Kathleen Norris, OblSB writes that she “recently signed a contract with Intervarsity Press for a memoir about my sister Rebecca, to be published next year. Rebecca was disabled at birth by brain damage but refused to let that disability define her.”

Laura Swan, OSB reports as follows: “I continue to work on our history [St. Placid Priory, Lacey, WA] and organize/update our archives (two sides of the same project). I’m also reading heavily across the limited sources for women’s Benedictine history as I’m revamping my monastic history class for postulants/novices. So, I’m having a good time.”

Greg Peters, OblSB writes: “Here are a few things I’ve been up to...I’ve published ‘The Necessity of Monastic Asceticism: A Case for Retrieval in Contemporary Evangelicalism’ in the Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, and edited Edward Bouvier Pusey and the Monastic Tradition for Nashotah House Press. [I] recently signed a contract with InterVarsity Press for a book tentatively entitled The Evangelical Church in the Middle Ages. Between February and April I will also lead four parish retreats on different monastic practices.”

Samuel Torvend, OblSB, PhD shared the following: “I am happy to report that Monastic Ecological Wisdom: A Living Tradition was published in November 2023 by the Liturgical Press and has been well received: https://litpress.org/Products/6797/Monastic-Ecological-Wisdom. In September, I attended the World Congress of Benedictine Oblates at Sant’ Anselmo, Rome, and was happy to discover that Abbot Primate Gregory Polan OSB had written a positive review of the book. In addition to webinars and workshops on the book, I am now working on its sequel, The Christ of Creation, which begins with an ecology of Jesus and then traces an ‘ecological’ Christology through early Christian and monastic writers of the first millennium.”

Hugh Feiss, OSB reports: “My time for research has been somewhat limited by other responsibilities, but long term projects are coming to fruition. An article on a borrowing from Peter of Betha’s De panibus in a small work of Richard of St. Victor is currently being printed for the 2023 volume of Sacris erudiri; a Latin-English edition of Richard of St. Victor’s De exterminatione Mali et promotions boni is inching its way toward publication in the Dallas Medieval Texts in Translation series (Peeters); a chapter on twelfth-century monastic exegesis is to appear in July in the first volume of a five-volume work entitled the Bible and Western Christian Literature (Bloomsbury); and a monograph on Richard of St. Victor’s exegesis on the Tabernacle of Moses is under consideration at Brepols. Currently I am working on a paper for Kalamazoo in May on Part 13 of the second book of Hugh of St. Victor’s De sacramentis, which is entitled ‘On virtues and vices.’ Next project is a paper on the presence of the fourth book of Boethius’ De consolatione in the writings of the Victorines. Sr. Colleen Maura [McGrane] and I are presiding at the two sessions of the ABR at Kalamazoo.”
Aaron Raverty, OSB has been awarded an academic book contract with The Anthropology of Tourism: Heritage, Mobility, and Society series, Lexington Press (Lanham, MD). His short description reads: “Shrines, as a category, are undertheorized. As multidimensional research targets, we need to redefine and reframe shrines in the anthropology of religion, addressing their evolution, symbolism, ritual context, and potential for stimulating interreligious dialogue.” The tentative title is: Shrines Theorized: Symbolic Repositories of Memory Culture. He notes that input from other ABA researchers is welcome.

He also summarizes two articles he has written for the Abbey Banner in the fall and winter issues: “Saint Maur’s Priory”: As fifth abbot of Saint John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B. (1877–1951), made the bold mid-twentieth-century decision to establish an interracial Benedictine monastery in Kentucky. This article traces the fruits of his passion for mission infused with a determination for social justice. The success of Saint Maur’s Priory is reflected in its interracial composition, standing as a model for respecting the equality of all who answer God’s call for holiness in the monastic life.” Also, “Subiaco” The central Italian city of Subiaco became the youthful Saint Benedict’s refuge following his flight from the chaos of Rome around A.D 500. Drawn out of his grotto (Sacro Speco) in Mount Taleo, where he sought silence and solitude, he instructed the local people in Christianity and eventually founded several monastic communities. Today, as a premier artistic tourist destination, Subiaco is hailed as the site where Benedict wrote the earliest drafts of his Rule, rightfully claiming Subiaco the womb of the Benedictine Order.

Jeana Visel, OSB has published two book reviews [see p. 3] and has submitted an article adapted from a talk she gave to seminarians called “Living a Virtuous Life” to Benedictines. She expects to return to writing quarterly blog posts for “Pray Tell” soon. She has been asked to be a peer reviewer for an article submission for Modern Theology. Recently she has been engaged in teaching spirituality courses and painting icons.

Timothy Joyce, OSB At Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham, MA, he continues his work moderating a committee of both monks and lay people on "The Future of the Monastery." He reports: “We have been doing a lot of spade work in identifying everything we actually do now, obstacles to change, and our potential.” Meanwhile the monks of Glastonbury meet weekly during Lent to discuss the book of Rowan Williams, "Passions of the Soul", which covers much of early monastic spirituality.

“My belief that biography (and history...is inherently theological in the sense that it contains already—literally by virtue of the Incarnation—the news of the gospel whether or not anyone discerns that. We are each one of us parables” —William Stringfellow

St. Mary Magdalene Icon By S. Jeana Visel, OSB

Over the last two decades, scholarship has presented a more nuanced view of women’s attitude to and agency in medieval monastic reform, challenging the idea that they were, by and large, unwilling to accept or were necessarily hostile towards reform initiatives. Rather, it has shown that they actively participated in debates about the ideas and structures that shaped their religious lives, whether rejecting, embracing, or adapting to calls for “reform” contingent on their circumstances.”

(Amazon Website)


Norris, Kathleen, ObiSB. Book Review: Shelter From the Storm by David Hodges, OCSO (Caldey Island, Wales: Caldey Abbey, 2023) in ABR 74:3 (September 2023) 353.


_________ The Evangelical Church in the Middle Ages (Westmont, IL: Intervarsity Press), forthcoming.

Piazza, Thomas and Geraldo Gonzalez y Lima, OSB. “Membership Trends for Benedictine Monks in Brazil.” ABR 74:3 (September 2023) 318-330.

_________ “Membership Trends in European Countries.” ABR 74:4 (December 2023) 436-446.

Raverty, Aaron, OSB. "Saint Maur’s Priory.” Abbey Banner 23:2 (Fall 2023) 22–24.


_________ Shrines Theorized: Symbolic Repositories of Memory Culture (Lanham, MD: Lexington Press), forthcoming.


_________ “In Memoriam: Two of the Magistra Family” (Mary Forman, OSB and Dr. J Frank Henderson) Magistra 29:1 (Summer 2023) 74-77.
Publications cont.


Book Review: Women and Monastic Reform in the Medieval West, c.1000-1500: Debating Identities, Creating Communities, eds. Julie Hotchin and Jirki Thibaut (Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2023) forthcoming in ABR.

Presentations

Hollermann, Ephrem, OSB. “Benedictine Women: From Europe to North America, from Moniales to Sorores,” given at the Leadership Delegate Assembly of the Communio Internationalis Benedictinarum (CIB), meeting at Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman, Alabama, September 4-8. 2023.

Notice

Next MR Newsletter, June 2024
Compiled and edited by Ephrem Hollermann, OSB
Saint Benedict’s Monastery, St. Joseph, MN
Comments/suggestions welcomed eborahmann@csbsju.edu

2024 ABA Convention
Liturgy of the Hours: Evolution
August 7-11
St. Meinrad Archabbey
St. Meinrad, Indiana.