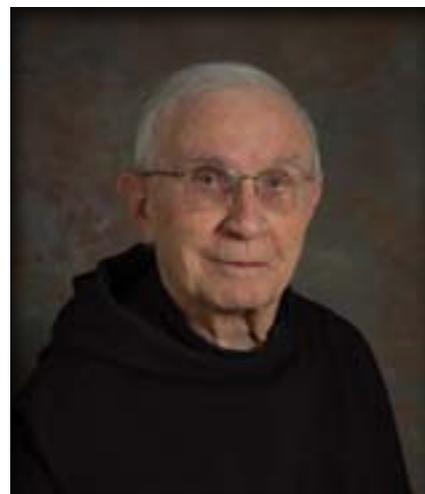


JUBILARIANS



Fr. Anthony Shidler: 70 Years Professed

by Fr. Xavier Nacke

Fr. Anthony was born into a large family—the 4th of seven boys and one girl, on August 21, 1921 in Elkhart, IN and was baptized Joseph Earl. Fr. Anthony was one of four religious to come from the family of Joseph Earl and Ursula Gettelfinger Shidler. Brothers Lawrence and Stephen were monks of St. Meinrad and Sr. Elnora is a Benedictine sister of Ferdinand, Ind.

He graduated in 1935 from the public high school in Harrison County, Indiana. (He says that he actually “never graduated from High School” but “had three years of quasi-high school at St. Meinrad.”)

Joseph Earl went to St. Meinrad when he was 14. There he attended the school for brothers in St. Placid Hall and afterwards made his novitiate in the monastery, professing first vows on March 12, 1940. Three years later he made perpetual vows.

At St. Meinrad he worked in the bakery and on the farm. In 1950

Abbot Primate Bernard Kaelin made a request of the Archabbey for brothers to help with the work at Sant’Anselmo Monastery in Rome. Br. Anthony told his superior he was willing to respond to this request. So, on July 16 of that year he and three other brothers left for a five-year assignment in Rome. There he worked in the carpenter shop and became driver for the community, hauling “everything from people to pigs.”

When he returned to St. Meinrad in the summer of 1955 he discussed the possibility of a priestly vocation with his abbot. But this was not to be immediately. He returned to Rome and during the next two years studied some Latin privately. He came home to St. Meinrad in the summer of 1957 and on to Conception where arrived on the train, “out in the sticks” on August 14th where Fr. James, who had been a friend and confidant at St. Anselmo, met him at the train station.

That Fall he joined nine younger men in the clerical novitiate. Novice Anthony went to the end of the seniority line and lived graciously, generously and cheerfully in that rambunctious class!

When the rest of the class made vows in September, 1958, Frater Anthony simply changed a short scapular for a long one—he had already made simple vows! (He would transfer his stability from St. Meinrad to Conception in June of 1961).

After a testing program, Anthony then entered second college. The next seven years were spent in the juniorate. This included one

year as a simplex priest after he was ordained on May 22, 1964.

There followed many jobs in the monastery, including archivist, professor at Mount Alverno Academy, prior in the monastery, assistant business manager, associate pastor, chaplain in the nearby hospital and professor in the seminary. But first came a further stint with the books at St. Louis University (1966-67) leading to a masters degree in history and later time in training for certification in Clinical Pastoral Education.

The beautiful wood carving that Fr. Anthony has done as a hobby is perhaps symbolic of his caring, persevering and gentle spirit. The author of this article, who was his fellow novice here at Conception, has appreciated and profited much from his witness as have so many others, both here at the abbey and seminary and in a number of other places!

He currently resides in St. Stephen’s Health Care Center at the abbey.

Br. Blaise Bonderer: 50 Years Professed



by Br. Etienne Huard

Br. Blaise Bonderer was born George Bonderer on January 29th, 1940, in Chillicothe Missouri—the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Mary Bonderer of Chillicothe. He attended the Green Grove Grade School, completing studies in 1953 and then went on to St. Joseph’s Academy in Chillicothe where he graduated in 1957. The following year, he entered Conception Seminary College to pursue priestly studies but found a stronger calling to the monastic way of life and entered the novitiate at Conception Abbey. After completing his novitiate he professed temporary vows on May 10th, 1960 and final vows May 10th, 1963.

Due to his farming background, the first assignment for Br. Blaise was working with the dairy operation for five years in the early sixties. For three consecutive years he showed the Grand Champion dairy cow at local fairs and the Missouri State Fair. He reports that her official registered name was Abbeydale Johanna Captain. He also admits that he enhanced the appearance (legally) of this champion white dairy cow with the aid of some talcum powder at strategic places! Moving from the farm, Br. Blaise was assigned as assistant manager of food services for one year and assistant superintendent of maintenance for the next three. For a short time thereafter, he was named the Abbey’s assistant business manager and the Abbot’s secretary while still continuing to help with outdoor landscaping.

For the next ten years, he began

a long and creative relationship working at The Printery House. Here he was able to take his skill and experience of cultivating plants and flowers to developing and printing Christian greeting cards.

Still known for his ‘green thumb’ and his often stunning flower arrangements for the church, Br. Blaise was given a new series of challenges. In 1985 he was named the vice-chairman of the committee formed by the now Archbishop Jerome Hanus, O.S.B. which was charged with making plans for the 1991 centennial of the Abbey Basilica. This committee was also created to address the daunting task of providing the vision for restoring and renewing the Basilica.

Throughout this time, Br. Blaise kept busy with a variety of other necessary assignments. These included being the supply store manager, associate guestmaster, member of the fire and safety team, member of the vocation recruitment team, assistant kitchen master, church manager and sacristan, and director of the monks’ supply room.

After these various duties, Br. Blaise was able to return to working outdoors. He became grounds keeper—giving an official title to a job he had already been performing for quite some time. He gladly held this position for nearly 25 years. To this day, he has never entirely relinquished his duties involving ground maintenance and he continues to help with flower beds which often add to the art and environment of the Church. He now officially serves the com-

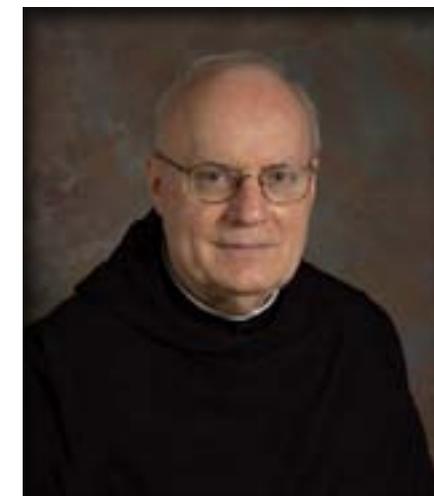
munity as apple orchard manager and monastic refectorian (the person in charge of cleaning and setting up the dining room for all the monks’ meals). It is also important to note that Br. Blaise has carried on Br. Damian’s work of recording and tracking the local weather for the national Weather Bureau, thus continuing the tradition of “the weather monk” at Conception Abbey.

Surely Br. Blaise, “one of the Bonderer kids of Chillicothe” has provided a powerful witness through these fifty years of generous and faithful monastic life which has touched the lives of many. His brother monks appreciate his ready smile and generosity and pray that whether working, praying, or playing a game of Bridge at the card table, the blessings still to come will indeed be abundant.

Fr. Quentin Kathol: 50 Years Professed

by Fr. Daniel Petsche

Golden Jubilarian of Profession, Fr. Quentin Kathol, traces his early days back to his hometown of Hartington, NE where he was born July 30, 1936, the



son of Leo and Clara Kathol. He got his early academic formation at Holy Trinity Grade School where the Benedictine Sisters of Yankton, SD introduced him to the idea of checking out the high school seminary operated by the Benedictine monks of Conception, MO. He began this adventure as a high school freshman in 1950 and eight years later graduated from Conception College Seminary with a Bachelor of Arts in 1958. After spending one semester at St. Bernard's Seminary in Dubuque as a seminarian for the Omaha Archdiocese the attraction to monastic life lingered, intensified and led to his entering the monastery as a novice on Aug. 31, 1959. Having persevered through the novitiate he professed temporary vows on Sept. 1, 1960 to be followed by solemn profession Sept. 2, 1963.

The responsibilities of priestly and academic ministry began immediately after his ordination to the priesthood on Sept. 21, 1963, the same month as his final solemn vows. After tasting the experience of classroom teaching for one year he went off to graduate studies in linguistics at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. from 1965-1968 and again 1969-70. In the years that followed Fr. Quentin could be found teaching in the classroom but also served as Dean of Studies from June 1970 to August 1981. Known for his precision in word choice and attention to details he brought his special gifts to the functioning of the office of the dean.

The years 1972 to 1991 saw Fr. Quentin wearing a number of

hats as languages professor, sub-prior associate treasurer with three years on the budget and finance committee and from 1972 – 2003 director of testing. He served as abbey archivist from 1991-2000.

Fr. Quentin has always had a keen interest in all things electrical and took delight in being a technical troubleshooter whenever problems with the audio-visual and telephone equipment arose in the monastery or seminary. He always seemed able to come up with the needed spare part or solve the problem if it was fixable. We knew that he would take it as a personal challenge to conquer the problem. When it was dandelion season around the monastery in spring and early summer we often saw Fr. Quentin waging a personal vendetta against that nasty flower/weed digging them out by their roots!

Even though he had done periodic parish ministry as substitute weekend help over the years a major change came for him when he was appointed pastor of the two rural parishes, St. Paul's Parish in Tarkio and St. Benedict's Parish in Burlington Junction, MO. He was pastor of these rural parishes from August of 1994 to 1998. His next assignment was back to the classroom in the seminary where he taught English as a Second Language with supplementary parish assignments from 2000-2003.

Further pastoral assignments followed in Aug. 2003 when he was assigned to be chaplain at St. Bernard's Medical Center in Jonesboro, AR and then followed in Aug. 2007 his current assign-

ment as chaplain for the Missionary Benedictine Sisters at Norfolk, NE and for the sick and elderly at St. Joseph's Nursing Home and Skyview Villa. This assignment was very fortunate for him in that it allowed him to be present more often to visit his elderly mother in her final days in his hometown.

When asked for a "word to the wise" in preparing this article Fr. Quentin offered the following thought:

"Despite the Benedictine vow of stability, the monastic vocation is as much subject to change as any other vocation. For anyone giving serious thought to entering the monastery at Conception, a "word to the wise" is that there's a dynamic aspect to the vows which a monastic person tries to live by. The impulse to begin is wonderful, but the call to put down roots and to grow in the midst of changing conditions involves a lifetime of adaptation. Also, you are not joining a single admired person but a community of persons who live and work together as brothers until each one meets the call to move on in death. For peace, happiness, and sheer survival, try each day to remain serene."

We congratulate Fr. Quentin as he marks his Golden Jubilee of Profession and pray that he will be able to continue to serve in a variety of assignments giving monastic witness to those vows he made so many years ago.

Fr. Allan Stetz: 50 Years Professed

by Fr. Patrick Caveglia

Fr. Allan Stetz, who celebrates his golden jubilee of monastic



profession this year, was born in St. Edward in east-central Nebraska in 1939. He began his college work at Conception Seminary in 1958, made his first profession of monastic vows on September 1, 1960, and was ordained to the priesthood on January 7, 1966.

For many years, Fr. Allan worked in our Christian greeting card apostolate, now known as The Printery House. He spent fourteen years as assistant manager, where he had special responsibility for advertising and marketing. He worked with designers to create advertising pieces. In those years, The Printery House relied on in-house printing and inserting of direct mail promotions. Fr. Allan became an expert on the care and feeding of our inserting and labeling equipment, which was used extensively during the summers to prepare advertising for our Christmas card lines. As the equipment became more and more complex, Fr. Allan constantly developed new tricks to repair older equipment. In about 1979, he purchased the first Printery House computer – a Tandy/Radio Shack model which he used to track source codes for catalog

orders. The data was recorded on an ordinary audio cassette player! But this was the beginning of on-site computerization of work data for Conception Abbey's apostolates.

In 1981, Fr. Allan was asked to take on the task of community business manager, which meant oversight of the financial health of the community. In this role, Fr. Allan served for eight years. During that time, the community moved toward greater financial coordination by means of better budgeting and accountability. As the demographics of the monastic community changed, so did the works the community had traditionally engaged in. Fr. Allan helped the community end its direct and active role in farming, and worked to solidify the community's financial situation during the 1980s. During this time at home, Fr. Allan also served the community as a confessor, director of the candidate program, and on various committees.

Following his term as business manager, Fr. Allan turned his attention to pastoral care as a parish priest. He was first assigned as pastor at St. Columban Parish, Chillicothe, Missouri, where he served from 1989 to 1995. There he was able to engage his passion for history, since Chillicothe was celebrating its sesquicentennial when he arrived. As he told the local newspaper, "I was very impressed by the long history of the area, which goes back much longer than where I grew up. So I got to learn a lot about the community from its history when I first arrived."

Fr. Allan's assignment at St. Columban was the beginning of a number of pastoral appointments. After a short sabbatical at Notre Dame, Fr. Allan became pastor at Sacred Heart Parish, Chariton, Iowa in the Des Moines Diocese. In 2000, he was assigned to serve at St. Brendan Parish, Mexico, Missouri, in the Jefferson City Diocese. He was called home to the Abbey in 2002 to serve as director of planned giving in the Development Office, and continued to do pastoral ministry in the area. He was pastor at St. Peter's Parish, Stanberry, and St. Patrick's Parish, Ford City until 2008, when he was assigned to serve as pastor of St. Columba Parish, Conception Junction. He continues in this pastoral role today, pastoring our neighbors and their families.

Fr. Allan's mind is open to new ideas and new inventions, and his heart is attuned to the needs of the people he serves. His ministry of service is one of Benedictine hospitality – welcoming all to come into the presence of the God of mercy and grace. May that service grow and flourish in the years to come!

Fr. Isaac True: 50 Years Professed

by Br. Justin Hernandez

One of the difficulties in trying to give a brief portrait of someone celebrating 50 years of religious life is that highlighting some of the more noticeable traits means inevitably passing over many no less significant qualities known to those who have shared his life. Anyone who has known Fr. Isaac True can testify that beneath the