

Religious center inspiring in its Christian cordiality

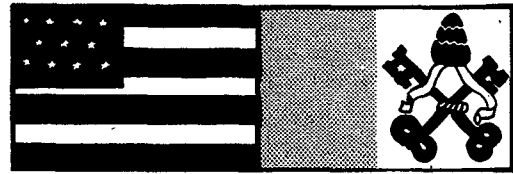
By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier Columnist

Since I didn't have any commitments to assist at any parish, I joined Kevin P. Doran — an aggressive Catholic who managed radio station WLEA in Hornell — and his teenage daughter, Maura, Dec. 27 through Jan. 1 at St. Benedict's Priory in Still River, Mass. The priory is about a dozen miles from Worcester.

My first encounter with St. Benedict's was in 1972. The late Father Robert Kress and I were on a meandering vacation in the east, when we stopped at St. Benedict's, then a religious center. We were welcomed by Brother Gabriel Gibbs, a Hornellian who is a brother-in-law to Kevin Doran.

We met the famous Father Leonard Feeney, who was in deteriorating health but cheerful and active. We were impressed by the devotion and hospitality.

In 1976, I returned for Brother Gabriel's ordination to the priesthood, which was conferred by Bishop Flanagan of Worcester. Our group included Mercy Sisters Leona Didas, Barbara Weyand, Raymond



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Joseph Griffin; the Gibbs and Doran families; Father John Weyand, a priest from Albany who is now in the U.S. Army; and Father Leon Neu of Buffalo, who was once chaplain at Alfred State.

The beginnings and the evolution of St. Benedict's are unique. When Father Feeney died in 1978, Father Avery Dulles — who was born in Auburn and whose grandfather was a professor at the Presbyterian Auburn Theological Seminary — wrote a memorial in *America*, which describes the founding of the center.

"I knew Father Feeney only slightly before the spring of 1946, at which time I settled in Cambridge, Mass. for several months as I was completing my naval service and preparing to enter the Jesuit novitiate in August. I came to Cambridge in order to rejoin St. Benedict's Center, a gathering place for Catholic students, which I had been instrumental in founding, together with Catherine Goddard Clarke five years earlier. Clarke, a woman of charismatic charm and contagious enthusiasm, had run the center almost unassisted until 1943, when she obtained the services of Father Feeney, who was at the height of height of his renown.

"In 1946, the center was a bustling place of theological study and apostolic zeal. Life at the center had an indelible effect on all the associates. At least 200, it is reported, became converts to the Catholic faith. The center was beginning to take on certain characteristics of a religious community, with Father Feeney in the role of superior." (*America*, 1978.)

In the midst of theological controversy in 1958, the center moved to Still River, the locale of the Brook Farm transcendentalists — Emerson, Hawthorne and associates — with Father Feeney as superior. It has since evolved into a canonical

Benedictine priory, with Father Gabriel as prior of some 18 monks, several of whom are quite young. Their work, prayer, study and liturgy reflect the continued inheritance of traditional culture and devotion. Mass and Vespers are in Latin with Gregorian chants. The rosary is in English. The atmosphere pervades cordiality.

The most striking thing to me was the hospitality to the guests. The monks have dinner at 6:30 p.m. As brothers in the Lord, they relax afterward in a large community room. From 8:30-9 p.m. several monks come to a large social room for guests and mingle in a spirit which reminds one of the early church. "See how these Christian love one another..."

The monks do not give retreats, but neighboring groups that come for retreats or days of recollection can bring their own chaplain. Individuals or small groups come just to spend a few days absorbing the tranquil atmosphere. Any reader who might wish to visit for a day or more should contact: St. Benedict's Priory, Still River, Mass., 01467, or call 508/456-3221.

Gospel of Matthew draws parallels with Exodus

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier Columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) Matthew 4:12-13; (R1) Isaiah 8:23-9:3; (R2) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17.

The year 1990 is Cycle A. This means the Sunday gospels this year will be predominantly from St. Matthew.

The Scripture readings are the catechism of the church. Vatican II stressed the centrality of Scripture. Her Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation says that the bread of life is offered from two tables: the word of God and the body of Christ.

Thus the New Order of the Mass was restructured on the twin pylons of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Both are perpetual sources of the spiritual life. "Ignorance of Scripture," wrote St. Jerome, "is ignorance of Christ."

The Gospel according to St. Matthew concentrates on the Sermons of Jesus. Matthew sees Jesus as the new Moses, founding a new Israel, or church, on the 12 apostles, to succeed the old Israel founded on the 12 sons of Jacob.

The books of Moses are called the "Pentateuch," meaning five scrolls. Therefore, Matthew divides his gospel into five Sermons of Jesus that are linked together by five narratives taken from St. Mark's Gospel. Because Matthew also has a predilection for the number "seven," he adds an introduction and a conclusion to these five units.

Here is a skeletal outline of Matthew's Gospel.

- Introduction, chapters 1-2: Infancy narrative. Jesus is "like" Moses in that as Pharaoh persecuted Moses, so Herod persecutes the infant Jesus. Pharaoh orders the death of male infants, Herod massacres the

infants in Bethlehem. Pharaoh forces Moses to flee from Egypt. Herod forces Jesus to flee to Egypt. Moses returns to Egypt after the death of Pharaoh, and Jesus returns to Palestine after the death of Herod.

- Five narratives, A to E:
- A. Chapters 3-4: Moses spent 40 days and nights fasting in the desert; so does Jesus.
- Five sermons, 1 to 5:
- 1. Sermon on the mount, chapters 5-7: Moses gives the Old Law on Mt. Sinai; Jesus gives the New Law from the Mount of the Beatitudes.
- B. Chapters 8-9: Jesus works 10 miracles, paralleling the 10 plagues worked by Moses in Egypt.
- 2. The mission sermon, Chapter 10: He who commissioned Moses now com-

missions the apostles. They are not to fear: "I am with you," as He was with Moses.

- C. Chapters 11-12: Jesus is greater than Moses. Still, Israel rejects Him, as Moses too was rejected.
- 3. The parable sermon, Chapter 13: seven parables on the Kingdom. The Jews do not understand Jesus; the disciples do.
- D. Chapters 14-17: The new Israel is to be found in the community of Jesus' disciples: Primacy is promised to Peter.
- 4. The community sermon, Chapter 18: the relationship of Christian to Christian, and of leaders in the community to their subjects.
- E. Chapters 19-22: questions and answers, starting with Moses' stance on divorce.
- 5. The final sermon, chapters 23-25:



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

condemnation of the Pharisees and the coming of the Son of Man.

- Part II: conclusion, chapters 26-28: passion, death and resurrection.
- From the beginning, Matthew's Gospel had always been recognized as "the ecclesiastical gospel." His gospel deals essentially with the mystery of the church and its sacramental life. He underlines the truth that the Lord is with His church "always to the end of time" and acts in her through her sacraments.
- In union with her and her sacraments, we shall have life and have it to the full.

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EDWIN SULEWSKI
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Grief...
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Grief is the name of a complex combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual experiences. It occurs when we loose someone or something very important to us.

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Everyone deals with grief in a different way.

GRIEF RESOURCE INFORMATION FORUM and the PASTORAL CARE CENTER at Rochester General Hospital jointly sponsor a monthly bereavement group called **WORKING THROUGH LOSS.**

The group provides information, education and peer support for adults recovering from the death of a significant person in their lives.

The group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the E-5 conference room at Rochester General Hospital.

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