



DAYS AND NIGHTS

June 2022

Dear Friend of Clear Creek Abbey,

Our life is a life that hardly varies day-by-day in its tranquil rhythm of *Ora et Labora*, composed of liturgical or private prayer punctuated by work of various sorts. Seven times a day and once during the night we meet to offer praise to God in our monastic church; morning and afternoon we go out to accomplish the necessary tasks that allow us to live largely from the labor of our own hands.

God in His infinite wisdom does send our way, nevertheless, those providential exceptions, the special events, that allow the good of monastic life to radiate outward into the Church and the world for the benefit of many outside the monastery walls. I thought that you might appreciate learning of some of these events that have marked the monks of Clear Creek so far this year.

Of course, the great construction project begun last year is now in full swing. The residential building that will include our chapter room, our sacristy, our infirmary, and many new cells for monks has long since reached its “topping off” point about which I wrote to you in March. The building is now fully covered by a roof, and the brick exterior is beginning to appear, as are the inner workings of the building. I believe the project is still on schedule to be completed in October.



The current progress of the Chapter house, June 2022.

Shortly after Easter, in late April of this year, we made our second recording of chant, this time with the help of *De Montfort Music*, now part of *Sophia Music Group* of the *Sophia Institute*. A Grammy award winning producer, Brad Michel, accomplished musician in his own right, brought his broad experience and considerable talent to the recording sessions. We hope a CD (and a digital version) of this recording will be available in early Advent. The title will be *Rorate Cæli: Marian Sounds of Advent*.

Coming closely on the heels of the recording, we had our canonical visitation, which is a kind of inspection of the monastery by our Superior in France or his designated representatives. This happens every four years. This time the visitors were Father Abbot Jean Pateau of Fontgombault

Abbey, and Abbot Xavier Perrin of Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight. They met with us for several days and seemed to be pleased with the state of things at Clear Creek. Being rather young and adventurous, these monastic visitors wanted also to see our property in New Mexico. So, we flew out to Albuquerque, where a monastic vehicle met us for the last miles to Oso Ridge in the Zuni Mountains, not far from Gallup. During our stay, we three abbots were able to meet with Bishop Wall of Gallup, much to our mutual delight. The European abbots were also happy to encounter a number of the kind people who have been supporting the project to bring some day a community from Clear Creek to found a monastery at Oso Ridge.

But that was not all. There was more travel in store. Already in February, I had traveled to France of the abbatial blessing of Father Abbot Louis Blanc at Triors Abbey, where Brother Martin Markey and I had once been monks, in fact, for some fifteen years. It was a glorious event, in spite of the lingering menace of covid. In any case, after the visit to New Mexico, we abbots had to travel to France (my second trip of the year) for the election of a new abbot of Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, the mother-house of our Congregation of Solesmes. Father Abbot Philippe Dupont had been abbot for thirty years and thought it time to retire. So, on May 17th, with almost all the abbots of the Congregation gathered at Solesmes, the election was held, in which both the members of the Solesmes community and the abbots of the Congregation had the right to vote. Dom Geoffroy Kemlin, formerly Prior, 43 years old, was elected to the great satisfaction of all.

On June 11th we had the joy of welcoming Dr. Scott Hahn, the noted Catholic convert from Presbyterianism, who is now a powerful apologist and theologian, drawing especially on his deep knowledge of Holy Scripture. He spoke first to the monks about the moral virtue of religion and then to a good group of the laity on the theme of the pilgrims of Emmaus. All of us very much appreciated his kindness and ability to make an audience enter into the beauty and truth of the faith. We are looking forward to a few more theological conferences from other noted theologians this summer.

Please be assured that, through the days and nights of our monastic life, we always carry you with us in spirit, knowing that you will continue to be there for us through your help, both spiritual and material. Together, we can all say, like the pilgrims of Emmaus after the visit of the Lord, looking back, in our case, on the liturgical year that is nearing the end of its temporal cycle: “Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures?”¹

¹ Lk. 24:32.

+ br. Philip Anderson, abbot

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Abbots of the Solesmes Congregation and the monks of Saint-Pierre, May 17, 2022.