

# Uxolo

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The Newsletter of Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery



## Holy Cross School ~ Ever Fresh, Ever New

-Br. Robert James, OHC

We are approaching the end of term three as the Uxolo prepares to go to press. It has been a busy and exciting time for us. Stephen Smith from the Young Adult Service Corp of the Episcopal Church has decided to remain with us for another year. Cameron Spoor, also from YASC, joined us in August. Cameron comes to us with teaching and youth experience as well

as a Masters in Educational Psychology. He is assisting in Grade R as well as doing some individual work and overseeing the After School Resource Centre. Permie Issacs, an education student at Rhodes,

who also assisted at our Reading Camp, spent a month with us doing her field placement in Grade 1.

At the May Meeting of the School Council, Paul Edey, Headmaster of St Andrew's, was elected as a trustee, and Ntsika Kitsili was recommended and appointed as the Grade 2 teacher. We will be starting a Grade 2 class in 2013. He received his BA from Rhodes and returned to receive his teaching certification. He has been teaching for the past two years at Get Ahead School, an independent school located outside of Queenstown. We look forward to the creativity and passion he brings to his teaching. He is a living example to our children of what is possible to achieve with commitment and hard work. We hope to raise funds to furnish the Grade 2 classroom before the end of this year.



Cameron Spoor with the Grade R class

The children paid a visit to our local fire station for a presentation as well as attending Youth Day celebrations at the Diocesan School for Girls. They were also treated to an educational game ride at Pumba, thanks



Holy Cross School children at Pumba Game Reserve

to the generosity of Dale Howarth, the manager, and to Diocesan School for Girls and St. Andrew's for transport to the Reserve. Health issues and a focus on preventative care are part of our daily routine. The municipality nurses have visited twice and been very helpful in keeping the children's medical records up to date. Dental screenings were done on both grades in August. Mpumi, our Youth and Child Care Worker, has a full case-load in dealing with social service issues, in assisting families as well as advocating for our children.

In late May we were granted full membership in ISASA (Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa). We look forward to our future collaboration with them. They provide a good support, advocacy and information resource regarding the political, legal, and educational aspects that affect independent schools in South Africa. With the addition of another class in January, we are exploring various alternatives for transporting additional children. The school bus can only accommodate fourteen children at a time. At present, two trips must be made in both the morning and afternoon.

We welcome your support and interest in our work here. Gifts are tax deductible in both the USA and South Africa.

# Returning Home

~Ntsika Kitsili

*The monastic community has watched Ntsika Kitsili grow over the years into being the devoted, passionate person and teacher that he is. He now is coming “home” to offer back to the community which has raised and nurtured him the many gifts that he has been given. And we are so proud that he wants to do so by teaching in Holy Cross School beginning in January. Here are some of his thoughts about his journey coming full circle.*



Ntsika Kitsili

Is my returning home like the return of the Prodigal Son? Leaving Grahamstown in 2010 after graduating from Rhodes University certainly felt like I was running away. The community of Grahamstown taught me a wealth of knowledge and skill, and the time had come for me to leave and go to another town where I would start my

own life from scratch. I would make new friends and spread that wealth to others

I arrived in Queenstown in 2011 with my friend Theresa. When she left, I felt all alone and scared. Unlike the Prodigal Son, I had no money to earn me ‘false’ friends. All I had was the passion to teach and a desire to make a change. But as I was in isolation, questions flooded my mind: Am I making the biggest mistake of my life by coming here? Will I fit in here in this community? Will I be listened to when asking questions and challenging the status quo? For the first three months of my arrival in Queenstown I focused solely on my work and then I began meeting friends who became my family away from home.

Another important difference between my story and that of the Prodigal Son is that what I inherited from Grahamstown is not lost; in fact it has been amplified. Perhaps one needs to get out of one’s hometown and then return to it in order to understand what one is called to do. So I am looking forward to be in Grahamstown again, not only to be close to my family and my friends, but to teach children who come from a similar background as me with a deeper understanding of their needs. I am looking forward to sharing my story with the children at Holy Cross School and listening to their stories.

My story is of a person who comes from a poor and unstable family but did not let his circumstances destroy him. He rather used them to work for him. I am so excited to help my kids not to be afraid to ask questions even if they will not get answers, not to be afraid to challenge even if change will not come right straight away. I am looking forward to being a member of the Holy Cross School staff that will help shape these kids and prepare them to cope with this world that is constantly changing.

As much as I did not lose most of my inheritance from Grahamstown, there are parts of the Prodigal Son’s story that I can relate to. I can picture the fears he had after losing everything: Will my father forgive me? Will he take me back? Will my brother forgive me? Will my community accept me back? I find myself asking similar questions: Am I doing the right thing by going back to my home town? Will I be accepted back? Will I be allowed to ask questions and challenge the status quo? When these questions keep me awake at night I come to two answers: No and Yes. Just like the Prodigal, there are people who are excited that I am returning home. They will pick the fattest sheep and slaughter it in my honour. And, No, some people will not listen to my questions and will not accept my challenges, but what matters the most is being aware of the social issues that still exist in our communities. This is the role I hope to play through my teaching, that is to bring awareness. The rest of the work is having faith that everything else will fall into place. I believe that this is one of the best ways I could ever thank the people that have played a major role in supporting me spiritually, emotionally and financially.

# Scholarship Fund Update

~Br. Josias, OHC

The 2012 school year is almost over. By the time you get this newsletter it will be the beginning of the fourth and the last term for 2012. We hope everybody will do well at the end of the year.



Shaun Piti



Nyangayethu Soxujwa

There have been many exciting events happening in the lives of the Scholarship Fund recipients. We have two possible university graduates this year. Nomaphelo Maquntulu will be starting at Victoria Girls' High School next year. Three of the young men in our scholarship programme were greatly rewarded for their pursuit of their gifts and to be all that God has asked them to be these past few months. Shaun Phiti, started at Lady Grey Arts Academy at the beginning of the second term. He seems to be flourishing because of his passion for art. This passion was even awarded this past term at the Aliwal North Eisteddfod. Shaun received three double gold certificates for his art work, an award for the most promising two-dimensional artist and a double gold certificate for reciting one of his own poems. He was also part of a

drama group who received a triple gold certificate for their performance and won the trophy for best group performance in the drama section of the Eisteddfod. God willing, he will be going to Stockholm, Sweden, at the end of the year as part of the school's concert tour. Nyangayethu

Soxujwa, who was receiving a scholarship from us from the fund's inception until recently, is now employed by Rhodes University as a caterer. This opportunity came to him after he completed the one and half year internship programme at Rhodes in catering. He entered Rhodes through his previous school, Kuyasa School for Specialised Education. Thembelani Kapteni (a.k.a. the karate kid) was awarded with silver and bronze medals at the Joza and Makana Karate Championships after beginning with karate only at the beginning of the year. We are very thrilled with all of these young people's achievements and wish them well in their adventures. We also wish that God will be with them in all their endeavours.



Thembelani Kaptein

On the 4th and 5th of October, a workshop for boys from age 11 will take place at the monastery for those in our Scholarship Fund. This programme will be an opportunity for the young men to address issues that affect them now, and may affect them in the future. We have had two successful workshops for girls and we hope this one will bear good fruits as well.

With the year-end exams coming in a few weeks, we would like to wish all the students a relaxed time of study. Good luck, patience and success in your exams. We know you will do it. To all the supporters we have for the scholarship programme, we appreciate your help. Thank you for sharing in our vision of producing the stars of tomorrow. May God bless you more abundantly. *Molimo o le roise molemo osa feleng.*

*The commitment to conversatio morum leads us to welcome Christ to turn us in His direction in every situation and to know that His direction for us is the best. ~Unknown author*

# Trails, Poets, Elephants and Love

~ Br. Daniel, OHC

And so we had our 5th Reading Camp at the end of June this year. As always, it was a sheer joy to be involved with it. It is very difficult to explain in words what is accomplished in only a week; however, I wish you all could experience the incredible changes taking place in the children, and in those working with them, in such a short time. Of course, as with all things in life, the impact on the children is varying, but the long-term effects of the camps are beginning to show now, with the first and second years' campers especially. If one looks at the proportion of them being in leadership positions as they reach higher grades and also the improvement in their academic performances, it is worth it! Thank you once again to everybody whose generosity keeps on making this a reality and thank you to all those of you whose generosity in future will continue to make a difference in these kids' (and the adults') lives! Here are some of the scenes.

Guests volunteer their expertise and experience at Reading Camp. Basil Mills (right) from the National English Literary Museum and a naturalist in Grahamstown returned to the camp this year to offer the children many different adventures with his own collection of animals and the immediate environment, including a nature hike.



Guest writers volunteer their services every year as well. This year Harry Owen (left), the Poet Laureate of Cheshire County, England, who now lives in Grahamstown, led the children to create their own group poem using various materials and treasures that they found around the property of Assegai Trails. He is seen here with a skull that was found by one of the kids.



Kwantu and Kariega Game Reserves again generously offered free day visits to both parks. The visit to Kwantu included some close encounters with the elephants



Often the volunteer counsellors have as much of an enjoyable and enriching experience as the children do and develop close bonds with their kids. Kathy Barnard (above left) is a student at Diocesan School for Girls. Our own Young Adult Service Corps volunteer, Stephen Smith (above right) was part of the team as well.



The Reading Camp 2012

# From the Novice Master

~Br. John, OHC

One of the most important roles of a Novice Master is to articulate monasticism, when helping novices to become fully integrated into the monastic culture, especially when receiving enquiries from



people interested in information about joining our community or just simply when educating the public about monasticism. The Novice Master or Formator must be one of the main disseminators of the tradition. He or she is one of the main spokespersons of a monk's values, importance, integrity and character.

However, what I have found in my own experience is the difficulty in communicating what is a monk in a way that is clear and that captures the life in a picture that is sharp and vivid. I am somewhat relieved to discover that it is not a struggle that I have alone.

This issue was a primary agenda item at the last meeting of the Benedictine Communities of Southern Africa (BECOSA), the conference of Benedictine communities. A sub-committee of BECOSA was formed of all the members who are "alumni" of the Monastic Formators Programme in Rome.

In July, this group gathered in Benoni with Mark Butlin, OSB, from Ampleforth Abbey in England, who is one of the organisers of the Monastic Formators Programme, facilitating our discussion. Our mandate was to draw up a document to present to BECOSA, which would convey the essentials of the monastic life and guide how those

essentials can be expressed to those in the initial formation process (enquirers, postulants and novices). We met for four full days, and they were full. We prayed together. We shared in lectio divina daily. We shared our journeys as monastics, as formators and as human beings, just being children of God. And then, we worked on some of those essentials - we worked hard.

Did we fulfil the mandate? I suppose only the document resulting from our meetings can tell us that. But after the four days, I had received a jolt of awakening as I think was the case for many at the meeting. I was reminded of just how precious and indispensable the monastic vocation is.

I believe we gradually came to see that a monk is one who lives the Christian life in a serious manner, one who really does "prefer nothing whatsoever to Christ", putting the Gospel into daily practice.

Many aspects are included to this practice. The Liturgy, the offices and the Eucharist, comes alive when we are present to it. It becomes the deep expression of our preference for God. Our ignorance of scripture is our ignorance of Christ. Lectio divina is a lived liturgy making scripture live through us. We live in community as one body, a unified body in Christ. Studying, knowing, and beaming immersed in the tradition flows into our life in community and in Christ.

All of these lived intentions help us to not only follow Christ, but to allow Christ to fill our whole being and inform who we are as human beings. We open ourselves to a transformation from the very core of our being, from our hearts. This is the life of all serious Christians, and this is the life of a monk.



Br. Roger, N/OHC with one of the Holy Cross School children

## From the Associates Director

~Br. John, OHC~



Associates present at the quiet day (from left to right): Andrew Hunter, Michael Brunt, Lindsay Woods, Wendy Sweetman, Br. John, OHC, Hannelie Duvenage, Tally Palmer

As I wrote before, being an Associate of Holy Cross means entering into a life of formation like a monk. This was confirmed to me back in August when we had a quiet day for Associates and those who are interested in being Associates. The subject of the day was to begin to

talk about our own lives, spirituality, spiritual journeys and where those journeys are taking us. We expressed where God was and where God can or desires to be in our lives.

It was a very gentle day looking at some of the challenges ahead for us. We began the day with lectio divina and then each participant shared their spiritual stories. In the afternoon, we looked at the role of Associates with regards to the monastic community and the Order of the Holy Cross, in addition to looking at the identity of the organisation here at the monastery. The discussion included ways forward to structure activities that would help form a community within the group itself. The discussion had an energy that bodes well for the future of this committed community of prayer and partnership. I am also energised by their own desires and passion to follow Christ and to walk in the truth and light of his ways as expressed by St. Benedict.

My hope is that more gatherings will happen like this one, including a weekend in the near future. Such a weekend will give the opportunity for more Associates from across the country to attend. I so look forward to my further work with the group and to meeting others who have covenanted with our monastic community.

## Guesthouse Highlights

~Br. Roger, N/OHC

It is a privilege for us to welcome guests into this space which we are so blessed to occupy. The variety of people we get to meet in the process enriches our lives. Their life stories are often fascinating.

Our guests come from all walks of life, and some literally walk in: a man from St Andrews in Scotland walked along the untarred Highlands Rd, having been dropped off from an inter-city bus at the turn-off from the highway. Another man arrived by motorcycle, while a couple had been cycling through east Africa shortly before arriving (they reached us by motor vehicle, however).

We feel we can best accommodate individual and group retreats, in which our guests can spend time here in peace, whether consciously in prayer or otherwise. In the past six months, we have hosted many individuals on personal retreat, but also various groups, including clergy and ordination groups, groups of students from the nearby College of the Transfiguration, parish groups, and Mothers' Union groups. These came to



Stacy Grossman, from the United States, was with us for a month for some retreat time as well as holiday. She, with two other women, are in the process of forming a religious community, Companions of Mary the Apostle.

us from Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth and East London, as well as further afield. They are affiliated with a variety of church denominations, including Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Ethiopian Episcopal.

We do not by any means restrict our guests to those with a church affiliation. We have recently hosted staff development sessions for the

President's Award for Youth Empowerment, writing breakaways for the Rhodes' Women's Academic Solidarity Association, and a group from Buffalo City College, amongst others. Individuals of any faith and none are welcome in our guesthouse.

Lois Savill, a young woman from the UK, was one of our longer term guests. She stayed with us for a couple of months, in May and June and part of July, while she was volunteering at Holy Cross School. She also helped out at the annual Holy Cross Reading Camp.

Rev Stacey Grossman, a priest of the Episcopal Church in the US,



A pilgrimage group from St. Columba's Episcopal Church in Washington DC were with us. As part of their visit here they spent time at the Isibindi Projects where Monica Vega and Heidi Schmidt did much valuable work (while they were long-term residents with us). Monica (third from the right) and Heidi (second from the left) returned to South Africa from Argentina to host them while they were here.

Episcopal Church in the US spent some time as our guests in August. Led by Rev. Janet Vincent, the rector of that parish, they were on a pilgrimage to South Africa. They visited Johannesburg before coming to the Eastern Cape for exposure particularly to some of the Isibindi project work in the region around Alice.

*Benedictine Hospitality is not a social event,  
but a holy event. ~Unknown author*

## The Guesthouse at Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery

As you can see, we have a variety of guests that come to us for all kinds of reasons. Some happen to stumble upon us. Others plan a time to stay with us. This is all part of the rich Benedictine tradition and ministry of hospitality. We see it as part of who we are as Benedictine monks. The monks of Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery offer a 24 bed, well equipped guesthouse for those seeking a quiet place of prayer and retreat for groups and individuals and for conferences and meetings. **All faiths are welcome.** So when planning your next retreat either as a group or an individual, conference, meeting or you are just looking for some space away, please consider us. You could be our next guest at the monastery, and we welcome you.

The Guesthouse is open from Tuesday morning until Sunday afternoon.

To make a booking:

The Guesthouse  
Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery  
PO Box 6013  
Grahamstown 6141

Tel.: (046)622-8111

Fax: 086-243-1738

Email: [guesthouse@umaria.co.za](mailto:guesthouse@umaria.co.za)

Or see our Guesthouse page on our website:  
[www.umaria.co.za](http://www.umaria.co.za)

## IZZIT? News of the Community



**Daniel:** God is indeed good! At last the new fence is up for the vegetable garden and we can start the planting for the new season in earnest. The porcupines and other wildlife are not too impressed, I am sure. I was hoping to have a part of the garden covered in shade netting, but that will have to wait for next year's budget. At some point part of the fenced in area may serve a different purpose. More than one brother has voiced the possibility of having a donkey sanctuary here at the monastery.

This may be especially worthwhile in future work with the children. The use of animals in overcoming trauma from abuse and violence is well documented. Since so many of our kids have an abusive background and the donkeys will be rescues, perhaps there can be a mutual healing. God has led us down stranger paths before. We continue to pray and listen and in the meantime we plant potatoes!

My first few months as prior have been a continuing time of adjustment. This has been a time of learning, and will continue to be so; however, I do not think it would have gone at all well if it was not for the support of my brothers in community. Monastically speaking, we are a very young community, with incredibly steep learning curves ahead of us, and this makes everything so exciting and vibrant and a lot of consulting goes on the whole time. Of course, none of this would be possible without the grace of God.

The next few months (as had the past few months!) will see quite a bit of coming and going in the community. John and I will be off in October to Durban for the Religious Life Conference, and in November I will go to Namibia to visit with friends and family, and also hopefully to talk at the Cathedral in Windhoek about possible vocations. In February the John and I again will attend the annual

BECOSA (Benedictine Communities of Southern Africa) Conference in Benoni, and then I will hopefully be able to practice some monastic stability.

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to pray for you.



**Timothy:** Two months into my sabbatical I am beginning to appreciate deeply the value of rest, of allowing new growth to generate as it will. When I arrived in Santa Barbara, California in early August, the brothers at St. Mary's graciously took me in and gave me all the space I needed to recover from the flight and adjust to the US again. I walked all over the city and learned to wonder at the expeditious manner in which business is done here.

Imagine transacting with the bank over the phone!! I took the train north to spend three days with the Camaldolese Benedictines, where I greeted old friends and began the conversations about the hermetical life with them. After three weeks in Santa Barbara, I once again boarded the overnight train to Santa Fe, New Mexico where I am now. It was a wonderful ride through the desert of the southwest. The absence of any habitations meant that the sky was totally blacked out and dotted with brilliant stars. I watched for a long time before falling asleep to the rocking sound of the rails.

My brother and friends greeted me at the tiny station in Lamy, NM, and the New Mexico adventure began. Although I have been here only a month, so much has happened in almost a serendipitous way, without breaking the instructions to rest. My old friend, Jim McDonald has very generously taken me into his home, and together so far we have hiked three times up into the mountains and camped next to a high altitude lake where I have been several times in the past. I'm out of shape, and the hikes nearly killed me, but the beauty of the trails ~ wild flowers, birds and four legged creatures ~ compensated for the fatigue. I've done some volunteer work with Listening Horse, my brother Gus's therapeutic riding organization. ([www.listenhorse.org](http://www.listenhorse.org)). I have been both

deeply moved and amazed by the relationships that develop between the horses and the participants. They are taught everything from grooming and care to riding. I thought that if we had something like this in Grahamstown for the children at the school, what a contribution that would make to their lives! And, I, too, am trying to learn to ride.

A while back I went to Taos, NM, home of the Taos Pueblo Indians, to stay with Alan Powell. Alan is a master furniture maker among other gifts, and to stay in his award winning new home was quite something! Alan designed and built the house which is constructed using all ecological methods for self sufficiency. The sparse rooms with beautiful views, and the silence enhanced by the tight construction provided more rest for me and a place to read and pray. ([www.alanpowelldesign.com](http://www.alanpowelldesign.com))

My study and reading about Native American cosmology has opened a great wealth of available research, and I am attending lectures and looking at things. I've joined the School for Advanced Research ([www.sarweb.com](http://www.sarweb.com)) here in Santa Fe. Their library is superb, and the scholars and artisans they bring in are most interesting. I'll go to an all day symposium on the Hopi Indians and pueblo society next month. I have become very interested in shamanic healing, a practice common to practically every culture on earth. I am talking with practitioners of this kind of healing and finding many connections between them and some Christian practices....laying on of hands, anointing, exorcisms, baptism, etc. I am also interested to explore how this form of healing and western psychotherapy might find bridges. My goal in all this, if there can be said to be one, is to find connections rather than barriers and to look beyond our compartmentalisations, which can be grounds for prejudice, to find ways and avenues of communication. Benedict's teaching that we are to listen with the ear of the heart, speaks quite directly to me in all of this. Thus far, my time of rest has been anything but fallow.

*As we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run on the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love. --Prologue, Rule of St. Benedict.*



**John:** These last few months certainly have not been a slow time for me.

As Novice Master, I have been doing some recruitment as always. Many enquiries are coming in, and I am pleased by that.

In August, I went to Bredasdorp to speak to a group of people about the monastic life and to preach on the Sunday. That area of the Western Cape primarily consists of small towns and villages and is a large farming and tourist area with coastal villages of fishing along

the Southern coast. It is beautiful. I always thought that Cape Point was the most Southern point in Africa. It's not. It is Cape Agulhas. Ulric and Althea Groenevald, some friends of the monastery and my most gracious hosts, took me there to visit the lovely old lighthouse.

In September, I did a retreat with Br. Roger for the Diocese of Highveld clergy. The bishop is an Associate of ours named Bishop David Bannerman, and we were pleased to oblige. The retreat was at a stunning place called La Verna Franciscan Retreat Centre in Vanderbijlpark in the Gauteng Province. Beautiful views of the Vaal River and wonderful spacious grounds including a magnificent and moving outdoor Stations of the Cross encircling the property, which I walked more than once.

The other portion of my time since April of last year was taken up with BECOSA (Benedictine Communities of Southern Africa) activities, which I write about on pages 10-11, doing retreats here including one for the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown, spiritual direction and writing. I have had two poems recently accepted for publication into a journal in the UK called *The Dawntreader* and one accepted into an international anthology called *Rhino in a Shrinking World* to support anti-poaching efforts of rhinos here in South Africa. An essay about a good friend and mentor Don Maclennan who died in 2009 was accepted into a collection of essays about his life and works named *No Other World*. This book has just been published. Two chapters were accepted for inclusion in a course on spirituality by the Theological Education by Extension College, a theological correspondence school. One of the

chapters was about the early monastics and the other was about Benedictine spirituality. The more I write the more I realise how important it is for me both as a monk and just simply a creative human child of God.

In October I will be at the Religious Life Council of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa and will then fly off to the US to see my family for a month as well as to travel from Indiana to North Carolina to see relatives and to spend time at the beach. I so look forward to the time with family, with hearing the sound of the ocean and just for the rest.

**Robert James:** My election to the Council of the Order at our Chapter in June has added another interesting dimension to my life, as well as the opportunity to visit the US more than once annually. This is an exciting time in the life of our Order and I'm grateful to be part of the leadership as we move forward. It was a great blessing to have time with family and friends and to see nearly all of our brothers as we gathered at West Park. Some I had not seen in many years. It was a time of getting to know each other more deeply and of opening ourselves as a community to the workings of the Spirit. I return to the US in September for a three day Council Meeting.



At the Archbishop's invitation, I attended the Mini Summit on Eastern Cape Education at Rhodes University. Public education in our province is in a state of crisis. The conversation between panelists and participants from throughout the province was stimulating, informative, and inspired a sense of hopefulness for the future.

I continue to enjoy my work as Principal, as well as priest in the community, and spiritual director. The resiliency of our children under difficult circumstances never ceases to amaze me. I'm given the opportunity to see the face of God in them throughout the day. The constancy and creativity of our school staff and the commitment of my brothers awe me as we persevere on this journey together.



**Josias:** This past June I visited the brothers at the Holy Cross Monastery, West Park, NY. It was a great opportunity for me to visit the Order's mother house, meet and spend time with the community there. The beauty of the place is marvellous. The view over the Hudson river and the walk to the river were breathtaking. I went there in time for the Order's chapter and I had a great time meeting other brothers as well, some of whom I had only known about through

newsletters, email communications and pictures.

While in the USA I visited Rev. Bernard Poppe in Maplewood, New Jersey. While there, I had the honour of preaching at St. George's Episcopal Church, where Rev. Poppe is the rector. They were celebrating the Juneteenth, which is a celebration in the United States that commemorates the announcement of the abolition of slavery in the U.S. State of Texas in 1865. After the service we had a lovely US barbecue (SA braai) with the congregation.

While visiting Rev. Poppe, I went to see the ballet Romeo and Juliet the Metropolitan Opera House, NY, performed by the American Ballet Theatre. I am not a fan of ballet, but I loved the performance. I also went to see the musical Godspell on Broadway. For those who do not know, this is an adaption of the Gospel of St. Matthew in modern-day song-and-dance.

What is America without a baseball game? Brs. James Michael Dowd, Jose Folgueira, James Roston and I, went to see a minor league game in Poughkeepsie. The four of us also went to Newburgh, NY to visit the Ecclesia Ministries of Newburgh. The Rev. Stephen Ruelke gave us a tour of the town and showed us the work they do in Newburgh.

I was also one of the presenters at the ordination of the Rev. Jesse Zink, which took place on the evening of Thursday, June 28 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Northampton, Massachusetts. While in Massachusetts, Br. Andrew and I stopped at Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, formerly known as the holiday house for the Huntington family.

My visit to the US was blessed by the lovely warm weather. Then I came back home and the weather was totally opposite. It has been freezing ever since, but that did not stop me to seeing shows during the Grahamstown arts festival. I had a lovely visit with my family and friends in Joburg, in September for my annual vacation.



**Roger:** The end of April and the beginning of May found me in Cape Town, enjoying the hospitality of one of my sisters and of some good friends. These live on opposite sides of the mountain from each other, so by dividing my time between them I was able to sample much of what Cape Town has to offer, scenic beauty by no means the least of it. It had been many years since I had been in Cape Town, so it was good to visit again, in the company of people who mean so much to me.

In my weekly classes, we continued our study of the development of monastic spirituality. We then considered aspects of the life story of the founder of this Order, James Huntington, who was also a significant social pioneer. More recently, we have been examining the history of the Order itself, basing our study on a book written by one of the members of the Order to mark the centenary in 1984.

I took on responsibility for our guesthouse after Br. Daniel took over as Prior of the community in June. In this, I am ably supported by Marian Lanham, the Guesthouse Director, whose enthusiasm has revitalized our ministry of hospitality. It is a privilege for us to welcome guests into this space which we are so blessed to occupy.

It has been a great joy for me to offer spiritual direction to several students from the College of the Transfiguration in town. Spending time with them individually, listening to their lives in the presence of God and so encouraging them to listen to their own lives more closely, has been enriching for all of us, I believe.

At the end of September, I will have been with the community for two years. Let the Lord be your delight, and He will grant you the desires of your heart.

## Heritage Day at Holy Cross School

*On Heritage Day in September, the school hosted a celebration showing the children what they have to be proud of in their own culture and heritage. It was an all day event with stories, dancing, music, arts and crafts and of course, great food. Here are some scenes from the event.*



## Uxolo is Now Online

*Uxolo* is now online! And it looks good! So we are asking you to tell us whether you still would like to receive the *Uxolo* through the mail or just view it online on our website [www.umaria.co.za](http://www.umaria.co.za).

On the send-back sheet, just mark which way you would like to view the *Uxolo*. If you would like to read it online, please send us your email address so that we can inform you when new issues come out. We look forward to many more years of bringing the *Uxolo* to you, our friends and supporters.

## Mariya uMama weThemba Monastery

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PBO#: 930/000/363

NPO#: 036-811

*Uxolo* is the isiXhosa word meaning peace. Benedict teaches his monks to "seek peace and pursue it". This quest has been the hallmark of Benedictine monasticism since the 6th century. We strive to continue to bring peace to not just ourselves but to all who come to us.

On the cover: This picture is the symbol of the work of our community. We are six monks total; the item pictured has six monks. We are the Order of the Holy Cross. We see ourselves together taking up the cross and following Christ. It is a true Benedictine symbol of community.

## Contributing to Our Monastery

Please send your gift to:

The Prior  
at the address to the left.

For our banking details, please email [jostias@umaria.co.za](mailto:jostias@umaria.co.za) or ring (046) 622-6465.

### If you are in the United States:

Please send your gift to

Mary Davey  
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Please contact us or look at our website for details about tax exemption.

You can now donate online! See [www.umaria.co.za](http://www.umaria.co.za)

### Requests

If you would like to know how you can remember the monastery in your will, please contact the [Prior](#).