

The Book of Customs
Saint Vincent Archabbey

DECEMBER 3, 1995,
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
REV. APRIL 26, 2010

BOOK OF CUSTOMS

SAINT VINCENT ARCHABBEY

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A "Book of Customs" or a "Customary" is an old institution in monastic history, constituted to compile local interpretations of and variations on the *Rule* and Church legislation. As part of the renewal of the Church's institutions of religious life during the Vatican Council II era, each monastery of the American-Cassinese Congregation "is encouraged to develop its own *Book of Customs*" (D 63.1.).

A studied description of the place, the role, and the principles behind a Book of Customs has been supplied by Fr. Brice Ryan, and stands as the "Introduction" to this Book. Perhaps the critical word in the directive above is "develop." A Book of Customs is open to, indeed invites, continual development. The word recognizes the legitimate autonomy of each community and the validity of its particular expression of Benedictine monasticism, as Fr. Brice points out in the "Introduction." At the same time it encourages ongoing reflection, discussion, and reformulation of that particular expression, so that it remains in faithful continuity with the sources of Christian and monastic tradition even while it strives to flourish creatively in a particular place.

Since a customary is never "complete," and in order both to encourage and structure the process of continuing development, the procedure will be that the Monastic Formation Committee will gather and present each year in early Fall recommendations for additions, changes and deletions to the Council of Seniors. If the recommendations approved are few or minor, a page or pages can be distributed to community members as an insert for the Book of Customs. Or the Council may in turn recommend other action to the Archabbot, for instance referral to some monastic committee, community discussion, or decision by the Monastic Chapter. At times it will be sufficient to reprint sections of the Customary, such as the yearly revision of "The Archabbey Directory," which will be considered as an appendix to the Customary. From time to time it will be necessary to reprint the whole Book of Customs.

There is no single accepted way to structure a Book of Customs. In light of the availability of *The Constitutions and The Directory*, it was thought convenient to make use of the same general structure as found there. The advantage of this method is that the material contained in the *C & D* can be easily found and need not be repeated. The Book of Customs is a formation document, however, not a legal one. The items in the text of the Customary proper are shown where possible to arise from an expressed rationale. The Appendices include a number of further texts, either related materials such as "The Archabbey Directory" which can be conveniently kept together with the Customary or more elaborated documents in a specific area such as the statement on formation. No list of abbreviations is provided, those used being the common ones for documents of Vatican Council II or easily found in the *C & D*.

BOOK OF CUSTOMS

PREFACE

To the revised version, April 26, 2010

Since the first edition in 1995, there have been changes and variations in the life of the Saint Vincent monastic community. Some of these were reflected earlier in periodic, small emendations to the *Archabbey Book of Customs* as well as in revisions and/or additions to its appendices. But some committees had been dropped and others added; some offices and workshops had changed location; alterations in the calendar and *horarium* had occurred. In the fall of 2008 it was judged time to print a revised edition of the ABC. Accordingly a committee was established for this purpose by the Archabbot. The initial revision touched only on the core of the ABC, approximately three dozen pages. The proposed revisions were reviewed by the Council of Seniors and further suggestions made. These have been incorporated in this revised and approved version. At the behest of the Council, revision of the appendices was also undertaken, and these then passed through the regular procedure of review and updating by the appropriate committees and then review and approval by the Council of Seniors. Other appendices are currently still in the process of revision. These will be made available as soon as the process for each is completed.

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INTRODUCTION

The Principles Behind a Book of Customs

St. Benedict expects the monk's obedience to be guided by a rule and an abbot. He also sets standards for the monks to be obedient to one another. For centuries of early monastic history, prescriptions of a single written rule were not uniform; an abbot, as spiritual father of his community, was considered a "living rule," and by his guidance the observance of God's law was regulated for his disciples, the monks. Such observances, norms and regulations as were adopted and became part of the spirit of any monastery had to be evaluated according to their benefit for the following of the Gospel and the spiritual profit to those who formed the monastic family.

Monastic houses are characterized by their *autonomy*, that is, a large degree of self-government, which is closely related to Benedictine stability. The vow of stability binds together for life the members of one monastery. This individuality of each monastery and this permanence in a community in one spot have allowed for wide variations in the interpretation of the Benedictine Rule and for marked differences from one community, or one age, to another.

The joining of monasteries into congregations enables like-minded communities to assist one another in living by the standards of the Gospel and according to the expectations of the Church in their time. Governance of the monastic life under the Rule is formally set out in universal Church law by the Code of Canon Law and in particular law by the constitutions and declarations of the congregation.

The Constitutions express the more permanent and fundamental principles by which we identify ourselves as followers of St. Benedict. They are authenticated by authority of the Holy See and can be changed only with approval by Rome. *The Directory* contains more detailed standards to which the monasteries are bound, and it can be changed at the level of the General Chapter of the American-Cassinese Congregation.

The most individualized norms of all are those authorized in the local abbey, by force of tradition and the approval of its abbot. These are the "customs" (in the broad sense). Custom, in the strict sense of law, means observances to which we bind ourselves as to unwritten law. That is not the sense in which we are using the word in the present document. We mean customary usages proper to each monastery, within the general framework of law referred to above.

Each monastery's customs carry out the broader universal and particular law as it is actually applied in local circumstances. They promote the development and the maintaining of a community's spirit in its common effort to attain a shared ideal. They foster group spirit, contribute to the binding together of older and newer members, and express some particular ways by which the community identifies itself and strives to accomplish its mission in and for the Church. Customs that endure over many generations build stability in the monastic manner of life, encourage perseverance, and serve as a safeguard against sudden or impulsive abandonment of tried-and-true ways of behaving and relating to each other in observance of the common life.

Customary observances have most often grown up, in the day-to-day practice, as a kind of unwritten law. One generation of monks passed on to the next what was sanctioned as practical observance in that community and its manner of life. In our own American-Cassinense Congregation documents prior to the present revision, approval and recognition of such norms were prudently designated under the careful term, "praiseworthy customs."

Periodically, such practices have been drawn up in written form, or "collected," in handbooks called "customaries." In such written form they approached or overlapped the particular law, declarations or statutes, and often passed beyond local observance to become the uniform observance of related monasteries.

In the Church after Vatican Council II(1962-1965), religious are expected to develop their own book of customs in a slightly different sense. The focus of *legislating* in the Church has shifted from a heavy centralization and uniformity towards a greater respect for the local churches and the particular communities. This is recognition that the local communities – dioceses, parishes, religious communities – are, in their own way, true expressions of the universal Church, the entire body of the People of God. This is to say that the universal Church *is made up* of the local churches. The universal law legislates for religious inasmuch as they share the characteristic of witnessing to the variety of gifts of the Holy Spirit, which have come through the many founders and followers of individual types of religious vocation. Particular law, in turn, is now expected both to respect and reflect those differences, as well as the various manifestations, within the body of the Church, of each special call of the Holy Spirit.

Following from such teaching, necessary norms are to be expressed, approved and adopted at the most appropriate level, rather than coming solely from one supreme authority within the universal Church.

In application of this principle, known as "subsidiarity," we find our framework of guidance by the Gospel, Church doctrine, canon law, the Holy Rule, congregational constitutions and declarations. At the immediate level of each monk's life in his community is added the authority and directive of the abbot, with his advisory bodies, first the monastic chapter, and secondly the abbot's council or council of seniors. To define better or more clearly the standards and expectations in leading a monastic manner of life, it is recommended that each community formulate its "Book of Customs," a document developed at the local level, and subject to change at the same level.

What are the standards in the community which have been established by common usage, and authenticated by the abbot's approval? What are the practices that have been helpful to the old in accomplishing their vocation, and are expected of the newcomer who wishes to associate himself with this community and live by its ideals? What has bonded us together as brethren in a life of striving for holiness, and which we wish to state as our best characteristics in carrying out our obedience to the Benedictine Rule? In practice, how do we act so as to live faithfully by our shared commitment, thereby growing in charity and obedience? Answering these questions concretely will produce the "Book of Customs," drawing a more detailed picture of life in this or that monastery at a particular time.

The tradition of Roman law, a force more influential than some may realize, and a tradition carried over into Benedict's Rule, should probably guide our formulation of a customary. That would mean expressing good and valuable principles without unnecessary detail, in a way that guides and supports the more experienced, while giving the less experienced the direction necessary to become formed as one with other members of a community with a long legitimate Benedictine heritage.

What is understood as the common observance of the community? What permissions are required; what may be presumed? What restrictions do the monks observe in fraternal common life? Are any privileges or exemptions accorded? How is the monk to observe the Rule living outside the monastery? How is poverty understood and practiced; what does common ownership mean? What is approved recreation and how is leisure time shared in a community way? How is St. Benedict's understanding of the "enclosure of the monastery" to be applied? How do the abbot, superiors and officials fulfill their duties and relate to the individual monks in the common search for God? How do the brethren serve one another? What are their obligations, in this particular time and place, beyond those already stipulated by the Church and our Congregation? How do we identify ourselves as American-Cassinense Benedictines and, further, differentiate ourselves legitimately from our sister-monasteries? The Customary answers questions like these with the minimum of details and the maximum of inspiration.

Like all examples of law guided by the principles expressed by Vatican Council II, a customary must always combine the *spirit* (motivation and purpose, goal or intention) with the *letter* of the law.

Brice T. Ryan, O.S.B. (7 June 1994)

Reflection on the Introduction (26 April 2010):

Many of the questions raised at the end of the Introduction do not receive a full and separate treatment in the Customary. However, answers can be gleaned from a familiarity with all the customs of monastic life at Saint Vincent. As the Introduction states: "The Customary answers questions like these with the minimum of details and the maximum of inspiration." In the course of time and on-going development of community life, it can be anticipated that some of the questions may change and that some answers will be more clearly articulated and incorporated into the Customary.

THE CUSTOMS

CHAPTER 1: Saint Vincent Archabbey

(cf C&D: General Principles C1 - C6; Part 1, Ch. 1: C7 - C9)

- 1A1. The monastery is a community of persons. While the term "monastery" often refers to a specific physical place as well, it is found where the monks are. Where, therefore, two or three are gathered in Christ's name and by monastic relationship as members of Saint Vincent Archabbey, they are to foster community.
- 1A2. A listing of all monks of Saint Vincent Archabbey with street addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses is usually published annually in the "Archabbey Directory." This is considered also as Appendix A to this *Book of Customs*.
- 1A3. The legal name of Saint Vincent Archabbey as a civil corporation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is The Benedictine Society.
- 1A4. While the community of Saint Vincent Archabbey is rooted in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, within the Diocese of Greensburg, its branches extend to many dioceses and regions. It has established subcommunities in the form of dependent priories at Benedictine Priory in the Diocese of Savannah (1967), at Saint Benedict Priory in the Archdiocese of Campinas, Brazil (1964), at Wimmer Priory in the Archdiocese of Taipei, Taiwan (1964). It also has foundations in the form of parishes and chaplaincies in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the Dioceses of Altoona-Johnstown, Erie, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Richmond, and Wheeling-Charleston.

C HAPTER II: Archabbot and Governance

(cf. C&D: Ch. II: C 10-C 35)

Article A: The Archabbot (RB 2, 64; C 10-24)

- 2A1. In accord with the *Rule* of Saint Benedict, the abbot is the spiritual father of the monastic community. The abbot at Saint Vincent also carries the honorary title "Archabbot" because the monastery was raised to the rank of an Archabbey in 1892 in recognition of its historical role as founding house of the American-Cassinese Congregation; while Boniface Wimmer and Andrew Hintenach were permitted the title "Arch-abbot" as a personal privilege granted respectively in 1883 and 1888, a Roman decree of 8 August 1892 granted *ipso facto* the title to each successor abbot.
- 2A2. In Church law, the Archabbot is the personal ordinary of each monk and is also the ordinary of Saint Vincent Seminary. The Archabbot of Saint Vincent is also, under civil law, President of The Benedictine Society, Chancellor of Saint Vincent College and Seminary, and serves *ex officio* on a number of governing boards.
- 2A3. The Archabbot governs the regular life of the monastery and its apostolates with the assistance of the Monastic Chapter, the Council of Seniors, and monastic officials. Standing and *ad hoc* committees are appointed by the Archabbot to fulfill specific charges.
- 2A4. a. In preparation for the election of an archabbot, suggestions for arrangement of preliminary discussion and liturgical services may be drawn from the booklet, "Guidelines for Abbatial Election in the American-Cassinese Congregation of Benedictine Monasteries" (1992).
- b. Custom at Saint Vincent, as observed at the abbatial elections of 1963, 1967, 1979, 1983, and 1991, is to hold the meetings of the Election Chapter in the monastery dining room in Andrew Hall, meals being transferred to the student cafeteria.
- c. As confirmation of an election, the abbot presiding asks the monk elected if he accepts the election. At his affirmative answer, the presiding abbot places a pectoral cross on the new Archabbot. Those of the community who have not taken part in the election itself are then summoned. Following the profession of faith and completion of canonical requirements in the election hall, all then move to the Basilica for an act of thanksgiving. All the monks greet the new Archabbot with a fraternal sign of peace. A photo is then taken of the community.
- 2A5. Since construction of the monastery building in 1967, the Archabbot has his personal room and a conference room on the fourth floor. Since 1992 the Archabbot has his office on the second floor of Maur Hall, with an ante office where a secretary is on duty during regular office hours.

Article B: The Chapter (RB 3; C 25-28)

- 2B1. All monks who are solemnly or perpetually professed are members of the Monastic Chapter. Other members of the monastic community may be permitted to attend Chapters but without the right to vote. Voting by proxy is permitted only at abbatial election Chapters. Parliamentary procedure does not govern the operation of the Monastic Chapter; rather, the Archabbot presents the agenda together with any resolutions. A resolution passes with a majority vote of the capitulars in attendance. The intent of Chapter procedure is not so much to effect parliamentary participation as to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit through the preparation work, discussion, and declared voice of the community. Participation in Chapters is both a privilege and an obligation, and attendance is expected of each capitular. Capitulars are expected to maintain confidentiality about Chapter matters.
- 2B2. Chapters convene usually on the sixth floor of the monastery building, except for the election of an abbot when the meeting is held in the monastic dining room, or when conditions such as the presence of a number of non-community members may suggest another location.
- 2B3. The Archabbot determines the agenda of Chapters, usually with the assistance of the Council of Seniors. Any capitular may submit an item to the Archabbot or to a member of the Council of Seniors.

Article C: The Council of Seniors (RB 3; C 29-31)

- 2C1. At Saint Vincent the Council of Seniors consists of 10 capitulars. The election of five Seniors customarily takes place at the first Chapter in January, the election process being conducted by the Prior. The other five Seniors are appointed by the Archabbot.
- 2C2. The Prior is an *ex officio* member of the Council of Seniors, counting as one of the five who shall be appointed by the Archabbot (Chapter, 16 August 1968).
- 2C3. Regular meetings of the Council of Seniors take place on the third Monday of each month.
- 2C4. The Council of Seniors, as the Archabbot may wish, serves as the *de facto* agenda committee for the Monastic Chapter.
- 2C5. The Council of Seniors serves as the Budget Committee for the Archabbey, and it must approve the completed budget.
- 2C6. The Council of Seniors is the Board of Directors for the Saint Vincent Cemetery Corporation.

2C7. One of the members of the Council of Seniors is appointed by the Archabbot to serve as Secretary of the Council. Edited copies of the minutes of meetings of the Council of Seniors are distributed periodically to all members of the Monastic Chapter.

Article D: Officials of the Monastery (C 32)

2D1. Officials are selected by the Archabbot, "with whom the abbot can confidently share the burdens of his office" (RB 21:3). Appointment follows consultation with the community and Council of Seniors. The names of the officials of the monastery are found in the "Archabbey Directory." Their job descriptions follow:

- a. **the Prior** (see RB 65) assumes second place in the community; in the absence of the abbot he presides at liturgies, meals, and meetings.
- b. **the Subprior** assumes third place in the community; in the absence of the prior, he takes on the prior's duties.
- c. **the Master of Novices** (C 39), whose role is described in RB 58, is given charge of the novices. He lives in the novitiate quarters which are located on the sixth floor of the monastery building.
- d. **the Procurator** (C 34) is in charge of all the temporalities of the monastery. The *Rule* says "He should take care of all that the abbot entrusts to him" (RB 31:15).
- e. **the Master of Juniors** (C 57) is given charge of those monks who are in temporary vows as well as of visiting religious and subsidized diocesan candidates for their first three years. He lives in the juniorate which is located on the fifth floor of the monastery building. He may have an assistant.
- f. **the Director of Solemnly Professed Religious Seminarians** (1999) is given charge of those permanently professed monks and members of other religious communities and subsidized diocesan seminarians studying at Saint Vincent after their third year living in the monastery.
- g. **the Director of Postulants** (2009) is charged with supervising those men who are approved by the Archabbot to live as postulants in the monastery.

2D2. The Archabbot is assisted by a number of committees, whose memberships are listed in the "Archabbey Directory." A short version of the charge and job description of each committee follows:

2D3. **The Archabbey Formation and Vocations Committee** (2008; established as the Monastic Formation Committee in 1989) is a consultative group which assists and advises

the Archabbot in regard to all stages of formation. The primary responsibility of this committee is to assist the Archabbot in his role as the Father and Teacher of the monastic community responsible for the formation of all its members; its tasks include the following:

- a. to provide additional guidance and direction to the Director of Vocations, including the discussion of means of publicizing and recruiting candidates to the monastic manner of life at Saint Vincent Archabbey;
 - b. to assist the Master of Novices and the Master of Juniors in their responsibility for the formal, canonical formation of those in the early stages of monastic development;
 - c. to provide guidance and direction for the formation of Junior and Solemnly Professed members of the community during those critical transitional stages of formation such as full incorporation (both spiritually and socially) into the community; assignment within and/or away from the Archabbey; assignment to the Archabbey upon completion of an assignment to the missions, parochial ministry, chaplaincy, and education or training away from the Archabbey;
 - d. to assess the ongoing formational needs and to provide appropriate forums and resources for the continuing (ongoing) formation of the entire monastic community on a wide range of topics specific to either monastic life or to the life of the Saint Vincent monastic community.
- 2D4. **The Archabbey Liturgy Committee** (ALC: 1966) provides advice and recommendations to the Archabbot concerning the fruitful and proper celebration of the liturgy as well as other matters pertaining to the life of prayer and spirituality.
- 2D5. **Ad hoc Committees.** There may be any number of Committees established for a particular purpose and on a temporary basis. Such Committees may be found listed, with their membership, in Appendix A, the “Archabbey Directory.”

Article E: Temporal Goods (C 33-35)

- 2E1. While the Procurator has administration of the temporal goods of the monastery under the direction of the Archabbot as called for in the *Rule* and church law, he and the Archabbot are assisted by a number of committees and groups whose membership is listed in the “Archabbey Directory.” Short summaries of their job descriptions follow:
- 2E2. **The Budget Committee** is the name for one function of the Council of Seniors.
- 2E3. **The Archabbey Committee on Investments** is the group that serves to advise the Procurator on Archabbey investment policy. It meets bi-annually.

- 2E4. **The Gristmill Committee** (1997) succeeded an *ad hoc* group with the same name (27 June 1988), which studied the mill and made recommendations to the Council of Seniors. It has the task to renew and renovate the Saint Vincent Gristmill to meet the needs of its mission, which is:
- a. to produce quality flours and grain products, primarily for use of the monastery community;
 - b. to maintain historical quality to the building and the craft;
 - c. to welcome visitors to learn about Saint Vincent and the milling industry.
- 2E5. **The Ridge Committee** (13 May 1981) is in charge of the monastery's property located on Chestnut Ridge with the tasks:
- a. to study the property with regard to its condition, its use, and its possible improvements;
 - b. to make recommendations and reports to the Archabbot, the Council of Seniors, and the monastic community with regard to the condition, use, and improvements of the ridge property.
 - c. to care for the property:
 - (1) by planning, supervising, and coordinating an orderly program of maintenance of the land, buildings, and equipment;
 - (2) by providing surveillance and maintenance work by their hands and the hands of other members of the monastic community and with the assistance of a care-taker;
 - (3) by promoting a timber management program, with the help of a consultant forester, in order to maintain and upgrade the "Saint Boniface Woodlands";
 - (4) by planning and maintaining a network of internal roads and trails for access, fire control, timber and field management, and recreational purposes.
- 2E6. **The Archabbey Hospitality Committee** (2010) oversees and coordinates the efforts to welcome guests as Christ and to provide for their needs in the spirit of chapter 53 of the *Rule*.
- 2E7. **The Committee on Monastic Art and Environment** (2010, successor to Committee on Public Environment 1993) advises the Archabbot on matters pertaining to the care and outfitting of the of the Archabbey buildings and public places, including the quality of art, furnishings and tasteful use of common areas.

Article F: Offices and Services

Here follows a listing of various offices and services, many of them part-time, carried out by various monks. Where appropriate, a description of the place of service is also provided.

- 2F1. The *Archabbot's office* is staffed by several people, whose names are listed in the "Archabbey Directory" and whose job descriptions are given as follows:
- a. The *Assistant to the Archabbot* 1) keeps in order the procedures and documentation on life in the monastery; 2) handles the relationship to matters pertaining to the American-Cassinese Congregation; 3) serves as secretary to the Monastic Chapter; 4) and assists the Archabbot in the day-to-day operation of the Archabbot's office. This position is held by a monk.
 - b. The *Administrative Assistant to the Archabbot* serves as telephone receptionist, typist, and clerical assistant to the Abbot.
 - c. The *Secretary to the Archabbot* is responsible for maintaining a record of the Abbot's daily calendar of activities.
 - d. *Research Assistants to the Archabbot* are monks who are charged with doing background work and preparing resumés on topics assigned by the Abbot.
 - e. *Archabbot's Delegate for Child Protection*, a position established in February 2005, growing out of the USCCB charter of 2002, is an assistant to the Abbot and is his delegate to the Archabbey Review Board. The primary purpose of this position is to ensure that the monastery's policy "Creating a Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Young People" is complied with and revised when necessary to maintain community accreditation through the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) and to be coherent with the policies of the various dioceses in which members of the community serve. This post is held by a layperson.
 - f. The *Director of Development* directs the daily operations of the Archabbey and Seminary Development Office, is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to meet annual and capital fund raising goals, and to cultivate planned gifts. The Director also supervises the Director of Public Relations, a Development Office Secretary, and Event Manager (2007), and a number of temporary personnel.
 - g. The *Director of Archabbey and Seminary Public Relations* serves primarily to promote the Archabbey and Seminary by means of print and electronic media. The office is responsible as well for designing and printing various publications from books, through periodicals, to liturgical programs and brochures. It is also responsible for maintaining the web pages.
 - h. *President, Saint Benedict Education Foundation* is a monk responsible for promoting support for the Collegio di Sant' Anselmo, the international Benedictine College in Rome.
- 2F2. *Archivists* are appointed by the Archabbot to maintain and preserve important documentation of the monastic community (D 32.3);

The *Archives*, located on the sixth floor of the monastery from 1967, have since 2008 been in process of being relocated to newly prepared accommodations on the ground floor, west, of the monastery building. A separate section is dedicated to the Archives of the American-Cassinese Congregation.

2F3. The monastery also maintains several other collections, which may be considered special parts of the monastery archives, under the responsibility of monks appointed by the Archabbot:

- a. **Art Curator.** The *Art Collection* had its start in the pieces brought by or sent to Boniface Wimmer in the nineteenth century. Exhibits of several permanent pieces and of periodically changing pieces are given in the "King Ludwig Gallery" located on the third floor of Carey Hall.
- b. **Coin Collector.** He is charged with cataloging and preserving examples of U.S. and foreign coins gathered over the years.
- c. **Stamp Collector.** He is responsible for making an inventory of stamps and other postal and revenue collectables, and for facilitating decisions about their care and future disposition.
- d. **Wimmer Music Curator.** The Curator is entrusted with identifying, cataloging, and preserving scores and other musical items on paper that were procured largely by Archabbot Boniface Wimmer and are now housed in the Saint Vincent Latimer Family Library. He is also responsible for placing this material, along with elucidating commentary, into a computerized database.

2F4. **Artists and Craftsmen.** The monastery has need of and encourages a range of arts and craft in the service of the common life and the monastery's various apostolates.

Liturgical artists include vestment makers and iconographers. One monk is a fabric artist who specializes in the design and execution of quality pieces for the liturgy.

Craftsmen include carpenters, electricians, mechanics, plumbers and others. Various shops provide space and equipment necessary for the execution of their tasks.

2F5. The *Automobile Mechanic* serves directly under the Prior to maintain and service the monastery's fleet of cars. A layperson serves in this capacity.

A new service building (2008) is located near the powerhouse, which is equipped with some basic equipment and tools for the use of the mechanic.

2F6. **Bakers.** The monastery has had an old custom of supplying much of its own bread. The bakers are those monks who volunteer or are assigned for this service.

The *bakery* is located on the second floor of the central campus kitchens.

2F7. *Barbers*. Since 1996 the monastery employs the services of an external barber.

The *Barber Shop*, located for many years on the first floor of Gregory [now Roderick] Hall, was moved to the new monastery when that building was completed in 1967. It was placed on the second floor of the monastery, in the infirmary section, for better accessibility. This has proved particularly practical in recent years when the barbering was taken over by lay barbers.

2F8. The signal to announce the hours for the Work of God (RB 47) is sounded by electric bell ten minutes ahead of time (it sounds 25 minutes before morning prayer.) This is ordinarily accomplished by a timer in the mechanism set by the Prior. However a *bell ringer* may be designated to activate the electric bell for meals, chapter meetings, or other functions which are not immediately preceded by a scheduled liturgical event.

2F9. *Campus Ministers*. These are monks who are assigned by the Archabbot to work under the supervision of the Director of Campus Ministry. The Director specifies and coordinates their various responsibilities.

2F10. *Cemetery Director*. When the decision was made in 1992 to open new sections of the Saint Vincent Cemetery, steps were taken to establish an office of Cemetery Director and Manager, separate from the parish office which had previously managed the cemetery. In the first years of its existence, the office was held by laymen who were charged to plan the layout, advertise the availability, and sell gravesites with the aim of producing sufficient income to insure proper management and maintenance of the cemetery. In recent years the office of Cemetery Director/Manager is in the hands of a monk. Cemetery offices are located on the ground floor of Leander Hall. The Council of Seniors is the Board of Directors for the Cemetery Corporation.

2F11. *Fire fighters* are a group of volunteer monks, employees, and students; the chief is responsible for the training of the volunteers. The *Fire Department* has become an important feature at Saint Vincent since the disastrous fire of January 1963; trucks and equipment are housed near the powerhouse.

2F12. Monastic *Food Liaison* is a monk, appointed by the Archabbot, who deals with the Food Service with regard to monastery menu, food preparation, dining room supplies, dining room workers, and other such matters. He also serves as "head waiter" and *maitre d'hotel* for the monastery dining room; in this capacity he has a special role for meals on major liturgical feasts and occasions. See also *table servers*.

2F13. *Giftshop Manager*. The manager is responsible for the Gift Shop. He is assisted by a group of lay volunteers.

The *Basilica Giftshop* is located in the Parish Center building, along the south side of the Basilica. It provides a range of religious articles, spiritual reading books, and greeting cards.

- 2F14. The *Gristmill Country Store* Manager is responsible for an enterprise with similarity to the Basilica Giftshop.

The *Gristmill Country Store* is located in the Gristmill and provides for sale not only products of the mill but also a variety of other items such as breads, jams, candles, greeting cards and seasonal gift objects.

- 2F15. Since guests "... are to be welcomed as Christ" (RB 53:1), *Guest Masters* are extremely important in Benedictine monasteries. Guest Masters are responsible for first and often lasting impressions the community makes on visitors.

The *Guest Quarters* have been located on the first floor of Leander Hall since that building was renovated in the mid 1980's. Visiting monks and clergy are quartered in newly renovated rooms (2002) on the first floor the monastery building when possible. Monastery vocation guests have also been quartered in the monastery building. Plans are being discussed for construction of a new guest quarters.

- 2F16. *Gardeners*. Some monks tend *gardens* along the slope between the science building complex and the Gristmill. Not only do they find relaxation and exercise in this manual work, but the whole community rejoices at harvest time when the fruits (and vegetables) of their labors appear in the monastery dining room and in the monastery building kitchenettes.

- 2F17. *Groundskeepers*. Some monks serve on a voluntary basis to take care of portions of the grounds. They are supplemented by several grounds crew employees under the direction of the Director of Facilities Management. Monastery *Grounds* are on the north side of the campus, generally north of a line represented by the Basilica, monastery dining room, and library, and bounded by the Beatty Road and Fraser Purchase Road. In this area is also the "monastery garden," a wooded grove with pathways on the hill and slope near the monastery.

- 2F18. *Infirmarians*. Saint Vincent considers it very important that members of the community be trained to care for our own sick, infirm, and aging monks. A "God-fearing, attentive and concerned" (RB 63:7) infirmarian is appointed by the Archabbot. He is responsible for the management of the infirmary and oversees the scheduling of liturgical and spiritual services. He is assisted by a staff of lay people, including trained nurses, who are the main care-givers. The infirmary is visited regularly by local physicians.

The monastic *infrmary* is located in the middle sections of the second floor of the monastery building. It has a separate dining room, supplied by the common kitchen, and also a kitchenette.

2F19. **Laundry.** After the old monastery laundry building was razed in the 1980's, the laundry was placed on the ground floor of Leander Hall. Since Fall 2008 the monastery laundry is located on the ground floor of the monastery building. Soiled laundry in individual laundry bags is collected in the eastern stairwell on each floor of the monastery each Sunday evening (even if Monday is a holiday) by the novices at 9:00 p.m. and taken to the laundry. Each Friday the bags of clean laundry are returned to each floor, except for shirts which require ironing; these latter are returned to a room near the lounge on the monastery's first floor.

Monks can also do their own laundry by utilizing the washers and dryers located on the ground floor of the monastery.

2F20. **Librarians** have always been important in Benedictine monasteries, especially for the needs of its own members and for the students of its schools. Several monks are trained in library science. **Libraries** at Saint Vincent are several. The main Archabbey-College Library is located centrally on the campus. There is also a library in the novitiate quarters on the sixth floor of the monastery with a limited collection of books on theological sciences, monastic studies, and *lectio* materials.

2F21. The **Liturgy Director** (1994) is appointed by the Archabbot to oversee and coordinate all matters liturgical.

2F22. **Masters of Ceremonies** are appointed by the Archabbot to organize and guide the proper celebration of the liturgy at Saint Vincent.

2F23. **Mission Office Director** is responsible for coordinating mission appeal efforts, for facilitating the transfer of mission funds to the missions, and for disseminating information about Saint Vincent's missions by means of the publication "Vineyards Abroad." The Office is also involved in special projects. One of these is establishing a scholarship fund at Saint Vincent College to enable youth from poor communities in Brazil to come to pursue studies leading to a degree. Another is serving as liaison for diocesan seminarians and monks, particularly from Brazil and Taiwan, to study at the Seminary.

2F24. **Musicians** are many and varied: organists who provide support for liturgical celebrations, other instrumentalists, and cantors. **Cantors** are monks who as individual soloists or as members of a *schola* intone, lead, or alternate passages with the monastic choir. Only those are cantors who are "able to benefit the hearers" (RB 47:3) and serve at the Archabbot's bidding (RB 47:4). The musicians are also responsible for conducting *music rehearsals* for the community, so that the liturgical prayer may be increasingly beautiful.

2F25. **Millers** are those who work at the monastery's Gristmill to provide flour for the monastic community and some others. Customarily the novices have worked at the Mill as a regular assignment during the novitiate year. The **Mill Supervisor** is appointed by the Archabbot as the "contact person" for the Mill and the one who is responsible for personnel and financial management.

The *Gristmill* has been in operation since 1854 to provide flour and grain products, especially for baking bread for the monastery, and when possible also for the students and others. It currently features also a Country Store, a Museum, and a Coffee House. In addition it provides studio space for some of the artists and craftsmen of the monastery.

- 2F26. **Porter.** The *Rule* speaks of placing a "wise brother of mature age who is able to understand and reply in all matters" (RB 66:1). The assignment of a porter at Saint Vincent in 1997 followed a hiatus of about 20 years. The *Office of the Porter* is located at a major entrance and intersection point on the ground floor of Roderick Center. This building contains the majority of the offices pertaining to the monastery and seminary, and it is close to the Basilica and dining rooms.
- 2F27. **Postal monks** are those who collect the mail from mail drops in the monastery and elsewhere on campus and who bring the mail from the Post Office to the monastery's mail room for distribution. The campus *Post Office*, located on the ground floor of the former South Benedict, now Headmasters' Hall, is not an official arm of the U.S. Postal Service but rather a re-distribution center. A monk serves as "Post Master General" and is aided by other monks, a lay employee, and occasionally student assistants. The monastery *mail room* is located in the center of the monastery's first floor; it has a wall of pigeon holes, one assigned to each monk, where U.S. mail and campus housemail is distributed. Postage stamps and various postal services are purchased at the campus Post Office.
- 2F28. **Printers.** From very early in our history the *Saint Vincent Archabbey Press* served to produce a wide range of materials such as class books, school catalogues, tickets and program guides, requisition slips and sheet music. From 1900 on it was housed in a building erected in that year southeast of the Basilica. On 1 January 2003 the Press went out of existence. The work formerly entrusted to the Press is now coordinated through the monastery's Public Relations Office (see 2F1), under the title *Archabbey Publications*, utilizing printing capabilities on campus or sending larger jobs off to local printing companies.
- 2F29. **Retreat Director** is responsible for planning, advertising, and organizing retreats at Saint Vincent. Most of these take place in the summer, but individuals or small groups may arrange for a retreat during the academic year. The Director and his staff are appointed by the Archabbot. The Director coordinates the *Retreat Masters*.

The *Retreat house* is Leander Hall. Larger retreat groups may require that at least some of the retreatants be housed in one of the student residence halls, such as Wimmer Hall.

- 2F30. Basilica *Sacristans* are responsible for providing organization for the Basilica sacristy and support for the various liturgical functions there. They are appointed by the Archabbot and are under direction of the Master of Ceremonies. The *sacristan* for the infirmary is responsible for good order and providing supplies for the chapel located on the second floor of the monastery. The *sacristan* for the Archabbot's chapel is responsible for good order and providing necessary supplies for the chapel in the east wing of the fourth floor of the monastery.

- 2F31. The *Stipendiarius* is a monk, appointed by the Archabbot, who keeps a record of all intentions and mass offerings sent to the monastery for the celebration of masses. He supplies intentions to priests of the community upon their request, supplies intentions and accompanying offerings to missionaries around the world, and records binational transfers to the monastery's mission fund.
- 2F32. Those monks who serve in the monastery dining room do so either by weekly assignment or daily volunteer basis. "The brothers should serve one another" (RB 35.1)... "for such service increases reward and fosters love" (RB 35.2). When the meal is served in buffet style, *Table waiters* usually provide all that is necessary during the meal itself and then clear the tables. For "sit down" meals the waiters serve only during the meal itself, and after the meal all the monks have the opportunity to clear the tables and reset them. The monastic *food liaison*, under the direction of the prior, is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the table waiters and table clearers/setters. *Table readers* are chosen "according to their ability to benefit their hearers" (RB 38:12).
- 2F33. *Tailors* make monastic habits and sometimes other garments. They also alter and repair clothing. The *Tailor Shop*, located earlier in various sites in Gregory [now Roderick] Hall, then from about 1986 on the ground floor of Leander Hall, was moved in Fall 2008 to the ground floor of the monastery building. Clothes can be dropped off for dry cleaning and picked up again in a room in the east wing of the first floor of the monastery, where the washed and ironed shirts are also returned from the laundry.
- 2F34. *Vocation Director* is a monk responsible for advertisement and recruitment of potential candidates to the monastic community. He also serves as the one responsible for the inquiry and application stage of formation for those who enter the process as candidates.

Chapter III: Growth and Formation

(cf C&DC36-C62)

- 3A1. A succinct description of the entrance requirements and of the formation program is provided in a separate document entitled "Formation, in its Various Stages" (1993), which can be found among the Appendices. This document describes the stages from pre-novitiate, through initial formation, to on-going formation through life, including transitions of reassignment, retirement and sickness. More recently, a fuller treatment entitled "Monastic Formation at Saint Vincent Archabbey" (2008, revised from 2005, and incorporating "Supplementary Notes on Monastic Formation," 1999) supplies more thorough and updated information on the admission and screening program, postulancy, novitiate formation, and juniorate formation. It also indicates points of interrelationship with the Seminary formation program. This 2008 booklet is also considered as part of the appendices to this Book of Customs.
- 3A2. The novitiate quarters are on the sixth floor of the monastery building and enjoy a certain degree of distinction but not separation.
- 3A3. The master of novices lives in the novitiate quarters and is assisted by at least one *socius*, appointed by the Archabbot.
- 3A4. Candidates who have been accepted for the novitiate normally arrive on 1 July to begin orientation and a retreat. Reception into the twelve month period of novitiate takes place during morning prayer on 10 July. At that time the novices are invested in tunic, belt, and scapular (1993); they also receive a copy of the *Holy Rule*.
- 3A5. Temporary profession is made by those completing the novitiate at first Vespers of the feast of Saint Benedict, Patriarch of Western Monasticism, on 10 July. At that time the hood is given (1993).
- 3A6. Temporary profession is made for a period of one year and must be renewed at least twice before the monk is eligible to make solemn profession. Monks in temporary vows live with the junior master in a distinct but not strictly separate section of the monastery called the 'juniorate,' located on the fifth floor of the monastery building.
- 3A7. Solemn profession normally is made during the eucharistic celebration on the feast of Saint Benedict, Patriarch of Western Monasticism, on 11 July.
- 3A8. The cuculla has not been conferred at Saint Vincent Archabbey in the years following Vatican Council II; some individual monks who retained cucullas have worn them on some occasions, for instance when serving as "chaplains" to a prelate during a liturgical service or when participating in a Eucharistic Day.

In recent years the new solemnly professed monk has been given a monastic psalter during the profession ceremony to signify the place of the psalms in the monk's spiritual life and the personal responsibility to pray the *Opus Dei*.

- 3A9. An anniversary celebration is held on Thursday during the annual monastic retreat for all vow and priestly ordination jubilarians; this practice was inaugurated in 1990 to separate its observance from profession celebrations. On the occasion of their golden and silver jubilee of profession, monks publicly renew their monastic profession.
- 3A10. At the annual anniversary celebration, golden vow jubilarians receive as *baculum senectutis* a cane (since 1986) with two inlaid Benedictine medals.
- 3A11. In recent years the monastic chapter has not accepted candidates to be claustral oblates.

CHAPTER IV: Elements of Monastic Life ~ (cf. C&D 63-87)

Article A: Prayer

- 4A1. The monk's life of "pervasive prayer" (see C64) is based in Baptism by which he is grafted into the paschal mystery of Christ and receives the spirit of adoption "in which we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom 8:15; CSL 6). The individual monk's prayer finds communal expression in the Liturgy of the Hours, in and through which the community "truly constitutes the Church at prayer" (C 66; CSL 2).
- 4A2. At Saint Vincent the *Opus Dei* is prayed in common three times daily in the Basilica: morning prayer (consisting of vigils and lauds), midday prayer, and evening prayer. Compline is said privately except in Advent and Lent when it is prayed in common at the conclusion of Wednesday evening community recreation.
- 4A3. The monastic community celebrates the Eucharist daily in the Basilica. The Conventual Mass takes the form of concelebration to enable the various members of the community to take part according to the various roles and offices they hold in the Church (see CSL 26). "The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the entire Christian life..." (RR: Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass: Gen. Intro, 1) for it "contains the entire spiritual treasure of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Passover and living bread" (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, 5).
- 4A4. Monastic tradition according to Saint Benedict is that a monk is to "immediately set aside" (RB 43:1) whatever he is doing and join in community prayer, for "nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God" (RB 43:3). At Saint Vincent it is expected that each monk will participate in common prayer on a regular basis. In the face of some other necessity or duty, the monk will make a prudent and responsible judgment before absenting himself from the community celebration of the liturgy; any regular or long-standing absence requires permission of the Archabbot. For instance the Archabbot will grant permission to dorm moderators, who must adapt to the hours of the resident students, to be absent from communal morning prayer. In all such instances an individual monk is still bound by church law to celebrate the Hours as best he can, unless the Archabbot explicitly dispenses or commutes his obligation (RB 50; CSL 95; C 66).
- 4A5. For those stationed away from the Archabbey, those who at Saint Vincent are unable to participate in the community celebration in choir, and those who are traveling, it is encouraged where possible to gather in small groups to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist.
- 4A6. Those with pastoral obligations are encouraged to foster, in their pastoral care and by their style of presiding, a deepened sense of personal and liturgical prayer among the people in their charge. It is desirable, and laudable where it is already occurring, that our Benedictine parishes provide when possible the public celebration of some part of the *Opus Dei*.

- 4A7. The prior schedules the leader of prayer and presider at the Eucharist, usually on a weekly basis (*hebdomadarius*) but sometimes for a day at a time. Other ministers are assigned on a weekly basis as part of their ministry-formation or are encouraged to volunteer on a daily basis for those positions available. Ministry assignments and volunteer sign up sheet are posted on the third floor bulletin board.
- 4A8. Guidelines for the hebdomadary (*hebdomadarius*) are provided in a booklet entitled "The Book of Ministries for the *Opus Dei*" (1984/ repr. 1990; revised 1996); a copy is found in the Appendices. This booklet was revised in 2010.
- 4A9. Guidelines for the community Mass are provided in a booklet entitled "The Book of Ministries for Conventual Mass," contained in the Appendices. This booklet is currently in the process of revision.
- 4A10. Liturgical celebrations of the monastic community are open to participation by parishioners and visitors.
- a. The Archabbot presides at celebrations, held in common by parish and monastery, during the Easter Triduum, Christmas Day, as well as other occasions through the year.
 - b. Since 2008, the monastic Conventual Mass at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday in the Basilica is no longer also a regularly scheduled parish Mass. However, many parishioners, visitors, and students commonly participate in this Mass.
 - c. During the school year, Wednesday evening Eucharist and evening prayer are combined.
 - d. Because of its long-standing educational heritage and relationship to Saint Vincent College and Saint Vincent Seminary, liturgical celebrations of the monastic community are open to participation by students.
- 4A11. Besides the Basilica there are other areas of prayer in the monastic precincts, including chapels in the infirmary and at both ends of the fourth floor of the monastery building. Since its construction primarily for the Seminary in 1998, Saint Gregory Oratory is also utilized by the monastic community, for instance daily for Midday Prayer, for Evening Prayer on Saturdays, and more extensively during the summer months.

Of course the whole house of God is a place of prayer. A visual reinforcement of a prayerful atmosphere is maintained in the monastic areas through selection and placement of religious art by those entrusted with this responsibility.

4A12. A full description of the funeral customs is contained in a separate document in the Appendices as Appendix E. There is also a separate document on suffrages, as Appendix F.

- a. At the reception of news of death of a monk, notification is made as soon as possible to all members, through public notice on the third floor bulletin board and telephone calls to those living outside the monastery according to a pre-arranged pattern identified in the "Archabbey Directory."
- b. When the superior gives the signal to begin the next scheduled liturgical hour, all rise to pray together the *subvenite*, a copy of which is in an appendix at the end of the morning prayer and noon prayer books.
- c. There is a brief rite of "reception" of the body at the main entrance in Roderick Center and placement in the parlor on the first floor tower room of Roderick Hall.
- d. A special guest master for funerals, or "Arimatean," as assistant to the Prior, is responsible for handling the various details.
- e. The body of the deceased monk, taken from the parlor by six monks as pallbearers, is led by the Archabbot and community through the first floor of Roderick Hall and the north ambulatory and conducted to the north transept of the Basilica, where it remains during a vigil service.
- f. The casket with the body of the deceased monk is placed at the head of the center aisle of the Basilica just before the funeral Mass.
- g. The funeral liturgy is a concelebrated Eucharist, at the end of which the body is conducted to the front doors of the Basilica where the *Ultima* is sung as the farewell song.
- h. The body of the deceased monk is taken to the cemetery by the monk pallbearers for the rite of committal.
- i. Weather permitting, members of the community gather at the gravesite for the final burial rite.
- j. During the 30 day commemoration period following the death of a monk, he is prayed for by name within the intercessions at Evening Prayer. Moreover during this same period his picture is displayed with candles in the monastery dining room. This latter is a revival (2006) of a custom, discontinued in the late 1960's when the practice of assigned refectory seating was discontinued, namely of placing a crucifix and two candles at the place the deceased monk had occupied at table.

- 4A13. Each monk should have a personal spiritual director who serves as a guide and "spiritual companion" in the life-long process of personal integration, development in liturgical spirituality, and growth in relationship to God patterned on that of Christ.
- a. Community members in novitiate and juniorate formation are required to choose a spiritual director, with the assistance of the novice master or junior master, and to meet regularly with the director.
 - b. Monks in solemn vows are expected to seek out and maintain a relationship with a director or "spiritual companion." Due to differences of personalities and needs, developments in spiritual outlook and abilities, changes in apostolic work and workplace, it is to be expected that these relationships will themselves undergo change and exchange.
- 4A14. At Saint Vincent the Ash Wednesday liturgy with distribution of ashes takes place at Conventual Mass in the morning; in the evening the Archabbot gives a community conference on the observance of Lent.
- 4A15. The practice since the early 1990's has been to celebrate evening prayer on one evening during Holy Week as a penitential service. The Prior and Subprior lead the community in a reflection based on RB 4, "The Instruments of Good Works." The service follows a prepared outline and concludes with a greeting of peace. This penitential service can also serve as a preparation for those monks who wish to have recourse to the sacrament of Penance before the Triduum. Another suitable time for such a penitential service at evening prayer is during the final days of Advent.
- 4A16. Each monk is encouraged to choose a confessor with whom he can establish a relationship of regular access to the sacrament (C 69). This person may but need not be the same as his spiritual director. The frequency of this sacramental encounter is determined by the individual monk and his confessor.
- 4A17. At least twice yearly the Archabbey community celebrates a communal anointing of the sick during evening prayer in the Basilica. Customary dates have been: during the Easter season when the Church celebrates the healing presence of the risen Lord, around the feasts of the Archangels (29 September) and Guardian Angels (2 October) because of their traditional role as protectors and guides, and during Advent. The Archabbot presides and may be assisted especially by some of those entrusted with the care of the sick and infirm: the Prior, the infirmarian, the chaplain for the sick. After the close of evening prayer the monks are encouraged to show personal solicitude to those monks who have been anointed by laying on hands in silent prayer, by speaking with them, and helping those who are needy back to the infirmary or to the evening meal.
- 4A18. From time to time monks are also anointed in the infirmary, either in small groups during an anointing service in the chapel or individually as need and request may arise.
- 4A19. A description of various customs related to the liturgical year is contained in a "Calendar" at the end of Section 4D in this Book of Customs.

Article B: *Lectio* and Reading

4B1. *Lectio divina* is not the same as Spiritual Reading. Both are necessary and both demand commitment of the individual to find the best, most alert, most available time for uninterrupted aloneness with God. A fundamental distinction between *lectio* and spiritual reading can be expressed in the following manner:

a. *lectio divina*

1. emphasizes, but is not limited to, the use of Sacred Scripture,
2. has no purpose except growth in relationship with God,
3. has a fixed time yet permeates one's entire day;

b. spiritual reading

1. is open to classic or contemporary spiritual writers,
2. has the purpose of enabling one to understand and articulate about one's relationship with God,
3. is limited generally to a specific time frame.

4B2. The ancient practice of *lectio divina* is taught during novitiate and juniorate. As an art of prayerful reading, the practice of *lectio* is a counter-cultural monastic witness which challenges the information explosion and the compulsion to speed read. The slow, relaxed, careful pondering of God's Word in the Scripture, one's personal relationships, and all creation enables the monastic to bridge the experience of liturgy and life. This bridge-building takes place when the monastic consecrates each event of the day with a word of blessing. This blessing-word emerges out of the encounter with the Word of God in *lectio*. The flow of this prayerful pondering can be described as follows:

- a. *lectio*: slow reading of the biblical text loudly enough to hear one's voice;
- b. *meditatio*: a pondering of the text within the context of one's own life to discover meaning;
- c. *oratio*: using the biblical text to shape one's prayer of thanks, petition, adoration, contrition;
- d. *contemplatio*: being available wordlessly and imagelessly to the presence of God.

4B3. Besides those materials available at Saint Vincent Library and those through programs of study and pastoral preparation, materials for *lectio divina* and spiritual reading are available in the novitiate studyhall on the sixth floor of the monastery building.

Article C: Silence

4C 1. Silence is understood to refer more to an internal spirit than to a mere absence of physical sound. However, there are times and places when physical silence or at least moderation of sound is also encouraged as a mark of charity and to help create an atmosphere of internal silence conducive to reflection and prayer: throughout the monastery building, in the Basilica, at specified times and occasions in the dining room, on the way to common prayer

after the signal has sounded, on the way from common prayer to the dining room, and during the night. Silence may be considered from several interrelating perspectives:

a. **Communal silence** is practiced in the liturgy, for instance through pauses after psalms and readings at the Liturgy of the Hours; the oratory itself is to be generally a place of communal silence before and after the liturgies.

b. **Personal silence** is reflective of communal silence and characteristic of an atmosphere of contemplative prayer. Each monk is encouraged to pursue personal prayer in the privacy of his cell, to take opportunity to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, and to foster practices of personal devotion.

c. **External silence** is encouraged especially out of a motive of charity and in order to help foster an environment for interior silence.

d. The **habit of silence or *taciturnitas*** (RB 6) is recognized as a profound Benedictine value which, however, cannot be fully legislated by policy; it is the necessary context for "personal silence," and it both requires and motivates practical customs of external silence.

Article D: Community Life

- 4D1. Since shared life reflects community of goals, responsibilities and cares, the monks of Saint Vincent attempt to take care of their own house and their daily needs.
- 4D2. The monastic enclosure is understood to include the whole of the monastery building, with exception of that part of the second floor which is designated as the infirmary and that part of the ground floor designated for the laundry service.
- 4D3. The monastic *horarium* is posted on the third floor bulletin board; a copy follows. It reflects changes made in the schedule occasioned by the inauguration in May 2008 of the revised form of the *Opus Dei*.

REGULAR SCHEDULE

Morning Prayer (bell 5:50)	6:15
Community concelebrated Eucharist	7:00
Breakfast	7:30
Midday Prayer (St. Gregory Oratory)	11:30
Lunch	11:45
Evening Prayer	5:00
Evening meal	5:35

Variations: on weekends and days of recess

Morning prayer (bell 6:20)	6:45
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Community concelebrated Eucharist	7:30
Breakfast (Sunday: 8:30)	8:00

Variations: On Wednesdays during the academic calendar

Evening prayer and community concelebrated Eucharist	5:00
Community Conference (may begin with a brief singing rehearsal)	7:30
Communal recreation	8:00

- 4D4. **Lounges** are at both the East and West ends of the first floor of the monastery building. These are available throughout the day to provide an area of informal socializing and relaxation. Each of the lounges contains a kitchenette, and areas for reading and viewing television.
- 4D5. There are also regular times and special occasions for communal recreation throughout the year.
- Communal recreation** is scheduled each Wednesday evening in the West lounge, as well as on special occasions throughout the year such as on major religious feast days, during the holidays, and at the end of periods of the school year.
 - A **common recreation** for junior monks and novices is held on Saturday evenings in the East lounge; all others are invited.
 - Occasionally the novices have a *haustus* on Sunday evenings in the novitiate from 7:30 - 8:45; sometimes juniors and other monks are invited to participate.
 - Twice a year students from the Seminary are invited into the monastery for a joint social with the monks in one of the lounges: on or about **St. Nicholas Day** (6 Dec.) and **St. Patrick's Day** (17 March).
 - There are also special events such as an all-day picnic (4 July) and late afternoon *Jagdfest* (late October or early November) which are held at the ridge; late afternoon cookouts on Memorial Day, Priests' Day (Tuesday before the First Friday of August), and Labor Day. During the early 1990's these were held on the monastery's north patio; from the late 1990's these were held on the monastery lawn and in front of the monastery garden. A late afternoon cook-in takes place at the parish Grove on Shrove Tuesday.
- 4D6. Because of the hazard to health even by secondary smoke, the public areas of the monastery building are **non-smoking** zones; smoking by individual monks is to be confined to their rooms (Council of Seniors, March 1993). Monks are also expected to refrain from smoking in the communal cars.

- 4D7. A fuller description of monastic **meals** and dining is being prepared in a separate document to be contained in the Appendices.
- a. Monastic meals are taken in the monastery dining room in Andrew Hall.
 - b. Serving at table is done by assigned novices and juniors, and by those solemnly professed who volunteer.
 - c. Custom is to bow upon entering, before taking one's place, to the crucifix, located above the Archabbot's table) and to bow again, after prayer, before leaving.
 - d. There is table reading at the evening meal. First comes a designated portion of the *Holy Rule*, followed by a short selection from another source, such as a papal encyclical or other material. On rare occasions the superior may ring a small bell to signal no reading, to which all reply *Deo gratias*.
 - e. Out of personal respect for individuals and to foster an atmosphere of peace at mealtime, a strongly felt custom is enunciated in the dictum, "no business at table."
 - f. A certain degree of formality and appropriateness is expected in attire in the monastic refectory. During the summer, monks are requested not to wear things such as shorts or tank tops (except under the monastic habit) in the church and dining room (Archabbot Douglas, 31 May 1994).
 - g. Customarily, guests in the monastery dining room are limited to visiting male religious, clergy, and vocation guests; requests to admit other guests are to be made with the Prior.
 - h. Most guests are received in the guest dining rooms located in Anselm Hall and specified for that purpose. Monks who sponsor guests are expected to make the appropriate arrangements with the kitchen and to dine with their guests.
- 4D8. As a sign of common life and as a witness to poverty, the monastery strives to make the best use of its goods, including the practice of recycling.
- a. The "beggars' bench" is a recycling center for articles of clothing, books, and other items; it is located in a room on the first floor of the monastery building.
 - b. As a sign of good environmental consciousness, monks are encouraged to help efforts to recycle cans, glass, and paper by using various containers placed for that purpose.
- 4D9. Any salary earned by a monk belongs to the monastery. Honoraria, contributions, and stipends are to be turned in to the Prior. Bination stipends for Masses are to be identified as such, since these are transferred to the mission fund. Monetary gifts and gift cards are also to be submitted to the Prior.

4D10 As a sign of responsibility, a witness to poverty, an aid in reducing bureaucracy and fostering personal responsibility, and to keep control of expenses, the Archabbot makes a regulated yearly distribution of *ad usum* funds to each monk for such purposes as purchasing clothing or toilet articles, financing a vacation or theater ticket, and buying other personal items.

- a. In order to maintain a sense of fairness and good order within the community, permission for possession and use of credit cards or bank accounts by a monk is under the direction of the Archabbot.
- b. Access to one's personal *ad usum* account by a junior monk is made through the junior master.
- c. Money received as a personal gift is to be turned in, as are gift cards. Junior monks turn in such gifts to the Junior Master, novices to the Novice Master.

4D11. The monastery maintains its own infirmary for the sick and aged of the community. Although primary responsibility lies with the Prior and the monks on the infirmary staff, all monks are encouraged to offer some time and effort, through the coordination of the infirmarian, for the care of the sick.

4D12. A list is posted each month on the monastery main bulletin board indicating the monks who are celebrating a birthday that month. Similarly a list is posted monthly indicating the names and dates of those celebrating a name day.

4D13. CALENDAR

1. The *Rule* places the paschal triduum at the beginning of considerations about the liturgical year; in keeping with current church practice, this Book of Customs starts its considerations on the liturgical year with Advent, while recognizing the paschal triduum as the heart of the year.

ADVENT

2. After first vespers of the First Sunday of Advent the community gathers in the monastic dining room to bless the Advent wreath. The Archabbot blesses the wreath and a novice lights the first candle. Thereafter the wreath is lit before each evening meal.
3. Starting in 1991, on each Wednesday of Advent a member of the community is invited by the Archabbot to give to the community a 15-20 minute reflection in the novitiate studyhall. The gathering begins at 7:30 p.m.; afterwards community recreation is held in the west lounge and is concluded with the praying of Compline.

4. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is an Office of the Abbot; Mass is celebrated in the morning right after morning prayer. Classes are held in the College but not the Seminary.
5. Previously observed on Boniface Wimmer's birthday, 14 January, until about 1950, *Founders' Day* was established on 8 December in 1987 on the 100th anniversary of Boniface Wimmer's death to honor those who laid the foundations of Saint Vincent. Attempts to keep the date close to 8 December proved to be difficult; the date is now chosen each year, usually in the second half of November. Events have included an academic convocation with granting of faculty and student awards within Evening Prayer (1987-2000 within Mass) at 4:00 p.m. in the Basilica, presided over by the Archabbot. The celebration joins monastery, schools, and parish. At 5:30 there is a campus-wide meal, established in 1954, in the gymnasium; and this is followed by the light-up of the campus holiday decorations. Other events have included fire works and an exhibit in the King Ludwig Gallery, on Carey Hall's third floor, of some dimension of Saint Vincent history.
6. Advent decorations are to be sparse and tasteful. Evergreens in general reflect belief in life in the midst of wintry death; candles show hope and joy. Besides an Advent wreath in the monastery dining room, the common monastery Christmas tree is placed in the West lounge on the first floor. A tree dedicated to the missions is placed in the dining room and decorated by the community members.
7. The *O Antiphons* are seven festive antiphons (17-23 Dec.) which acclaim Christ and call him to come. We have retained these ancient Roman Church antiphons, dating from at least the fifth century, in Latin, at the *Magnificat* of Evening Prayer. The first letters form an acronym, which when the last antiphon has been sung, reveals the words, backwards: *ero cras*: I will come tomorrow

CHRISTMAS

8. Christmas eve customs include since 1987 a caroling trip by novices, juniors, and other monks to Saint Emma's Monastery near Greensburg where the Benedictine sisters who staffed the kitchens at Saint Vincent joined other members of their community, where they run a retreat house. Since 1991 the tree in the refectory has been dedicated to our confreres in the missions; and the mission cross (adopted from the Scheyern cross, see 14 September) is placed at the top. The Archabbot blesses it before the Christmas Eve dinner and the youngest novice is asked to light the tree at the appropriate time.
9. Midnight Mass is preceded by Vigils; another community Mass is celebrated on Christmas Day morning. The novices host a gathering, in the 1990's named a "wassail," at 2:00 p.m. in the west lounge of the monastery. The community celebrates Second Vespers of Christmas at 4:15 p.m.; this is followed by preprandials and a festive dinner. A monastic social takes place in the evening at 8:00.
10. Common recreation is scheduled each evening of the Christmas octave in the west lounge at 8:00.

11. During the days of the Christmas season monks have the opportunity to spend a few days visiting their families; scheduling is coordinated through the Prior and Junior Master. While the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord marks the end of the liturgical season of Christmas, the "de-trimming" of the community Christmas tree within the context of a social in the west lounge marks the practical end of the Christmas recess.
12. The first month of the New Year features a number of chapters and conferences, which include the election of the Council of Seniors, the mid-year report on the novices, and since 1991 the "State of the Abbey" address by the Archabbot.
13. On Super Bowl Sunday a buffet supper is served in the monastery west lounge following Evening Prayer.
14. On the feast of the Presentation of the Lord the blessing of candles takes place before the Mass. On the following day the blessing of Saint Blaise is given during the Mass.

LENT

15. On Shrove Tuesday the monastic community customarily gathers at Saint Vincent Parish Grove for a social and supper; Evening Prayer is prayed within the schedule at the Grove.
16. On Ash Wednesday ashes are blessed and distributed during the Mass which follows Morning Prayer. It is a day of fast and abstinence. In the evening at 7:30 the Archabbot delivers an abbatial conference. Since 1991 on each Wednesday evening of Lent, except in Holy Week, a member of the community is chosen by the Archabbot to give a Lenten reflection. The evening recreation period is concluded with the praying of Compline in the west lounge.
17. On 21 March the community celebrates the Solemnity of The Passing of Our Holy Father Saint Benedict. Classes are not canceled on this day; the liturgical festivities are customarily scheduled for later in the day, with Mass at 4:00 p.m. followed by a festive dinner.
18. On Wednesday of Holy Week evening prayer is conducted as a penitential service; members of the community are encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity for the sacrament of Penance before the beginning of the Triduum.

PASCHAL TRIDUUM

19. On Holy Thursday evening the Mass of the Lord's Supper is scheduled at 7:30. The Archabbot washes the feet of 12 persons, chosen from monks and parishioners. A special homilist is designated. After Mass the community conducts the Blessed Sacrament

through the church to the south transept, where it will be honored in a special way until midnight.

20. On Good Friday the Afternoon Liturgy of the Lord's Passion begins at 1:30. A special homilist is designated.
21. Special meal prayers are said during the Easter Triduum. The custom of eating the evening meal of Good Friday in silence was extended to all three meals in 2008.
22. On the evening of Good Friday a *tenebrae* service is conducted once it has become sufficiently dark. The service is intended to be "low key" and a more popular experience; a combination of scriptural readings and sung responses is matched by the extinguishing of candles on a candelabrum in the sanctuary.
23. On Holy Saturday the Paschal Vigil begins about 8:00 p.m., depending on the time of nightfall. There is an attempt to make good use of the dark/light symbolism. During the Mass the initiation sacraments are celebrated.
24. On Easter Sunday, in a practice started in 1998, the community gathers in the Parish Center, then proceeds to the front doors of the Basilica, where the Easter Gospel is proclaimed. (This succeeds a custom of about 25 years duration according to which the Gospel proclamation took place in the monastery garden. The unpredictability and frequent inclemency of the weather prompted the change.) The community then proceeds, singing an invitatory psalm, to the choir, where it prays Easter Morning Prayer. The concelebrated community Mass follows at 7:30. Evening Prayer is celebrated at 4:00 p.m. The festive meal is in the evening and a social is scheduled for 8:00 p.m. in the west lounge.

POST-PENTECOSTAL ORDINARY TIME

25. A chapter is held in mid-May to hear the vocation director concerning candidates for the novitiate, to hear the novice master for the ten month report on the novices, and to hear the junior master concerning those requesting acceptance for solemn profession; the respective votes are taken.
26. The annual monastic retreat is held in early June. It begins on Monday evening and concludes with renewal of vows during Mass on Friday. On Thursday there is a community celebration for the profession and ordination jubilarians.
27. Memorial Day is observed at the monastery with a cookout. For a number of years it was held on the monastery north patio. Since 1998 it has been held on the lawn, near the entrance to the monastery garden. Evening Prayer is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. in the Basilica. While it is not a liturgical day, Memorial Day is recognized in the liturgy.
28. On 1 July the candidates for the novitiate arrive for a week of orientation and pre-novitiate retreat.

29. On 4 July the monastic community traditionally holds a picnic at its property on Chestnut Ridge. For well over a century the picnic was held at a pavilion located in the woods some 300 yards east of the house. Beginning in 2006 the event was transferred to the renovated barn which is more conveniently located near the house. Evening Prayer is prayed at the barn just before supper.
30. Starting in 1991 there have been two days of Community Meetings in conjunction with the feast of Benedict, Patriarch of Western Monasticism on 11 July. These have been scheduled for 9 and 10 July or 12 and 13 July, depending on circumstances.
31. New candidates are received into the novitiate during morning prayer on 10 July; after their canonical year novices make first, temporary, vows during evening prayer on 10 July; solemn profession is made during Mass on the feast of Benedict, Patriarch of Western Monasticism on 11 July.
32. On 24 August the Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church is celebrated, commemorating the date in 1905 when the current Archabbey Church, later designated a Basilica, was consecrated. The Liturgy of the Hours on this day is not an Office of the Abbot.
33. On 25 August the feast of St. Bartholomew is observed, transferred due to the date of the Anniversary of Dedication. However, when the Anniversary of Dedication is celebrated on a Sunday, the feast of St. Bartholomew is not observed at all.
34. On Labor Day the final cookout of the season takes place, since 1998 customarily on the monastery lawn. While not a liturgical day, there may be some trace in the liturgy.
35. The Triumph of the Cross on 14 September retains a tenuous memory of our indebtedness to the monastery of the Holy Cross in Scheyern, Bavaria, which supplied Fr. Petrus Lechner for two years in our early history, a memory which is also architecturally detectable in the use of the "Scheyern cross." The Saint Vincent "missionary cross," given during evening prayer to those newly assigned to a mission, also follows the pattern of the "Scheyern cross."
36. 27 September is the Solemnity of Saint Vincent de Paul, Titular. It has not been a major observance liturgically or socially at Saint Vincent. The observance was transferred to this date with the 1969 Roman calendar from 19 July, the date when Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick of Philadelphia blessed the first Saint Vincent Church in 1835. This brick structure, which after the construction of the Basilica become known as the "Students' Chapel," succumbed to the fire of 28 January 1963.
37. On 2 October the community celebrates the Feast of the Guardian Angels, Patron of the American-Cassinense Congregation, a patronage borrowed from the Bavarian Congregation.

38. On the Solemnity of All Saints, the Conventual Mass is celebrated in the morning after Morning Prayer. Relics are placed in the transept with vigil lights.
39. On All Souls Day we customarily wear black vestments for the eucharistic celebration. Envelopes with memorials, that is, the names of deceased loved ones mailed to us, are brought forward; after this day they are placed prominently in the transept during the month of November. Starting in 1993 at Evening Prayer, the reading of the names and dates of death of those confreres who died since last 2 November takes place at the intercessions.
40. November suffrages include the office of the day and the Conventual Mass to be offered for the deceased members of the community (Directory 71.5).
41. On a date set by the prior, usually during the second week of November, a *Jagdfest* (hunt festival) is customarily scheduled at the ridge. This is a late afternoon social and supper of the fruits garnered by the hunters of the community. Evening Prayer is prayed at the site.
42. On the Feast of Christ the King, there is exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after the last parish Mass. Joint monastery and parish Evening Prayer is scheduled for 5:00 p.m. in the Basilica, which closes with Benediction.
43. On Wednesday before Thanksgiving there is a blessing of the harvest at the gristmill. It is also an occasion to give thanks for the benefactors who helped with renovation of the mill. The Archabbot has presided at the blessing, which takes place about 3:00 p.m., followed by refreshments at the coffee house.
44. On Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving it was custom from 1985 for an "Evening with the President," at which a report was made to the Benedictine community on the "State of the College." Between 2000 and 2010 there were lay presidents; the report was scheduled on another, convenient date during the Fall, and a regular Wednesday evening conference took place on Thanksgiving eve.
45. On Thanksgiving Day the community celebrates Eucharist in the morning with the parish. In recent years the times of this Mass have varied. The festive dinner takes place at 12:30 p.m. Evening Prayer is scheduled for 7:30 in the Basilica, followed by a buffet social in the west lounge.

Article E: Work

- 4E1. Monks participate in Christ's paschal mystery through their lives of prayer and work. While joining with Him in "that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven" (CSL 83), they also are partners with him in the redemptive work of "bringing divine creation to perfection" (PCCMW 67). Saint Benedict perceives manual work in this light when he considers it as indicative of Christian monastic identity, writing "When they

live by the labor of their hands, as our fathers and the apostles did, then they are really monks" (RB 48).

- 4E2. The major work of the Saint Vincent Archabbey community is community witness to prayer and work in a specific place.
- 4E3. A list and description of various works in our communal life can be found in Chapter 2, Article F "Offices and Services."
- 4E4. The process of preparing, assigning, and transferring a monk in the apostolic works of the community is in the hands of the Archabbot.
- 4E5. Saint Vincent engages in a wide scope of activities and works; the major ones "at home" are academic (Saint Vincent College and Saint Vincent Seminary) and pastoral (local parishes and chaplaincies); the major ones "away from home" are the parishes, Savannah priory and military school, foreign missions in Brazil and Taiwan, and the chaplaincy at the Penn State University.
- 4E6. A listing of the titles, addresses, and telephone numbers of the various parishes and sites of other apostolic work, as well as the names of the monks currently staffing them, can be found in the "Archabbey Directory" in the Appendices.
- 4E7. The responsibility of assigning monks to pastoral assistance on weekends and holy days, to conducting retreats, and to similar ministerial works is in the hands of the Prior.
- 4E8. **The Saint Vincent College Corporation** is a nonprofit corporation constituted through a charter issued by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on 18 April 1870, amended in 1957 and 1980. The Corporation comprises two educational units: Saint Vincent College and Saint Vincent Seminary.
 - a. **The Saint Vincent College Board of Incorporators** consists of seven members who constitute a self-perpetuating body. These seven, all members of the Benedictine Society, exercise the office of owners of the property of the College Corporation
 - b. **The Saint Vincent College Corporation Board of Directors** is elected by the Board of Incorporators, and is responsible for setting the policies of the College and Seminary. At least one-third of its members are members of the Benedictine Society of Westmoreland County.
 - c. **The Saint Vincent Seminary Board of Regents** consists of up to twenty members, which assists the administration of the Seminary in its work of preparing qualified students for priestly and other Christian ministries.
- 4E9. **The Saint Vincent Cemetery Corporation (1953)** is a separate corporation under civil law. All members of The Benedictine Society of Westmoreland County hold membership in The Saint Vincent Cemetery Corporation. The Board of Directors is the Council of

Seniors of the Archabbey. The Cemetery is owned by the Benedictine Society and the operation is conducted by a Cemetery Director/Manager, a monk who is in charge of the Cemetery's administration, responsible for keeping all records, for selling gravesites, and making provision for "perpetual care." He also is involved with planning occasional development of cemetery sections and a future mausoleum/chapel. Cemetery offices are located on the ground floor of Leander Hall

- 4E10. **The Wimmer Corporation** (1972) is a separate corporation under civil law, which serves to hold and manage a designated amount of property in Unity Township by Agreement with the Benedictine Society for the purpose of planned development and financial return. The Wimmer Corporation also serves as advising agent for the Society in regard to other properties owned by the Society. All members of the Benedictine Society hold membership in the Wimmer Corporation. The Board of Directors are eight in number and are elected by the members of the Wimmer Corporation, not necessarily from the membership.