



## Lead On, Kind Light

*Dominus regit me, et nihil mihi deerit; The Lord ruleth me: and I shall want nothing. . .*  
For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils,  
for thou art with me. (*Psalm 22*)

October 2008

Dear Friends of Clear Creek,

Some of you have followed from the beginning — for nearly forty years now — the monastic adventure begun at Fontgombault in France, involving several Americans. Others among you have been aware of the foundation at Clear Creek since our return to the United States in 1999. Even if you have only recently learned of our monastery located in the hills of Eastern Oklahoma, you may well have gotten a sense that the story involves something more than a handful of conversions to the Catholic faith and of vocations to a strict monastic life, within the ancient walls of a French Abbey.

Ever since this adventure began we have had the moral certainty of being part of a larger plan, of playing minor roles in a story orchestrated by the loving designs of Divine Providence. The arrival of this monastic foundation in America on the threshold of the year 2000 was already a certain fulfillment of the dream, and the more recent transfer of the monastic community from our temporary quarters to a beautiful monastery on the definitive site on the hill deepens the wonder of those of us who have lived through it all. It almost seems unreal . . . But here we are!



A few days ago, as I was coming up from the crypt (where we currently hold the Divine Office) after Matins and Lauds, I witnessed a spectacle that stopped me in my tracks. It was just the first rays of a clear morning striking the eastern wall of the monastic residence. On a background of verdure (it rained here a great deal this summer) the harmonious lines and subtle colors of the architecture made for a sight that no literary prowess could convey. I only hope you will come see it for yourself. In a true Benedictine monastery, the

buildings monks live in are a kind of *icon*, the material expression of something spiritual, surging from the depths of contemplation.

It is perhaps needless to say that we are very happy about living in this new monastery: a spirit of thanksgiving continues to be the order of the day. We owe this happy development of the story, after

Foundation for the Annunciation Monastery of Clear Creek

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God and His angels and saints—especially their Queen—to our many friends, who have helped so much to make it happen. There have been some much-appreciated major financial contributions along the way, but the charity of more modest households has been astounding: if you only knew the number of twenty-dollar checks we have cashed over the last nine years! To tell you the truth, establishing this foundation in America has been in many ways a very arduous endeavor. The sometimes complex financial questions and other material considerations can be overwhelming at times. But then we never really expected it to be easy.

Now we find ourselves (together with you, our friends “through thick and thin”) on the threshold of a new challenge. In order to complete what has been so well begun, Our Lady of the Annunciation of Clear Creek Monastery is in need of that most necessary component: the *Church*. There will be other building projects down the line, but none can compare with this one endeavor. Our new buildings are exquisite, but when you look around the impression is something like looking into the smiling mouth of a little child, who is missing one (or both) of his front teeth!

Earlier this year, circumstances seemed to indicate that construction of our church might begin next spring. At present, this seems much less likely. The important thing is that we all turn to the good Saint Joseph, our primary fundraiser (along with Our Lady and the Infant Jesus), in order to obtain the financial miracle such a great undertaking will require. To this end, the monks continue to recite daily the chaplet of the Child Jesus, with which many of you are no doubt familiar. I would humbly ask you to join us in this prayer.

During a recent visit to our mother-house in France (Fontgombault Abbey), I could not help musing on the many facets of this whole monastic adventure. Having been part of the effort to establish a monastery “from scratch” in America for the last nine years, I am more aware of what went into the making of a place such as Fontgombault. The simple fact is that the Abbey, founded in the Middle Ages, was the creation of a different world. Despite our technology and knowledge of nature, we men of the 21st century remain incapable of building anything on the same scale — at least in terms of a greatness surpassing mere feet and inches. It was not simply wealth or knowledge that built Fontgombault, but rather a living faith that thrived, not just within someone’s private convictions, but in the very fabric of society. Perhaps this is our most important challenge of all at Clear Creek: to be that tiny bit of leaven, hidden away in the dough of contemporary American society, capable of making the bread rise for the glory of God. “The Kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened.” (*Mtt. 13:33*).

We thank you again for your spiritual and material support, and ask you to be with us in this next chapter of the story as it unfolds. The Abbatial Church is truly the heart of the Benedictine Monastery; it will be the crown jewel of Clear Creek. Please help us in this most critical phase of construction. The kind light of God’s Providence will not fail us! May God bless you and Our Lady guard you.

In Our Lord and Our Lady,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "br. Philip Anderson, Prior". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

br. Philip Anderson, Prior

P.S. Please accept the enclosed gift. This updated version of the DVD entitled *Ecce, Fiat*, is the work of a gifted young filmmaker, who prefers to remain anonymous. Although this little documentary does not pretend adequately to represent the monastic ideal or tell the whole story about Our Lady of Clear Creek Monastery, we think you will appreciate the beauty of what it does portray, especially if you have not had the opportunity to visit us in person.