and the forest, and dropped our packs next to a huge log. A little bit of teamwork, and soon



A few Grade 8's and 9's in study hall

the fire was going. Meanwhile, Matius was out on a log trying to catch some fish. Dean and Mang found a cool shelter under a cedar tree, while a group of the grade 9s set about constructing their own large shelter. Simeon squashed his hand, but Linus immediately tended to him with his expert first-aid skills, and Simeon quickly recovered.

After evening prayer and devouring a large pot of chili, most of the guys continued work on their shelters. Brother Bartholomew set up a hammock in the forest, and Brother Maximus just found a dry spot under a tree.

In the middle of the night I heard a bunch of laughing and splashing, so I joined the boys for a midnight swim. It was great, and the fire soon dried us off. By now we had seen a whole plethora of constellations pass over head, including Orion and Pleiades, and we were treated to a spectacular show of shooting stars.

The next day, between swimming and exploring, Damien, with his accomplice Jude, found several frogs or toads, one of which would make a honk sound. Even a salamander was discovered in a can.

Before lunch we made epic forts in the forest. One was built of a giant fallen tree with its roots up, next to a large pit, surrounded by ancient planks dug up from a very old logging road. The other one was built high up in a cedar tree, with a rope to access it.

Needless to say, this camping trip was not at all like we had planned it to be. It was better, thank God.

## With the Brothers

“Necessity” is a recurring theme throughout the Rule of St. Benedict. It connotes the unavoidable difficulties and duties thrust upon us by objective reality. Flight is a common but futile human response in the face of such stresses. Instead of flight before the capricious storms of necessity, St. Benedict teaches us acceptance. To obey the demands of reality with docility is to trust in our omnipotent Father. The hidden beauty of necessity emerges when we realize we need others, especially our heavenly Father, in

order to live. Necessity challenges us to be in relationship.

The need for food is one area of human life which frequently puts the brothers in relationship with others. For example, Virginia Yago generously supplies the monastic and seminary communities with blueberries. When the blueberries arrive, they need to be cleaned for freezing (after all, God gave the fruit of the trees for man to eat, not the leaves, stems, and bugs of the trees). Brother Luke has been assiduously

bumping shoulders with fellow monks to clean blueberries for many years now.

An opportunity for the monks to do a good turn for Virginia came one fine Friday afternoon. Virginia had come for a retreat in our guesthouse. The hand of necessity struck when she realized she had forgotten the key to her locked suitcase. Seeing Frater Charles, she asked him to seek assistance from our assistant Guestmaster, Brother Paschasius. By a stroke of providence, Frater failed to find him. He passed the buck on to Brother Joshua. Now Brother Joshua is no locksmith by trade. More of a fiddler, cook, and newly-appointed head sacristan/tower master. But with generous heart, he took the suitcase to the porter's office and frantically fiddled around with a safety pin, paper clip, and assorted keys. The pressure rose when he heard Virginia and her friends praying – how could he let down such earnest prayers? Still, nothing clicked. Try as he might, the lock held fast. As the determined hum of prayers slowed to a halt and desperate thoughts of bolt cutters began passing through Brother's mind, he threw the clip and pin aside, gave one



**Br. Benedict working in the kitchen**

last twirl of a random key and ... Click! The lock broke free! Brother stepped out of the office and, with dramatic flair said, "Ladies, it's a miracle!"

(Now to all the young men of our readership, note well that celibacy does not obstruct the primordial masculine need to save damsels in distress. Not at all! It elevates this need to a supernatural plane.)

Onto more mundane matters, especially in our consumer society, is the need to dispose of junk. Brother Maximus handles this necessity every Saturday. He leaves with a truck full of garbage and comes back loaded with milk. Hoorah to all landfill workers and dairy farmers without whom Brother could not accomplish this task!

Meat-cutting is another crucial task performed by the brothers in the food department. Aidan Winterhoff, the brother of two alumni, has nearly finished a course in butchering and stopped by to give us a few tips. Brother Joseph says the newly imparted knowledge has enabled the brothers to cut up beef tips with greater precision and efficiency than ever before.

Needless to say, a lot goes into raising the beef



**Fr. Nicholas edging the monastic cloister sidewalk at 96**

before it ever lands on the meat cutters' table. Brother Emeric is still the farm boss and does what he can to meet the cattle's needs. Due to the abnormally dry autumn, he was transferring the herd from one field to another. One day the herd broke loose and charged up Cassie's Road straight for...the flower garden! But little did they expect to be stopped in their tracks. Out and about on his scooter enjoying the fresh air, Brother Meinrad espied the trouble and dauntlessly clapped and hollered those cows back the way they came. He later informed Frater Matthias, our hard-working flower gardener, that the flowers had been saved from destruction.

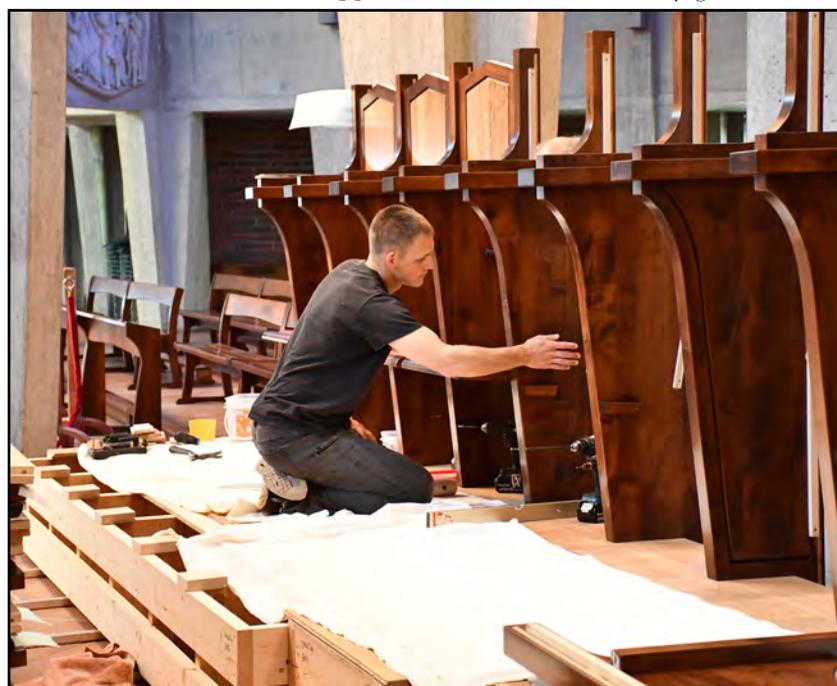
Many things threaten the life of flowers besides hungry animals. Lack of water stands out as a particularly prevalent threat this year. In early October, exhausted after months of watering, Brother Paschasius noticed the hoses had been taken away. He figured some authority decided it was high-time to stop watering and happily agreed. However, Frater Matthias was intent on providing Frater Athanasius with flowers to decorate the church for the feast of All Saints on November 1. He approached Brother



**Tom Jamin assembles the new choir stalls he built**

and gently remarked that the flowers required water urgently. Brother complied and, after some investigation, identified the hose-nabbers. The postulants who helped reseal the courtyard, parking lot, and hockey court, had taken the hoses for pressure washing and unwittingly failed to return them.

Lack of water outside was ironically matched by unwanted water inside. The pipes in the guesthouse and monastic dormitory began leaking due to corrosion. Providentially, the timely gift of a carpet cleaner from our good



**Br. John assists in the assembling of the new choir stalls**

friend Rudy van Berkel came in handy when one of the guesthouse rooms flooded.

Over in the monastery, Brother Benedict, impelled by the necessities of old age, fortunately moved down to the first floor in time to avoid splashing his toes in the puddles that emerged around his room. Father Joseph and Brother John have been working hard with Rob Dea to replace faulty pipes in the dormitory attic and guesthouse. The ceiling of the guesthouse lobby had to be removed for this job

so the postulants, who go by the names of Jonathan, Charlie, Michael, Daniel, and Dominic, literally lent their heads to support a new ceiling during its installation.

The brothers have also lent their heads in prayer to support our new abbot during his blessing. Abbot Alban's abbatial blessing beautifully expressed the mutually beneficial relationship between Westminster Abbey and the Archdiocese of Vancouver. The

monks received a profound sense of being members of the Universal Church, the Body of Christ. Christ our Head assures us of the blessings we need when we remain united in charity to His bishops and one another.

As powerful as necessity can be in directing us to the communion God has planned, the good Lord shows us that charity passes beyond mere requirements. God created us out of love. He did not need to create us. And, as we pray in the fourth common preface, "He has no need of our praise but our thanksgiving is itself His gift." One of the ways human beings have responded to God's gratuitous love down through the centuries is the erection and beautification of places of worship. In line with this noble aspiration, the most recent addition to our abbey church is a stunning new set of choir stalls fashioned by



Postulants Michael Savritski, Charles Testa and Jonathan Ulanicki

Tom Jamin. Many monks, most notably Brother Bartholomew and Brother John, had a hand in this praiseworthy project.

As an aside, the Lord gave us an unexpected and gratuitous gift one day when Brother Novice Agostino stumbled across a perfectly tame bunny. Brother Isidore was particularly fond of the furry fellow, even taking him for a ride in our camping hammock. However, the bunny's black and white colours (black moustache included) clearly marked him out as a Dominican. Our community justly offered him up to our cherished Dominican sisters of Queen of Peace Monastery in Squamish.

To conclude, I leave you, dear readers with some final reflections on necessity: "Christ allows us to reconcile ourselves with necessity. Necessity is not an angry divinity, nor is it a curse, inconvenience or obstacle to the plan of God for us, but rather it is a possibility to return to this design and to live it in cooperation with God." (Mauro-Giuseppi Lepori OCist, *Monastic Formation Conferences*, September 4 2015). St. Benedict, quoting not Scripture but the acts of the martyrdom of St. Anastasia, affirms, "Self-will hath its punishment, but necessity winneth a crown" (RB 7).



Postulants Dominic Cummings and Daniel Kim

**Father Dunstan Massey, osb** passed away on December 26, 2022. His obituary will be included in the next edition.

**PAX REGIS**

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Abbatial Blessing (L to R): Bishop-Elect Gary Franken, Abbot Alban Riley, Bishop Gary Gordon

## Alumnitems

Gratitude, blessings and prayers go out to the Vicar General of Vancouver Archdiocese, Bishop **Gary Franken**, who taught in the major seminary for one year and has been appointed to the diocese of St. Paul, Alberta.

Bishop **Andrew Souksavath Nouane Asa '02** is the eighth alumnus of SCK to be made a bishop.

Bishop **François Beyrouiti '93** is the ninth alumnus of SCK to be made a bishop.

*Requiescant in pace:*

**Roger Casey '66** died December 27, 2021 in New Westminster.

**Patrick Welsh '55** died July 14 at Eagle Ridge Hospital, Port Moody.

**Michaela Vetter**, Oblate of our monastery, died July 17 in Vancouver.

**Thomas McCloskey '46** died in New Westminster on August 15, 2022.

**Mark Ruelle '66** passed away peacefully in Vancouver on Sept. 8. He was both an alumnus and also a teacher of Latin at SCK for a number of years.

**Gordon "Mac" Southby**, SCK 2017-18, was killed in a motorcycle accident in Glastonbury, Connecticut on Sunday, Sept. 25.

Father **John Horgan** died on Oct. 19 in Vancouver. He was not an alumnus of SCK, but taught Homiletics and Pastoral Theology at SCK.

**Murdoch McSween '65** died on November 8 in North Vancouver.

**Michael Hurcum** of Mission, benefactor, died November 23.

### FORM OF BEQUESTS

I give, bequeath and devise to WESTMINSTER ABBEY LTD, Mission, BC, a corporation under the laws of British Columbia, the sum of \$..... to be used at the discretion of the Benedictines of Westminster Abbey for the building program and general benefit of the Seminary of Christ the King, Mission, BC, Canada.