

# GESTA MONASTICA

News from the Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux



Father Paul Mark Schwan, OCSO ABBOT

# Welcome!

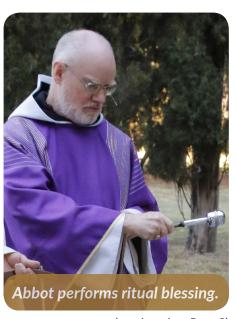
**MISSION STATEMENT** 

Seeking God at this place of New Clairvaux, we are a community of Cistercian monks living the Rule of Saint Benedict. We witness God's love for the world according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by a life of prayer, labor and sustainable stewardship of our resources in simplicity and openness to the signs of the times. Our monastery welcomes all people in a spirit of hospitality, and engages others in collaborative relationships.

### FROM THE ABBOT'S DESK

Dear Friends,

Life never remains the same. rather life unfolds. It is easy enough to delude ourselves that life doesn't change as we go through our usual daily routines. There are meals to prepare, housecleaning, laundry, and shopping, to be done, work, meetings, and clean-up. And for us monks there is our prayer schedule that repeats itself in an unchanging daily cycle. every day and every moment of the day is new because each day holds within itself the element of the divine. And you will agree that the divine is anything but routine. Who can define, name, or contain God, the Divine Mystery from which all existence comes into being?



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Moses, standing before the burning bush asks the Divine Mystery, "What is your name lest the Israelites should ask?" The cryptic response from the Divine Majesty to Moses



still puzzles us today, not that God does not want us to know God's name but each of us needs to be ready in his or her own time and way to receive this intimate, personal name of God.

The season of Lent prepares us to receive once again the newness of God's name in our lives. It awakens within us new possibilities, a chance for a fresh beginning, breaks us out of complacency, and leads us to the hope of new life in God, no longer manifested in the burning bush but in the passion, death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus the Christ. May it be for you a graced time of new discovery of God's love for you.

Thanks for reading,

Fr. Paul mark



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DONOR SERVICES ASSOCIATE - Kathryn Richards

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# Celebrating the New Lunar Year Year of the Rat

On Sunday, January 26, 2020, the monastic community welcomed the Year of the Rat with a festive meal and song. Traditionally, Asians from the Far East and South East Asia in countries like China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam, celebrate the Lunar New Year. It is a time of family reunions and friendly gatherings with traditional food and the Dragon Dance. Here at the Abbey, we celebrate the Lunar New Year in a simple yet festive monastic way.













## **STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION 2019**

We are pleased to acknowledge and thank these special friends who have supported us with gifts during 2019. We are grateful to everyone who has been a part of this effort, and indeed for every gift of every size. In thanksgiving for your generosity, our monastic community will remember the intentions of all our benefactors in daily prayer.

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#### TO OUR ABBOT'S TABLE MEMBERS: SAVE THE DATE

Save the Date for Abbot's Table in Vina on Monday, April 20, 2020 at 10:30 or in Sacramento on Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 10:30 am.

"Let the table of the Abbot be always with the guests and strangers. But as often as there are few guests, it shall be in his power to invite any of the brethren. Let him take care, however, always to leave one or two seniors with the brethren for the sake of discipline." – Chapter 56, 1: Rule of St. Benedict



Photo above: Glimpse of the 2019 Summer Harvest

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### **RHONE RIVER CRUISE 2021**

In April 12 – 25, 2021, Abbot Paul Mark and New Clairvaux Winemaker Aimee Sunseri will lead a Rhone River Cruise to France. It will include Abbaye Notre-Dame de Cîteaux, the mother monastery of the Order, the nearby winery of Château du Clos de Vougeot, originally Citeaux's winery, and Lérins Abbey, a Cistercian monastery near Cannes.



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(Continued on page 8)



Have you thought about owning a monk's former choir stall? It can serve as a great way to remember your connection to the Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux and the monks who have touched and impacted your lives.

Call or email Mike Prym
Tel: (530) 839-9936
Email: mikeprym@newclairvaux.org



Photo above: Interior of 12th-century portion of our Abbey Church

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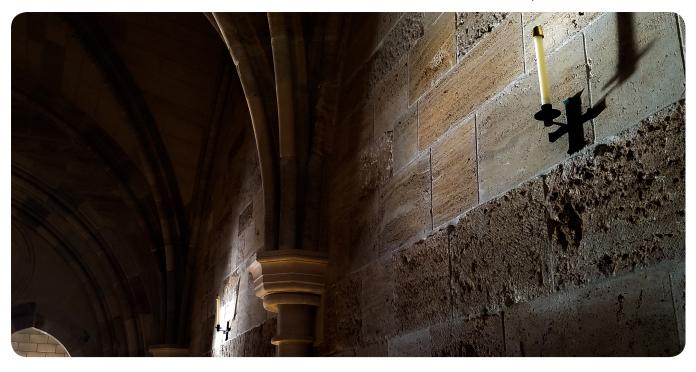
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### Have You Remebered the Abbey in your Estate Planning?

If you have, we would like you to share this with us so we can add your name to our growing membership in the St. Bernard's Society.

Bequests are the cornerstone of most estate plans and are

among the easiest to arrange. The Abbey wants you to contact your own legal advisor or life insurance agent. They have the technical expertise to draw up planned giving documents or bequests.

mikeprym@newclairvaux.org or at (530) 839-9936 and I will be happy to add your name as a new member of the society.

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude in advance.

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## **ABBEY TOUR INFORMATION**

Guests are welcome to take a self-guided tour any time between 2:30 PM - 5 PM. We are open weekdays and Saturdays but closed on Sundays. A guided tour can be arranged through the Development Department for groups of 10 or more. A suggested donation of \$10 per person supports the ongoing care and maintenance of our new abbey church. For information contact the Development Department at (530) 839-9936 or visit our website: www.newclairvaux.org.

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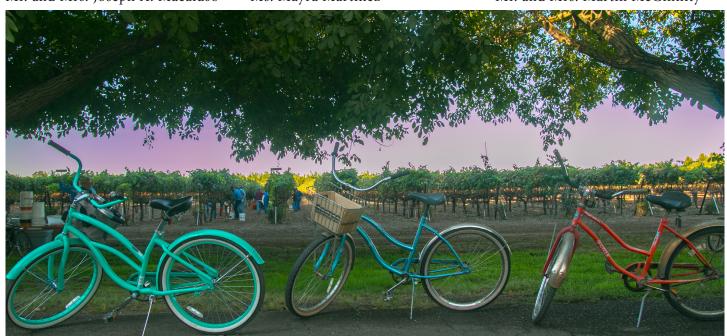
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## DID YOU KNOW?

On February 12, we celebrated the feast day of Blessed Humbeline, the younger sister of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. She was the only girl in the family of seven boys. All the boys including their father entered the Abbey of Clairvaux at the persuasion of Saint Bernard. And Humbeline herself became the mother abbess of the Benedictine convent of Jully.

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Net Ministries



## Thinking about becoming a monk?

"Then Jesus said, 'Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile" (Mark 6:31). Discerning monastic life to the abbey begins with contacting the Vocation Director. You may reach the Vocation Director: godseeking@newclairvaux.org or call (530) 839-2161.

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Mrs. Theresa Nhung Nguyen

Mr. Tony Nguyen Ms. Kate Nichols

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Captain and Mrs. Dennis J. Price,
USN Ret.

# Requirements for Joining the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance

Some requirements for joining:

- Practicing Catholic of at least two-years standing.
- A vocational discernment retreat at the Abbey of New Clairvaux.
- Between ages of 22-40 (good health and psychological balance are important).

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Rev. Ponciano M. Ramos, S.V.D.

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Ms. Loretta Reed

Ms. Crystal Reeve

Mr. and Mrs. Chris and

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Ms. Placida Reyes

Ms. Elizabeth Rhodes

Mr. and Mrs. John Richards

Mrs. Mary Sue Richen

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Mr. and Mrs. Tom Robertson

Mrs. Barbara Robinson

Ms. Eileen Rock

Ms. Diane Rodriguez

Ms. Judith Rojas

Mr. Fernando Romero

Leslie Parsons and Ron Schoen

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Ms. Delores Mason Ross

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Mr. Matt Rowley

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Ms. Teresa Shanahan

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Anonymous

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Ms. Pamela Shelton

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Ms. Jessie Shields



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"Therefore we intend to establish a school for the Lord's way of service. In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome." ~ from the Prologue of the Rule of Saint Benedict

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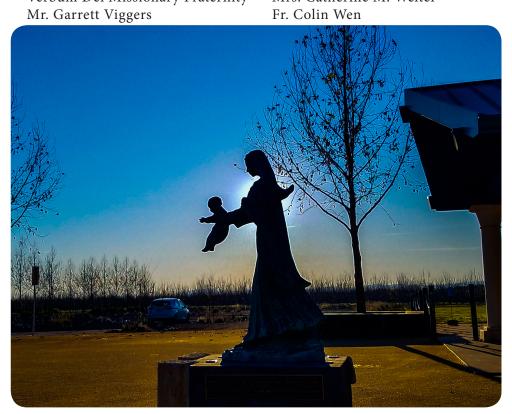
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Ms. Paula DeGiorgis

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## LAY CISTERCIANS OF NEW CLAIRVAUX

By Bernie Hietpas & Sharon Stover

Lay Cistercians of New Clairvaux are lay Christians who are called to follow the Cistercian charism and spirituality of the Abbey of New Clairvaux. Bernie Heitpas serves as the Dean for our Lay Cistercian group.

n February 2018, a small group of lay people came together under formal recognition of the Abbot and Conventual Chapter of the Abbev to adopt in our lives the fundamental values of Cistercian spirituality. We believe that personal and liturgical prayer, simplicity of life, interior silence and contemplation, lectio divina, and work guide us toward holiness. When possible we try to help the monks in practical ways, in

the complex relationships of the monks of the Abbey with the outside world.



The Community meets on a regular basis to study, through reading and discussion, under spiritual guidance of the monks of the Abbey, the way of life and the charism of the Cistercians of Strict Observance, and to

incorporate these qualities into our daily lives as Lay Cistercian Oblates as we seek God.

Any practicing lay Catholic, male or female, who is 18 years of age or older and is in good standing with his or her church is eligible to become a member of the Lay Cistercians. Candidates for membership in the community undergo a process of formation, which includes time for Inquiry, Postulancy, Novitiate, and Oblation before final acceptance into the community.



## For more information on becoming a Lay Cistercian

Please contact:

Bernard Hietpas, bhietpas45@comcast.net, telephone (530) 570-3233 Sharon Stover, stoversharona@gmail.com, telephone (530) 570-8487

# Requiescat in Pace - Fr. Charles Cummings

ather Charles was born in Ironwood, Michigan to Elizabeth (Betty) Deffe Cummings and Joseph Cummings. When Charles was three the family moved to Grand Rapids, Minnesota. He attended Central School and Middle School in Grand Rapids and then attended Crosier (Canons of the Holy Cross) Seminary in Onamia, Minnesota for high school and junior college.

Upon graduation in 1960 Father Charles entered Our Lady of the Holy Trinity Abbey in Huntsville, UT, spending several years in philosophical and theological studies at Gethsemani Abbey.

Father Charles served the Huntsville monastery as an excellent cook, vocation director and novice director. A respected Cistercian scholar he was a regular participant in the Medieval Congress, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo,

MI, served as editor of Cistercian Studies Quarterly for many years and authored five influential books, Monastic Practices, Eco-Spirituality, The Mystery of the Ordinary, Spirituality and The Desert Experience, and Songs of Freedom (on the psalms). He published numerous articles and translated from the French, The Names of Jesus by Irenee Hausherr.



Father Charles served chaplain at two houses of Trappistines, Santa Rita Abbey, Sonoita, AZ and from 2014 until the present, Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Crozet, VA. Father Charles was a humble. gentle, monk, a thoughtful man of prayer with deep roots in the monastic tradition. His quiet humor, demeanor, and smile manifested a man in love with God and life.

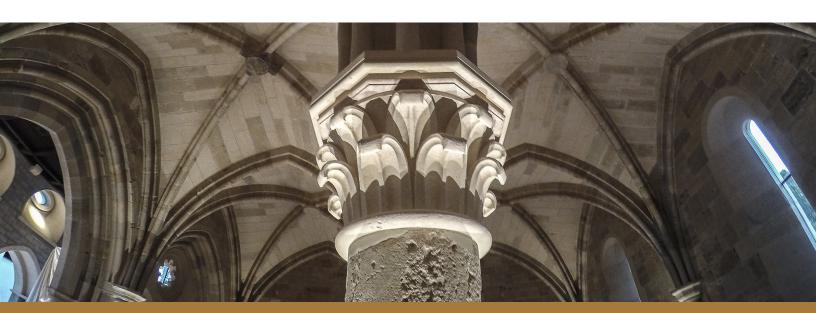
When Holy Trinity Abbey closed in 2017 Father Charles had his heart set on transferring his vow of stability to New Clairvaux, Vina, CA. He was visiting Vina to plan the transfer when he suffered a massive hemorrhagic stroke.

Father Charles' funeral and interment was held at the Abbey of Our Lady of New Clairvaux, Vina, CA, Saturday, January 18, 2020.



## **Abbey of New Clairvaux**

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