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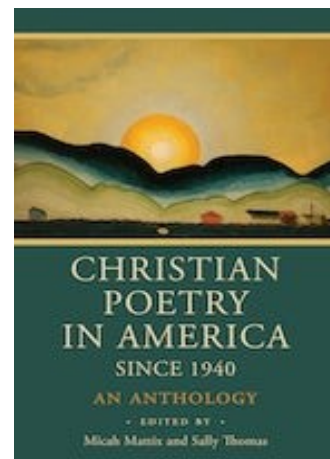
**Current Projects**

**Kathleen Norris, ObISB** happily reports: "Several of my poems are included in a new volume from Paraclete Press, an anthology of *Christian Poetry in America Since 1940*. My other news is that this fall I'm enjoying a six week residency at the Collegette Institute at St John's in Minnesota working on a new book looking at the desert fathers and mothers in terms of how people experience their stories today."

**Samuel Torvend, ObISB**, is completing the last chapter of his book manuscript, *Monastic Ecological Wisdom: Trajectories for the Present* (Liturgical Press), a study of early medieval monastic care for creation. He will be presenting a paper on this writing project in the Ecology and Liturgy Seminar of the North American Academy of Liturgy in January 2023. His latest book, *For the Life of the World: The Essentials of Episcopal Worship* (Church Publishing, 2021), also includes a chapter dedicated to care for creation, inspired by contemporary monastic commitments to earth care in a time of global warming. And, finally, his students in Medieval Christianity spent a semester studying early Benedictine life and initiatives in health care and earth care, an eye-opening experience for many pre-

med and environmental studies majors.

**Judith Valente, ObISB** guided the annual retreat for Oblates of Christ the King Priory in Schuyler NE in October, and has upcoming online retreats for Sophia Center in Atchison and the Chicago Cenacle on the theme of "Let Peace Be Your Aim: Spiritual Strategies for Coping with Conflict." She will guide a retreat at Holy Family Retreat Center in Hartford CT on Nov 19 with Brother Paul Quenon, OCSO of the Abbey of Gethsemani, her co-author on her most recent book, *How to Be*. The Hartford retreat theme is "Heart Speaks to Heart: Correspondence As Spiritual Practice." Judith is continuing work on her book about what Americans can learn from Italians about living a more balanced life, based on her many stays in Italy. She will lead a spiritual retreat/pilgrimage to little-known Benedictine sites in Italy May 9-22, 2023. The retreat will also be an opportunity to experience the cultural, culinary and contemplative life of Italy. Anyone interested in learning more about the journey can contact Judith at [JValente17@msn.com](mailto:JValente17@msn.com) **Michael Seretny, ObISB**, of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, writes about the following: "Professor Thomas Ryba, the St. Thomas Aquinas Center theologian



in residence at Purdue, and I have begun a multi-semester investigation into the "Writings of St Columban." Our research project is housed in the Religious Studies Department at Purdue.

**COLUMBANUS**

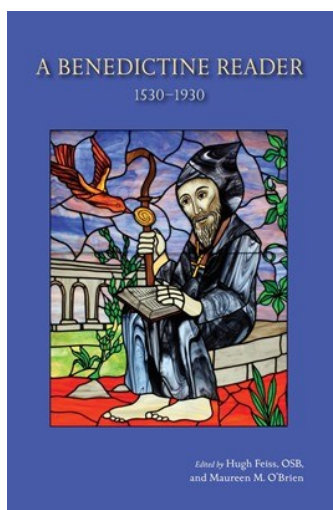
This semester has been focused on the assembly of primary and secondary sources for his broader context within the customs of the Celtic Catholic Church, his "Peregrinatio", and austere formation at Bangor Abbey. Inter-library services remain difficult in this post-pandemic period; however, things are moving forward. Around Thanksgiving, we hope to start the actual commentary analysis of *Regula Monachorum*. Input/Insights are welcome: [mseretny@saintmeinrad.edu](mailto:mseretny@saintmeinrad.edu)



## CURRENT PROJECTS CONT.

**Gratitude  
celebrates life  
with a joyful  
“yes” at every  
knot of the  
great network in  
which everything  
is connected to  
everything.**

—Br. David Steindl-Rast



**Volume 2, ed. Hugh Feiss  
1530-1930**  
Forthcoming, April 2023

*"This is a striking and unique book covering a long period of Benedictine history through the use of unusual and original sources. It demonstrates the richness of the ageless Benedictine spirit in its many forms. Giving a succinct and clear context for all the primary texts chosen, it will provide readers with a valuable encyclopedia of Benedictinism in one volume."*

—Abbot Geoffrey Scott

**Tom Piazza** is working on an article on membership trends among Benedictine monks in Brazil. Also in progress is an article on membership trends among monasteries in the various European countries.

**Greg Peters, ObISB**, presented three talks on Anglican spirituality for the Diocese of Mid-America, Reformed Episcopal Church's Synod from October 5-7. He also participated in the Anglican Church of North America-Roman Catholic Church ecumenical dialogue in Chicago on October 20, where he presented the Anglican church's understanding of the Episcopacy. From November 7-11 he will be teaching an intensive course on Ascetical Theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary, Wisconsin.

**Timothy Joyce, OSB** writes: "I continue to write a semi-monthly blog on spirituality and associated topics. I also write for "Faith Doing Justice" in Boston, *Aletheia* (an online publication), and will appear on a zoom conference with the Duluth, MN Benedictines in November. Thomas Merton has been my inspiration in reaching out to people."

**Hugh Feiss, OSB** reports the following: "I have been working on the proofs for *Benedictine Reader 2: 1530-1930* (Spring, 2023, Cistercian Publications), and a long introduction for Ron

Pepin, tr. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue of Miracles* 2 vols. (2023, 2024, Cistercian Publications). ●The lineup for the ABR sessions at Kalamazoo, 2023, is set. Sr. Colleen Maura McGrane is a contributor. I am going to give a paper in a different session, about identical passages in a work of Richard of St. Victor and Peter of Celle's *De panibus*. ●I hope to get back to a monograph I am writing on the Richard of St. Victor's interpretations of the Tabernacle of Moses.

**Jeana Visel, OSB** writes: "Presently I am on a schola tour of Rome and France. In Rome we had several sessions with Professor Karl Prassl at the Musica Sacra. We gave a concert at the Church of the Twelve Apostles and sang the Mass for the Sunday vigil at Saint Peter's. In Tours we had sessions with Dom Daniel Saulnier. We also visited the Abbey of Solesmes. ● Back at home I am teaching community history with our postulants, and we stumbled on a bit of a 'rabbit hole' regarding our community's brief involvement with a residential school at Standing Rock in the 1880s. We have been connecting with three scholars who wrote their dissertations on Benedictine missions with Native Americans. The history is nuanced and not black and white terrain."

**Jacob Rieyeff, ObISB** writes: "I am now in a three-year term as the Academic Integrity Director at Marquette University and looking for ways to bring my own Benedictine perspective and the Jesuit perspective together to advance trust, honesty, and responsibility in the Marquette community (ideas welcome!). ●In the hours that I still get to write, I am finalizing my poetry collection under contract with Fernwood Press called *Be Radiant: A Sonata Pome* [a kind of fruit] and have a forthcoming essay in *Macrina Magazine* entitled "We Are the Dreamer: Earth and Body in Times of Plague," which draws on Benedictine spirituality and especially on the thought of Camaldolese Benedictine monk Cyprian Vaggagini. ●Work on my "body and soul" book based in the thought and practice of Benedict, John Cassian, and William of St. Thierry is on hiatus until the winter break. ●And I am currently leading a dads group for my family of parishes focused on Thomas Merton's *Thoughts in Solitude*."



**Macrina Magazine**  
*Philosophy As A Way of Life*

## CURRENT PROJECTS CONT.

**Jerome Oetgen** sends the following update: “My work on the history of the American Cassinese Congregation, commissioned by the Congregation’s Abbot President and General Chapter, is almost finished. I’m hopeful that after the evaluation of the final two (of sixteen) chapters by the distinguished historians the Abbot President has invited to read and critique it, the book can be published sometime in 2023. The four readers (Father Joel Rippling of Marmion Abbey, Father

James Flint of St. Procopius Abbey, Father Rene Kollar of St. Vincent Archabbey, and Abbot Augustine Curley of Newark Abbey) have been extremely helpful in critiquing the early drafts and recommending improvements, for which I’m deeply grateful”.

**Tracy Rittmueller, OBlSB** of Saint Benedict’s Monastery, St. Joseph, MN, reports: “I recently received an Artist Career Development Grant from the McKnight Foundation

through the Central Minnesota Arts Board to support the release and promotion of my poetry collection, *Still Life Broken and Repaired*, forthcoming in January 2023 from Lyricality Press. ‘Broken and Repaired’ refers to Kintsugi, the Japanese art of restoring broken pottery with golden mortar, and the philosophy of embracing our imperfections. The grant also funds me to prepare creative writing/self-expression workshops for

shops for people affected by aging-related memory loss—those recently diagnosed with mild neurocognitive disorder (pre-dementia); and spousal/family caregivers and friends of people living with memory loss. These workshops will be somewhat modeled on a 6-session writing circle I recently facilitated at Whitney Senior Center in St. Cloud, MN, drawing on Benedictine spirituality, poetry (my own and others), visual art, and trauma-sensitive somatic awareness exercises to prompt creative writing that facilitates connection and belonging, change-adaptability, and resilience.”

**Julia Upton, RSM** writes as follows: “My Oblate Research project for ABA 2014 is still alive and well. I’ve been using it as the base for other presentations and discussions, most recently at Mount Saviour for their October Oblate Retreat. In person! •Using Zoom I taught an intensive graduate course, “Liturgical Prayer and Pastoral Care” for the Liturgy Institute at Australian Catholic University. Now I’m preparing a podcast for another project they’re developing.”

## PUBLICATIONS

**Hollermann, Ephrem, OSB.** Book Review: *Coenobium: Reflections on Monastic Community*, by Michael Casey, OCSO (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications/The Liturgical Press, 2021) in *ABR* 73:3 (September 2022), 331-333.

**McGrane, Colleen Maura, OSB.** Book Review: *Superior Women: Medieval Female Authority in Poitiers Abbey of Saint-Croix*, by Jennifer C. Edwards (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019) in *ABR* 73:3 (September 2022), 339-342.

Book Review: “*Breviary of Fire: Letters by Mother Mechtilde of the Blessed Sacrament*, trans. by an Oblate of Silverstream Priory (Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2021) in *ABR* 73:3 (September 2022), 350-353.

**Norris, Kathleen.** Poems in *Christian Poetry in America Since 1940*. eds. Micah Mattix and Sally Thomas. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2022.

**Rittmueller, Tracy.** *Still Life Broken and Repaired*. Lyricality Press, forthcoming in 2023.

**Riyeff, Jacob.** “We Are the Dreamer: Earth and Body in Times of Plague,” *Macrina Magazine*, forthcoming.

**Torvend, Samuel.** *For the Life of the World: The Essentials of Episcopal Worship*. New York: Church Publishing, 2021.

### Notice

**Next MR Newsletter, February 2023**  
 Compiled and edited  
 by **Ephrem Hollermann, OSB**  
**Saint Benedict’s Monastery, St. Joseph, MN**  
 Comments/suggestions welcomed  
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**2024 ABA Convention**  
**Liturgy of the Hours: Evolution**  
**August 7-11**  
**St. Meinrad Archabbey**  
**St. Meinrad, Indiana.**