

learned, hard-working, and independent surface, lies a soul God-fearing, caring, and humble in the estimation of his own wisdom.

There is little need to dwell on Fr. Isaac's learnedness. Though he did not like school when he was younger, Fr. Isaac has shown an enthusiasm, or at least a determination, to learn what it takes to tackle the practical demands his assignments presented—whether as President-Rector, Business Manager, teacher of philosophy, and, more recently, as pastor of a parish. Fr. Isaac's perceptive and open mind usually enables him to arrive at a well-considered solution to the issue at hand. But as we know, Fr. Isaac never uses the successes he may have experienced as an excuse to stop re-thinking, re-working, re-learning. Always a teacher, he's never stopped being a student.

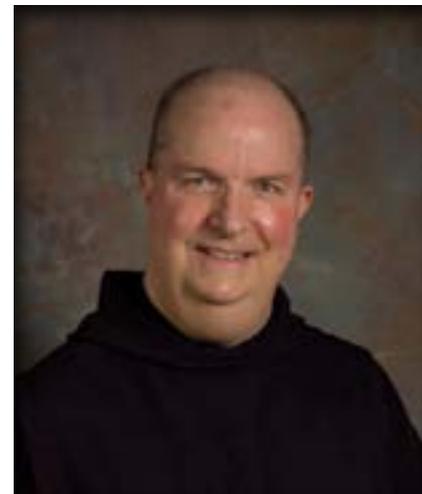
Fr. Isaac's industriousness is accompanied by humility, a chief characteristic mentioned by St. Benedict of the monk who truly seeks God. As President-Rector from 1973-88, and during somewhat challenging times, Fr. Isaac diligently and patiently sowed the seeds of the seminary's later

fuller flourishing. To paraphrase St. Paul, Fr. Isaac watered and planted, but God gave the increase. Fr. Isaac's industriousness, in other words, has been accompanied by an evident and strong faith in God. If there's one theme that consistently stands out in Fr. Isaac's homilies to the community, it is this: Do not allow our own wills to get in the way of God's grace in our life. Surely it is this theme of personal conversion that is responsible for the "sacred enthusiasm" that can sometimes burst forth from Fr. Isaac's more ordinary Stoic demeanor—often coming as a surprise to unsuspecting observers.

Underneath Fr. Isaac's independent exterior there is also a generous, caring, and even affectionate quality that is shown to those who approach him in trust. On many occasions Fr. Isaac has offered a quiet but wise word of support to a confrere experiencing a difficulty. If the situation calls for a candidly direct response, Fr. Isaac is quite capable of that too. Those of us who have worked with Fr. Isaac in the administration of the abbey or seminary know of the neatness and thoroughness that he applies to his work. We also know of his willingness to help with tasks that may require his expertise. For example, Fr. Isaac was asked to write the most recent self-study report for the seminary's successful accreditation—an important and demanding work that he was already familiar with.

Fr. Isaac's strong sense of purpose to better the lives of others has been shown not only in the seminary as a teacher and admin-

istrator, but also in the pastoral responsibilities more recently assigned to him. After fifteen years as rector, Fr. Isaac spent a sabbatical of a year and two summers in Guatemala, knowing he would be exposed to poverty, violence, political unrest, and an unfamiliar language. The first three he could do very little about, but then he not only taught himself Spanish, he also learned Cachiuel, the Mayan dialect of the native region. We are thankful to God that Fr. Isaac has enjoyed good health over the years, enabling him to presently serve the Catholic parish in Bethany, Missouri, sharing his wisdom and his faith as he has done for us these past 50 years.



Fr. Timothy Schoen: 25 Years Professed

by Abbot Gregory Polan

Fr. Timothy knows about persistence. A graduate of our seminary college, he studied theology at the North American College in Rome during the exciting years of the Second Vatican Council. After ordination in 1964, he served for twenty years in parish ministry

as a priest of the Diocese of Kansas City-Saint Joseph: Fr. Frank Schoen became a well-known figure among the liturgical musicians of our nation. But even as his ministry progressed, Fr. Frank found himself growing ever more aware that God could be persistent, too: through all those years, a divinely inspired attraction to a more contemplative life than the parish could afford was a persistent whisper in the ear of his heart. Finally heeding the voice of his Master's instruction, Father petitioned for admission to the monastic community he had known as both seminarian and priest. And as a monk, placed at profession under the name and care of St. Timothy, he has borne the "full discipline of the rule" with zeal, putting his priestly ministry his many talents fully at the service of his monastic community.

That service has included many manifestations. Fr. Timothy has been an instructor in the seminary for most of his years in the

monastery; mainstay of the music department, he regularly teaches voice and chant as well as organ and piano. He has further served the seminary at various times as Chaplain, Spiritual Advisor, and Director of Seminary Liturgy, having completed further graduate studies in Liturgical Music at Saint John's University, Collegeville, in 1996.

His service in the monastery has been no less illustrious. Whether as refectorian, assistant choirmaster or abbot's secretary, he has acquitted himself with devotion and enthusiasm. But as anyone who knows Fr. Timothy can tell you, his real gifts to the community come in the Liturgy. He is an organist of exceptional ability; no one can resist the thrill generated by his blazing execution of Charles-Marie Widor's Toccata. Fr. Timothy is never above sharing the liturgical stage: in addition to his direction of both the monastic schola and seminary choir, Father expands the beauty

of our liturgies in encouraging participation by student-players of violin, trumpet or flute, diligently searching out organ pieces suited to the accompaniment of such instrumentalists. His liturgical compositions grace both our Eucharistic celebrations and monastic office. The heart of Father's musical endeavors is always the joyful praise of God.

The beauty and depth Fr. Timothy brings to the liturgy is not limited to organ bench or music stand. His homilies are renowned for their sensitivity, learning and spiritual power, and his deep appreciation for poetry brings striking insight to his scriptural exegesis, gleaned apt spiritual kernels from literary luminaries ranging from George Herbert and John Milton to W. H. Auden and T. S. Eliot.

Fr. Timothy came to Conception for love of God and neighbor. Let us rejoice with him, thanking God for twenty-five years of monastic life and service!

ABBHEY AND SEMINARY FOOTNOTES

Abbot Gregory Polan, O.S.B. gave the annual Study-Day for the Catholic Biblical School in Buffalo, NY on Saturday, 23 October 2010. On 1-4 December 2010, he will conduct the annual retreat for the Benedictine monks of St. Gregory's Abbey, Three Rivers, Michigan.

Fr. Benedict Neenan, O.S.B. gave a "Busy Person's Retreat" at St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center at Iowa State University in Ames from October 17-21.

Fr. Samuel Russell, O.S.B. at-

tended the annual convention of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors in Milwaukee, WI 12-16 September. He led the senior pilgrimage to Chicago and St. Louis October 28-November 2. October 21-22 he attended a board meeting of the National Association of College Seminaries at St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia. The board met to plan the association's annual conference.

In addition to directed and preached retreats at the Abbey

Guest Center, **Fr. Patrick Cavaglia, O.S.B.** preached the annual retreat to the Catholic Daughters of the Americas of the Archdiocese of Dubuque at the American Martyrs Retreat House, Cedar Falls, Iowa, in October. The retreat house is celebrating its 50th jubilee of founding in 2010. He also attended the Swiss-American Congregation Finance Committee meeting at Glastonbury Abbey near Boston in early November. Fr. Patrick chairs the committee.

Fr. Dan Merz will be presenting

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