

ORA ET LABORA 100 YEARS

1922-2022

A publication of **Benedictine High School** and **Saint Andrew Abbey**

Winter 2021



100 Years for the Benedictines in Cleveland

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

A JOINT MESSAGE FROM
ABBOT GARY HOOVER, OSB '74 AND MR. RYAN RYZNER '95

DEAR BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY,

As our cover indicates, we emerge from the COVID shadows of the past year to celebrate the Centennial of the arrival of the first Benedictine monks in Cleveland in 1922. This coming year of jubilee should serve as a testimony of the faith, courage, and perseverance of those pioneer monks in the face of many challenges. This coming year of 2022 also marks the 95th anniversary of the opening of Benedictine High School. When school began this past August, it felt like a modified homecoming or reunion. Monks, faculty, staff, and students greeted each other with fist bumps, hugs, and shared fits of laughter. After a year filled with fear and uncertainty, we were finally reunited as a Benedictine community.

And so, as we bring this year to a close, we do so with a great sense of hope and gratitude. We, the leaders of Saint Andrew Abbey and Benedictine High School, want to let you know how much we value the students entrusted to our care, the faithful our monks minister to at our weekend parish assignments, the many alumni who continue to live out their Benedictine values, and the countless friends and benefactors who believe in our mission of “Prayer and Work” and make sacrifices to support us.

Much like our monks, students, and staff experienced the joy of community, we are also excited to announce that there will be a series of events marking the **Abbey Centennial**

culminating in a major celebration on **Sunday, September 18, 2022**. We want to also announce that we will be resuming an in-person **Blue and White Gala** for BHS on **Saturday, March 12, 2022**. We hope to match the success of last year's digital Gala, and we will have some opportunities for those who cannot attend to participate as well. We always say that the Blue and White Gala allows us to celebrate our Benedictine community and share our story the best. We'll look forward to catching up and seeing you there!

In this issue you will also read about our newly inducted members of the Hall of Distinction, our Fall Sports Recap, a number of monastic milestones, and a handful of testimonials from alums, family and friends who share their motivations for supporting the mission of Benedictine High School, St. Andrew Abbey, and much more.

May our annual celebration of the birth of Jesus into our world renew in each of us the faith that our Lord said could “move mountains.” We ask for continued strength and guidance that will carry us to successfully living our mission of developing young men in mind, body, and spirit.

Yours in Saint Benedict,



Abbot Gary A. Hoover, OSB '74
Abbot / Chancellor



Rt. Rev. Gary Hoover, OSB '74



Mr. Ryan Ryzner '95



Mr. Ryan Ryzner '95
President and Principal



Fr. Michael Brunovsky, OSB, subprior of Saint Andrew Abbey and history teacher at BHS along with two members of the Benedictine High School Class of 2022, **Henry Peyrebrune** (left) and **Bryce Brand** (center) admire the bronze bust of **Fr. Gregory Vaniscak, OSB**, that was sculpted in 1949 by artist-in-residence **Ugo Graziotti** from Rome. Fr. Gregory is considered the founder of Saint Andrew Abbey which will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Benedictine monks in Cleveland from Lisle, Illinois in 2022. This issue begins the Centennial celebration with the story on pages 4 and 5 of Fr. Gregory's early efforts to establish an abbey and high school in Cleveland. Please mark your calendars for the main public celebration of the Centennial on **Sunday, September 18, 2022**.

THE DREAM OF FR. GREGORY VANISCAK

BY FR. GERARD GONDA, OSB

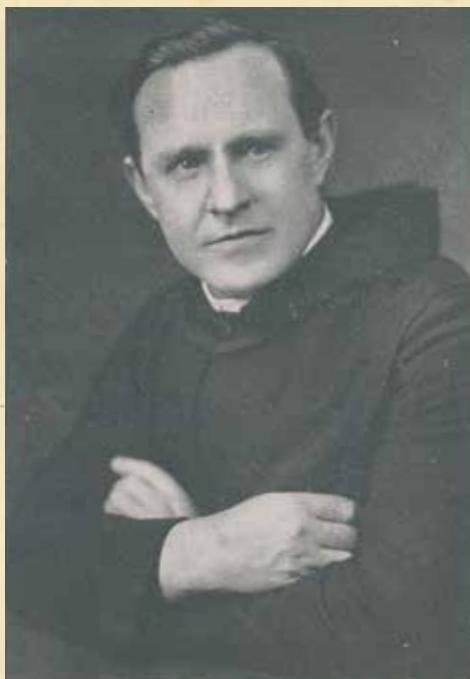
2022 will indeed be a year of celebration for Saint Andrew Abbey and Benedictine High School. February 5, 2022 will mark the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first Benedictine monks in Cleveland and September 8, 2022 will begin the 95th academic year for Benedictine High School.

The one historical personality that connects both of these anniversaries is **Fr. Gregory Vaniscak, OSB** who is considered the founder of Saint Andrew Abbey and the earliest promoter of the establishment of Benedictine High School. Fr. Gregory also connects both institutions to their Slovak heritage.

In 1972, for the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the Benedictine monks in Cleveland, **Fr. Andrew Pier, OSB**, veteran BHS history teacher and former principal, wrote the following account of Fr. Gregory's early life:

"Well, the beginning of Saint Andrew Abbey in Cleveland, Ohio actually goes back to Slovakia where a young boy, **John Vaniscak**, dreamed about becoming a priest. The dream recurred frequently as he drowsed while tending a flock of sheep in the hills surrounding the picturesque village of Lemesany in the Saris district of Eastern Slovakia. He was born in Lemesany on July 24, 1884.

The first step to fulfilling this dream was made around the turn of the century when a family decision enabled the young man with a vision to cross the Atlantic Ocean to join his uncle in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Youthful Vaniscak's job in the steel mills seemed to sidetrack his aspirations to the priesthood until the intervention of Fr. John Martvon, pastor of the flourishing Slovak parish of St. Stephen's and Fr. Matthew Jankola, eventual founder of the Slovak Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, sent the young man on his



Fr. Gregory Vaniscak, OSB

way to realize his dream. John was enrolled at St. Procopius College in Lisle, Illinois in 1903 where the Czech Benedictines were destined to train an entire generation of Slovak clergy who were very much in demand in the increasing number of new Slovak Catholic parishes in the East and Midwest.

From the very start, John Vaniscak, a solid student with a resolute will and a vision, devoted himself faithfully to his studies and soon manifested his desire to become a Benedictine monk. Upon being accepted by the monastic chapter of St. Procopius as a novice at the age of 24 in 1908, he was given the religious name of Gregory, after Saint Gregory the Great, the first Benedictine pope. Long before his ordination as a priest in 1914, Fr. Gregory became the leader of a

nucleus of young Slovak monks at St. Procopius Abbey who shared his new dream of establishing a Slovak Benedictine community in this country. Foremost among them were the future Fathers Stanislaus Gmuca, Celestine Drexler, Charles Florek, Leo Rehak, and George Luba (founder of Benedictine High School)."

The Slovak Catholic Federation, an umbrella organization for a number of cultural and fraternal societies for Slovak immigrants in the United States, first proposed the idea of founding a Slovak-American institution of higher learning in 1914. At that time, a number of sons of Slovak immigrants were enrolled at St.



Abbot Valentine of Lisle



John Vaniscak in college

Procopius High School and College in Lisle, Illinois because the monks there were predominantly of Czech background. Czechs and Slovaks share a Slavic heritage and a similar language. In Europe at that time, both Czechs and Slovaks were subjects of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

When the monks of St. Procopius Abbey heard about the desire of the Slovak Catholic Federation to start a Slovak-American high school, they offered to create a Slovak section for their high school and college in Lisle as a more affordable alternative. The leaders of the Slovak Catholic Federation liked the idea and accepted it in principle at their convention in Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Fr. Gregory's hometown) in 1914. ***This would have been the end of the efforts to create a Slovak abbey and high school, but World War I (1914-1918) changed everything.***

At the end of World War I, the Treaty of Versailles re-organized the lands of the defeated Austro-Hungarian empire and created the country of Czecho-Slovakia, in which the Czechs and Slovaks were to live as equal partners. However, disputes soon developed between the majority Czechs and the minority Slovaks. These tensions carried over to the immigrant communities in the United States and the Slovaks decided to found their own monastery and high school instead of merging with St. Procopius. After 1918, the Slovak Catholic Federation began looking for a sympathetic bishop and diocese for this project.

They found it in the person of **Bishop Joseph Schrembs** of Cleveland. Born in Germany, his family had settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he was ordained a priest. He and his brother attended St. Vincent's Benedictine College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania where his brother eventually became a monk. Joseph rose in the ranks of the Church and was named Bishop of Cleveland in 1921. When approached by officers of the Slovak Catholic Federation, Bishop Schrembs was enthusiastic to have a Slovak monastery and high school in his diocese.

As a newly-ordained priest in 1914, Fr. Gregory was assigned to St. Michael's Church in Chicago, a Slovak parish that had recently gone through tensions with one of its previous pastors who was a Czech Benedictine. Fr. Gregory was an active member of the

Slovak Catholic Federation and privately shared the news of Bishop Schrembs' positive response with his superior, **Abbot Valentine Kohlbeck, OSB**, of Saint Procopius Abbey in a very emotional letter on November 13, 1921.

In one section of that letter, Fr. Gregory wrote, ***"I think it is known to you that it has long been the ardent desire of the Slovak people to found a Benedictine monastery here in AmericaThere are only two saints of Slovak nationality of which our Slovak nation can boast – Saint Andrew (Svorad) and Saint Benedict (Skalka), both Benedictines.....And this binds the Slovaks to the order of St. Benedict in a particularly close manner....I think that if the Most Rev. Bishop Schrembs offers us a parish we could take charge of that parish, and leave the rest to Divine Providence."***

Divine Providence was indeed at work because it turned out that Bishop Schrembs and Abbot Valentine had been classmates at St. Vincent's College and sat next to each other in the study hall. Two weeks later, Abbot Valentine presented the idea to the monks of St. Procopius Abbey. The monks were mostly positive and so Abbot Valentine conferred with Bishop Schrembs. The bishop approached the pastors of the eight Slovak parishes in Cleveland to see if one would be willing to resign and give his parish to the Benedictines. **Fr. John Liscinsky** selflessly offered his parish – St. Andrew's at East 51st and Superior Avenue. The monks of St. Procopius voted on January 9, 1922 to accept the parish as a base for a new Benedictine monastery.

Ironically, Fr. Gregory was not to arrive in Cleveland until 1928 because the Archbishop of Chicago would not release him from St. Michael's Parish until then. However, he continued to work to build support for the new monastic community in Cleveland of which he would be elected superior in 1929. In the meantime, Abbot Valentine sent **Fr. Stanislaus Gmuca, OSB**, Fr. Gregory's assistant at St. Michael's, who had only been ordained two years earlier, to Cleveland to become pastor of Saint Andrew's Parish on **February 5, 1922. (To be continued in the next issue)**



Bishop Joseph Schrembs

Fr. John Liscinsky

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"Benedictine is family. I am grateful for the students, the faculty and staff, my coaches and everyone who comes together in this special bond. I am a better role model to others and have become a better leader because of the Benedictine High School education."



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- The Crocker Family



Pictured from left to right: Jake '91, Molly, Ron, Judy, and Josh '96

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HALL OF DISTINCTION

On Saturday evening, November 13, 2021, alumni and friends filled the beautiful Crawford Rotunda at the Western Reserve Historical Society for the ninth induction ceremony for the Benedictine High School Hall of Distinction. A nominating committee looks for graduates of BHS who have achieved the highest esteem of their peers in their respective fields enriching their community, society, and the world through their work in the Benedictine tradition. Entering the Hall of Distinction this year were the **Honorable Gerard Breland '81** (Law), **Dr. Martino Harmon '83** (Higher Education), the **Honorable Thomas P. Perciak '66** (Government), and the **Honorable Michael P. Shaughnessy '89** (Law).

Judge Gerard Breland '81 was appointed by the governor of New Jersey as a judge of the Superior Court in the criminal division in 2014. He served previously for many years as a prosecutor with six murder trials among his over 70 cases, including one that went to the New Jersey Supreme Court. Gerard has also been an instructor at the Jersey City Police Academy and a panelist on the popular television show, *Court TV*.

He came to Benedictine from Mt. Pleasant Catholic Grade School and was an honors student participating in the Drama Club, the band, Student Council, French Club and Chess Club. As a bowler, he had the highest average on the team in 1980-81. In his remarks, Gerard acknowledged how the religious faith and high ideals he experienced at Benedictine kept his life on course through some tragic events in his life. He and his wife of 31 years, Tonya, have recorded many original and traditional Gospel songs on CDs. They have two children, Gianya and Daniel, and are all active in their local church in various ministries. Daniel is a nationally-known professional Country Western/R&B artist known as "Breland."

Dr. Martino Harmon '83 explained how he lacked self-confidence when he first came to the Home of Champions from Christ the King School in East Cleveland. He credited a bus tour of colleges when he was a student organized by Fr. Anselm as inspiring him to greater goals and higher education. He majored in education at the University of Toledo but actually worked in business and sales for 15 years before realizing his passion for education.

He returned to the University of Toledo, earned his doctorate, and took on leadership roles that allowed him to make a difference in the lives of young people. He recalled the pride he felt when as an administrator he welcomed Fr. Anselm and another college bus tour from BHS and Fr. Anselm introduced him as a "Man of Benedictine."

From 2016 to 2020, Martino served as the Vice-President for Student Affairs at Iowa State University before accepting his current position as Vice-President for Student Affairs of the University of Michigan where he supervises 1,400 student life leaders and staff. The recipient of many awards in his field, Martino is most proud of his role as father to his two daughters, Adrienne and Sydney-Marie.

From Left to Right: Mayor Tom Perciak '66, Judge Gerard Breland '81, Dr. Martino Harmon '83, and Judge Michael Shaughnessy '89



Mayor Tom Perciak '66 was introduced by Mark Francioli as deserving to be both in the Banking Hall of Fame as well as in the BHS Hall of Distinction for Government. Elected as a write-in candidate for mayor of Strongsville in 2003, Tom entered civil government after 40 years in the banking industry. As President and CEO of Strongsville Savings Bank, he grew it from a two-office savings bank to a retail savings bank with 16 offices across Northeast Ohio.

Tom and his team have made Strongsville one of Ohio's best run and most financially stable cities in Ohio. Strongsville is only one of 15 cities in the state to earn a Moody's bond rating of Aaa. The median sale of homes in Strongsville has risen over 26% in the last 10 years.

Tom reflected on his Polish Catholic roots in St. Hyacinth's Parish and the influence of Benedictine monks he met at BHS such as the late Abbots Jerome Koval, OSB and Clement Zeleznik, OSB. As a student he was the editor-in-chief of *The Bennet* and president of the Class of 1966. In his careers, he has received numerous awards, especially the National Homebuilders Association National Housing America Award in 1992. In 2007, the Southwest General residential hospice was named "The Thomas P. Perciak Family Residential Hospice" in recognition of his support. Active in St. John Neumann Parish and serving on the Financial Advisory Board of the Diocese of Cleveland, Tom and his wife, Deborah, have three children.

Judge Michael P. Shaughnessy '89 recalled how his roots at St. Louis School in Cleveland Heights and his years at Benedictine, as well as his family's law practice on Buckeye Road, fostered a desire in him to practice law in order to help people. After a stellar career as a defense attorney, following in the footsteps of his father and older brother Tom '83, Mike was elected in 2017 as a judge of the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas.

At the time of his election, Mike received the support of four prominent legal organizations, called "Judge 4 Yourself," recommending him to voters with an "Excellent" rating. In addition to his duties as a county judge of common pleas, Mike has been appointed a judge of the Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Court, a duty he finds "very rewarding."

While at Benedictine, Mike earned the Speech and Debate trophy for his oratorical skills. Mike and his wife of 28 years, Mary Ellen, have four children.

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Jarred is a doctoral candidate at CWRU and works at NASA Glenn Research Center. He lives with his wife, Devaki, in Euclid.



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HAPPY 80th FR. JOACHIM

Happy 80th birthday to Fr. Joachim Pastirik, OSB '60 (and his twin brother John '60) on December 9. Fr. Joachim, who taught art at BHS for 32 years from 1969 to 2001, resides at Regina Health Center and can be reached by calling 330-659-4161 between 8 am and 8 pm and asking for Fr. Joachim. He was in good spirits when Abbot Gary took this photo during a visit in November.



OVER 40 YEARS FOR GERMAN FIELD TRIP

Fr. Anselm took the German classes on the annual German Field Trip. This year, they went to Yoder's Amish Home in Millersburg, Ohio where they learned about the history and life of the Amish. Along with English, the Amish speak Pennsylvania Dutch, which is a dialect of German. They also learn German in school so that they can read scripture in German and sing German hymns at their Sunday services.

The students were excited to interact with the animals on the farm and sample the Amish baked goods. Lunch was, of course, at Der Dutchman in the Carlisle Inn in Sugarcreek.

Did you know Fr. Anselm has been organizing the German Field trip since 1979? It has been a part of the German language experience at Benedictine for over 40 years!



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Coach Salata comes to Benedictine with 25 years of coaching experience. The last two seasons he served as an Assistant Varsity Boys Coach at Hawken School in Gates Mills and prior to that was the Head JV Coach and a Varsity Assistant at Saint Ignatius High School, where he compiled a record of 106–19 in six seasons for the Wildcats, including a school record, single-season 20 wins in the 2013 season.

In 2016 Coach Salata was the recipient of the Diocese of Cleveland's CYO Recognition Award, following a 13-year tenure as the Head Varsity Coach at Gesu School, where he led the program to seven CYO Diocesan Championships and compiled a career record of 223–45, including the school's only undefeated season (27–0) in the 2012 season. Since 2013, Coach Salata has been among a select group of high school and college coaches invited to work Coach Mike Krzyzewski's summer camp at Duke University.

Coach Salata and his family live in University Heights and he is an active member of Gesu Parish.

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ALUMNI FEATURE

CHRISTIAN COLO '12

BY FR. GERARD GONDA, OSB '71

When Christian Colo graduated from Benedictine High School in 2012, he didn't waste time following St. Benedict's admonition, "Hasten to do now what will profit you for Eternity (Holy Rule, Prologue)." As a senior, he won the prestigious Crescat Scholarship from Belmont Abbey Benedictine College in North Carolina. This full, four-year scholarship was established by the monks of Belmont Abbey to be awarded annually to an outstanding graduate of a Benedictine high school in the U.S.

Relocating from his home in Euclid to North Carolina was not as dramatic as his next move. After earning a bachelor's degree in mathematics in 2016 from Belmont College, he volunteered with an organization called WorldTeach. For the next year, he taught math and English in an elementary school in the Marshall Islands which are located in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Australia. He served as an assistant field director

for WorldTeach for the next two years. He also worked as the manager of a giant clam and coral farm.

After spending five years in the Marshall Islands, he wanted to go to grad school in Australia to pursue a marine-related field of study. The COVID outbreak caused a delay in his Australia plans. Instead, Christian moved to Hawaii where he has been doing aqua culture research for the University of Hawaii. He is now looking for a graduate school in Hawaii.

His travels brought him back to the States this fall. He first stopped to visit his friend Abbot Placid Solari, OSB at Belmont Abbey. Then he stopped at his Alma Mater to see some of his former teachers and changes on campus (seen below with Fr. Michael near the grotto). Finally, he spent time with his parents in their new home in Mentor before heading back to Hawaii.



BENEDICTINE HIGH SCHOOL



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MARCH 12, 2022

InterContinental Hotel Cleveland

*If you have any questions,
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STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

WILL AND JACK KEHRES

"The last four years at Benedictine have been an incredibly rewarding experience. We have taken immense strides in academics and athletics, while also developing into leaders within our school community. Having the opportunity to follow in our dads' footsteps, getting just as much as they did out of their experience at the school roughly 30 years earlier, is something that we will never take for granted. We are very thankful for the generous contributions of alumni and benefactors that have allowed us to get the most out of our time at Benedictine."

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FALL SPORTS WRAP UP

The Benedictine Bengals wrapped up successful fall sports seasons across the board. While the goal is always to advance as far as possible and win championships, every sport performed well and looks poised to perform even better next year if they put in the work!

FOOTBALL

The football team finished a great season with a record of 8 wins and 3 losses. The Bengals were ranked #1 in the AP poll throughout the season, and defeated a number of tough opponents during the year. The team reached the regional semi-finals, and were defeated by Walsh Jesuit. The Bengals return a strong nucleus to next year's team and will look to make another run in the OHSAA playoffs.



CROSS COUNTRY

The cross country team participated in meets and invitionals across Northeast Ohio this season with a top finish of 12th among 30 opponents. The program will look to build on this success and grow in numbers as well.



GOLF

Golf holds the titles as the most improved and fastest growing program in the building. Infused with a large group of freshmen, the team finished with a record of 9-5. The hopes for another successful season are high as the team only loses one senior to graduation.



SOCCER

The team bids farewell to 8 seniors along with Coach Cora who has recently announced his retirement. We thank Coach Cora for the successful career leading our soccer team and wish him well!

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Fr. Gregory Vaniscak as a 28-year-old monk in 1912.

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Science teacher Fr. Thomas Sanders, OSB leads the music while playing the organ during an All School Mass in September.

ABBHEY BENEFIT RETURNS LIVE WITH 250 GUESTS

The annual Abbey Benefit returned to a live event on Saturday, October 2, 2021 after going virtual last fall due to COVID. The venue also returned to Assumption Parish Church and Family Center in Broadview Heights. A very large crowd of over 250 attendees turned out to support the monks of Saint Andrew Abbey and to give special honor to the legacy of Abbot Clement Zeleznik, OSB '50 who died on May 3, 2021 at the age of 89. Abbot Clement had served as associate pastor of Assumption Parish from 1997–2001. Brian Devers of the Advancement Department produced a video tribute to Abbot Clement that featured interviews with **Bishop Roger Gries, OSB, Shelli Zeleznik, Dr. Don Kikta MD, '69, and Sister Annette Therese Amendolia, SND.**

Special appreciation goes once again to the Cleveland District of the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association whose branches provided attractive baskets for the Slovak Raffle. ***It was also announced that the upcoming Centennial celebration on Sunday, September 18, 2022 will take the place of the Abbey Benefit for the coming year.*** The Abbey Benefit is the only major fundraiser that directly supports the monks of the abbey each year.



Enjoying the evening were (l-r) Bro. Simon Corrigan, OSB, Prior Peter Ancell, OSB, and Fr. Thomas Sanders, OSB.



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BERNIE WIEDERWOHL '75

"Although I graduated from Benedictine in 1975, I never really left. As a volunteer in the Athletic Department for decades, I have come to know many students and their families. I consider the Benedictine Family my extended family. The monks of Saint Andrew Abbey provide stability. In fact, my German teacher, Fr. Anselm, is still teaching to this day. Benedictine provided me with an exceptional educational experience far beyond the classroom. I support Benedictine because Benedictine supported me. My hope is that Benedictine will continue to flourish for future generations of students. Go Bengals!"



DONOR TESTIMONIAL

THE GOLIAS FAMILY

"Our family has been blessed for over 75 years with the gifts of friendship and guidance from the Benedictine monks of Saint Andrew Abbey. There has never been a time in our lives that the monks have not been there for us. They have been there for all the important milestones—baptisms, confirmations, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries and funerals. In return we hope to always be there for them, whether it is by volunteering or donating. Our parents, Wanda and Richard (Red) '47, set an example of donating whenever they could and we continue to follow in their footsteps. Thank you very much to all the monks who have enriched our lives so abundantly!"

— Bob '70, Marie, Rich '74, Anne, Karl '78, Tim '81, Paul '86



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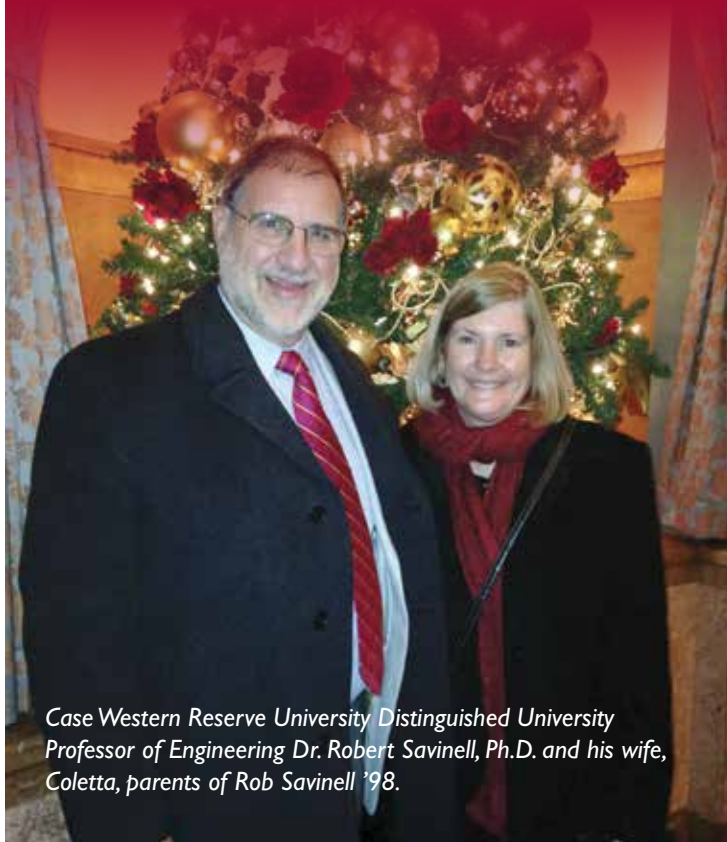
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ROBERT AND COLETTA SAVINELL, PARENTS OF ROB SAVINELL '98

"We were introduced to the Benedictine community by our son when he chose BHS for high school. To this day Rob appreciates the small-class education, cultural diversity and camaraderie of his classmates and faculty, many of whom he is still in contact with today. He was instilled with respect and discipline during his academic studies. He talks of the spiritual influence of the monks and priests in the classrooms, the halls, liturgical celebrations, and prayers before band concerts, plays, and sport activities. We especially support the monks and priests of the Abbey because of their commitment to prayer and to the Rule of Saint Benedict, in addition to their dedication to Benedictine High School, the Buckeye urban neighborhood, and to promoting and advancing the work of God and the Church."



Case Western Reserve University Distinguished University Professor of Engineering Dr. Robert Savinell, Ph.D. and his wife, Coletta, parents of Rob Savinell '98.

THREE MONKS MARK ANNIVERSARIES

Three monks of Saint Andrew Abbey marked notable anniversaries in 2021. **Fr. Anselm Zupka, OSB '58** reached his 60th anniversary of monastic profession. **Bro. Gabriel Balazovic, OSB** achieved his 40th year as a professed monk. And **Fr. Paschal Petcavage, OSB** marked the 40th anniversary of his priesthood ordination



Fr. Anselm first came to Benedictine High School as freshman Jack Zupka in the fall of 1954. After graduating in 1958, he attended St.

John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota for two years before entering Saint Andrew Abbey. He received the religious name of Anselm after an 11th century saint who was a Benedictine monk and scholar in Great Britain. Fr. Anselm was ordained a priest in 1967.

He has achieved notoriety for breaking records in his monastic life. Last year when he turned 80, he became the first monk or lay teacher at BHS to still be actively teaching at that milestone age. He continues to teach German in his 53rd academic year on the faculty – the most total number of years teaching of any faculty member in the history of the school, though he paused for five years (2011–2016) to serve as chaplain of Walsh University in Canton, Ohio. He also has the record for the most years as the BHS Director of Guidance – 42 years (1969–2011). He has continued to provide weekend ministry at St. Charles Parish in Parma for 54 consecutive years, the longest weekend ministry assignment of any priest-monk in the history of the abbey.



Brother Gabriel was born in Dolna Krupa, Slovakia as one of the seven children of Dominic and Julianna Balazovic. His baptismal name was Julian. He grew

up under the Post-World War II Communist regime. In 1967, at the age of 18, he received government permission to visit his aunt Mary Sedlacek in Toronto, Canada with his two cousins. After they arrived, his aunt asked them to stay which was in violation of their travel visas and for that they were not able to return to Slovakia without facing arrest until the fall of Communism in 1989.

For 12 years, Julian worked as a research lab technician at the University of Toronto. The pastor of his parish was a Slovak priest from Youngstown, Ohio named Msgr. Michael Shuba who eventually convinced Julian to visit St. Andrew Abbey in 1979. He had a positive experience and a year later entered as a postulant. He received the religious name of Gabriel when he became a novice and professed his first vows on June 21, 1981 at the age of 31.

Over the past four decades, Bro. Gabriel has worked in a variety of capacities in the abbey and high school notably serving as sacristan taking care of the sacred vessels and vestments for liturgies at the abbey for over 20 years until his retirement last year. He also assists with maintaining the grounds, driving errands, and supervising security. His older brother, Jaroslav, 84, passed away this year in Slovakia. He has one remaining younger brother, John, also in Slovakia.



Fr. Paschal was given the name Leonard by his parents Albert (deceased) and Floraceda Petcavage of Elyria, Ohio. He was one of

six children. He graduated from Elyria Catholic High School in 1971. He earned a degree in Music Education from Marian College in Indianapolis and then entered St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland. He was ordained as a diocesan priest in 1981.

He served as an associate pastor at St. Bernadette's Parish in Westlake, Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Garfield Heights, and St. Joseph's Parish in Amherst. In 1991 he joined the Congregation of St. Joseph and was assigned to teach at Paraclete High School in Los Angeles.

In 1996, Fr. Petcavage decided to try monastic life and became a novice of St. Andrew Abbey receiving the religious name of Paschal. He professed his first vows in 1998. Fr. Paschal served as one of abbey organists and taught Spanish, French, Italian, Music Appreciation, English, and Theology at Benedictine High School for six years before being assigned as the associate pastor of Assumption Parish in Broadview Heights in 2004.

He returned to the BHS faculty in 2012 and taught until he succeeded Abbot Clement as chaplain of Loyola Retreat House in 2018. He now resides at the abbey and assists at St. Stanislaus Parish in Cleveland, Regina Health Center, and Nativity of the BVM in Lorain. He also serves as chaplain for the Fr. Ragan Council of the Knights of Columbus in Avon.



Cardinal Jozef Tomko and Bro. Gabriel

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Benedictine Order of Cleveland Centennial Pilgrimage

Saturday, July 2, 2022

Depart via scheduled air service. The destination is Rome, Italy

Sunday, July 3: Rome

Arrive in Rome and meet your Faith Journeys Tour Manager who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to the hotel for check-in. Enjoy a panoramic tour of Rome's highlights, including stops at Spanish Steps, Piazza Navona, and Trevi Fountain. Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of St. Agnes. Evening Welcome Dinner and overnight

Monday, July 4: Rome

Half-day guided tour of Imperial Rome, including entrance to the Roman Forum and Colosseum. Also view the Pantheon, Baths of Caracalla, and Palatine Hill. Visit St. Anselmo, a Benedictine church and monastery on Aventine Hill. Near the church at the Malta priory, there is a keyhole on the gate with a perfect view of St. Peter's Basilica. Visit the Benedictine Monastery of S. Cecilia, located in Trastevere. This famous Basilica is devoted to the patron saint of music and is run by Benedictine nuns. Celebrate Mass at the Monastery of S. Cecilia. Dinner at a local restaurant

Tuesday, July 5: Vatican City / Rome

This morning, we will visit Vatican City to tour the Vatican Museums, which house what can be described as the most important collections of art in the world, including The Sistine Chapel. Visit St. Peter's Basilica. Marvel at Bernini's beautiful bronze canopy and Michelangelo's Blessed Mother, known as the Pieta. Celebrate Mass at St. Peter's Basilica. Enjoy time at leisure for additional sightseeing, shopping, or other activities. Evening dinner and overnight

Wednesday, July 6: Rome

This morning, we will return to the Vatican City to attend an Audience/Blessing with our Holy Father (if available). Visit the ancient catacombs of St. Domitilla. Visit the Basilica of St. Clemente, where Saint Cyril is buried. Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of St. Clemente. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Thursday, July 7: Monte Cassino / Rome

This morning we will drive to the Abbey of Monte Cassino where St. Benedict established his first monastery, the source of the Benedictine Order, around 529. Upon arrival, we will celebrate Mass. Return to Rome. Enjoy time at leisure for additional sightseeing, shopping, or other activities. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Friday, July 8: Rome - Subiaco - Norcia

Transfer east of Rome to Subiaco. Visit St. Benedict's Abbey, the Sacred Grotto, and the Abbey of Santa Scolastica. Celebrate Mass at the Sanctuary of St. Benedict. Continue north to Norcia to visit the ruins of the Monastery of Saint Benedict, built over the birthplace of Saint Benedict. Continue to the hotel in Norcia for dinner and overnight

Saturday, July 9: Norcia - Venice

Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of St. Rita in Cascia. Experience a wine-tasting event from one of the nearby vineyards. Transfer to Venice. Check-in to the hotel in Venice-Mestre for dinner and overnight

Sunday, July 10: Venice

Transfer to the main island of Venice via public boat. A morning walking tour includes St. Mark's Square, with entrance to the incredibly rich Basilica of St. Mark and the Doge's Palace where the powerful and prosperous dukes of Venice ruled their far-flung empire at its height during the 15th century. Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of St. Mark. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure in Venice. Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight.

Monday, July 11: Depart for Home

Transfer to Venice or Milan's airport for the return flight home

OPTIONAL EXTENSION

Monday, July 11: Venice - Nitra

Full-day transfer to Nitra, Slovakia, by chartered motorcoach with stops along the way. Check-in to the hotel for dinner and overnight

Tuesday, July 12: Nitra

Half-day guided tour of Nitra will be filled with beautiful hilltop views, ancient legends, exciting history, and stunning churches, including the Zobor Monastery of St. Hippolytus, the oldest Benedictine Monastery, dating back to the 10th century. Entrance is also included to Nitra Castle where we will visit the Cathedral of St. Emmeram and celebrate Mass here. Enjoy time at leisure for additional sightseeing, shopping, or other activities. Dinner at a local restaurant

Wednesday, July 13: Trenčín - Nitra

Full-day excursion to Trenčín for a tour of many Benedictine sites such as the Monastery of St. Andrew, Cave and chapel, Chapel of St. Benedict of Skalka (where he was killed). Celebrate Mass at the Chapel of St. Benedict of Skalka. Return to Nitra for dinner and overnight

Thursday, July 14: Nitra - Bratislava - Vienna

Transfer from Nitra to Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. Enjoy a walking guided tour of Bratislava. See the Bratislava Castle, Old Town Hall, and Michael's Gate. Bratislava is set along the Danube River, and has a population of about 425,000. It is one of the smaller capitals of Europe, but the country's largest city. The city's history has been strongly influenced by people of different nations, religions, and backgrounds. Bratislava has been home to many Slovak, Hungarian, and German historical figures. Continue to Vienna, Austria. Half-day guided tour of Historical Vienna includes the Ringstraße, Imperial Palace, State Opera, Town Hall, Burgkapelle (home of the Vienna Boys Choir), Palace Stables, Strauß Monument, and entrance to Schönbrunn Palace, built by the Hapsburgs in imitation of Versailles. Tonight, we'll gather together for a Farewell Dinner at a local Heuriger restaurant.

Friday, July 15: Depart for Home

Transfer to the Vienna airport for the return flight home

Pilgrimage price with self-arranged airfare (Land-Only): \$3,196

Pilgrimage price including airfare from Cleveland, OH: \$4,895

(U.S. government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges up to \$550 included – pricing is based on a minimum 25 pilgrims)

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Mr. Jim Stefanek

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Rose Sevcik

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Ms. Rosemary Sutter

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BISHOP PILLA DIES AT 88 FRIEND OF BENEDICTINE

The Community of Saint Andrew Abbey and Benedictine High School offers its prayers for the soul of former Cleveland Bishop Anthony Pilla who died on September 21, 2021 at the age of 88. A graduate of Cathedral Latin, Bishop Pilla led the Diocese of Cleveland for 25 years. He was always supportive of the work of the Benedictines and presided at the solemn blessing of Abbot Roger on August 30, 1981. Twenty years later, he ordained Abbot Roger as auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland on June 7, 2001. May he rest in the peace of Christ.



RECENTLY DECEASED

The following members of our Benedictine Community have gone on to Eternal Rest between 7/23/21 and 11/30/21. May they all Rest in Peace.

Class	Name	Deceased Date
1946	Richard Kenney	9/7/21
1949	Lawrence Hohman	7/22/21
1949	Richard Kall	10/4/21
1950	Daniel Frate	10/3/21
1951	Kenneth Dacek	7/25/21
1952	Dr. Philip Vanik, MD	8/17/21
1954	Raymond Kikta	8/27/21
1954	Ronald Secolic	10/12/21
1955	Norman Locker	8/21/21
1955	William Novotny	8/5/21
1955	Joseph Toth	7/23/21
1956	John Canzoni	9/7/21
1958	Lawrence Dolin	7/30/21
1959	Dr. Thomas Evans	11/9/21
1965	Victor Vella	9/22/21
1966	Richard Decker	8/26/21
1970	Terrence Kurimski	11/29/21
1975	Richard Novak	10/17/21
1981	Donald Cline	8/27/21
1982	Andrew Kascak	8/19/21
1983	Steven Shantery	9/6/21
1998	Ivan Douglas	10/21/21
	Kay Franko	11/25/21
	Bertha Marconyak	
	Nungesser	9/3/21
	Nicole Williams	9/1/21
	Thomas Wenzel	10/29/21
	Janice Lisy	11/14/21
	Michael Chisarik	11/10/21

Recently notified earlier deaths

1952	Benedict Stefanek	2/3/21
1968	Gregory Vrbel	2/8/21

If anyone knows of other recently deceased alumni, please contact the alumni office at 216-421-2080 ext. 342 or alumni@cbhs.edu

In Memoriam

of Benedictine High School and friends of Saint Andrew Abbey



Gregory Vrabel, 71, of the Class of 1968 died on February 8, 2021 after a heroic battle with Huntington's Disease. A resident of Hinckley, he worked as an engineer. He came to Benedictine from St. Charles Elementary School following his two brothers, Stephen '60 and Robert '65. His is survived by his wife, Carol, and son, Andrew.



Andrew Kascsak, 57, Class of 1982, died on August 9, 2021 after a long struggle with cancer. He worked for Cleveland Electric Laboratories for 37 years. He is survived by his wife, Deborah, son Dominic, and daughter Caitlyn. His late father, James, was a 1955 BHS alumnus and his brother Christopher graduated in 1983. His funeral Mass was celebrated at Gesu Church. Fr.

Gerard represented Benedictine at the funeral.



Philip Vanik, MD, 86, of the Class of 1952, died on August 17, 2021. He lettered in golf at BHS and went on to earn his medical degree from Ohio State University in 1960. He was a pediatric anesthesiologist at Children's Hospital in Columbus for 32 years and Chief of Staff at St. Ann's Hospital. He is survived by his wife, Regina, of 58 years and two children. After his retirement,

Dr. Vanik and Regina (a nurse) spent a decade participating in 20 medical missions to Central and South America. His funeral Mass was at St. Brigid of Kildare Church in Dublin, Ohio.



Raymond Kikta, 85, of the Class of 1954, died on August 27, 2021. Raymond taught for 37 years in the Cleveland Public Schools. He was an officer in CTU, OFT, and CTUR. He and his wife of 54 years, Nancy, established a family scholarship at Benedictine and enjoyed meeting the students who benefited from it each year. His funeral Mass was celebrated by his classmate, Bishop Roger

Gries, OSB '54, at St. Leo's Church. Abbot Gary Hoover, OSB '74 and Fr. Gerard Gonda, OSB '71 also participated in the Mass.



Steven Shantery, 56, of the Class of 1983, died on September 6, 2021. He played four years of football and ran two years of track at BHS. Known for his humor, he is survived by his mother, Lynda, and his children: Russell, Brenna and Kelly. Steven retired from Pipefitters Local 120 after 30 years.



Victor Vella, 74, of the Class of 1965, died on September 22, 2021. Vic was a special education teacher for Aurora City Schools for 30 years. He was an accomplished drummer and valued his many drum students throughout the years. He was a proud "65" graduate of BHS, where he was a senior class officer and a finalist for "Mr. Benedictine." His funeral Mass was celebrated at

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Macedonia.



Dan Frate, 90, of the Class of 1950 passed away on October 3, 2021. Dan served in the Army as a medical aid during the Korean War. He returned to his hometown of Cleveland and worked for Air Products as a chemical operator for over 30 years before retiring. Dan spent the last 9 years of his life residing in Naples, FL, where he lived close to his son Daniel of the BHS Class of 1979. His funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Gregory the Great Church of Sacred Heart Parish in South Euclid.



Ivan Douglas, 41, of the Class of 1998, died from COVID on October 21, 2021. Ivan was a member of the 1996 BHS State Championship football team and went on to play for Ohio State as a starter on the Buckeyes' offensive line when the team won the national championship in 2002. Health issues prematurely ended his collegiate playing career. He returned to the

Cleveland area and worked as a special education aide in the Shaker Heights schools, then worked as a property manager and material handler. In 2016, he joined Cuyahoga County's Department of Children and Family Services as a social worker. A husband and father of two young boys, Ivan had just started the intensive weekend program for his master's degree in social work at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University.



Dr. Thomas Evans, Ph.D., 80, of the Class of 1959, died on November 9, 2021. Dr. Evans was a well-known figure in Northeast Ohio, most notably for his numerous television news appearances related to the topics of violence and terrorism, a recognized expert on these topics from his 45 years as a professor at John Carroll University, being a profiler for the CIA, and

serving as a police psychologist for nearly every municipality in Northeast Ohio. He was inducted into the Benedictine Hall of Distinction in 2019.



Kathryn (Kay) Franko, 97, of Youngstown passed away on November 25, 2021. She was the youngest sister of the late **Fr. Cyril Novotny, OSB '31**, BHS's first valedictorian and long-time physics teacher. She earned a degree in cytopathology (study of diseased cells) and worked for many decades at St. Elizabeth Hospital, founding not only the Cytology Department, but

also a school of cytology. *She established the Fr. Cyril Fund in the BHS endowment to which contributions in memory of Fr. Cyril are welcomed and used for scholarship assistance.* Abbot Gary and Fr. Gerard represented Benedictine at her funeral Mass at St. Matthias Church of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Youngstown.



Isabel "Sue" Kotlinski, 94, died on December 7, 2021. She was the mother of Fr. Bede Kotlinski, OSB and Mary Hanville. She was a member of Christ the King Parish in Columbus, Ohio where she was a long time volunteer and Eucharistic minister. Fr. Bede celebrated her funeral Mass there on Saturday, December 11.

SAVE THE DATE

REUNION WEEKEND 2022

JUNE 17-19, 2022

Celebrating classes ending in '2 and '7

2017

5 YEAR REUNION

1977

45 YEAR REUNION

2012

10 YEAR REUNION

1972

**50 YEAR
GOLDEN
REUNION**

2007

15 YEAR REUNION

1967

55 YEAR REUNION

2002

20 YEAR REUNION

1962

60 YEAR REUNION

1997

25 YEAR REUNION

1957

65 YEAR REUNION

1992

30 YEAR REUNION

1952

70 YEAR REUNION

1987

35 YEAR REUNION

1947

75 YEAR REUNION

1982

40 YEAR REUNION

1942

80 YEAR REUNION

2022 Reunion Weekend Dates

**STAG
NIGHT**

FRIDAY

JUNE 17, 2022

**CLASS
PLANNED
ACTIVITIES**

SATURDAY

JUNE 18, 2022

**REUNION
MASS &
BREAKFAST**

SUNDAY

JUNE 19, 2022

REUNION 2022

We are looking for class leaders and ambassadors from the above classes to help get the best out of the celebration of your reunion milestone during Reunion Weekend 2022.

Please contact alumni@cbhs.edu.

THANK YOU!

DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,



Chris Lorber '04

During one of the most unique and unusual times in our history, on behalf of Benedictine High School and St. Andrew Abbey – our monks, students, teachers and staff – we thank you for making last year a very successful year of philanthropic support. We value and appreciate your dedication!

Although the year was a challenge for many of us, we maintained our Ora et Labora

motto and delivered the opportunities necessary for the students of Benedictine High School celebrating 95 years of existence along with the monks of St. Andrew Abbey who will celebrate year **100** this upcoming year. In the year where many of us sacrificed much, we share our gratitude for the commitment you made to these institutions and the missions they represent.

At the beginning of our Annual Report, we shared a centennial reflection from Fr. Gregory Vanisak, OSB. While reviewing history and referencing articles of the past, it was inspiring to see a memo that Fr. Gregory wrote in *The Procopian Chronicle* enthusiastically sharing his appreciation for the collection of books valued at \$5,000 as well as a financial pledge made by The Slovak Catholic Federation he received for St. Andrew's. Nearly **100 years** later, you see that same commitment and support from the First Catholic Ladies Slovak Association. What an inspiration!

We were able to witness their support firsthand along with over 250 other friends and benefactors as we joined together to celebrate the 99th year of the monks' arrival to Cleveland at this past Fall's Abbey Benefit. We paid tribute to Abbot Clement Zeleznik, OSB and the wonderful life he lived and the thousands of lives he touched. This annual event was a preview to an amazing milestone that will be held next **September 18, 2022** – St. Andrew Abbey and the Benedictine Monks' **100th** year in Cleveland!

Much like we joined together to support the monks of St. Andrew Abbey in the Fall, we look forward to being back in-person on **Saturday, March 12, 2022** for our 20th annual Blue and White Gala! The Gala, which will be held at the InterContinental Hotel - Cleveland, is the school's single, most important event of the year where all monies raised go toward students' scholarship and tuition assistance. More event details will come, but please be sure to Save the Date!

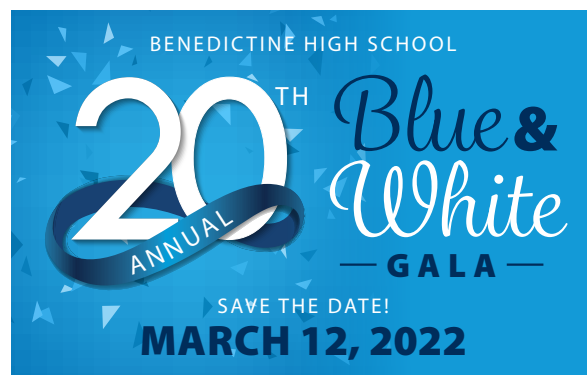
As we grow and continue to carry on our missions, I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year. And, most importantly, I thank you for the **gifts** you provide to our students and monks.

Yours in St. Benedict,

Mr. Chris Lorber '04
Vice President of Advancement



(left to right): National Trustee-Sue Ann Seich, District Vice President-Marie A. Golias, National President-Cynthia M. Maleski, National Secretary-Kim Graham, District President-Joyce Lechman and National Auditor-Barbara Sekerak present a check on behalf of the FCCLA to Abbot Gary Hoover, OSB.



Ora et Labora: A publication of
Benedictine High School
and **Saint Andrew Abbey**

Winter 2021

Abbot Gary Hoover, OSB '74
Publisher

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Vice President of Advancement

Fr. Gerard Gonda, OSB '71
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Advancement Associate

Give the future to **BENEDICTINE**

GIVE FROM YOUR IRA THIS YEAR

If you are 70 ½ years or older, you can use all or part of your IRA distribution to make a gift towards Benedictine's future.

Here are the steps:

- 1) Communicate with your financial advisor, IRA custodian, or bank your desire to make a "Qualified Charitable Distribution" (also known as QCD) to Benedictine this year.
- 2) This reduces your taxable income even without itemizing.
- 3) The gift is sent directly to BHS from your financial institution with no tax obligation to you.
- 4) Your gift goes to work in furthering authentic Catholic education at Benedictine High School.

This has become one of the preferred methods of giving for many alumni and benefactors in order to support Benedictine in the most tax efficient way possible.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chris Lorber '04, Vice President of Advancement, at (216) 421-2080, Ext. 246.