

The Influence of Maria Laach on Mount Saviour Monastery

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Moses built the tabernacle according to the pattern shown to him on the mountain. Reverend Father Damasus Winzen did the same with Mount Saviour, but his model was the monastic community of Maria Laach under the governance of Abbot Ildephonse Herwegen, with Father Albert Hammenstede as novice master. In his invitation to collaborate in this *Festschrift*, Father Emmanuel Severus suggested that I portray the goals Father Damasus had in mind when he founded Mount Saviour and something about the relations we had with Maria Laach, especially through Fathers Raphael Hombach and Burkhard Neunheuser.

The primary goal of Father Damasus never varied. It was to transplant to the United States the reality of the Catholic, monastic life he had known at Maria Laach. The concrete application would differ in certain respects; for example, a greater simplicity in all dimensions of the new monastery, its life and undertakings. If it is true that, "The apple does not fall far from the tree," it certainly applied in the case of Father Damasus and his vision of Mount Saviour, relative to Maria Laach.

Father Damasus, influenced by the monastic ideas of Abbot Ildephonse and the teaching of Father Odo Casel in the *Mysterium Christi*, wanted to establish a pneumatic monastic life in a small community without the "pomp" of pontifical liturgy. His vision of this life included the realization of the *Mysterium Christi* in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, the hours of the Office celebrated at their proper times, *Lectio Divina*, no distinction of choir monks and lay brothers, and real manual work.

In an article published in 1972, Abbot Leo Rudloff gave a succinct listing of the goals he and Father Damasus shared and discussed on their voyage to the United States in 1938.

First, America was the fertile ground for monastic renewal, for a monastery with Christian witness as its essential goal. In effect, this meant a break with parish and school work. This was not an essential departure from the basic monastic principles of our own monasteries. It would be new, of course, to existing monasteries in the United States.

Second, we intended to abandon all the romantic and medieval encrustations of our congregation and its antecedents.

Third, the celebration of the liturgy was to be central to the monastic life. The forms and structures were to reflect the times, location, and persons of the community.

Fourth, the distinction between choir-monk (priest) and lay-brother was to be abolished. Father Damasus was particularly farsighted in this idea, considering that this centuries-old division within communities was rigidly upheld by monasteries themselves for emotional as well as economic reasons. He was also courageous, considering that canon law demanded clericalization of the monasteries. But Father Damasus cast the line firmly and neither wavered nor compromised on this explosive point.

Fifth, contingent on the above idea was the limitation of the number of priests to serve the needs of the community. This week was at the center Father Damasus's desire to return the monastic way of life to its original spirit. They were also the most controversial, since the extant monastic structure depended upon them.

Sixth, monasteries should be small in size. Bearing in mind that Maria Laach numbered 150 monks in those days, and Gerleve 90, our idea of small was around 40 or 50. Subsequently, our experience pared away that figure until it became half or even a quarter of our original thinking.

Seventh, openness was an ancient biblical concept and one practiced directly and simply by early monks. We intended to recover this Christian attitude in our monasteries by way of hospitality to guests and visitors and also by being men of our times, not of some earlier age.

There were other ideas as well as these, and even these which I mention have larger extensions, but they serve to give some notion of the original thrust of Father Damasus's thinking on the monastic life thirty years ago.

They will only be significant now in these days of *fait accompli* to those who remember when all of these insights were radical. No one could conceive of a monastery in those days that just "witnessed to the Gospels" without running parishes or schools, let alone support itself apart from the resources of those institutions. But ideas have a way of demanding existence and Father Damasus with a small group including myself was anxious to put them to the test.¹

The ideas or goals listed above were more or less accomplished here at Mount Saviour and have become the patrimony of monastics in the years following Vatican II. In the meantime, circumstances in the United States gave rise to new goals that would be interwoven with the monastic ideals Father Damasus imbibed both at Maria Laach and during his years in Rome. They became incorporated into the fabric of the foundational goals of Mount Saviour.

Father Damasus began teaching at the major seminary of the Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey, with Father Albert Hammenstede of Maria Laach, and Father Leo Rudloff of St. Joseph Abbey, Gerleve. Years later he would say that Father Albert loved the spirit he found in the United States, but he could not accept the lack of tradition. It is in regard to this issue that the unique contribution and insight of Father Damasus stands out most clearly.

He sensed in the seminarians, who knew little Latin and who would never be able to read a page of Augustine or Leo or Benedict in the original Latin, a spiritual hunger and a contemplative spirit that most Europeans never recognized. He saw in the laity this same receptiveness and fertile ground which filled him with surprise and joy. In a way he never expected, both groups taught him something of the deep stirrings of the Spirit in the human heart. He had learned from the Rule of Benedict that, "the Holy Spirit often speaks to the youngest" in the monastery. The one least socialized into the monastic tradition is often, in

God's plan, the one who is best able to preserve the tradition in adjusting to new circumstances. Father Damasus realized that the *doctrina* he had learned at Maria Laach was being received and responded to even more wonderfully and fruitfully by the laity than by many religious.

After three-and-a-half years of teaching at the seminary in Darlington, New Jersey, Fathers Albert, Damasus, and Leo decided to launch out on a monastic experience. They settled at Keyport, New Jersey, and called the foundation St. Paul's Priory. Later, Father Thomas Michels of Maria Laach joined this group. The foundation was problematic from the beginning, and lasted six years before it collapsed. All this time Father Damasus was extensively involved in retreat work among American religious and laity, helping in parishes, and he also became associate editor of *Orates Fratres*, now *Worship*.

In her biography of Godfrey Diekmann, Kathleen Hughes mentions the key role Father Damasus had in the Liturgical Movement in the United States:

In 1939, Father Damasus gathered about a dozen American Benedictines, mostly friends who had met one another during their studies at, or visits to, Maria Laach. It started simply as a study group reviving the camaraderie of the "Laacher pneuma." Under the direction and enthusiasm of Father Damasus, this group became a nucleus who established Benedictine Liturgical Weeks modeled on the "Semaines Liturgiques" of Mont César. Father Damasus and his friends spelled out the purpose of the first Liturgical Week which was held in Chicago in 1940. It was to provide a common forum at which various liturgical leaders throughout the country could discuss their various problems, coordinate their efforts, and refine their methods. Second, it was to focus the interest of liturgical leaders, priests, religious generally, and as many of the local clergy and laity as possible upon the fundamental liturgical theme: "The Living Parish: Active and Intelligent Participation of the Laity in the Liturgy as Members of a Parish."

The discussions at this final Liturgical Week could not touch directly upon all liturgical problems of current interest. However, they felt if it were successful, steps could easily be taken to make it an annual affair, at which other important problems could be discussed. It was more than successful. It was a watershed event and enabled people from all over the country to come together for the first time, to pray in common, to probe issues of mutual concern as they learned from the demonstration of various rites. They met firsthand those whose articles and columns they had read, and they began to form deep and lasting friendships.²

This matter of friendships is most important. His friendships included people in all classes of society with a variety of educational backgrounds. He listened to them and they had a real influence on the development of his thought. His extensive involvement in the Liturgical Movement, retreat work, lecturing, and parish assistance brought him into contact with the laity on both a wider scale and more intimate basis than he experienced in Europe. Writing in a Mount Saviour newsletter, he pointed out that the Old Testament Temple was a series of exclusions. In one area, only the High Priest could enter; another was reserved for Levites and Temple personnel; another area was only for Jewish men; another court was for Jewish women; another was for the Gentiles. In the New Testament, when the faithful began to break bread in their homes, an era of inclusions was initiated. Father Damasus believed that we have not yet begun to grasp the ramifications of this significant action.

In the renovation of the chapel at Mount Saviour, the steps up to the altar were eliminated so that priests and people worship on the same level. The New Israel of the Messianic Age will live according to the "law of the house" proclaimed by Ezekiel in his description of the ideal temple and the ideal community: "This is the law of the house: up on top of the mountain the whole country! Round about in every direction is the Holy of Holies!" (Ezekiel 43:12). In the Messianic Age, the Holy of Holies ceases to be a very small place set apart to be absolutely holy. It becomes

the center of sanctity in every direction. Father Damasus did not intend that monks and laity should so mix their respective vocations as to dilute either, but that there would be an inbuilt reciprocity to strengthen each. Father Damasus loved to quote the response of Cardinal Montini (soon to become Pope Paul VI) when Father Damasus told him about founding Mount Saviour: "Open the doors, Dammaso, open the doors!"

The best summation of the first part of this paper on the goals of Father Damasus in founding Mount Saviour and the goals or vision he had near the end of his life are in this excerpt of a conference he gave to the Mount Saviour community:

I have always considered this aspect of the teaching of Abbot Ildefonse as basic for Mount Saviour: the mind in harmony with the voice (*mens concordet voci*), not to rattle down the office as fast as possible but to pray it with understanding, not as an expression of individual moods but as a growing into the ever deeper understanding of the God-given voice, or Word. The "words of eternal life," as the creative pronouncement or proclamation of God's saving design, which Scripture calls the *mysterium*: Christ, his death and resurrection, his *agape*.

The daily being "exposed" to the riches of Christ, to his power of the Resurrection in *lectio* and in the celebration of the sacraments I considered, following the teachings of Maria Laach, as the principal transforming power and for the individual monk. In the course of the years, however, it became more and more clear to me that more is needed for the monk to achieve his goal, namely systematic practice of the spiritual art, but in a realistic and human way. That means that all "perfectionism" should be avoided. We are not angels. As men, every one of us carries the burden of his inborn character. This we should come to accept, which is the central act of humility. Our character will never essentially change. It will always stamp our first reactions. The work of the Holy Spirit starts only where the immediate reactions

end. These are the material with which the Spirit works in and through our “second reactions.” These again are not based on our natural virtues (or will-power), but on Christ who lives in us through faith. Faith in Christ means to believe that He has loved us first, that we are sheltered in His love, because He loves us to the end, and that in His infinite love He knows us better than our heart. He knows everything. We are known by Him, not with the knowledge of the detective, but with His loving knowledge, covering a multitude of sins. In this faith in Christ’s loving knowledge we become our true selves, although it will never be manifest what we really are as long as we live in this body, or in this world. But we are able in the power of Christ’s love for us to believe, to trust in our salvation, “in the shadow of His wings.” This faith should prevent us from getting stuck in the immediate reactions in us against the immediate reactions of our brothers. It is only natural that, for example, arrogance on the part of a brother would draw the immediate reaction of anger on our part, especially when there is much arrogance in ourselves. But again, this reaction is only natural, immediate, automatic, and it should be considered as such by myself and by all, so that then the spell, the infection of our natural reaction could be broken either by ourselves or by our brother. We may then say that these two things should be working at Mount Saviour to make it a “holy community,” exposing all monks to the saving power of Christ as it is working in word and sacrament, and systematic effort on the part of every brother, alone as well as in community, to react and to live, beyond the sphere of the immediate reactions, which should be taken for granted, out of that peace and strength and truth, which our faith in Christ’s first love of us opens up for all.³

Permission for the foundation of Mount Saviour was granted by the Congregation for Religious in Rome on October 11, 1950. The reality of founding a new monastery proved far more difficult

than Father Damasus had been able to foresee. In July of 1952, he had a serious nervous breakdown that required hospitalization and then a year's absence from the monastery. He returned in August of 1953. This illness proved to be a turning point in his life, and it was to some lay friends that he gives credit for his recovery. Survival of the monastery became the primary goal, and we hear no more of the lesser goals that had previously occupied his mind.

In the years preceding his breakdown, considerable inner tension developed between his spiritual inheritance from Maria Laach and the new ideas that had taken root and found nourishment in the United States. He tried to do justice to the ideals of Maria Laach, while simultaneously objecting to an overemphasis on the sacramental life, which he felt brought the objective and esthetic aspects of spirituality too much to the fore. He believed that one could develop a false sense of security that placed too strong an accent on the new nature gained from baptism and ordination. This can go so far that one takes grace for granted. He told some friends that the experience of the breakdown led him to new insights about the necessity of an ever-repeated new beginning, of a determined turning towards Christ. It had to be done systematically by taking all the small steps required. St. Benedict's expression of a "School of the Lord's Service" prompted Father Damasus to call the method of returning to the peace that Christ has with the Father in the Spirit, and to which we have access, "The School of the Heart."

Professor Balduin Schwarz gives a beautiful account of the School of the Heart in the issue of *Monastic Studies* referred to above. I would like to quote from his article not only for the light it throws on the nature of this "method," but as a tribute to the debt Father Damasus owed to the laity and to its importance as a "legacy" for us as monks and for the laity:

Developed by lay people not living in a community who, however, feel called to make the spirit of St. Benedict the inner form of their lives, The School does not concern itself with the monastic obedience in the specific sense of obedience to a superior in regulating one's daily dispositions. Nor does it deal with the Rule of St.

Benedict as containing a set of specific "rules and regulations" ordering the community life, but only as this great book shows a "spirit." In the Rule that spirit is applied to particular situations, but also expressed in general observations and "admonitions"—particularly in the Prologue. The spirit of the holy Rule—such is the basic assumption—is equally valid in a monastery and in the world, that is, under conditions of life where few or none of the specific regulations could or should be followed to the letter. St. Benedict wants his monks to become true Christians, and what he had to say about that tremendous concern "how to become a Christian" is of great import for us who live in the world.

Furthermore, neither the holy Rule nor the School—which tries to make transparent for us something of the spirit of the Rule—are concerned with the basic decision which makes a Christian, the decision to follow Christ. The totality implied in the call to follow Christ, and the plenitude of life which opens up to one who wants in earnest to heed that call, are not spelled out, they are only hinted at in the Rule. They are not the topic of the School. It is rather a question of how to go about following the call of Christ as realistically as possible. The great stress laid by St. Benedict on the removal of obstacles for the full unfolding of the divine life in our souls is taken up in the School.

St. Benedict sees the life of a true Christian—and that is what he wants his monk to become—as *servitium*, a service. This is basic for the spirit of the Rule. St. Benedict considers in the very first paragraph the one "to whom my words are now addressed, whosoever you may be," as willing "to fight for the true king, Christ," to serve him by "taking up the strong and glorious weapons of obedience." This is to be understood very specifically and needs some close scrutiny, for what is meant here was probably more obvious to those who lived in the sixth century; the figure of speech is more remote from our way of thinking, and may even have wrong connotations.

In speaking of "service" there is a presupposition underlying which is nowhere explicitly stated in the holy Rule, yet is everywhere present: to live as a Christian means to have the strong belief that Christ is the master of my own life, so that I desire to live that life in its totality and in every aspect not only according to his commandments (that is understood) but in my every move and plan, in what I desire and what I decide—and all this as concretely as possible. Christ has his plans for me. They are plans of life and it is my desire to come to know them, without illusions, as closely as I can, and to follow them. To serve Christ means certainly no blind, servile submission—it is a kingly service, according to the word of the liturgy: *Servire Deo regnare est*. It is the liberation of our true self from the servitude of our fallen nature. In this sense "to serve God means to reign." This "freedom of the children of God" is obtained through obedience—perhaps the keyword of the holy Rule—obedience to the divine will. Monastic obedience to a superior is but a means for the realization of that basic obedience to God.

In the early fifties I was privileged to discuss these matters intensively with Reverend Father Damasus, in almost daily conversations. He was greatly interested in the experiences and ideas of those who put into practice this attempt to "translate" the holy Rule into counsels and reflections applying to our time. He shared the experience and took part in its development.

Reverend Father Damasus considered the School, though conceived for lay people, equally applicable to the monastic life as lived by a monk, though it has, of course, to be amended by other factors specific to the life in a monastery.⁴

Having written about Father Damasus's unique contribution to the *doctrina abbatis* of Abbot Ildephonse, which he transmitted to the community of Mount Saviour, I want to say something about how the spirit of Maria Laach influenced our community life

at Mount Saviour. It happened in much the same way as the life of the community that formed around the historical Jesus. Jesus sent out disciples two by two. One person is not a community but two can be. For us at Mount Saviour, it was Father Damasus and Father Raphael Hombach at one time and Father Damasus and Father Burkhard Neunhauser at another.

Father Raphael first came to Mount Saviour on May 20, 1960, and he was with us until September 25. It is impossible to convey to those who never have been in the same situation what it means for young and inexperienced monks to have the companionship of an older experienced monastic. It is not only true of Father Albert Hammenstede that the lack of tradition is frightening or at least profoundly unsettling, it was also true for us. We had no "gray heads" and the need for experience and wisdom has always plagued us. Father Raphael's presence gave us a much needed solidity and sense of rootedness in monastic tradition at a time when it was most needed and appreciated. During his first visit, we experienced the first death of a member of our community, Br. Christopher Claas. He died suddenly while reading to the community at the noon meal.

The shock to all of us, and to Father Damasus in particular, was greatly alleviated by the presence of Father Raphael, a beloved confrere who was like a solid rock to Father Damasus, and Father Raphael handled all the liturgical details of the first funeral. By taking this burden from us, we were enabled to participate in the death and resurrection of the Lord into which our brother was now fully entering. My own ordination to the priesthood took place less than a week after Brother Christopher's death, and I am eternally grateful for Father Raphael's help and humor.

Father Raphael returned again a year later on September 6, 1961, and, except for a brief trip to Rome, was with us until September of 1962. It was during this visit that he made what we affectionately refer to as the Rafaelian Reform of our Liturgy. He also rearranged the psalms, which was a most significant step in the reform of the monastic breviary. It deserves some comment here.

St. Benedict had recommended changing the order of the psalms, as long as the full complement of 150 psalms were said each week.

According to his arrangement 246 psalms were recited each week because of the number of repetitions. Over the centuries monks departed from many of the prescriptions of the Rule, but the one area in which our holy father Benedict gave permission to change, no one touched. As a result, the order and number of psalms in the Benedictine Office had so rusted in place that no one could even imagine changing them. One of the arguments put forth at a Congress of Abbots and Priors in Rome was that the arrangement of the Divine Office was the only thing Benedictine monks had in common. To change the arrangement of the psalter would shatter the Benedictine Confederation irreparably.

It is impossible to recreate the climate of the time, and so it is impossible to fully appreciate Father Raphael's pioneering work in the necessary reform of the breviary. No matter how cogent the reasons for change, including St. Benedict's explicit instructions to do so, the order of the psalmody had become sacrosanct. The change had to come first, and only then would the reasons seem fitting. A well established monastery could not have made any change because of internal and external resistance. Someone lacking the erudition of Father Raphael would have ruined the undertaking and his being able to do the work at a small, insignificant, independent monastery made all the difference. A number of other factors, such as an adequate library, the financial help and encouragement of Abbot Bonaventure Knaebel and the monks at St. Meinrad Archabbey, as well as several other contributors were vitally important. Finally, the approval of Church authorities such as Cardinal Laarona enabled the experiment to be carried on in spirit and in truth, openly and officially.

Father Raphael's work was finished and published in 1962, before the opening of Vatican II and long before the document on the Sacred Liturgy released in December 1963. Father Raphael used the arrangement of psalms in the Roman Office of the fifth and sixth centuries and compared it with St. Benedict's revision of the psalmody. Father Raphael's arrangement was based on St. Benedict's direction to "by all means" carefully maintain 150 psalms every week.

A second printing included a bolder step of a schema without the office of Prime. A small eight-page booklet, entitled "Notes on the Proposed Redistribution of the Psalter," accompanied the *Psalterium Monasticum ad Experimentum Novo Dispositum*, which was widely and freely distributed to Benedictine and other religious institutes throughout the world. Copies of this booklet are available in the archives of the various monasteries that received copies of Father Raphael's work. In his last paragraph, Father Raphael anticipates the mind of the Council Fathers and the Holy Spirit at Vatican II by stating that his intention was "to respond to present day needs . . . and be consistent with the spirit of the Rule of our Holy Father, St. Benedict." Paragraph two of *Perfectae Caritatis* reads:

The appropriate renewal of religious life involves two simultaneous processes: (1) a continuous return to the sources of all Christian life and to the original inspiration behind a given community and (2) an adjustment to the changed conditions of the time.

I do not want to imply that Vatican II or the reform of the monastic office could not have taken place without the work of Father Raphael at Mount Saviour Monastery. The Holy Spirit could have found myriads of other ways to bring about reform of the monastic office and Vatican II. What I do want to say is that, in part, the work of many scholars at Maria Laach, Abbot Ildephonse among them, in the context of community life there produced the climate in which monks like Father Raphael could come to a knowledge of spirituality and liturgy that enabled them to recognize the need for reform of the office and equipped them to respond in line with the doctrine of St. Benedict. But the existence of Mount Saviour, whose prior was a monk of Maria Laach and whose community gave a context in which Father Raphael was free to do the research and accomplish the project, provided the means that the Holy Spirit did use. Finally, the reputation and integrity of both monasteries enabled others to contribute financially and confidently to a project that was worthy of their necessary support and ultimately received approval from

the highest authority in the Church. It was a wonderful work of God for which we give everlasting thanks with humble pride.

There are many other things I could write about Father Raphael and how as a monk of Maria Laach he influenced our lives. His impish humor, the hikes in the Catskill mountains, his humanity shown in his appreciation of culture, my own trips with him to New York City and to the blessing of Abbot Alban Boulwood in Washington, D.C. are but a few memories that come to mind. For the purpose of this article on this occasion, our focus has been on the important work he did in the reform of the Divine Office and to give some indication of how together with Father Damasus he handed on to us something of the brotherhood and spirit of Maria Laach.

I also want to say a few words about another monk of Maria Laach to whom we owe much, Father Burkhard Neunheuser. Father Burkhard's first visit was from August 27 until September 8, 1963. It was most memorable for a visit to Woodstock Maryland, home of the most vibrant Jesuit theologate in the East. Father John Courtney Murray and Father Avery Dulles were among its faculty. Some of the young monks were wondering what a Jesuit was and thought a good first step was to find out what a Jesuit was not. In order to do so, they invited a Benedictine, a Carmelite, and a Trappist. They invited enough Jesuit provincials to prevent a full scale decampment and put us all together. Father Damasus had been invited as the Benedictine, but he convinced them that Father Burkhard would be a better representative. Gatherings of Roman Catholic religious were very rare in those days, and this was a wonderful experience. Some lifelong friendships were established and because of Father Burkhard's performance, we were very proud to be Benedictines.

His second visit was from July 28 until September 27, 1972. In late August through early September of that year, we had a symposium entitled "Word Out of Silence." It brought together religious leaders of the various world religions. We had Sufis, Swamis, Buddhists, and Jewish Hassidic representatives as well as Orthodox Jews, Orthodox Archimandrites, representatives of various Protestant churches, and some non-descript "Eastern"

groups, whose members were formerly Catholic or at least Christian. They all lived at Mount Saviour. We did not allow anyone to bring an entourage of disciples and the other participants were carefully selected to include abbots, academics in the field of spirituality, monks with similar qualifications, and graduate students we thought would profit from the symposium and be able to contribute to it.

It was the first gathering of this kind. We avoided publicity, since we wanted the participants to be able to talk to one another without the need to be on guard because of the presence of their devotees or the presence of the media. It was a tremendous success, but that is another story. It is the contribution of Father Burkhard in the success of the meeting that I wish to convey.

This symposium was like the first space voyage; it was without precedent, and without known boundaries. Since I bore the ultimate responsibility for whatever happened, you can imagine the support afforded by a monk of Maria Laach, well grounded in the faith, an expert in liturgy, a *peritus* at Vatican II, and so experienced in dealing with enormous egos. It was a very volatile situation and all the tact, prudence, wisdom, and courage available was needed. Without Father Burkhard the event would have exploded like the Challenger spacecraft. Yet an event like this, when it takes place in a monastery where the Paschal Mystery and the Agape of God in Christ are the focus of life, has an entirely different impact on the lives of the participants and ultimately the world at large than when it happens in any other context.

Since Father Damasus had died in June, 1971, our need for direction and confidence in what we were doing was all the greater. The symposium was a rite of passage for all who attended. Father Burkhard's subtle and gentle influence is what kept us properly focused.

During a three week visit in September of 1974, Father Burkhard gave us a series of lectures on the work of Father Odo Casel and on the liturgy. The next year in July, Father Burkhard gave us eight conferences on the preface to the *Thesaurus Liturgiae Horarum Monasticae*. Father Raphael and Father Burkhard always took part in our community recreations and outings, much to our

delight and edification. Once we took several canoes down the Chemung River, which flows past our property. Father Burkhard was in the care of the two most vocal experts in this Indian art. They tipped over three times, which can be a very disastrous accident in a fast flowing river which hides fallen trees that can snare an ankle or an arm. Nothing seemed to dampen Father Burkhard's enthusiasm.

On his fifth visit, in September, 1982, Father Burkhard gave us very valuable conferences on the history of Maria Laach and its role in the liturgical revival. He and I attended the ordination of Bishops Emerson Moore and Patrick O'Keefe in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. It was an unbounded joy for him to witness, in another culture, the results of the work of the liturgical commissions on which he had served becoming incarnate in the celebration of these ordinations. For me and for all of us with whom he shared the experience, it was a great lesson in the value of patient study, long and difficult discussions, temporary discouragement, and all the difficulties that make up any important enterprise. Father Burkhard was able to make one final visit two years later on his return from presenting a series of conferences in South America.

It is our understanding that Abbot Ildephonse desired a holy community and not an association of individual stars. Father Damasus and a confrere, at one time Father Raphael and at another Father Burkhard, formed a holy community like the disciples sent out by our Lord. In large measure that is how we learned our monastic fundamentals, the *schola servitii Domini*, St. Benedict intended.

At the end of his life, Father Damasus wrote: "When I look back on the seventy years of my own life, I see quite clearly that I owe my present inner happiness, my peace, my confidence, and my joy essentially to one single fact: I am certain that I am infinitely loved by God."

That was not an insight of recent origin. The seed, the root, the trunk, the branches, and a good deal of the fruit had already grown at Maria Laach.

Notes

1. Abbot Leo Rudloff, "In Memory of Father Damasus," *Monastic Studies* 8 (spring 1972): 7-8.
2. Kathleen Hughes, *The Monk's Tale: A Biography of Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B.* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 123ff.
3. Father Damasus Winzen, from a conference at the monastic community of Mount Saviour, Pine City, NY, 1951.
4. Balduin Schwarz, "The School: On Benedictine Spirituality in Our Time," *Monastic Studies* 8 (spring 1972): 26ff.