

# Tridentine Community News

June 27, 2021 – Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

## *The Norbertines' New St. Michael's Abbey, Part 2 of 2*

In 1957, seven Norbertine priests from Hungary settled in Orange County, California, intent on creating a new abbey free from Communist persecution. Those founders of what became St. Michael's Abbey built their first facility in what was then the extreme rural environs of the hills along the Santiago Canyon.

Fast forward a few decades, and that part of Orange County had evolved into an upscale neighborhood. Just down the street is Saddleback Church, the megachurch founded by Pastor Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Life*. Gradually the Abbey was expanded, most significantly by the addition of St. Michael's Prep School for boys grades 9-12, at which many of the Norbertine priests teach. The rapid expansion of Orange County created a need for many new parishes to be built and priests to staff them. The Norbertines were happy to help out.

Unlike metro Detroit and Windsor, traditional expressions of Catholic worship are not that prevalent in Los Angeles and Orange County. Diocesan priests rarely show an interest in the Traditional Mass. This group of Norbertines, however, developed a specialty of offering both the Ordinary Form in a traditional manner as well as staffing most of the Extraordinary Form Masses in the region, as was documented in last week's edition of this column. They have recorded CDs of Gregorian Chant and offer a daily Ordinary Form Mass with chant on weekdays at 7:00 AM and on Sundays at 11:00 AM. On Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays it is in Latin.

Vocations boomed as young men from across the continent inquired about joining this traditionally-minded order. Those young men are sent to the minor seminary of the Toronto Oratory for studies. Today there about 50 priests and 30 seminarians affiliated with the Abbey.



Though the order was growing, the campus of St. Michael's Abbey was not. The main chapel was relatively small and plain, lacking the ornamentation one would expect to match the

solemn liturgies held there. The overall appearance of the buildings, including the prep school, was army barracks/cheap motel. Something needed to be done.

One benefit of being located in such a wealthy area is that donors are not hard to find. Fundraisers began to be held. One ardent supporter and event host was novelist Dean Koontz, for example.

A similar, but larger, hilltop property was acquired a few miles north of the original abbey. French architect Jean-Louis Pages was hired to design a classic European monastery campus. A few weeks ago this writer paid a visit to the new Abbey, which seems immense in comparison to the old one. A massive church dominates the campus, in which there are galleries of Side Altars

on the main and lower levels. One temporary casualty of the move was the prep school had to be shut down until a new school can be built at the new campus. For more information, visit: [www.stmichaelsabbey.com](http://www.stmichaelsabbey.com)



## *Tridentine Masses This Coming Week*

**Fri. 07/02 7:00 PM:** High Mass at *Old St. Mary's* (Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary) – Celebrant: Fr. Joe Tuskiewicz. Reception after Mass.

Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail [info@windsorlatinmass.org](mailto:info@windsorlatinmass.org). Previous columns are available at [www.windsorlatinmass.org](http://www.windsorlatinmass.org).