

A Year and a Day

Now We Have a History



Stephan A. George

July 11, 1964 – July 12, 1965

This is a journey back in time to 1964. Thirty boys became men in a monastic environment of almost complete isolation. They followed a rigorous schedule and learned of the rules and vows they would profess 366 days after entry into this novitiate. They made time for prayer and reflection as well as pranks and humor. The balance kept them sane and changed their lives forever.

By Stephan A. George
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To Cheryl who supports my idiosyncrasies, grimaces at my grammar, and, along with Pepper and Chloe, pulls me back to this planet Earth.

Acknowledgements. This narrative would not have been possible without the kind and gentle men who started me on this path. Fr. Simon presented me with the possibility. Fr. Joe Mary convinced me. Fr. Tom befriended me. Fr. Chris made me laugh. Fr. Alan laughed with me. Fr. Eric showed me hope. Fr. Gerard exhibited the strength to continue. Fr. Randall provided gentle advice. Fr. Germain instilled a desire to learn. Fr. Casmir fostered my amazement. Fr. Roger illustrated what gentle leadership meant. Brother Bob taught me how to ride a horse and curry an Angus bull. Brother Kevin showed me the value of a healthy body. Another Brother Bob gave me the gift of playfulness. Fr. Albert taught me how to grin. Fr. Michael Joseph cared for me. Fr. Owen corrected my English, Fr. Peter my Latin, and Fr. Morris my tone-deafness. Fr. Frederick presented me my choices. Fr. Ambrose lightened many moments. Brother David showed me Spirit in sewing, making sandals, and watching birds. Fr. Cyprian taught me the value of grasshoppers, Brother Jim the culinary arts. Fr. Julian was an example of simplicity, Fr. Hubert of kindness. Fr. Blaise instilled serenity. Fr. Frank taught me courage. Fr. Vincent showed me the world of ideas. Fr. John Francis instilled persistence. Fr. Melvin conveyed intellect. Fr. Thomas Anthony defined the Shadow. Fr. Barnabas introduced me to passion. Fr. James Patrick showed me politics with a smile. Charlie Stockbauer taught me life's fragility, Fr. Alexis, how to die. Fr. Paul gave me decisiveness. Fr. John Patrick taught me judgment. Fathers Pat and Don accepted me as a lifelong friend.

Many men whose names I regrettably cannot remember crystallized this experience into one that remains in sharp focus and will so remain to my dying day.

Loving Brings Infinity (A Poem for a Single Breath)

And this is the way we learn to love ourselves...

We do and we don't and we will and we won't and these become sounds that say we can and we can't and still we seek our limits and unknowingly come to know but first to know and then to test and mostly to discard as we find when we do we do and we fail but when we don't we never know and that's akin to failure, that's akin to failure should we seek, should we hide, should we dream and yearn beyond what we call our limits and we say we can't and we say we won't because it is beyond our limits, is well beyond our limits, it's miles beyond our limits and that brings us each and every time to hate another part of us and so destroy, a little more, the dream of what's beyond those limits yet should we stop and slowly step upon the line we drew we find that it's no line no more and cants and donts and shouldnthaves are left behind and we see that we can do whatever comes to mind because first we checked to know and test the limits of that mind and found that such a word exists in concept only and knowing that we come to love ourselves

...and loving brings infinity.

In the world of today, Michael Belgeri tested my patience, made me think, and provided the wonderful spark that brought about this book's look and feel and half the title.

John Hollon said "dyn-o-mite!" more times than I can count. God bless his curmudgeonly soul.

Without the suggestion of Felix Diskin, Curator of the Osage Mission-Neosho County Museum, this story would have remained just another boringly written interlude.

To the people of St. Paul, Kansas: I sincerely hope this fills in some of the blanks about "those novices". I regret that I knew ye not.

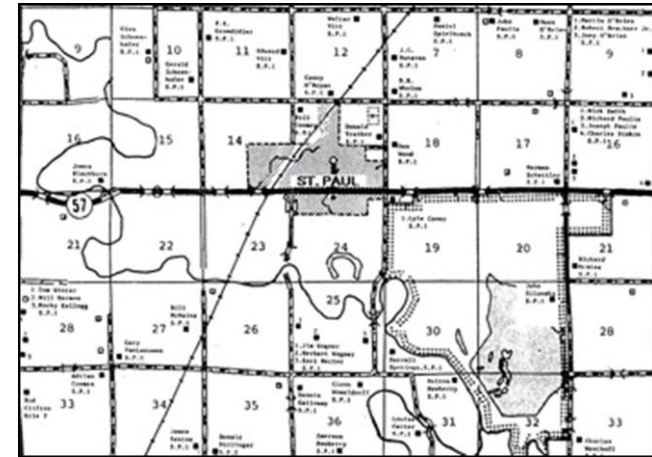
It was June of 1964 and a bunch of boys were about to become men. Excitement was high as a slew of us boarded a train for Kansas City, Kansas, to be followed by a bus ride to St. Paul, Neosho County, Kansas.

It has been our custom, over the years, to refer to St. Paul, Kansas as “about mile beyond where God stopped creating.” The citizens of St. Paul might take umbrage at this statement. St. Paul Kansas was the center of their community life on earth. It would soon become the center of ours. In May of 1964 most of us on the road to St. Paul had graduated from Mother of Good Counsel Preparatory Seminary in Warrenton, Missouri. We had all been anticipating this trip for most of that year regardless of our origins. It was a trip to change our lives. Many in the class had come from various and sundry other places: the military, college, other high schools, and other continents.

We were all entering the Passionist Fathers novitiate to begin our spiritual training before taking the simple vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and devotion to the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (*Memória Passiōnis*).

St. Paul, Kansas—specifically, St. Francis Retreat—would be our home for the next year and a day (technically, our *time of service* would be 366 days). Then, we would profess vows. Our time spent would be under the scrutiny of a novice master and the discerning eyes of the already-professed members of the religious community of priests and lay brothers.

The town of St. Paul Kansas, population 900, was away from everything. No, that’s not fair. It was a functional and successful town but we would have no part in it. We were about to enter a world where no contact to the outside world was



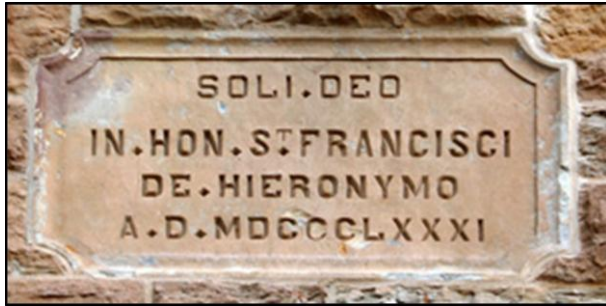
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permitted. No newspapers, magazines, telephone, television, or radio. We were to be sequestered so completely that our training in the Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Passion would have no distraction. The world outside would continue. Ours would stop except for human necessities and contemplation of what we were about to profess. No news event would be important enough to intrude on this isolation and solitude. And none did, except through our own high jinx. This story attempts to bring historical events into a counterpoise to our lives, historical events that we knew nothing about at the time.

Late June on this mid-western prairie was hot and humid, obsessively so. We arrived and met the class of novices who were just about to finish their year and a day. We looked with envy on them as they strolled among us, greeting and introducing themselves, men much different from those we had known as juniors at Mother of Good Counsel Preparatory Seminary. They had made it. The sparkle in their eyes belied this; we wanted that.

There was no air-conditioning, evident by the chevrons of white on these novices' underarms, tucked into long-sleeved, heavy woolen habits. Their feet were entrained by homemade sandals and calluses showed thickly on their heels. We still wanted that sparkle. By far the overwhelming emotion was one of anticipatory joy. We were made comfortable by what we saw and our own feelings of disorientation dissolved in the smiles and laughter of these men.

Introibo ad Altare Dei.

Die 24 Junii—In Nativitate S. Iohannes Baptistæ, I classis, colóre albo, Missa 'De Ventre Matrís'¹

Wednesday, Jun. 24 1964—Birth of St. John the Baptist, 1st class, color: white, Mass: 'From the womb of the Mother'

We were shown to our *cells* (a term for rooms in a convent, monastery, or prison; never mind the metaphor) which bunked a novice with a postulant due to the high number of boys and men entering into religious life in those days. The beds were bunk beds, each having a mattress about 2 inches thick. There was a desk, a chair, and a small closet to make up the rest of the furniture of the room. A large window looked out on St. Francis Church and the wheat fields of Kansas.

We were housed on the third floor above the professed priest and lay brothers who would support our formation time acting as cooks, gardeners, tailors, sandal-makers, teachers, disciplinarians, spiritual confessors, and advisors. They had a recreation room on the second floor. It was the only room in the monastery which was air-conditioned!

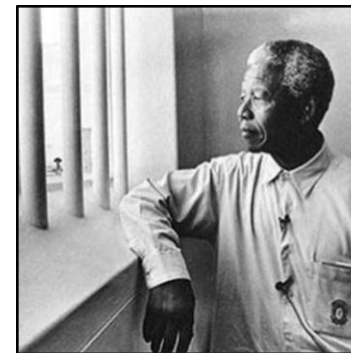
The monastery had its own small chapel (sometimes referred to as choir, or in Anglican English, a *quire*) and to that was connected a back entrance into St. Francis Church, the local parish church for the Catholics of St. Paul. St. Francis de Hieronymo, the church's official name, had been established by Jesuit missionaries to the Osage Indians in 1847 and re-built in 1881. The Passionists took over in 1894 and opened a novitiate in 1936. Adjoining the church and monastery was a gar-

¹ Author's Note: This Latin text is taken from the *Ordo Missae* for 1964 and 1965 and the *Missale Romanum* (1962), the missal in use today for the Tridentine Mass. New *Ordos* were published each year to describe the requirements for the specific feasts of that calendar day. I have attempted to translate the Latin on the line below.

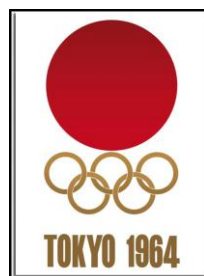


6/1/1964: The Beatles released the single "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Take Out Some Insurance On Me Baby." (4)

6/1/1964: The Rolling Stones arrived in the U.S. for the first time, landing at Kennedy Airport in New York. Their first date was at a high school stadium in Massachusetts.



6/1/1964: In South Africa Nelson Mandela, convicted of treason in the Rivonia Trial, was moved into a jail cell on Robben Island. (5)



- 6/1/1964: The Summer Olympic Games were held in Tokyo, Japan (6).
- 6/9/1964: W. Maxwell Aitken, 85, Lord Beaverbrook, English Minister of Info, died.
- 6/19/1964: The Beatles release the LP "Long Tall Sally."
- 6/20/1964: General William Westmoreland succeeded General Paul Harkins as head of the U.S. forces in Vietnam.
- 6/21/1964: Three young civil rights workers, Andrew Goodman 20, Michael Schwerner 24, and James Chaney 21, disappeared near Meridian, Mississippi.



- 6/24/1964: The Federal Trade Commission announced that starting in 1965, cigarette manufacturers will be required to include warnings on their packaging about the harmful effects of smoking. (7)
- 6/29/1964: Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed after 83-day filibuster in Senate.

den. This 2-acre garden had the twelve Stations of the Cross hewn in granite set off from a macadam path winding through the garden, a grotto to the Virgin Mary, a screened-in and covered patio area, and a 28-foot bell tower built of native sandstone. It was a quiet oasis, full of trees, bushes, flowers, and the occasional headstone of a dead Passionist monk. Of course, none of us even noticed this idyllic place those first days we were there. That would come later.

July 11, 1964. This would be the official day of our entry into the novitiate, our *vestition* ceremony. There was the formal “vesting” ceremony but nothing more of great note on this day. All attention was directed at the upcoming profession of vows by the class ahead of us. Their day was upon them. Their families had arrived to share in the celebration. Then we were alone.

Bl. Lorenzo Maria of St. Francis Xavier (Salvi) (1782-1856)
Liturgical Feast Day: June 12²

² The men and women who populate the end of each chapter are all celebrated as holy men and women with direct connection to the Passionists. Each order of monks has such a hagiography of their own.

Die 12 Iulii—Dominica XV, II classis, colore albo, Missa
'Dicit Dominus'

**Sunday, Jul. 12, 1964—Fifteenth Sunday of the Year, 2nd
class, color: white, Mass: 'The Lord says'**

Routine set in immediately. At 2 a.m., a clapper-wood on wood—abruptly disturbed a deep sleep. It's not likely that even the devil could sleep through such a racket. We had five minutes to don our woolen habit, splash our faces with water in the communal bathroom, and head to the small chapel for *Matins and Lauds*, the first segment of the daily Divine Office.

A little background for those not clued into the rigors of the monastic life in 1964: Latin was still the language of the ritual and liturgies of the Catholic faith. The Second Vatican Council had not yet reached the daily religious life of its believers. The Mass was still in Latin. The Divine Office consisted of the canonical hours. Matins and Lauds began the day. After an hour of chanting prayers and psalms—most of which were beyond our comprehension of Latin—we went back to bed. At 6 a.m. a bell began to ring, fifteen minutes before mandatory arrival in the choir.

The choir architecture needs some explanation. It was a square room with no windows, paneled in dark walnut with a ruby sheen. Its dimensions were about 40 feet by 50 feet. One entered from the rear with the altar on the far 40-foot wall. There was a door adjacent the altar which housed the sacristy, that place where the celebrant priest dressed for Mass. As one stood in the middle of the room, in the back, looking toward the altar, there were two rows of seating to the left and right and two rows across the back wall. All places were assigned.

6/26/1964: Beatles released "A Hard Day's Night" album.

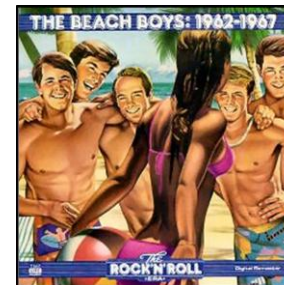
6/28/1964: Malcolm X founded the Organization for Afro American Unity to seek independence for blacks in the Western Hemisphere.



7/2/1964: Celia Black recorded Beatle's "It's For You" with McCartney on piano. (8)

7/2/1964: President Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights.

7/2/1964: Glenn "Fireball" Roberts, biggest NASCAR money winner, died in crash.



7/4/1964: The song "I Get Around" by the Beach Boys topped the charts and stayed there for 2 weeks. Sales went on to exceed a million records. (9)

7/6/1964: Beatles' film "Hard Day's Night" premiered in London.

7/10/1964: The Four Tops released "Baby I Need Your Loving" on the Motown label.

7/11/1964: Queen Elizabeth ordered Beatles to her birthday party and they attended.



7/14/1964: The United States sent 600 more troops to Vietnam. (10)

7/15/1964: The Republican National Convention was held at the Cow Palace in Daly City, Ca. It elected Barry Goldwater as its presidential candidate.

7/18/1964: Riots erupted in the African American communities of NYC and Rochester, NY.



7/24/1964: A race riot took place in Rochester, New York, and 4 people were killed. (11)

This seating was essentially a long, wooden pew, fronted by a long *prie-dieu* which held the prayer books and spiritual reading for each particular monk. Atop the *prie-dieu*, supported by walnut columns, was a wooden lectern upon which the monk placed his breviary while chanting the Divine Office. The center of the choir was open all the way to the altar.

We had a little more time to freshen up than we did coming in Matins and Lauds at 2 a.m. That, or we would sleep until the bell rang again at five minutes before chapel. In the case where we slept late, it would be a rush into the habit and sandals and a quick walk while hands served as comb. The final bell rang two minutes before services commenced. This was a bell regimen that was *always* used for *every* event throughout the day. No need for watches.

Once at our places, we intoned the third and fourth hours of the Divine Office, *Prime* and *Tierce*. Our plainsong chant echoed through the monastery. It seemed a fitting start to a new day. The liturgy of the Mass followed on the heels of Prime and Tierce. This was Latin most of us understood as we had been attending the Latin Mass through grade school and high school. The Mass was non-participatory, so what we heard were only mumbled phrases.

If one looks at the published schedule, the *Horarium* does not mention the Mass. The priests would depart the chapel for any number of the private altars throughout the place. A lay brother or novice would follow to serve as the altar boy for that priest. The Mass was important but not the centerpiece of our activity. Only on those special occasions, such as first-class feasts where High Mass or Solemn High Mass was

conducted, did we participate as a community or even an extended community encompassing the parishioners of St. Francis.

It is difficult to explain in words the impact of chant on the human spirit. Gregorian chant, another name for plainsong or plainchant, is named after the presumed founder of this music, Pope Gregory the Great (Pope from 590-604). You were entranced by many different variations; sometimes it was the rhythmic phrase (*Vale, o valde decora* for the Ave Regina), sometimes the repetitive flow of notes, sometimes the fact that one syllable would move through 50 tonal changes.

Gregorian chant uses a different musical notation than today's 5-line staff. Square notes, *neumes*, were inscribed on a 4-line staff and sung monophonically. Previous to this notation, monks learned the plainsong *viva voce*, through example and reiteration; a tedious process.

There are numerous examples of this notation on YouTube.³ The plainsong is sung while you watch the original document for the music float by. That is the more formal variety of Gregorian chant. The simpler chants of the *Ave Maria*⁴ and the *Salve Regina*⁵ can also be found on the Internet.

Much of what we sung was sung in simple tone. The trance-inducing effect was the same. You moved to another level of consciousness using a language you didn't understand and vocal

7/25/1964: Beatles' "Hard Day's Night, A," album went #1 and stayed #1 for 14 weeks.



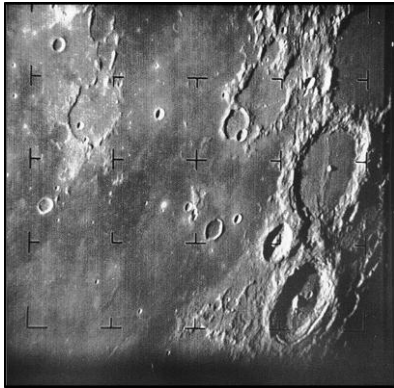
7/26/1964: Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa and six others were convicted of fraud and conspiracy in the handling of a union pension fund. (12)

7/27/1964: President Lyndon Johnson sent an additional 5,000 advisers to South Vietnam.

³ Kyrie IV (Paschaltine). *InFormation: Gregorian Chant*. [Online] Benedictine monks of St. Martin Beuron, 1984. <http://www.aznetwork.com/cp/chant/09-kyrieiv.htm>.

⁴ Ave Maria. *InFormation: Gregorian Chant*. [Online] Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Saint-Maurice and Saint-Maur de Clervaux, 1988. <http://www.aznetwork.com/cp/chant/01-avemaria.htm>.

⁵ Salve Regina (Simple Tone). *InFormation: Gregorian Chant*. [Online] Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Santo Domingo de Silos, 2005. <http://www.aznetwork.com/cp/chant/02-salveregina-sim.htm>.



- 7/28/1964: Ranger 7 was launched toward the Moon. It sent back 4,308 TV pictures. (13)
- 7/31/1964: The American space probe Ranger 7 transmitted pictures of the moon's surface.

tones that permeated your every sinew. You didn't dwell on the mechanics. You let your soul soar.

As 7 a.m. approached, someone in charge knocked three times on the lectern in front of him as a sign to move to the refectory for breakfast. I say someone as all the priests had gone off to celebrate Mass at the many altars throughout the monastery and St. Francis.

You may note that English, or speaking in English, has yet to be mentioned. There was none; nor would there be until after lunch. We ate our simple breakfast in silence, cleaned up after ourselves, and went to our individual *office*, spelled in lower-case. This was a euphemism for manual labor.

By 8 a.m. we were at our jobs. We each had been assigned a task by the novice master. Mine was sacristan, a plum job amongst those possible. Some cleaned the communal bathrooms; others swept and polished the parquet floors. Some tended to the library or the kitchen and refectory, others to the many different chores that keep a building and community of men running smoothly, all in absolute silence. Most of us discovered that hand signals compensated somewhat, not for philosophical discourse, but certainly to get the salt and pepper at the table or point something out to another person.

The preceding three hours of silence lent itself to a lot of self-analysis. Had I followed the rule? Had I kept my eyes down-cast? Had I suffered or caused any distractions? This was important stuff—the stuff of the next activity: Chapter of Faults.

St. Maria Goretti (1890-1902)

Liturgical Feast Day: July 6

Bl. Niceforo of Jesus and Mary ((Tejerina) 1888-1931)

Liturgical Feast Day: July 24

Die 15 Augusti—In Assumptione Beatae Mariae Virginis, I classis, colore albo, Missa 'Signum Magnum'

Saturday, Aug. 15, 1964—Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1st class, color: white, Mass: 'A great sign'

Scrupulous was the by-word. It was instilled in us to observe our every miscue and assess whether it had violated the spirit of the rule. With a little push, scrupulous becomes obsessive. It was a fine line we walked. Some kept small diaries to note their daily infractions.

The Chapter of Faults happened in the novices' recreation room. At 9 a.m., we entered the recreation room as another set of bells would ring. We would line up in classroom style. If we had faults to report to the novice master and our fellow *confraters* (there's that Latin again, a term applied to all of us novices, literally meaning "brothers together"), we knelt in front of our seats until Fr. Frederick, the novice master, called us to order. Most of us knelt. To sit implied we had done nothing at all wrong in the preceding 24 hours. Imagine that! In itself that implied a bit of hubris on the part of the sitter.

Our seating order was prearranged: The first seat was taken by the individual who had entered the seminary first and so on down the line. This was referred to as *deanship* and it brought a few perquisites to the earlier-entering men. It also meant that they began the ritual first. The formula was "I beg of your Reverence some mortification for having..." The fill-in-the-blank could have been anything from looking out a window to falling asleep during prayer to speaking during work hours to breaking an item in the refectory. Those of us further down the deanship ladder learned what and what not to expose.

8/1/1964: Beatles' "Hard Day's Night" single went #1.



8/1/1964: Arthur Ashe became the first African-American to play on the U.S. Davis Cup tennis team. (14)

8/2/1964: There was a race riot in Jersey City, NJ.

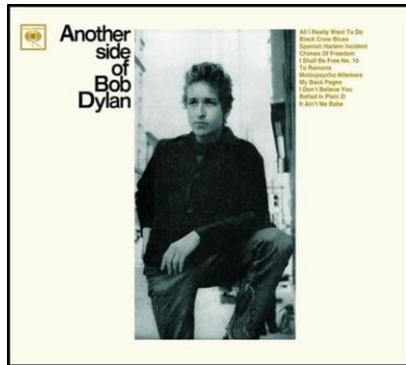
8/4/1964: Pres. Johnson ordered an immediate retaliation for the Aug 2 attack on the US destroyer Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin off North Vietnam.



8/4/1964: The bodies of missing civil rights workers Michael H. Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James E. Chaney were found buried in an earthen dam in Nashoba County, Mississippi. (15)

8/5/1964: US began bombing North Vietnam.

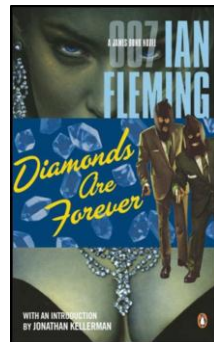
8/7/1964: Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution.



8/8/1964: Bob Dylan released his 4th album "Another Side of Bob Dylan." (16)

8/11/1964: There was a race riot in Paterson, NJ.

8/12/1964: There was a race riot in Elizabeth, NJ.



8/12/1964: Ian L. Fleming. 56, British spy, journalist, writer (James Bond), died. (17)

8/15/1964: A race riot took place in Dixmoor, a suburb of Chicago, Ill.

8/18/1964: South Africa was banned from Olympic Games because of apartheid policies.

Father Frederick then meted out the mortification after each novice recited the sins of his day. This was something as mortifying as saying five Hail Marys and five Our Fathers kneeling in the middle of the choir. Or it might be more serious, requiring the novice master to increase the punishment to 10 of each, prostrate on the floor of the choir.

Then there was the day that one novice, Confrater Michael, broke all the records. His office was cleaning the professed recreation room. While throwing out the newspapers he saw something that all of us had to know about (his thought). When his turn came he intoned, "I beg of your Reverence some mortification for having looked at a newspaper headline saying that the St. Louis Cardinals won the World Series beating the New York Yankees, 7-5, in the seventh game." God! We were a disciplined bunch! Not a gasp, giggle, or raised head was seen or heard. Father Frederick never smiled under normal circumstances and this was not normal by a long shot. "Confrater," he hissed, "that kind of detail is not at all necessary. Recite Psalm 129 while prostrated on the floor of the choir." Confrater Michael had just made himself a hero. He was already a Cardinals fan. Father Fred must have been a fan as well because he allowed Michael to get that whole thing out.

Spiritual training now began after all this mortification and humiliation. The topics varied: The history of the Order of the Congregation of the Passion, the saints of the Order, the Rule of St. Benedict upon whose Rule most other monastic communities lived, worked, and prayed, and the Rule as interpreted by St. Paul of the Cross for the Passionist community.

How old were these texts? Only Father Fred knew but he tried to modernize them as he went along. The history of the Order and the lives of its saints held some interest but the rule of St. Benedict did not. Before we all nodded off, Father Fred adjourned our morning Chapter and sent us to our cells for 15 minutes of spiritual reading and a half hour solitary walk or further reflection, depending upon the weather.

It was fast approaching 11:45 a.m. and the next canonical hours of *Sext* and *Nones*. Back to the chapel for the sixth and ninth hour of the day (as estimated before clocks were invented) and more plainsong chant. Dinner followed at noon and after cleaning up we headed to the novices' recreation room for the first conversations of the day.

Special relationships, this was a phrase fraught with negative overtones. A renowned novice master of the 1940's and 50's once remarked that, "Special relationships are the bane of community life!" Special relationships were what all of us had developed over our years together. They are what, today, still holds many of us together in mutual respect and admiration. Then they were what we might refer to as *cliques*. To minimize the development of such relationships, we were each assigned a partner during this noonday recreation time. We didn't have to spend time with that person exclusively but, it was a reportable chapter offense if we didn't spend the majority of time with that person. One novice who seemed to always be getting a new partner cracked, "I'm the kiss of death! They pair me with someone and then he leaves!" In many ways it was an unenforceable and often dismissed rule, observed mostly in the breach.

It's amazing to look back and realize there is little to remember

8/20/1964: President Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act, a nearly \$1 billion anti-poverty measure.



8/27/1964: Gracie Allen, comedian, died at 62. (18)

8/28/1964: Race riots took place in Philadelphia.



8/29/1964: Walt Disney's "Mary Poppins" released. (19)

about what was said during that forty-five minutes. It wasn't about *what was said* but about the very fact that we could talk! I never remember this time being as long as 45 minutes. It seemed to be only 15 minutes. That can be attributed to not having got said what needed to be said after more than six hours of silence.

Bl. Dominic of the Mother of God (Barberi) (1792-1849)
Liturgical Feast Day: August 26

Die 29 Septēbris–In Dedicātionē S. Michaēlis Archāngeli,
I classis, colōre albo, Missa 'Benedicite'

Tuesday, Sep. 29, 1964–In Dedication to St. Michael the Archangel (Michaelmas Day), 1st class, color: white, Mass: 'Bless the Lord'

At 1:15 p.m. we left the recreation room and went to our individual cells. This was the siesta hour. We were free to read, journal, or nap. Our reading consisted of books in a spiritual theme, lives of the saints, *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola, works on the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, homilies on the Virgin Mary, Thomas Aquinas, anything by St. Paul of the Cross, our founder. Whatever one was reading had been preapproved by the novice master or vice master. Reading such material often leads to fluttering eyelids and drooping heads. Going into my cell for the sole purpose of sleep was usually my choice. That clanging bell at 2 p.m. never failed to bring us back.

At 2:15 p.m. we all assembled in the hallway with our rosaries in hand. The novice master would intone the prayers and we would answer, walking the corridor as we did. We stopped at some pre-arranged places after each decade of the rosary. In some ways it was a gentle way to awaken after that hour's snooze. There's an inherent danger to this siesta: If you're religious (no pun intended) in your use of it, it would haunt you for the rest of your life. Even today, more than 45 years later, I still feel my eyelids begin to droop at 1 p.m.

At about 2:30 p.m. we assembled in the recreation room for the third time that day. This would be an hour and a half of the novice master elaborating on the rule and constitutions. One

9/1/1964 The Joint Chiefs of Staff organized a was game called SIGMA II which attempted to predict how Hanoi and the Viet Cong would react to the Johnson policy of "graduated pressure." It predicted that escalation would erode public support in the US.

9/2/1964 Keanu Reeves, film actor, was born.

9/2/1964 Indonesian paratroopers landed in Malaysia.

9/3/1964 Pres. Johnson signed the Wilderness Act.

9/3/1964 US attorney general Robert Kennedy resigned.



9/4/1964 "Gilligan's Island," a TV tale of 7 castaways, began its 98-show run on CBS. (20)

9/9/1964 John Osborne's "Inadmissible Evidence," premiered in London.



9/10/1964 Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) formed. (21)

9/12/1964 Typhoon Gloria struck Taiwan killing 330, with \$17.5 million damage.

9/14/1964 UC Berkeley officials announced a new policy prohibiting political action at the campus entrance at Bancroft Way and Telegraph.



9/14/1964 Pope Paul VI opened the third session of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, also known as Vatican Two." The session closed two months later. (22)



9/16/1964 French Pres. Charles de Gaulle visited South America with stops in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and Brazil. (23)

of the first things we learned was that the official name of the Passionists was the Congregation of the Discalced Clerics (or Clerks in early writings) of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It had a certain rhythm but no one ever used that title except on documents. This time was spent delving deep into a short book which had been approved by Popes Benedict XIV (1675-1758), Clement XIV (1705-1774), Pius VI (1717-1799), and recently revised by John XXIII (1881-1963). Father Fred would read and interpret, read and interpret. If there was a tougher time to stay awake, I've never met it.

Four o'clock in the afternoon brought the blessed (and not so intellectual) relief of work, cleaning floors, bathrooms, or putting out the vestments for the Masses for the next day. An hour of this certainly gave all of us time to reflect on what we had learned from Father Frederick. More likely it helped us forget how consummately boring the previous hour and a half had been! In fairness, I learned many things during that time. Foremost of all was the deep and rich traditions that arose over two hundred years of practicing these rules and constitutions and how they had evolved. There was a reverential awe to the continuity of these Rules. Some small part of me heard what was said but most of me was waiting for the next bell to sound.

And sound it did. First, we had time for another solitary walk, then to the choir. The entire community gathered for the penultimate canonical hour, *Vespers*, or Evening Prayers to any good Anglican. The chanting voices re-introduced the altered state of consciousness. It was a good thing. It prepared us for the most difficult hour of the day: meditation. One long hour of nothing. One long hour of maintaining a

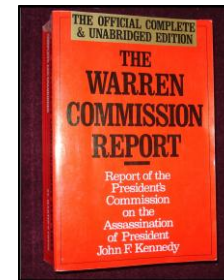
wakeful state of mind. One long hour of wondering if I was doing this right.

That was my state of mind for the first six months. I would read something spiritually-oriented for the first ten minutes and then lower my head, close my eyes and try to wipe all extraneous thoughts from my brain, concentrating on what it was that I may have read. My mind went everywhere except where I thought it should be going, *i.e.*, contemplating Our Lord on the Cross, the virgin birth, or other mysteries of our faith. Thankfully, newsworthy intrusions from the outside world were non-existent or this would have never worked.

Sometime along the way, I found I would move into this meditation and the next thing I would hear would be the Rector's knock alerting us to the next activity, supper. Where did that hour go? What spiritual enlightenment had I accomplished? Was I asleep, awake, or somewhere in between? I would walk silently to supper wondering what had happened, completely ignorant of the fact that I had truly meditated.

St. Vincent Mary Strambi (1745-1824)
Liturgical Feast Day: September 24

- 9/17/1964 The situation comedy "Bewitched" premiered on ABC-TV.
- 9/18/1964 U.S. destroyers fired on hostile targets in Vietnam.
- 9/21/1964 Malta became an independent member of the British Commonwealth.
- 9/22/1964 The musical "Fiddler on the Roof" opened at Imperial Theater on Broadway, beginning a run of 3,242 performances.
- 9/22/1964 "Man from U.N.C.L.E.," premiered on NBC-TV.
- 9/24/1964 The TV situation comedy "Munsters" premiered on CBS with Al Lewis (d.2006) as the family patriarch.



- 9/27/1964 The Warren Commission, investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, announced that according to its findings Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone as did Jack Ruby in the assassination. (24)



- 9/28/1964 Harpo (Arthur) Marx, comedian (Marx Bros), died at 75. (25)

10/1/1964 The 547-foot USS Horne, built at the Hunter's Point naval shipyard in SF, was launched. It was named after Adm. Frederick J. Horne (d.1959), who played a major role in directing the Navy's efforts in WW II. It was decommissioned in 1994.



10/1/1964 The Free Speech Movement was launched at the University of California at Berkeley. Mario Savio (1943-1996), UC Berkeley physics student, began the Free Speech Movement to fight prohibitions against students distributing political brochures and other materials such as civil rights. (26)

10/2/1964 Scientists announced findings that smoking can cause cancer.



10/3/1964 East Berliners dug a 470-foot tunnel, Tunnel 57, to the West and 57 people escaped. (27)

Die 19 Octóbris–S. Petri de Alcantára, Conf., III classis, colóre albo, Missa 'Iustus Et Palma

Monday, Oct. 19, 1964–St, Peter of Alcantara, Confessor, 3rd class, color: white, Mass: 'The righteous shall flourish'

Supper at 6:30 p.m. was an event that I remember well, not for the food which was delicious and not for the continuing silence which had become an accepted part of our daily routine. Once the food had been distributed, one person in the community would approach the Rector, carrying a black, wooden cross. That person—and it could have been either novice or professed priest or lay brother—would recite a Latin formula that began, "*Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa...*" (My fault, my fault, my grievous fault...). The intention was to demonstrate one's humility to the entire community by describing some minor transgression. What it was, was not as important as the expression of humility. It was an eye-opener for us novices to see grown men kneel before the Rector and the entire community.

Once the Rector had responded and closed that minor chapter, one of us had the anxious job of reading to the community. The readings began from a hagiography of the saints. A saint, whose feast day it was, was the featured reading. Some were obscure, some not. This short reading was full of platitudes and admonitions but also contained a bit of questionable history about the individual. My love of history began here.

We had many different books but only one remains in memory to the dismissal of all others: *Naked to Mine Ene-*

mies: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey by Charles W. Ferguson (1958). Here was true historical narrative with only minor embellishment of platitude or admonition. It was akin to a drink of fresh, sweet water without a saccharine religious overtone. I hung on every word and rued the times that the Rector dispensed with silence at the meal. That did happen occasionally. I didn't rue long as that dispensation was like another oasis in the silence of religious life. Add to this that the food prepared by the brothers was superior and you have the recipe for an hour of bliss, silent or not.

The task of reading to the entire community was not something any of us volunteered for. We lived in fear of making a mistake during our reading. Mispronunciations would lead to a knock on the table, a correction by the superior, a blush by the novice, and a repeat of the correction before resuming the reading. Some people could just not read in the face of this anxiety.

Seven o'clock in the evening was a highlight. We departed the refectory for the recreation room and 45 minutes of talk. But it wasn't all talk, talk, talk. Things were present to keep our hands busy. We made rosaries until curving the wire, adding the beads, and attaching chain became so automatic that we could talk and bead with little thought to the hands at work.

One local farmer decided to donate the fruit of a number of his pecan trees. *Barrels of nuts*. These all had to be shucked. It was an alternative to rosaries but we shucked so many pecans that, even today, I'm not too keen on pecan pie or other dishes employing it.

If the weather was clement we would go to the garden patio. Our words and laughter radiated through the ground restoring

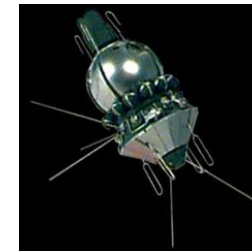
10/5/1964 Egon Shultz, an East German border soldier, was shot to death at the site of the escape tunnel. A 1994 report said he was inadvertently killed by another border soldier.

10/6/1964 Richard Scheibe, German sculptor (Adler mit Hakenkreuz), died at 85.

10/10/1964 Bob Hayes, sprinter, won gold medals at the Tokyo Olympics in the 100 meters and 4x100 relay.

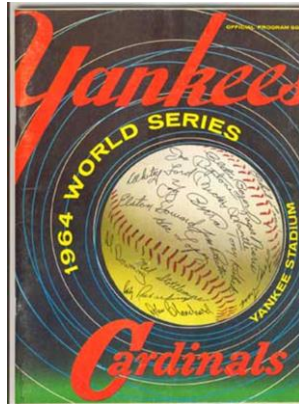


10/12/1964 Mary Pinchot Meyer, lover to John F. Kennedy up to his assassination, was brutally murdered on a walking path by the Potomac River. (28)



10/12/1964 The Soviet Union launched a Voskhod space capsule with a three-man crew on the first manned mission involving more than one crew member. (29)

- 10/14/1964 Civil rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advocating a policy of non-violence.
- 10/14/1964 Philips began experimenting with color TV.
- 10/15/1964 Cole Porter, 73, renowned lyricist and composer, died. His work included "Still of the Night," "I've Got You Under My Skin," and hundreds of other classics. Cole Porter music crossed all musical style and format boundaries throughout his long and rich career.



- 10/15/1964 St. Louis Cardinals in their home park beat the New York Yankees in game 7 of Baseball's World Series (7-5). (30)
- 10/15/1964 It was announced that Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev had been removed from office. He was succeeded as premier by Alexei N. Kosygin and as Communist Party secretary by Leonid I. Brezhnev.
- 10/16/1964 The New York Yankees fired manager Yogi Berra one day after their World Series loss to the St. Louis Cardinals.

spirit and mind, and cooling us off in those heavy wool habits. Forty-five minutes passes quickly. Our day is near its end.

As a group, we walked in silence to the professed recreation room for something called the *evening sentiment*, a spiritual pause with a few religious words by the rector. This was the only time we were allowed here. Maybe they thought that the permeating smells of cigarettes and cigars, newspapers, and 3-malt whiskey would convince us not to continue on the path of the religious life. Wrong! Those smells just told us that this year and a day would end and those things might again be available.

It was imperative, however, that our eyes remain downcast so that the small corruptions surrounding us could not be sampled. I'm sure some of the professed priests or brothers, in a spirit of compassion or downright devilishness, left headlines on the table for anyone with sight good enough to read.

There's was one more stop before chapel. As a group, we novices met with the novice master in the sacristy of St. Francis Church. The first order of business was reading from the *Ordo Missae*. This was a small book published yearly including all of the necessary directions for celebrating the Mass of the next morning.

This information is summarized in the title of these chapters. The problem was it was in Latin so whoever was the designated reader had probably read through it previously so that his English translation was flawless. Or not. Flawed translation could create a few quiet laughs and later ragging during tomorrow's recreation time. Father Fred would also take a moment to provide a short homily. God only knows what he

said because I remember only one. That one was a cautionary tale to keep our heads down as we traversed the main church to the choir loft on Sunday mornings. This would insure that we were not distracted by the young women in the crowd, though I believe he used another word to describe the fairer sex.

By 8 p.m. we reassembled in the choir for the last of the canonical hours, *Compline*. As we came into the choir you could feel the energy of the community begin to ebb. People moved slower, sung more softly, and seemed more introspective, if that's possible. It was the end of the day and it would close with plainsong chant and a hymn to Mary, *Salve Regina*⁶. The concluding prayer captured the day succinctly:

Lord, we beg you to visit this house	Vísitá, quæsumus, Dómine, habitatiónem istam
---	---

and banish from it all the deadly power of the enemy.	et omnes insídias inimíci ab ea longe repéllé;
--	---

May your holy angels dwell here to keep us in peace	ángeli tui sancti hábitant in ea, qui nos in pace custódiánt,
---	--

and may your blessing be upon us always.	et benedíctio tua sit super nos semper.
---	--

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen	Per Christum Dómine nos- tri. Amen.
--	--

⁶ Salve Regina (Simple Tone). *InFormation: Gregorian Chant*. [Online] Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Santo Domingo de Silos, 2005. <http://www.aznetwork.com/cp/chant/02-salveregina-sim.htm>.

10/16/1964 Harold Wilson of the Labor Party assumed office as prime minister of Great Britain, succeeding Conservative Sir Alec Douglas-Home. Wilson's Labor government took over from Harold MacMillan's Conservatives.



10/16/1964 Red China detonated its first atomic bomb, codenamed "596," on the Lop Nur Test Ground, and became the world's 4th nuclear power. (31)

10/20/1964 Herbert Hoover (b.1874), the 31st president of the United States (1929-1933), died in New York at age 90.



10/21/1964 The movie musical "My Fair Lady," starring Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison, had its world premiere at the Criterion Theater in NYC. (32)

10/22/1964 EMI rejected an audition by "High Numbers," a group that went on to become "The Who."



10/22/1964 Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980), French philosopher and novelist, declined the Nobel Prize for Literature. (33)

10/24/1964 Belgian paratroopers liberated 1,000 white hostages in Stanleyville (Kisangani, Congo).

10/24/1964 Zambia (N. Rhodesia) gained independence from Britain (National Day). Pres. Kenneth Kaunda was in charge. The country had fewer than 100 university graduates.



10/27/1964 Singers Sonny and Cher wed. Cher wore bell-bottoms. (34)

With prayers complete we went off to our cells and eventual retirement at 9 p.m. Now began the *Grand Silence*. I could never understand this. We had been silent for all but an hour and a half already. What was so grand about the Grand Silence? Weren't the previous hours just as grand? It was not a question I would ask of anyone under these circumstances as I had probably been told during one of Father Frederick's lectures. It was years later when I found that this question still troubled a very small part of me that I went looking for an answer. Google Books is an excellent source for very old books. I will not attempt to cite any here but simply put my conclusions out there, derived from this massive amount of information and archaic wisdom.

Our English tongue prevents us from making a distinction between silence and Silence. The former is an action of just not talking. The latter goes much more deeply. During the day silence is observed in terms of not talking. Interactive communication still occurred through that damned clapper, bells, knocks on the pew, nods of the head, and sign language.

This system kept everyone functioning. St. Benedict recognized the need for this type of communication when he wrote his rule about 540 CE. Anglo-Saxon monks at the end of the first millennium were known to have as many as 125 different gestures to communicate during times of silence.

The English word, silence, is derived directly from the Latin, *silêncio*. There is as well a Latin word used by Cicero in the Catalinian Conspiracy orations (63 BCE), *tacitus*. In Cicero's oration condemning the *coup d'état* staged by Cataline, he used the phrase, "*Qui tacet, consentire videtur*" (he who is silent seems to consent). *Tacitus* meant a type of silence

where one remains quiet and within oneself. The verb, *tacere*, meant the action to maintain this attitude of quiet.

No one objected to the few hand signals in the refectory, even the professed religious used them. Those same signals were forbidden once the Grand Silence began. Consider this time after Compline until after Mass the next morning a time for internal reflection to be disturbed by nothing and no one. At an unconscious level we all absorbed the meaning of the Grand Silence. We just couldn't put words to it. If there was any part of our day that was *de rigueur*, it was these hours. It never changed. It was not dispensed. It was broken only in an emergency which you will hear more about later.

Bl. Isidore of St. Joseph (De Loor) (1881-1916)

Liturgical Feast Day: October 6

St. Innocent of Mary Immaculate (Canoura Arnau) (1887-1934)

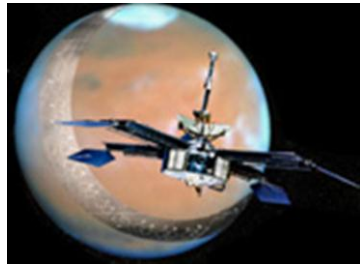
Liturgical Feast Day: October 9

10/27/1964 Congo rebel leader Christopher Gbenye held 60 Americans and 800 Belgians.



10/29/1964 Thieves made off with the 565-carat Star of India and the 100-carat DeLong ruby along with other gems and jewels from the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The Star and most of the other gems were recovered; three men were convicted of stealing them. (35)

- 11/1/1964: The Vietcong assaulted the Bien Hoa airport at Saigon, South Vietnam.
- 11/2/1964: Faisal ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud succeeded his older brother Saud bin Abdul Aziz as king of Saudi Arabia.
- 11/3/1964: President Johnson soundly defeated Republican challenger Barry Goldwater to win a White House term as the 36th president.
- 11/3/1964: Robert Kennedy was elected senator from New York.



- 11/5/1964: The Mariner 3 was launched. It failed to reach a trajectory around Mars and ended up in distant orbit around the sun. (36)
- 11/10/1964: Australia began a draft to fulfill its commitment in Vietnam.
- 11/13/1964: Pope Paul VI gave a tiara to the poor.



- 11/14/1964: The U.S. First Cavalry Division battled with the North Vietnamese Army in the Ia Drang Valley, the first ground combat for American troops. (37)

Die 1 Novémbris–In Festo Omnium Sanctorum, I classis, colore albo, Alissa 'Gaudeamus'

Sunday, Nov. 1, 1964–The Feast of All Saints. 1st class, color: white, Mass: ‘Let us rejoice’

If I had read such a summary of a day in the life of a Passionist novice, I would have been the first ex-novice of our class. The mere thought of spending 366 days under such a regime would have scared the hell out me; there would have been no need for redemption. The majority of weekdays were spent following this schedule. Saturdays and Sundays eased it a bit. There were extended hours of work and play in which speaking was permitted.

In 1962 a provincial meeting designated that U.S. holidays would be included in the *Gaudeamus* days (Latin for “Let us rejoice”). The strict rule was relaxed, Matins and Lauds exempted, and the day free.

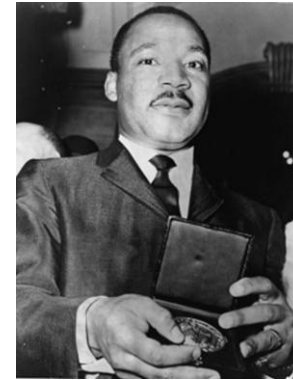
After all, when you have a pond full of carp, a handball court, and a baseball diamond, how could anyone ever think those activities would be done in silence? Feast days of the first class also brought more relaxation of the rule, more work as well as more play. If there was the temptation to flex one’s individuality it usually occurred on these days.

There is a muddy river that meanders through Neosho County, the Neosho River. About a mile south of the monastery, previous novices had built a camp, Camp Osage. This camp was two old railroad freight cars, firmly seated on concrete piers near the river. During times of extended recreation, we grabbed our swim trunks, used the railroad cars as a changing rooms, and plunged into the muddy water. Remember, no

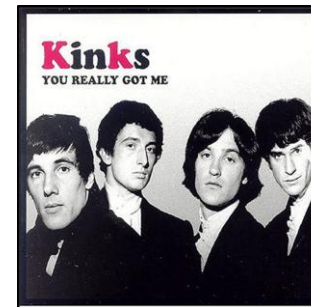
air-conditioning and a shower once a week was our norm. A water slide was created by the water brought up in buckets and by the water on our bodies. We slid merrily down this 50-foot embankment of slimy mud. No one ever contracted typhus or any other water-borne illness either because of the grace of God or because the water was just muddy (in some way, also the grace of God). This getaway had a limited lifetime—basically summer.

It was easy to field two teams for softball with the number of novices in our class. It also became a time where Christian charity lapsed as teams were picked and the athletically-challenged were groaned about. Handball was another matter. Father Fred was, by far, the most accomplished player, even at his advanced age of 44. He could, and did, whip anyone playing him one-on-one.

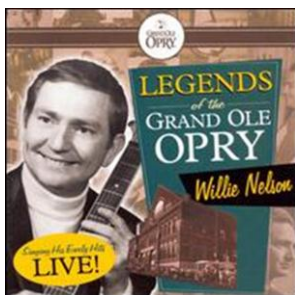
I had one short-lived victory in this game. The day before, I walked into Father Fred's office to announce that I had chosen the name under which I would profess my vows. This was something each of us had to decide in the course of the year as it was another way of moving away from the secular world we had left behind. I knelt at his desk. "Your reverence," (a title by which we always addressed him, to his face) "I have chosen my devotional name." From behind the latest issue of *Flying* magazine came his scowl. He put down the magazine, leaned back in his chair, and inserted his right thumb into his right armpit. Try that. It's not easy. That was a posture he often adopted with novice or professed alike. "And..." he said still scowling, "what will that be, Confrater Stephan?" I gulped back my intimidation and said, "Stephen Jerome of Mary, Seat of Wisdom." Both Jerome, an ancient Father of the Church, and Mary, Seat of Wisdom, a title given to Mary in the 11th or



- 11/18/1964: FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. as "the most notorious liar in the country" for accusing FBI agents in Georgia of failing to act on complaints filed by blacks. (38)
- 11/21/1964: The upper level of New York's Verrazano Narrows Bridge, which connected Brooklyn and Staten Island, was opened.
- 11/23/1964: Vatican abolished Latin as the official language of Roman Catholic liturgy.
- 11/24/1964: Residents of Wash DC were permitted to vote for the 1st time since 1800.



- 11/28/1964 "You Really Got Me" by The Kinks peaked at #7 on the pop singles chart. (39)



11/28/1964: Willie Nelson made his debut performance at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. (40)



11/28/1964: "Leader of the Pack" by The Shangri-Las peaked at #1 on the pop singles chart. (41)

11/29/1964 The US Roman Catholic Church instituted sweeping changes in the liturgy, including the use of English instead of Latin. (42)

11/30/1964 The Russian ZOND 2 Flyby lost contact enroute to Mars.

12th century, seemed to be two things I could relate to in a new name.

Father Fred's scowl softened for a moment, his thumb came out of his armpit and he picked up a pencil to begin writing on a fresh sheet of paper. "You know that whenever you say Mass (that would be eight years in the future), you'll have to write your name in the Mass book. Is this what you want to write?" He held up the paper, landscape style, and on it was written

Stephánus Hierónymus a María Sedes Sapiéntia

from end to end. "No, let's try, *Stephánus a María.*" There was no discussion. I said my thanks and left the office but I was perturbed! Humiliated, maybe. And these feelings did not go away. The next afternoon he and I were on the handball and he won 2 games to my one. That one game assuaged my ego and left him with another scowl on his face and, perhaps, a bruise in the small of his back!

Many, many years later did I discover that Father Fred *had* accepted my devotional name minus the Jerome part.

Bl. Pius of St. Aloysius (Campidelli) (1868-1889)
Liturgical Feast Day: November 3

Bl. Eugene (Bossilkov) (1900-1952)
Liturgical Feast Day: November 13

Bl. Grimoaldo of the Purification (Santamaria) (1883-1902)
Liturgical Feast Day: November 18

Die 3 Decembris—S. Francisci Xaverii Conf. III classis, colóre albo, Missa 'Loquebar de testimoniis'

Thursday, Dec. 3, 1964—St. Francis Xavier, Confessor, 3rd class, color: white, Mass: 'I spoke of Thy testimoniis'

Die 26 decembris—II dies infra octavam Nativitatis Dómini: S. Stepháni Protomártiris, II classis, colóre rubro, Missa 'Sederunt Principes'

Saturday, Dec. 26, 1964—Second day into the octave of the Nativity of Our Lord: St. Stephen, First Martyr, 2nd class, color: red, Mass: 'Princes sat, and spoke against me'

Bitterly cold winds blew across the winter wheat by December. We began to appreciate our heavy woolen habits. A cold choir loft in the back of St. Francis Church didn't seem to matter. We were there to practice the Gregorian chant and Latin hymns that would be sung at Midnight Mass on Christmas. The only person blowing into his hands was the choirmaster, an African-American who had received a degree in music before entering the novitiate with our class. Andrew was full of energy in this new role he had assumed. He was diligent and a taskmaster in getting thirty-plus men to sing the four different voices required of the music he had selected. He had been conducting us for the last six months but this was our biggest gig. He wanted it perfect. The frigid temperatures in the choir loft were nothing compared to his cold, hard stares when the tenors muffed it. But we came together under his direction.

Many years later a local resident of the town of St. Paul said to me, "You know what I missed the most after the Passionists left? The music you guys created." I miss that, too.

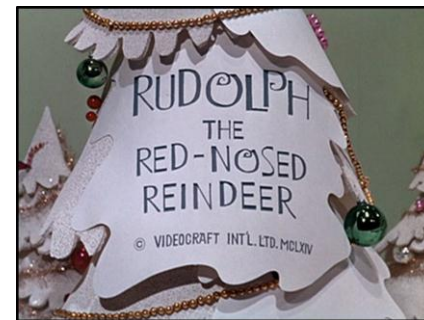
12/1/1964 M.L. King spoke to J. Edgar Hoover about his slander campaign.

12/1/1964 Pres. Johnson summoned UC Pres. Clark Kerr and said he wanted to name Kerr as Sec. of Health, Education and Welfare. The FBI came back with a slanted 12-page report that including unsubstantiated damaging allegations.



12/2/1964 Mario Savio made a speech on behalf of the Free Speech Movement that caused hundreds of students to take over Sproul Hall in Berkeley. Gov. Pat Brown ordered police to arrest students occupying Sproul Hall. (43)

12/2/1964 Brazil sent Juan Peron back to Spain, foiling his efforts to return to his native land.



12/3/1964 "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" 1st aired on TV. (58)

12/3/1964 Police arrested 824 students at the University of California at Berkeley, one day after the students stormed the administration building and staged a massive sit-in as part of the Free Speech Movement. It was the largest mass arrest in US history.



12/4/1964 Some 10,000 people attended a protest rally at Sproul Hall, UC Berkeley, and speakers included Willie Brown and John Burton. (44)

12/8/1964 The UC Academic Senate passed resolutions that affirmed the rights of students to participate in political activity.



12/9/1964 Dame Edith Sitwell, 77, English poet, died. "Good taste is the worst vice ever invented." (45)

Christmas and its octave, the eight days after, was a wonderful but soul-wrenching time. I was homesick without even the hope of reprieve. My parents, brothers, and baby sister were more than 460 miles away. I knew full well that I had given up that life at the age of 17. That didn't change how the heart felt. I'm sure I wasn't alone with that loss. The inherent beauty of the Latin rituals and liturgies of that season took the sting out. We aced our performance for the resident Catholics (and a few non-Catholics) of St. Paul, Kansas, not just once at Midnight Mass but also two more times on Christmas Day. Rules were relaxed as I'm sure Father Fred saw the faraway looks in many eyes.

By this time the common, daily routine was common and daily. We still hated the clapper at 2 a.m. but we still trudged down to Matins and Lauds and chanted away. We must have looked a sight standing there, disheveled and heavy-lidded. The professed priests and brothers didn't look much different. The period of sleep after Matins was short but most of us developed the habit of falling asleep quickly to maximize the shortness. Prime, Tierce, and Mass brought us to full wakefulness, sort of.

In these days the Mass was not a participatory event. It was done quietly and we were only observers. We were not expected to repeat the responses back to the priest. We simply held one position, a three-point landing. We knelt on bare wood which was slanted to take our knees full on (imagine the calluses after a year of this). At the same time our toes rested on the floor and our butts against the seat—exactly what we were taught not to do as children. Once one adjusts to the agony of it all—and one does—then there arises a certain amount of comfort, comfort enough to bring back the Arms

of Morpheus—sweet, sweet sleep. Big problem. While this three-point landing was stable when one was awake, it became hazardous when one fell asleep. *Thonk!* That’s the sound of a head hitting square on the wooden *prie-dieu* in front of it. It served to bring one back to a blazing reality. Of course, it also served to waken anyone else on the verge of following suite. It would become material in the Chapter of Faults as well as the noon recreation.

Our heavy, woolen habits were cinched at the waist by a 2-inch black, leather belt, made adjustable by knotted leather straps. This allowed the more mature priests and brothers a bit of comfort when the stomach began to expand as age took over.

For the novice that wasn’t an advantage; it had another role. As Mass or afternoon meditation began, I would loosen my belt enough to allow my arms to pass between that belt and my habit. My arms would be held rigid in position next to my body. I had created the ideal splint that would keep me erect and eliminate the possibility of the *Thonk!* Scrupulous as I was, it did not eliminate reporting the infraction at the Chapter of Faults. This splint idea was the invention of Confrater Murray. The well-worn phrase, “Necessity is the mother of invention,” captures the reason why. Murray had the propensity and often reported his *Thonk!*’s at Chapter. One thing he did not report was the jar of wasps he released into my cell one day which, naturally, led to my breaking of the Grand Silence one night.

This season of the year keeps a sacristan very busy, setting out the vestments and all the accoutrements of the Mass, chalices, *cibória* (covered containers that look like chalices), platens, missals, albs, cinctures, maniples, stoles, chasubles, corporals,



12/10/1964 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize during ceremonies in Oslo, Norway. (46)

12/11/1964 Frank Sinatra Jr. was returned to his parents home after being kidnapped for the ransom amount of \$240,000.

12/12/1964 Kenya formally became a republic.



12/12/1964 Three Buddhist leaders began a hunger strike to protest the government in Saigon, South Vietnam. (47)

12/13/1964 In El Paso, Texas, President Johnson and Mexican President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz set off an explosion that diverted the Rio Grande, reshaping the U.S.-Mexican border and ending a century-old dispute.

12/21/1964 Britain's House of Commons voted to ban the death penalty. Parliament voted to abolish the death penalty. The vote was in part due to the country's unease over the 1953 Bentley hanging.



12/23/1964 Rock 'n' Roll Radio- in the guise of Pirate Radio- came to England. Pirate Radio was a gallant effort to broadcast commercial radio, which was illegal in Great Britain at that time. (48)

12/23/1964 India and Ceylon were hit by a cyclone and 4,850 were killed.



12/24/1964 The U.S. headquarters in Saigon, South Vietnam, was hit by a bomb. Two officers were killed. (49)

palls, veils, and burses. I was honored in this role of sacristan and not a small bit proud of the position I held.

We moved to our work when breakfast was over. I properly stowed the vestments and other paraphernalia then dusted and waxed the cabinets on which they were displayed prior to use.

One day, a day I will never forget, I had left a *ciborium* on the cabinet top, its thin golden lid snugly on top of the container of unconsecrated hosts. It needed a good polishing which I intended to do after waxing the cabinet surfaces. The chalices and *ciboria* were housed above the vestments in a cabinet that simply sat astride the vestment cabinet. I polished the display surface to a mirror-like luster with rapid circular movements of my waxed cloth. I polished a little too hard in the back corner. The upper cabinet slowly moved to the side, lubricated by the wax, and began to fall to the side. It stopped short of complete disaster by a certain *ciborium* I had left on the cabinet top. I caught the edge of the cabinet and lifted it back to its proper position. I then looked upon the most frightful thing I had ever seen: a precious, golden *ciborium* whose thin, golden top with small cross, now had a thin, golden top with a small golden cross poking deep into the center of the cup! After a few expletives in the silent sacristy, I collected myself. This cup was damaged beyond repair.

Nowhere to turn. No place to hide. The vessels housed in the upper cabinet were in chaos. Once I was able to bring my hyperventilating under control, I rearranged those vessels. I realized Father Fred was my next port of call, like it or not. I didn't, but I had no choice.

I took the ciborium and lid up to his office. I knelt before him, placing the dented ciborium on his desk without a word. His eyes and scowl came out from behind *Flying* magazine. The scowl disappeared into puzzlement as his eyes showed more white than I thought possible. His thumb went into his armpit as he recovered his scowl and his composure.

“Well. What have we here?” he said slowly hoping I would understand that the question was rhetorical. I did. I explained what happened and he listened without the aid of *Flying* magazine.

“This appears to be a matter for *Culpa* at dinner this evening. Go see Father Ambrose and he’ll tell you what’s required.” End of conversation. No recriminations. No penance or mortification. Perhaps it was the look of abject fear on my face. I left and sought out Father Ambrose.

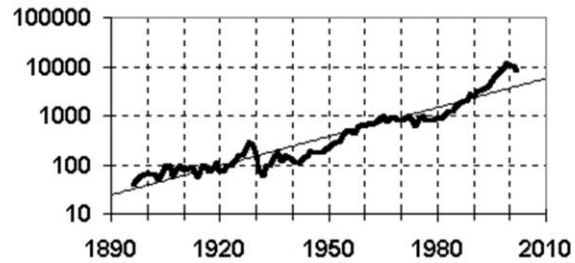
The vice master played Mother to Father Frederick’s Father. He was a young priest much closer in age to all of us, friendly, open-minded, and irreverent enough to put this whole place in proper perspective. *Culpa* was our shorthand for the process I described earlier. The phrase, “*méa culpa, méa culpa, méa máxima culpa,*” is recited followed by a request for forgiveness for a *faux pas* effecting the entire community. What I didn’t know but Father Ambrose explained to me was that, when this infraction involved breakage, one must wear the broken object on a black cord around one’s neck. Imagine that sight: a skinny novice, carrying a wooden, black cross on his shoulder and a bright and shiny, broken ciborium tied around his neck!

It didn’t happen.



- 12/28/1964 The principal filming of "Dr Zhivago," began. (50)
- 12/30/1964 Edward Albee's "Tiny Alice," premiered in NYC.
- 12/31/1964 Syrian-based al-Fatah guerrillas of Yasser Arafat launched their 1st raid on Israel with the aim of provoking a retaliation and sparking an Arab war against Israel. Fatah, a Palestinian movement for independence, made the first terror attack on Israel and initiated the armed struggle for a state.

Dow Jones Industrial Average



12/31/1964 The DJIA ended at 874.1. (51)

“Just a minute,” Father Ambrose said.

It appeared that it he could hardly to contain his laughter. He went and spoke to Father Fred and returned telling me that wearing the object would not be necessary. I can see him in Father Fred’s office—a place he had to go to relieve the belly laugh begging to get out—the two of them barely able to contain their mirth, first at the sheer oddity of the accident and second, the thought of me, cross, and ciborium, kneeling in front of priests, brothers, and fellow novices. I’d have brought the house down.

Bl. Bernard Mary of Jesus (Silvestrelli) (1831-1911)
Liturgical Fest Day: December 8

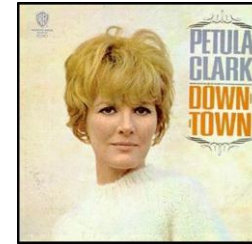
Die 1 Ianuarii–Octáva Nativitátis Dómini, I classis, colóre albo, Missa ‘Puer natus est’

Friday, January 1, 1965–Octave of the Nativity, 1st class, color: white, Mass: ‘A child is born’

A new year had begun. A secular new year, that is. The liturgical year of the Roman Catholic Church begins on 25 December, the Feast of the Nativity. Christ’s life on earth is then condensed into four months culminating in Easter. We were not so far removed from the secular to ignore New Year’s Day. It marked the half-way point in our year and a day. We began to recognize that first class feasts meant a break from routine and often a dispensation from the clapper announcing Matins and Lauds. Indoor recreation was longer but this just created more time to make rosaries and shuck pecans. We still went out in the bitter cold, adequately protected by the winter clothes we had brought with us as we entered the novitiate.

Speaking of the bitter cold, there was an incident that occurred which proved cold weather was a friend to some. A boating adventure had gone awry. A number of us took rowboats to a northern ramp on the Neosho River intending to row downstream to St. Paul. It is a winding river with little or no current at the time. A trip of a few hours turned into six or eight hours and Father Fred was frantic that he had lost half his novices to the watery depths in a river that was only six inches deep in places. That was the reason for our delay: we had to carry the damned boats half the distance! We got back very, very late. Father Fred felt that some demonstrable form of penance was called for so, the next weekend, he informed us that those on the boating expedition would remain on the property while he took the other half on a cross-country hike. He loved his exer-

1/1/1965 The Council on Religion and the Homosexual launched a gay Mardi Gras Ball in San Francisco that was raided by police.



1/1/1965 Petula Clark (b.1932), English singer, actress, and composer, made a #1 US hit with “Downtown,” a song composed by Tony Hatch. (94)



1/2/1965 The New York Jets signed University of Alabama quarterback Joe Namath for a reported \$427,000. (52)

1/3/1965 UC Berkeley officials announced a new campus policy that allowed political activity on campus.



1/4/1965 President Johnson outlined the goals of his "Great Society" in his State of the Union address. (53)

- 1/4/1965 T.S. Eliot, English poet, died in London at age 76. In 1995 Anthony Julius published "T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism and Literary Form." Julius was the lawyer who won a divorce settlement of \$23 million for Princess Diana in 1996. "Little Gidding" is an Eliot work.
- 1/8/1965 The Star of India and other stolen gems were returned to the American Museum of Natural History in New York.



- 1/13/1965 Two U.S. planes were shot down in Laos while on a combat mission. (54)
- 1/16/1965 "Outer Limits" last aired on ABC-TV.
- 1/16/1965 Eighteen were arrested in Mississippi for the murder of three civil rights workers.



- 1/20/1965 Byrds recorded "Mr. Tambourine Man. (55)"

cise, did Father Frederick. But this turned into a case of “being hoist by his own petard” as Shakespeare once said. The hike began in earnest but Mother Nature unleashed a cold, bitter wind. The half of us who had been grounded tried to maintain our own cool when the stiff and frostbitten party returned.

We pushed the boundaries of our property by exploring the neighboring territory. The small pond to the north was frozen but we had no ice skates. The farmers’ fields to the east lay fallow, covered in a blanket of snow. We found an activity that sublimated the energy bottled up by routine: bunny-bashing. It’s embarrassing to relate this now. We justified hunting, capturing, and killing rabbits because it brought food to the table of the monastery. Or did it? Maybe it was only a justification? The rabbits had a somewhat fair chance of escaping *Hasenpfeffer*. We hunted only with our legs and a few sticks. Once flushed out, the rabbit would tear across a field and we would tear after, raising a hellacious noise in the process. As the rabbit would begin to tire it would go to ground, borrowing deep into the snow in the middle of the field. That particular rabbit would be stew; most escaped back into the woods. Those few we caught had their necks wrung quickly and were taken to the brothers preparing our meals.

On a more compassionate note, Confrater Michael was taking a walk around the pond at the north end of our property and spotted a single, wee duckling in the cold, cold water. It was paddling around looking lost and hungry. At least that’s what Michael felt. He asked those with him to keep an eye on it while he ran back to the kitchen looking for something to feed it. Mike came running back with a box of cereal grain,

not breakfast cereal, but barley grain. He tossed it across the open water and the grateful duckling began gorging itself on it. Dry barley, when it comes in contact with water, swells. The eventual outcome was not pretty. Perhaps, there's a metaphor here.

Brother David, tailor, sandal-maker, and truly holy man, was also a bird watcher. When recreation was extended he would assemble a group of us for the three-mile trek to the Neosho Wildlife Area, southeast of the monastery. He knew his birds. This preserve was on the Midwestern migratory flyway of many different species, mostly waterfowl. Millions of them! They would darken the skies when, as one, they arose from the water, frightened to flight by God knows what. This sight contributed to Brother David's sense of the spiritual. One day, as he was pointing out the take-off patterns of a drake, he told us to point our binoculars to an island on our left. On it stood, in all its glory, a lone pelican. Go figure.

These lay brothers were an indispensable element of our religious community. Anyone who entered the Passionist order had an initial choice to make with approbation from the local superiors. Did he want to become a priest or a brother? Choosing the former led to a lengthy study of eight years culminating in ordination to the priesthood and further intellectual pursuit as the new priest desired. Not so the brother.

When one would enter training to be a lay brother, that training was short. Brothers assumed all the tasks around a monastery that called for manual labor. They ran the kitchens, the farms, the building infrastructure of the monastery, the laundry, the tailor shop, the leather shop. Their apostolate consisted of the talents of their hands and the strength of their backs but their

1/20/1965 Generalissimo Francisco Franco met with Jewish representatives to discuss legitimizing Jewish communities in Spain.



1/24/1965 Winston Churchill, former prime minister (1940-45, 51-55), died from a cerebral thrombosis in London at age 90. (56)

1/27/1965 Military leaders ousted the civilian government of Tran Van Huong in Saigon, South Vietnam.

contribution to the intellectual and spiritual environment of the monastery was precious. If there is a dark side to community life, however, one might try looking here.

They did their work so well that no one noticed. The food was delicious, the plumbing worked, the property looked gorgeous, and our woolen habits and leather sandals were not too far removed from comfort. No one noticed this perfection and all of us took it for granted. The Second Vatican Council changed all of that. In this 21st century the role of brother is open to any ministry short of the clerical responsibilities of the priest. If there are saints in a monastery, start looking among the brothers.

St. Charles of Mount Argus (Houben) (1821-1893)
Liturgical Feast Day: January 5

Die 27 Februarii—S. Gabriélis a Virgine Perdolente, Confessoris, III classis, colore albo, Missa 'Oculus Dei'

Saturday, Feb. 27, 1965—St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, Confessor, 3rd class, color: white, Mass: 'The eye of God'

The first class feasts began to abate and routine reemerged. The weather still sucked and gloom was not too far away. We heard more from Father Fred about the Rules and Constitutions and the four vows we would profess in just four months: poverty, chastity, obedience, and devotion to the Passion. These are not simple promises. They are vows which would become the lens through which we would see the world. Whole theological treatises have been written on them and they have been rehashed for 1,500 years. That's what made those lectures by Father Fred so overwhelmingly boring.

But a part of me heard what was said. Most of me wanted to be elsewhere. So which is the most difficult to follow? That was a question whose answer changed in each of us, month by month. Chastity got the most votes early on. Since we were housed, clothed, and eating well, poverty was the most palatable. And what else had we been doing for eight months but honoring the Passion of Jesus Christ? It didn't take long to realize that the biggie was obedience. Within the Rules and Constitutions⁷ it states:

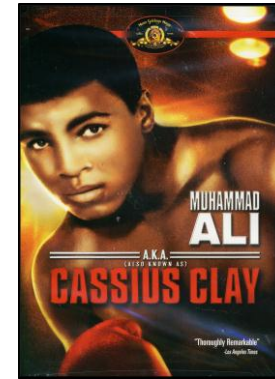
⁷ Rules and Constitutions of the Discalced Clerks the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 1870. Chapter XII., "On the Manner of Fulfilling the Vows, and First Concerning obedience." Printed at St. Michael's Retreat, West Hoboken, New Jersey.

2/1/1965 In Selma, Alabama, Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and 770 of his followers were arrested on their civil rights march.

2/2/1965 Joe Orton's farce, "Loot," premiered in Brighton.

2/6/1965 A Viet Cong raid on a base in Pleiku, South Vietnam, killed 7-8 US GIs.

2/7/1965 U.S. jets hit Don Hoi guerrilla base in reprisal for the Viet Cong raids. Pres. Johnson ordered the bombing of North Vietnam following the deaths of 9 US soldiers near Pleiku.

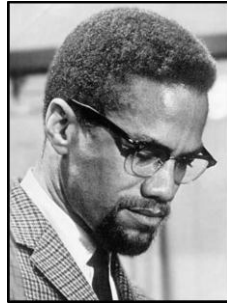


2/7/1965 Cassius Clay became a Muslim and adopted the name Muhammad Ali. (57)

2/8/1965 Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson called for the development and protection of a balanced system of trails to help protect and enhance the quality of the outdoor experience.

2/8/1965 Eastern DC-7B crashed into the Atlantic off Jones Beach, NJ, and 84 people were killed.

- 2/8/1965 South Vietnamese bombed the North Vietnamese communications center at Vinh Linh.
- 2/11/1965 Pres. Lyndon Johnson ordered air strikes against targets in North Vietnam, in retaliation for guerrilla attacks on the American military in South Vietnam.
- 2/13/1965 James Mitchell, 23, amateur explorer, died inside Schroeder's Pants Cave in Dolgeville, NY.



- 2/14/1965 Malcolm X's home was firebombed. No injuries were reported. (59)



- 2/15/1965 Nat King Cole, 49, singer (Unforgettable, Mona Lisa), died. (60)
- 2/16/1965 Four persons were held in a plot to blow up the Statue of Liberty, Liberty Bell and the Washington Monument.

“Let their obedience be blind.

When commanded, let them obey promptly, simply and godly.

Let them not write letters to any one without the knowledge of the Superior, and let him seal all letters.

Let everyone be at liberty to write, even secretly, to the Superior.”

This interpretation was almost a hundred years old at this time. Vatican II had closed its third session in September 1964 and reports released in 1965 caused religious orders to adapt their vows to the modern world.

Be that as it may, those were disconcerting words. And the last phrase reads as if there could be spies in our midst. It is ironic that our training in this vow of obedience caused the most discussion, some of it hot. Were we willing to subjugate ourselves to another man, blindly? The seriousness of this commitment was becoming more and more apparent. We would have to abide by the wisdom of our superiors. If they said go serve as a secretary in the provincial office in Chicago, we would have to go even in light of the fact that being a retreat director in California was a lot more appealing. If secular clothes were required, they would only be purchased after approval of the superior. This is not to say that our input wasn't considered. It was. It just wasn't a choice we made by ourselves.

The dawning of this revelation had its own personal impact on each one of us. There were those who asked even more questions than I. The next morning they were nowhere to be seen, leaving without a word to friends. They had obviously

elected not to meet the imposition of this vow and disappeared in the middle of the night. (Not to turn too fine a point on this, but that was probably due to the bus or train schedule back to Kansas City.) Empty seats in the choir created rumor, angst, and not a small amount of grief at the loss of friends.

The choice to leave the novitiate was not always a personal one. The professed priest and brothers held their own chapter on frequent occasions to discuss the progress of the novices. Some novices drew the spotlight and were discussed in detail. A vote would be taken and each monk would have a white and a black marble. If that monk thought the novice was not suitable material, he would cast his black marble anonymously. All of us lived in fear of being "black-balled". It wasn't a conscious fear, just something that lived with the monster under the bed. If it happened there was no recourse. You were gone without a word to special friends, in the middle of the night.

This process was not infallible. One man from the 1950's was blacked-balled during his tenure as a novice and, later in life, became a bishop in Illinois. Go figure.

St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows (Possenti) (1838-1862)
Liturgical Feast Day: February 27

2/18/1965 Gambia gained independence from Britain.



2/19/1965 Fourteen Vietnam War protesters were arrested for blocking U.N. doors in New York. (61)

2/20/1965 The Ranger 8 spacecraft crashed on the moon after sending back 7,000 photos of the lunar surface.

2/21/1965 Former Black Muslim leader El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, aka Malcolm X was assassinated.



2/23/1965 Stan Laurel (74), the "skinny" half of the Laurel and Hardy comedy team, died in Santa Monica, Calif. (62)

2/24/1965 Beatles began filming "Help" in Bahamas.

2/26/1965 Norman Butler was arrested for the murder of Malcolm X.

3/2/1965 The movie version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical "The Sound of Music," starring Julie Andrews and Christopher Plummer, had its world premiere at New York's Rivoli Theater.

3/2/1965 More than 150 U.S. and South Vietnamese planes bombed two bases in North Vietnam in the first of the "Rolling Thunder" raids.



3/3/1965 Temptations' "My Girl" reached #1. (63)

3/3/1965 US performed a nuclear test at Nevada Test Site.

3/3/1965 USSR performed a nuclear test at Eastern Kazakhstan, Semipalatinsk, USSR.

3/6/1965 The U.S. announced that it would send 3,500 troops to Vietnam.

Die 3 Märtii–Feria IV Cinérum, I classis, colóre violáteo, Missa ‘Miseréris omnium

Wednesday, Mar. 3, 1965–Ash Wednesday, 1st class, color: purple, Mass: ‘You have mercy on all’

Die 7 mártii–Dóminica I in Quadragesíma, I classis, colóris rosácei, Missa ‘Invocábit me’

Sunday, Mar. 7, 1965–First Sunday of Lent, 1st class, color: rose, Mass: ‘He shall call to me’

As if those thought-provoking empty seats in choir were not enough, the liturgical year had just moved into its most intense part: Lent. Passionists fasted three days a week. During Lent that became five. This eliminated meat, dairy products, and eggs from our diet for all but Saturdays and Sundays.

Lent doesn't really begin on Ash Wednesday. It begins on the Sunday following. With the exception of that first Lenten Sunday, Masses were most often conducted in the color purple (a constant sign of impending liturgical gloom). The monastery became a more reflective place

But not all the time. Confrater Andrew was busy getting all of us ready for the music—both sorrowful and joyful—that would permeate Holy Week and culminate in the joyous sounds of Easter. That was probably a touchstone that made the rigors of Lent a bit less rigorous.

We certainly didn't starve during this time. The food was just simpler. *Collation*, as it was called, was a meal of one dish. Most of us thought collation was a noun to the verb, to collate. The monastic use of the word comes from *Col-*

látiones Pátrum in Scética Erémo (Conferences with the Egyptian hermits), which was read in early fifth-century Benedictine communities before a light meal.⁸ Heavy reading, light meal. Get it?

The brothers excelled in the culinary art of preparing meals of no meat, eggs, or dairy products. Our favorite was, by far, “sweet rice” (rice pudding in the outside world). Placed in front of each of us was a single bowl of boiled white rice, lightly sugared, sometimes with raisins. It was the variety of sauces that made this dish heavenly. At recreation we would plead with Brother James for our favorite sauces. What power he wielded! We also had a lot of delicious beans during that time about which I will say no more.

Mortification. The word sounds harsh and oppressive. The spiritual sense of the word, both Eastern and Western, meant to “die to oneself.”⁹ Penance sounds a bit more acceptable. There is a rich tradition of monks and nuns who proposed that the path to sanctity and spiritual perfection could only be accomplished if one “mortified the flesh.”¹⁰ Many different forms of penance existed: fasting, hair shirts, body chains, sleeping with a wooden block as a pillow. Some of it sounds anachronistic today and some of it is downright chilling. St. Francis of Assisi, renowned for his love of nature—brother bird, sister fox, etc.—referred to the human body as brother ass.

⁸ 1950. Partridge, E. *Name into word: proper names that have become common property; a discursive dictionary*. New York: Macmillan, p. 110.

⁹ 1823. *The book of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the United Churches of England and Ireland*. Clwydian Press: Denbigh. Thomas Gee, printer.

¹⁰ Ingram, Catherine. 2003. *Passionate presence: experiencing the seven qualities of awakened awareness*. New York: Gotham Books, Penguin Press, p. 144.



3/7/1965 A march by some 600 civil rights demonstrators was broken up in Selma, Ala., by state troopers and posse under Sheriff Jim Clark. (64)

3/8/1965 The United States landed its 1st combat troops, about 3,500 Marines, in Danang, South Vietnam.



3/10/1965 Neil Simon's play "The Odd Couple," starring Walter Matthau as Oscar Madison and Art Carney as Felix Unger, opened on Broadway. (65)

- 3/11/1965 The Rev. James J. Reeb (65), a white minister from Boston, died after whites beat him during civil rights disturbances in Selma, Ala.
- 3/15/1965 T.G.I. Friday's 1st restaurant opened in NYC.
- 3/18/1965 The first spacewalk took place as Soviet cosmonaut Aleksei Leonov (30) left his Voskhod 2 capsule and remained outside the spacecraft for 20 minutes, secured by a tether.
- 3/20/1965 Lyndon B. Johnson ordered 4,000 troops to protect the Selma-Montgomery civil rights marchers.



- 3/21/1965 Martin Luther King Jr. led more than 3,000 civil rights demonstrators on the 50-mile march to Montgomery from Selma. (66)
- 3/21/1965 The U.S. launched Ranger 9, last in a series of lunar explorations.

This was not about creating physical punishment to the point of death. It was about reminding ourselves that our very physicality was a detriment to spiritual union with God.

What forms did it take for us? Keeping our eyes downcast, referred to as mortification of the eyes, was one whose violation was often reported at Chapter. Sunday Mass in St. Francis with the church full of people was often the root cause. We must have had radar for the girls our age that populated the congregation.

Mortification involved extra prayers. You didn't just go off on your own and fast or wear a hair shirt. For that you needed the permission of the novice master. It was a permission not often granted because there was a fine line between voluntary mortification and the sin of pride.

We did, however, exercise one form of mortification: the *discipline*. This was an integral part of the monastic rule in 1965. I's likely fallen by the wayside in the post-Vatican II world. Every Friday after Compline we would retire to our cells and the privacy therein. On the back of our doors was Psalm 129 (Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord), writ large. Hoisting the habit, we would stand and recite this psalm while striking our backsides with a knotted cord, the discipline. This is almost as embarrassing to remember as bunny-bashing.

Confrater Edwin was undeniably the artiste at making the discipline during recreation. He would alternate between shucking pecans and weaving cords into a handle about ¼ inch square and 3 inches long, then five single lengths about 18 inches long, ending in woven cord again about ¼ inch square and two inches long. The discipline was not an im-

posing instrument but it did carry the symbolism of mortification. We didn't beat ourselves. We didn't flagellate ourselves. We certainly didn't draw blood or, for that matter, even raise a welt. It was a symbol, one for the sufferings of Christ Crucified and a reminder to each of us that through suffering comes perfection.

Well, the not drawing blood part is not entirely true. We were not allowed in each other's cells but one occasion required that I enter a colleague's room. Across the walls of his room was a series of rusty dots, all in a line. At recreation that evening I satisfied my curiosity. Confrater Carl had had a boil on his butt. Saturday morning it was healed—not miraculously. The discipline seemed to fix the issue. The blood splatter on the walls was evidence of that.

The Passionist Order was evolving but still we heard the stories of long past novices and professed who used the discipline as a group. The monks would arise from prayer in the chapel, disburse themselves throughout the chapel with adequate space between them. As a group they performed this public mortification while someone read Psalm 129. All the lights were turned out so that some semblance of privacy existed. Now that would have been a pain in the butt!

Pope Paul VI said:

“This exercise of bodily mortification—far removed from any form of stoicism does not imply a condemnation of the flesh which sons of God deign to assume. On the contrary, mortification aims at the "liberation" of man, who often finds himself, because of concupiscence, almost chained by his own senses.



3/22/1965 US confirmed its troops used chemical warfare against the Vietcong in South Vietnam. (67)

3/22/1965 Columbia Records released Bob Dylan's album "Bringing It All Back Home."



3/23/1965 America's first two-person space flight began as Gemini 3 blasted off from Cape Kennedy with astronauts Virgil I. Grissom and John W. Young aboard for a nearly five-hour flight. (68)

3/24/1965 The University of Michigan held the 1st "Teach-in" on the Vietnam war.

3/25/1965 Martin Luther King Jr. led a group of 25,000 to the state capital in Montgomery Ala. to protest the denial of voting rights to blacks.



3/25/1965 Viola Liuzzo (b.1925), a white civil rights worker from Detroit, was shot and killed by the Ku Klux Klan on a road near Selma, Alabama. (69)

Nevertheless, in the New Testament and in the history of the Church—although the duty of doing penance is motivated above all by participation in the sufferings of Christ—the necessity of an asceticism which chastises the body and brings it into subjection is affirmed with special insistence by the example of Christ Himself¹¹

This is an enlightened statement. It justifies why Catholics were exhorted to abstain from meat on Fridays and why we monks were conditioned to the use of the discipline. It was, as Paul VI says, a reminder of the Passion of Christ. The instruction was written after our time in the novitiate but summarizes our communal approach to penance and mortification in general.

¹¹ 1966. Paul VI. Apostolic Constitution on Penance, *Paenitèmini*, 17 Feb 1966, Chap. 2

Die 11 Aprilis—Hebdomada Sancta, Dominica III Passiónis seu In Palmis, I classis, colore rubro, Missa ‘Iudica me, Deus’

Sunday, Apr. 11, 1965—Holy Week, Passion or Palm Sunday, 1st class, color: red, Mass: ‘Judge me, O Lord’

Die 15 Aprilis—Missa sollemnis in Cena Domini, I classis, colore violaceo, Missa ‘Nos autem’

Thursday, Apr. 15, 1965—Solemn Mass of the Lord’s Supper, 1st class, color: violet, Mass: ‘We however’

Die 16 Aprilis—Feria sexta, In Passione et Morte Domini, I classis, colore niger

Friday, Apr. 15, 1965—Friday, The Passion and Death of the Lord, 1st class, color: black (no Mass celebrated)

Die 17 Aprilis—Sabbato Sancto, de Vigilia Paschali, I classis

Saturday, Apr. 17, 1965—Holy Saturday, the Paschal (Easter) Vigil, 1st class

Die 18 Aprilis—Dominica Resurrectionis seu Paschalis, I classis cum octava I classis, colore albo, Missa ‘Resurrexi’

Sunday, Apr. 18, 1965—Sunday of the Resurrection or Easter, 1st class with 1st class octave, color: white, Mass: ‘I arose’

Die 28 Aprilis—S. Pauli a Cruce, Conf., III classis, colore albo, Missa ‘Christo Confixus’

Wednesday, Apr. 28, 1965—St. Paul of the Cross, Confessor, 3rd class, color: white, Mass: ‘Cross of Christ’

4/1/1965 King Hussein bin Talal of Jordanian appointed his younger brother, Prince Hassan bin Talal, as crown prince and heir to the Hashemite throne. This required a change to the Jordan constitution to allow for fraternal succession.

4/1/1965 Henry D.G. Crerar (b.1888), Canadian general and the country's "leading field commander" in World War II, died.

4/1/1965 Helena Rubinstein, 89, US cosmetic manufacturer, died.

4/2/1965 Rodney King, black motorist brutally beaten by LA cops, was born in Sacramento, Calif.



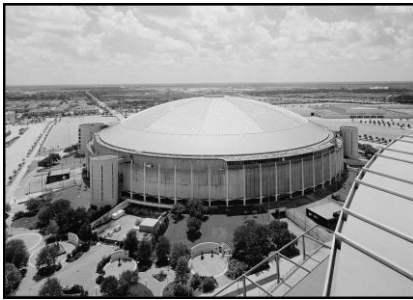
4/2/1965 Rolf Hochhuth's play "The Deputy," which blamed Pope Pius XII for war crimes, was banned in Italy. (70)

4/5/1965 In the 37th Academy Awards "My Fair Lady," Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews won.



4/5/1965 Lava Lamp Day was celebrated. (71)

- 4/5/1965 The second Indo-Pakistani conflict began when fighting broke out in the Rann of Kachchh, a sparsely inhabited region along the West Pakistan-India border.
- 4/6/1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized the use of ground troops in combat operations.
- 4/6/1965 The United States launched the Intelsat I, also known as the "Early Bird" communications satellite.
- 4/8/1965 Erik A. Blomberg, 70, Swedish art historian, poet, author, died.



- 4/9/1965 The newly built Houston Astrodome featured its first baseball game, an exhibition between the Astros and the New York Yankees. Mickey Mantle hit the 1st indoor homerun, but the Astros won, 2-1 in 12 innings. (72)
- 4/9/1965 India and Pakistan engaged in a border fight.
- 4/10/1965 Linda Darnell, 41, actress, died from burns received in a fire.

Holy Week is the longest week of the liturgical year. It begins with Christ's triumphant ride on an ass into Jerusalem to His last supper, passion and death, and finally His triumphant resurrection. All of the highs and lows are exaggerated by the intensity of ritual and pageantry. Our normal routine took a back seat to extended services in the Divine Office, Mass, and meditation. Holy Week was the week that belonged to the Passionists and the people of St Paul. It was the week in which we became less contemplative and more active, sharing our liturgy with the people of St. Paul, Kansas.

Considering the demographics of today, St. Paul's population expresses a religious affiliation of about 60%¹² and a Roman Catholic census of roughly 25%. Extrapolating back to 1965, this meant that roughly 150 were probably parishioners of St. Francis. The church during Holy Week was always full/

I was no longer sacristan. I had been promoted to cleaning the *jakes*, (the novices' common bathroom area). I don't know if this promotion arose from the luck of the draw, the ciborium incident, or someone expecting a bit more humility from me. Regardless, I was free of the increased attention given any sacristan during Holy Week.

Palm Sunday was a joyful day. There was much liturgical singing and chanting as well as an afternoon of healthy recreation. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday began the slide into mysteries more sorrowful. These three days were part of the reason for the time dilation. The rituals were purple and simple. Everyone was looking forward to the rest of the week.

¹² St. Paul Kansas. *City-Data.com-Stats About All U.S. Cities* . [Online] Advameg, Inc.. <http://www.city-data.com/city/St.-Paul-Kansas.html>

Holy Thursday commemorates a number of different things: the last supper, the betrayal by Judas, the arrest of Jesus, the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane while the apostles slept, and Peter's denial of Christ. That was a lot to fit into our rituals. Most activities centered on the symbolism of the Last Supper and the washing of feet. Christ is said to have washed the feet of each apostle that evening, a symbol to good Christians of humility and servility.

By the time the last rituals were performed all of us felt much like the apostles awaiting Jesus in Gethsemane, eyes only half open. All was not yet over. We intoned and sang Psalm 22 (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?). The church was then stripped of all linen and the statues covered in purple. The Passion had begun.

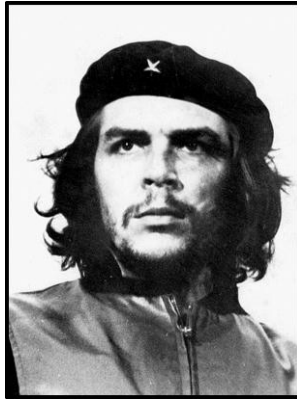
I'm waxing a bit too liturgical. There was much ceremony on this Good Friday and our role as choir was to provide the responses to the priest as he celebrated these rituals. The Mass of the Presanctified (not a Mass in the true liturgical sense) is celebrated where whole biblical accounts of the Passion were sung in front of a stripped down altar. The Gospel of John (18:1-19:42) describes the Passion in exquisite detail. When the priest reached the Latin words, "*et inclináto cápite, trádidit spíritum*" (and bowing his head, he gave up the ghost), everyone knelt in a moment of complete silence. Christ had died. This moment of silence would define our routine for the next 24 hours. All bells in our routine were replaced by the ignominious clapper. It would presage the beginning of joyous celebration.

Holy Saturday began with the clapper sounding as usual. Matins and Lauds became a service called *Ténebrae*, Latin for



- 4/11/1965 A series of tornados left 256 people dead in the US Midwest. (73)
- 4/13/1965 Beatles recorded "Help."
- 4/13/1965 Lawrence Wallace Bradford Jr. (16) was appointed by New York Republican Jacob Javits to be the first black page of the US Senate.
- 4/14/1965 Perry E. Smith and Robert E. Hickok, US murderers, were hanged. Their 1959 murder of a Kansas farm family was described by Truman Capote (1924-1984) in his 1965 book: "In Cold Blood"
- 4/17/1965 Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) held its 1st anti-Vietnam war protest rally in Washington DC. Daniel Ellsberg helped Patricia Marx tape the event for public radio.
- 4/17/1965 A stretch of the Mississippi River near Minneapolis crested at a record high. Flooding caused \$100 million in damages and left 12 people dead.
- 4/19/1965 An article in Electronics magazine by Gordon Moore, later Intel Chairman, noted that chips seem to double in power every 18 months. Thus was born Moore's Law.

4/21/1965 New York World's Fair reopened for a 2nd and final season.



4/24/1965 Che Guevara, his second-in-command, Victor Dreke, and twelve of the Cuban expeditionaries arrived in the Congo. (74)

4/27/1965 Edward R. Murrow (b.1908), newscaster (*Person to Person*), died of cancer in Pawling, N.Y.



4/27/1965 RC Duncan patented "Pampers," a disposable diaper. (75)

“shadows,” in keeping with the somber remembrance of Christ’s death on the cross. This was a unique service. The only light came from a candelabrum of 16 lit candles. As we sang the 15 psalms of Matins and Lauds, one candle was extinguished for each psalm sung, gradually bringing the church into darkness. The last candle remained but was placed behind the altar completing the darkness.

When the service finished, that candle was returned, symbolizing the imminent resurrection. Our only food that day was hot crossed buns. As far as I recall there was silence the entire day. We began preparations for the Easter Vigil Mass that evening, hungry, somber, and looking forward to a brighter day.

Our lives were so wrapped up in the liturgy of Holy Week that, by now, the actual Easter Vigil is a blur. We ate, slept, and dreamed in Gregorian chant. Nothing else existed. It was a focus so strong it overshadowed the funny things that I’m sure must have happened. It was a focus most of us would never experience again.

Easter Sunday dawned in triumph. Our choral practices were done and we were about to shout to the heavens the Risen Christ. It’s impossible to verbally describe the mix of Gregorian chant and polyphony in four male vocal ranges. It is a sound that inspires, elevates, and calms the spirit. Trying to put words to that experience proves futile, coming to a realization that it needs to be heard, not read about.

Calling upon the modern digital world, I found, on YouTube, of all places, a 54 minute rendition of the Latin Mass for Easter Sunday, 1941, narrated by Fulton J. Sheen.¹³ It's scratchy, in black and white, with poor TV resolution.

Listen, if you will, to the voices in the background. That begins to approximate our experience. It does transcend words.

St. Paul of the Cross (Dane) (1694-1775)
Liturgical Feast Day: April 28



4/28/1965 Barbra Streisand starred on "My Name is Barbra" special on CBS. (76)

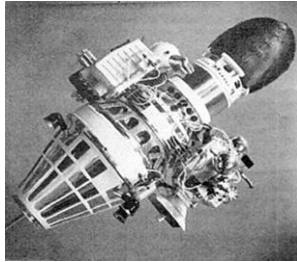
4/28/1965 U.S. Army and Marines under US Pres. Lyndon



4/29/1965 Seattle experienced an earthquake. 7 people were killed and damage was estimated at \$12.5 million. (77)

¹³ Traditional Latin Catholic Mass: Easter Sunday. 1941. Narrated by Rt. Rev. James R. Keane, O.S.M., rows, Easter Sunday, 1941. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6AOvStZS6>

5/1/1965 Spike Jones, 53, composer (Spike Jones Show), died.



5/1/1965 USSR launched Luna 5; later lands on Moon. (78)

5/2/1965 Intelsat 1, also known as the Early Bird satellite, was used to transmit television pictures across the Atlantic.

5/4/1965 Willie Mays hit his 512th HR and broke Mel Ott's 511 NL record.

5/5/1965 1st large-scale US Army ground units arrived in South Vietnam.

5/11/1965 A US 10th Fighter Bomber F105D was shot down at Xien Khouong, Laos.

5/11/1965 In East Pakistan a cyclone killed some 12,000.

5/12/1965 West Germany and Israel exchanged letters establishing diplomatic relations.



5/13/1965 Rolling Stones recorded *Satisfaction*. (79)

Die 1 Maai–S. Joseph Opificis, Sponsi B. Mariae Virg., Confessoris, I classis, Missa 'Sapiëntia'

Saturday, May 1, 1965–St. Joseph the Worker, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1st class, Mass: ‘Wisdom’

You could tell just by our step, our posture, even our chanting that the final stretch had started. Father Fred may have also realized that he had done all he could to instill in us the understanding that we were approaching a precipice, a choice. Our numbers diminished some but there was still a of flock of us heading toward Profession. My office was no longer the jakes. For some reason my new office was to be the two-acre garden compound. I decided that flowers were called for and got permission to order and plant quite a number in front of the Stations of the Cross that dotted this green, lush landscape. I was also able to enlist my colleagues in planting and nurturing these flowers and bulbs. Saturdays were glorious. Dirty, sweaty, and simply glorious.

I had worked hard one Saturday, returned inside to shower, and prepare for Vespers and meditation. I felt my exhaustion begin to surround me as we were singing the closing response to one of the psalms, “Glória Patri et Filii et Spiritui Sancto...”. I thought, as we sung, “God! it would be wonderful to be in bed right now.” The next thing I knew, I was.

A number of monks hovered over me as I lay prone on the bed of the bishop’s suite, not the two-inch mattress fare of the monk. The concern on their faces was evident. What had happened? Was this the answer to a prayer? I didn’t think so. Had it been I would have expected a bit more awe and holiness in the room. A doctor had been called, I heard

someone say. When I had revived enough to be coherent, I asked what had happened. “You’ve had a seizure,” was Father Fred’s quiet response. I then went right back to sleep.

About 16 months before all of this, I was in a truck accident. We high school seniors were going into the woods to clean up an area where we had had a picnic the day before. One of my classmates was driving and lost control of the pickup truck on the gravel berm of this country road. I was in the back of the truck as it rolled down an embankment, picks and shovels flying all around us. The end result was a concussion, a 12-stitch laceration and a week in the hospital at Washington, Missouri. I recovered fully and life went on.

What no one knew at the time was that concussions bounce the brain around inside the cranium and often cause bruising. This bruising later develops into scar tissue as it heals. And even less did anyone know that the scar tissue shrinks after 15 months and is likely to manifest as grand mal epilepsy—seizures that convulse every muscle in the body until no energy is left to expend and the victim falls into a deep, revitalizing sleep.

I began to get the full story after my second awakening when my colleagues were finally allowed to visit often with a surreptitious soda in their habits. Here’s the story as observed by all the monks and novices in the chapel: As the final response was concluding, people heard someone coughing and eventually choking. I was standing on the end of a row. I stepped down one step with my hands at my throat, turned, and launched myself onto the floor in the middle of the chapel, in front of the altar. This may seem to be straight out of *The Exorcist* but that film had yet to be released.

5/14/1965 An acre at the field at Runnymede, the site of the signing of the Magna Carta, was dedicated by Queen Elizabeth as a memorial to the late John F. Kennedy, US President.



5/16/1965 Spaghetti-O's were first sold. (80)

5/18/1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson officially announced the Head Start program in the White House Rose Garden.



5/18/1965 Gene Roddenberry suggested 16 names including Kirk for Star Trek Captain. (81)

5/18/1965 Eli Cohen, who arrived in Syria in 1962, was hanged in a public square in Damascus for spying for Israel until his capture.



5/22/1965 "Super-cali-fragil-istic-expi-ali-docious" hit #66. (82)



5/24/1965 Supreme Court declared a federal law allowing the post office to intercept communist propaganda as unconstitutional. (83)

5/25/1965 Muhammad Ali KO'd Sonny Liston in 1st round for heavyweight boxing title.

My habit, by its own momentum, flew up, exposing me in my underwear. Confrater John Patrick ran from his place nearby and whipped the habit into a more modest position. As he did, I convulsed, wildly, so I'm told.

Here's where a mix of the physical and metaphysical froze the entire community for just a brief moment. I can only imagine the expressions on people's faces trying to bring this incident into a realm of understanding other than the supernatural. The seizures stopped, reality took hold, and I was eased into bed in the bishop's suite.

Most of the monks and novices remained in the chapel, all thoughts of Vespers and meditation dispersed, praying, I think, for my immortal soul. I was later told that some thought this to be the devil's work, certainly not a blissful ecstasy of divine intervention. I had no idea of the ramifications that this incident held for me.

Recovering quickly at the ministrations of the brothers, I went back to the routine and schedule of my fellow novices. The next Saturday it happened again. I would begin to feel the aura that accompanies the onset of a seizure. I sat down on the grass of the garden and convulsed. Four of my colleagues grabbed my arms and legs and it was back to the bishop's suite. That procession must have also been a sight.

In the background, 640 miles from St. Paul, Kansas, at the provincial house in Chicago, a meeting took place amongst the leadership of the province. In these days, prospective entrants into the Passionist order were still screened for epilepsy and likely denied entrance. It was a little late for that with me.

I'll never know what the vote was for that meeting except to know that they allowed me to continue. I wonder how close I came to that night train to Kansas City. I was diagnosed with grand mal epilepsy after a visit to the hospital in Pittsburg, Kansas. I was medicated and told that was all that could be done. I went merrily on my way to Profession.

St. Gemma Galgani (1878-1903)
Liturgical Feast Day: May 16

5/25/1965 India and Pakistan engaged in border fights.



5/30/1965 Vivian Malone (later Vivian Malone Jones) became the first black graduate of the University of Alabama with a degree in Business Management. (84)

5/30/1965 Viet Cong offensive began against US base at Da Nang, South Vietnam.

6/1/1965 The 2nd of 2 cyclones in less than a month killed 35,000 along the Ganges River in East Pakistan.



6/3/1965 Astronaut Edward White became the first American to "walk" in space, during the flight of Gemini 4. (68)

6/7/1965 Gemini 4 completed 62 orbits.



6/7/1965 Judy Holiday, 42, actress, died. (85)

6/8/1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized commanders in Vietnam to commit U.S. ground forces to combat.



6/12/1965 Big Bang theory of creation of universe was supported by announcement of discovery of new celestial bodies known as blue galaxies. (86)

Die 5 Junii—S. Bonifacii Ep. et Martyris., III classis, colore rubro, Missa 'Exsultabo in Jerusalem'

Saturday, June 5, 1965—St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr, 1st class, color: red, Mass: 'I will rejoice in Jerusalem'

Our year and a day were coming to a close. This was vividly brought home by the arrival of the next class of novices. They looked a bit anxious and intimidated as we went around and renewed old acquaintances and made introductions to those we did not know.

They were mirrors of us a year ago. Maybe we were also able to assuage their fears by the sparkle now in our eyes. We introduced them to the routine that had become so commonplace and automatic for us. They stumbled through as we devoted our attention to our upcoming Profession.

Our parents and families would be arriving shortly. Only Confrater Michael had seen his parents in the last year as they lived just a few miles away in Parsons, Kansas. The rest of us were eager. A few more bowed out before this final curtain but we hardly noticed, so focused were we on the impending ceremony.

The regimen of the horarium was almost non-existent. There was much to prepare for. We spent our time being introduced to our roommates among the new postulants. They also had to be educated on what they could and could not get away with. There was an odd thing going on: We were showing them how to pull away from the secular world and enter into monastic isolation. They were showing us all the secular music, culture, and politics that they had lived with until their trip to St. Paul. We exhibited the snobbishness that

comes with knowing mysteries they had yet to experience and they possessed a pride in knowing what had passed us by. It was the kind of counterpoise that probably balanced the situation, preventing judgments in either direction. There were torches passing in two directions.

When we did follow the daily routine, those of us about to be professed sang the Anglicized canonical hours with a gusto. We knew we were being watched. We performed our offices to a degree of perfection that did not exist a month ago. We introduced the postulants to the discipline, watching for their reactions, discussing those reactions in private.

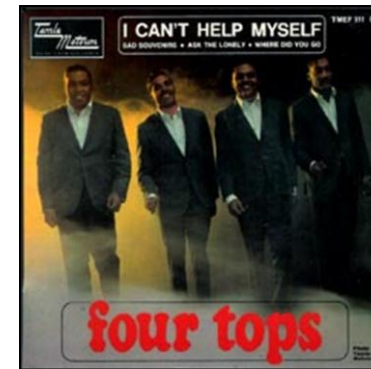
Again in private, outside the hearing of the postulants, we shared our experiences and memories of those who had left before the year had ended. It was a way of honoring them and their memory of what all of us shared. It was also a fist raised in victory that we had survived what they had not.

It was not all celebration. The men who had left were mourned. They would not be part of our future. They would have their own.

6/14/1965 A military triumvirate took control in Saigon, South Vietnam.



6/17/1965 Twenty-seven B-52's hit Viet Cong outposts but lost two planes in South Vietnam. (87)



6/19/1965 "I Can't Help Myself" by Four Tops peaked at #1 on the pop singles chart. (88)

6/22/1965 David O. Selznick, producer, died at 63. His films included "Gone With the Wind

6/26/1965 "Mr. Tambourine Man" by The Byrds reached the number one spot on the pop music charts.

7/1/1965 Bill Moyers replaced George E. Reedy as press secretary to Pres. Johnson.



7/3/1965 Trigger, 25, the golden palomino horse of Roy Rogers, died. (95)

7/5/1965 Porfirio Rubirosa (b.1909), Dominican Republic playboy and husband to French actress Odile Rodin, died in a car crash in Paris. His 5 wives included Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton.



7/9/1965 Adelaide Hibel (b.1879), American artist, died. Many of her paintings were used for advertising and calendar prints. (89)

Die 12 Iulii S. Joannis Gualberti Abb., III classis, colore albo, Missa 'Os iusti'

Monday, July 12, 1965, St. John Gualbert, Abbot, 3rd class, color: white, Mass: 'The mouths of the Just'

July 12, 1965. That final day of the year and a day was upon us. Families from all over the Midwest had assembled. The approved ritual (Pope Benedict XIV, September 16, 1746) was in effect. There was a procession into St. Francis and we formed a semi-circle around the altar. There were prayers and blessings and then, as a group, we were asked¹⁴:

“Dear Confrater, I ask you in the name of God: Have you a determined and serious intention to make the simple vows of our Congregation?” (I do.)

“Furthermore,, I ask you: Is there anything interior or exterior that is impelling you against your will to take this step?” (No.)

Do you know and realize the obligations according to our Holy Rules that you take upon yourself by making your profession?” (I do.)

“Are you conscious of any impediment or hindrance to your taking the vows validly?” (No.)

We were wearing our black woolen habits, leather belts, and a black woolen mantel characteristic of the Passionist habit. We then laid flat on the floor with our heads in our arms while the celebrant read the account of the Passion from the Gospel of John. In order of deanship we approached the cel-

¹⁴ Vestition and Profession Ceremony. 1965. Passionist Fathers. Private collection, S. A. George, p21.

eb rant and knelt in front of him bearing a symbolic cross and crown of thorns.

"I, Stephan of Mary, do vow and promise to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever a Virgin, to all the heavenly Court, and to thee, Father, poverty, chastity and obedience, according to my strength, devotion to the Passion of our Lord according to the Rules and Constitutions of the Discalced Clerics of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ for three years. Amen."¹⁵

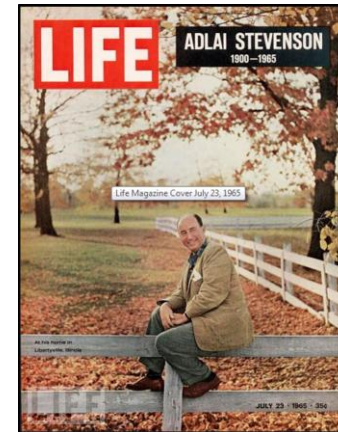
The celebrant, Father Carl Schmitz, an uncle to Confrater James, blessed each of us and gave us the accoutrements of the professed: The long rosary worn through the leather belt on the left, a beautiful black crucifix tucked into the belt, symbolizing our role as preacher of the Passion, and the black and white heart affixed with a cross above the heart.

Twenty-some men would walk out of the church and onto paths that would eventually lead them in an untold number of directions. American teens had entered a year and a day earlier. Society had undergone cataclysmic upheavals. Music and events that would influence culture, define a generation, unseat a president, and topple nations had occurred around them.

The world we returned to was now an unknown mystery for them to rediscover over the course of our lives. Forty-five years later, three of those men remain Passionist monks wearing the same habit in which they were professed. In our heart of hearts, the rest of us have to admit that we are also Passionists.

That year and a day fashioned our young minds and spirits so

7/14/1965 The American space probe Mariner 4 flew by Mars and sent back 22 photographs of the planet. These were the 1st images of Mars taken from a spacecraft.



7/14/1965 U.S. Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson Jr., the Democratic presidential nominee in 1952 and 1956, died in London at age 65. (90)

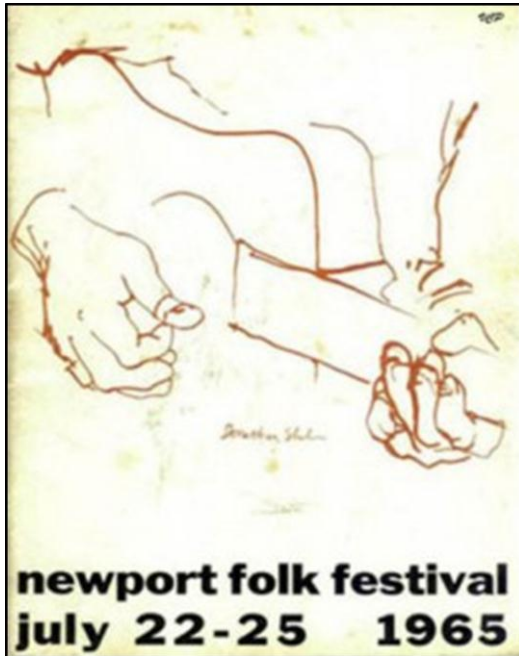
7/15/1965 US scientists displayed close-up photographs of the planet Mars taken by "Mariner Four." It passed over Mars at an altitude of 6,000 feet.

7/16/1965 Mount Blanc Road tunnel between France & Italy opened.

7/19/1965 Syngman Rhee, 90, president of South-Korea (1948-60), died.

7/24/1965 The Mauna Kea Beach Hotel on the Big Island of Hawaii opened.

¹⁵ Vestition and Profession Ceremony. 1965. Passionist Fathers. Private collection, S. A. George, p. 23.



- 7/25/1965 Folk-rock began when Dylan used electricity at the Newport Folk Festival, Rhode Island. (91)
- 7/27/1965 Pres. Johnson signed a bill requiring cigarette makers to print health warnings on all cigarette packages about the effects of smoking.
- 7/28/1965 President Johnson announced he was increasing the number of American troops in South Vietnam to 175,000 "almost immediately."
- 7/30/1965 President Johnson signed into law the Medicare bill, which went into effect the following year

that everything after was colored by it, regardless of the path taken.

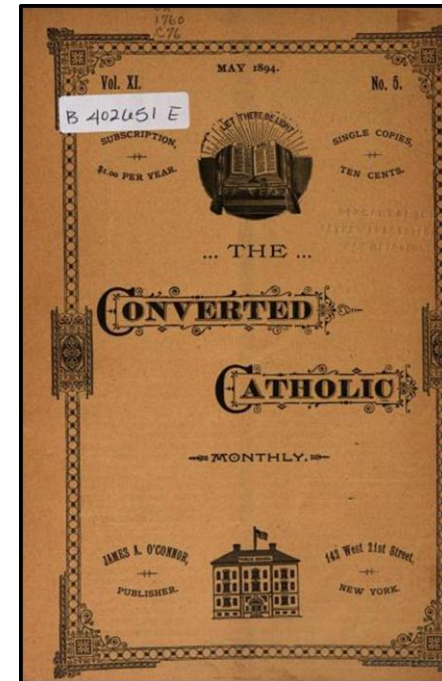
Amen.

Over 45 years have elapsed since these events took place. I have tried to be faithful to the facts and may have occasionally erred for the sake of levity.

It boggles my mind that I was able to write this narrative without once leaving my patio and my laptop computer. All of my research was done through the Internet—a fact impossible only a few years ago. The Passionists have taken good care to archive much of their history online and Google Books complements this with original texts of some very old material. There is much to be read in 18th and 19th century documents when one adjusts to the English style of the period.

There is one story that especially caught my eye when I *googled* the Passionists. A Mr. Sylvester Harrington gave a presentation to a group of people at Masonic Temple in New York City on May 20, 1894. The entire text of his speech was recorded in *The Converted Catholic*.¹⁶ This was a periodical whose animus was anti-Catholic in nature. Catholics were papists or Romanists with little or no allegiance to the United States government, only to the Vicar of Rome, a prevailing opinion of the time. It must have appealed to many people as it flourished in the bigoted environment of the day.

After establishing the fact that his audience thrived on the freedom of their nation, Harrington continues in the second paragraph¹⁷:



(92)

¹⁶ *The Converted Catholic*, June 1894, Vol. XI, No. 6. Pp. 166-173.

¹⁷ *Monasticism and its relation to Christianity*. A lecture delivered at the Reformed Catholic Services in Masonic Temple, New York, Sunday Evening, May 20, 1894. By Rev. Sylvester Harrington, A priest of the Passionist order. In: *The Converted Catholic*, June 1894, Vol. XI, No. 6. P. 166. Pub. James A. O'Connor, New York

“Let freedom perish, and what is the result? You have but to read your answer in the din and carnage of a thousand battle-fields, insurrections, bloody revolutions, the world over! Let freedom perish and behold again the slave writhing under the lash of a cruel task-master, the world filled with the groans of your fellow mortals, and the clanking of their galling chains! Let freedom perish even in the cause of law and justice, and lo! on every side arise the prison, the lunatic asylum and the pest house! Let freedom perish and you have—the Monastery and the Convent!”

Sylvester Harrington was a Passionist priest who took his vows at St. Michael’s Monastery, West Hoboken, New Jersey (Union City) in about 1883. He was ordained a priest in 1890. He was a contemporary of Fr. Stephen Kealy, C.P., at one time the Provincial of St. Paul of the Cross Province. Harrington was sent to Argentina where he worked under the tutelage of Fr. Fidelis Kent Stone, C.P. He then returned and apparently left the Passionists and the priesthood. His speech in the Masonic Temple is full of the rhetoric of the time. It also conveys how good a preacher he really was. But it is bigotry and diatribe as is evident in this paragraph:

“Now, picture to yourself a boy of these tender years knocking at the convent gate seeking admission therein as a member of the holy brotherhood. The gloomy portals open and close behind him practically forever. It is true he is sometimes permitted to breathe the fresh air and catch a glimpse of the glorious summer fields and sunny sky; but, mark this, he is never allowed to go abroad alone for many years after his entrance.

He is closely guarded by a keen eyed ecclesiastic, who watches his every movement and directs his every step. Not only this, but he goes forth under holy obedience to a hundred tantalizing and outrageous regulations which must direct his conduct while out of the monastery. He must never raise his eyes from the ground, not even to look into the face of his companion—no, not even to look into the face of his own mother should he meet her on the street. Every night he is questioned by his director as to the number of faces he has seen, even inadvertently, during the day, and if he has looked upon more than five faces he is summarily penanced! More than this, he is tongue-tied—he must not open his mouth to speak until the signal is given by the clerical watch-dog who is by his side. Even then he must not address a stranger, or even reply to his salutation or question.”¹⁸

If this had been the way of life I was about to enter in 1965, I would long ago have taken that night train out of St. Paul. Something happened to Harrington to turn him so completely against the Passionists even though he had been willing to take on the hardship of the Argentine missions.

Our journey through that year was a journey each of us chose to make. We were not the sheep portrayed by Harrington. Vatican II was starting to affect our daily lives and our inquiring minds. The language of our day was changing from Latin to English. The prayers made more sense but we were losing the mind-altering state created by Gregorian chant and Latin. Matins and Lauds were less frequent and each of us began to interpret mortification and penance in a way more akin to Paul

¹⁰ Ibid. Pp. 167-168

VI's theology—as a symbol of participation in the sufferings of Christ.

July 12, 1965 was hot and humid as only southeastern Kansas can testify. Our families milled around the front of the church as picture after picture was taken. We stood among them all smiles, fingering our rosaries that draped from our leather belts, proud of the shield over our hearts.

Someone asked for a group shot so we assembled. After that, more flash bulbs went off. Father Fred stepped in front of me knowing that flashes of light might trigger a convulsion. To the group in general he said with a grimacing smile, “I’ve invested much in this young man.”

I’d never thought of it that way. He spoke of an investment in each and every one of us.

Author's Note: The historical timeline on the right side of the pages is derived from *Timeline of History* (2).

The photos on the left of each page have been documented by the number in brackets on the timeline. Each number refers to a number in the list below:

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