

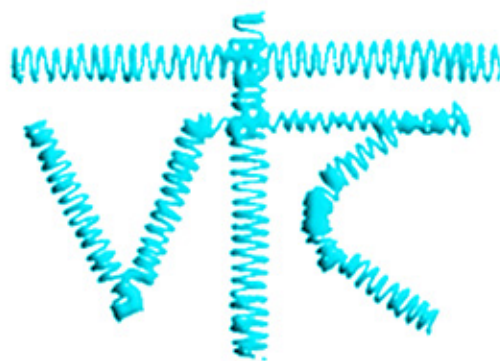


PETER



BENEDICT

THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS



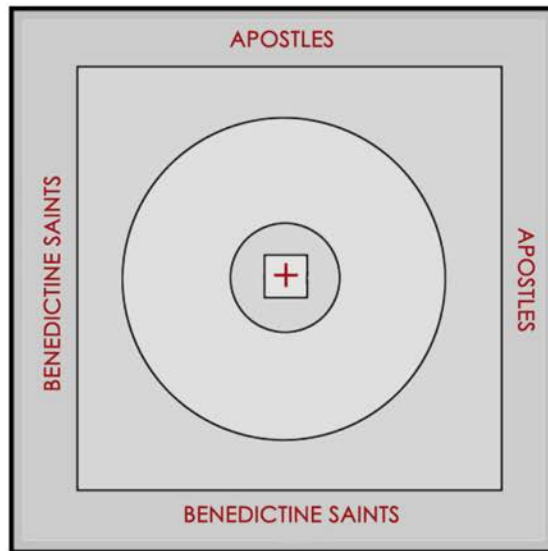
THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS

A SERIES OF TWENTY-FOUR HANGINGS
CREATED BY
FR. VINCENT DE PAUL CROSBY, O.S.B.
FOR
SAINT MARY'S ABBEY CHURCH
MORRISTOWN, NJ



“ At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal”

Revelations 4: 2-6



ABBEY CHURCH PLAN

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Saint Mary's Abbey Church

In 1961, the Benedictines of Saint Mary's Abbey, Delbarton School, Morristown, New Jersey selected Victor Christ-Janer Associates of New Canaan, Connecticut to design their new church and monastery. Christ-Janer's style was sleek and contemporary, employing the simplicity and beauty of natural building materials. The walls of the church are all cinder block giving the outer area of the space an overall gray tonality.

In recent years there has been a growing desire for more color in the worship space so the monks asked Fr. Vincent de Paul Crosby, O.S.B., a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania to create some fabric art for the four cinder block walls. Fr. Vincent de Paul suggested the idea of the Communion of the Saints, six figures on each wall, each looking down at the Altar. The total number 24 figures is reminiscent of the 24 elders surrounding the throne of God in the Book of Revelation. In this case they are the 12 apostles and 12 Benedictine Saints. The art was created digitally and then printed on canvas. Each hanging is 3' x 10'.

APOSTLE SHIELDS



PETER

The two crossed keys, symbolize the confession of faith upon which the Church is founded. The inverted cross indicates how Peter requested that his head might be where his Master's feet were nailed to the cross.



ANDREW

The cross saltire, now familiarly known as St. Andrew's Cross, is traditionally the form of the cross upon which he was crucified after preaching the gospel in Greece.



JAMES THE LESS

Tradition says that James the less was martyred by stoning and that his body was sawn in two, hence the symbol of the saw.



JOHN

Legend has it that an attempt was made on John's life by placing poison in his chalice. Actually, he was the only one of the twelve to attain a ripe old age and die a natural death.



PHILIP

Philip is represented by loaves and fishes, referencing his participation in the miracle of their multiplication.



BATHOLEMEW

The flaying knife is the symbol for Bartholomew. He met his fate with those knives.



THOMAS

Thomas is represented by the carpenter's square. Tradition has it that he built the Church in India, while carrying on his ministry there.



MATTHEW

Matthew was a tax collector, so he is depicted by three bags of money recalling his former manner of livelihood.



JAMES, THE GREAT

The scallop shell was a simple dish with many uses. The three shells symbolize James' missionary journeys.



JUDE

The ship symbolizes Jude's missionary travels



SIMON

Simon was an avid fisherman and through the power of the Gospel he became a fisher of men, thus the fish and book of the Gospels.



MATTHIAS

Matthias was chosen by the apostles to take the place of Judas the traitor. The Bible refers to his work as an apostle and the sword to his martyrdom.



PETER

St. Peter was the leader of the apostles, chosen by Jesus to have a special relationship with him. With James and John he was privileged to witness the Transfiguration, the raising of a dead child to life, and the agony in Gethsemane. His mother-in-law was cured by Jesus. He was sent with John to prepare for the last Passover before Jesus' death. His name is first on every list of apostles.

And to Peter only did Jesus say, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven".



ANDREW

St. Andrew, was the older brother to St. Peter.

According to the New Testament, Andrew was born in the village of Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee during the early first century. Much like his younger brother, Simon Peter, Andrew was also a fisherman.

According to Christian tradition, Andrew went on to preach the Good News around the shores of the Black Sea and throughout what is now Greece and Turkey. Andrew was martyred by crucifixion in Patras. He was bound, rather than nailed, to a cross, as is described in the Acts of Andrew. He was crucified on a cross form known as "crux decussata," which is an X-shaped cross or a "saltire." Today this is commonly referred to as the "St. Andrew's Cross." It is believed Andrew requested to be crucified this way, because he deemed himself "unworthy to be crucified on the same type of cross as Jesus."



This **St. James** is the brother of John the Evangelist. The two were called by Jesus as they worked with their father in a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee.

James was one of the favored three who had the privilege of witnessing the Transfiguration, the raising to life of the daughter of Jairus, and the agony in Gethsemani.

This James, is called James the "Greater". The title "the Greater" was added to St. James' name to help distinguish him from the Apostle James "the Less," who is believed to have been shorter than James "the Greater."

James was martyred for his faith by King Herod, who decapitated him. Saint James the Greater is known as the first apostle to die.

As he was not allowed to be buried following his martyrdom, his remains were taken to Compostela, Spain, by some of his followers, who buried him there.

In the ninth century his remains were discovered and moved to a tomb in Santiago de Compostela. Today, his remains can still be found in the Cathedral of Santiago.



JOHN

St. John was called from his life as a fisher to become a "fisher of men."

John's own Gospel refers to him as "the disciple whom Jesus loved", the one who reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper, and the one to whom Jesus gave the exquisite honor of caring for his mother, as John stood beneath the cross. "Woman, behold your son.... Behold, your mother"

Because of the depth of his Gospel, John is usually thought of as the eagle of theology, soaring in high regions that other writers did not enter.

There is a tradition of blessing new wine on the feast of St John, December 27th. The tradition comes from a story associated with the biography of the saint. It is said that, while in Ephesus, John was offered a glass of poisoned wine. Before drinking, he blessed the wine and the poison came out of the cup in the form of a small snake.



BARTHOLOMEW

St. Bartholomew, a doctor in the Jewish law, was a dear friend of St. Philip the Apostle. Because Bartholomew was a man "in whom there was no guile," his mind was open to the truth. He went willingly with Philip to see Christ, and recognized the Savior immediately as the Son of God. After having received the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost, Bartholomew evangelized Asia Minor, north-western India, and Greater Armenia.

In the latter country, while preaching to idolaters, he was arrested and condemned to death. While still alive, his skin was torn from his body.



PHILIP

St. Philip came from the same town as Peter and Andrew, Bethsaida in Galilee. Jesus called him directly, and he then sought out Nathanael and told him of the "one about whom Moses wrote"

Like the other apostles, Philip took a long time coming to realize who Jesus was. On one occasion, when Jesus saw the great multitude following him and wanted to give them food, he asked Philip where they should buy bread for the people to eat. Saint John comments, "Jesus said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do" Philip answered, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little."

Possibly because Philip bore a Greek name or because he was thought to be close to Jesus, some gentile proselytes came to him and asked him to introduce them to Jesus.



THOMAS

St. Thomas made one unfortunate remark and has been branded as "Doubting Thomas" ever since. But if he doubted, he also believed. He made what is certainly the most explicit statement of faith in the New Testament: "My Lord and My God!" and, in so expressing his faith, gave Christians a prayer that will be said till the end of time. He also occasioned a compliment from Jesus to all later Christians: "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed".

Thomas should be equally well-known for his courage because of his willingness to die with Jesus. The occasion was when Jesus proposed to go to Bethany after Lazarus had died. Since Bethany was near Jerusalem, this meant walking into the very midst of his enemies and to almost certain death. Realizing this, Thomas said to the other apostles, "Let us also go to die with him".



St. Matthew was a Jew who worked for the occupying Roman forces, collecting taxes from other Jews. The Romans were not scrupulous about what the "tax farmers" got for themselves. Hence the latter, known as "publicans," were generally hated as traitors by their fellow Jews. The Pharisees lumped them with "sinners" . So it was shocking to them to hear Jesus call such a man to be one of his intimate followers.

From such an unlikely situation, Jesus chose one of the foundations of the Church, a man others, judging from his job, thought was not holy enough for the position. But Matthew was honest enough to admit that he was one of the sinners Jesus came to call. He was open enough to recognize truth when he saw him. "And he got up and followed him".



JAMES

St. James, Son of Alphaeus: We know nothing of this man except his name, and, of course, the fact that Jesus chose him to be one of the 12 pillars of the New Israel, his Church. He is not the James of Acts, son of Clopas, "brother" of Jesus and later bishop of Jerusalem and the traditional author of the Letter of James. James, son of Alphaeus, is also known as James the Lesser to avoid confusing him with James the son of Zebedee, also an apostle and known as James the Greater.

As in the case of the other apostles, we see in James a man who became one of the foundation stones of the Church, and we are reminded again that holiness and its consequent apostolate are entirely the gift of God, not a matter of human achieving



THADDEUS

St. Thaddeus, is sometimes called Jude or "Lebbaeus;" in Aramaic the meaning of Thaddaeus and Lebbaeus is the same, "beloved" or "dear to the heart."

The Fourth Gospel tells us that Thaddaeus asked Jesus, "How is it that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?" And Jesus answered, "If a man loves me and obeys my teachings, my father and I will love him and we will come to him and abide with him" Many scholars believe this was the last question Jesus answered before he began his prayer vigil in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to his arrest.

Since the eighteenth century, Christians in France and Germany have prayed to Jude Thaddaeus as the Saint of Lost Causes; today he continues to be petitioned by many Christians throughout the world.



SIMON

Very little is known about St. Simon the Zealot. The term "Zealot" referred to a Jewish political faction that desired Israel's independence both spiritually and as a nation. In early first century AD they sought to overthrow Rome through force and believed that the coming Messiah would bring such a victory. It seems Simon was associated with this political faction prior to becoming a disciple of Jesus.

Regardless of his previous political affiliations or personality, the day Simon the Zealot followed Jesus he became a disciple. As one of the people closest to Jesus he learned that Jesus came not to fight flesh and blood for a nation, but spiritual forces for souls.

During his three years of ministry with Jesus, Simon the Zealot matured into an apostle empowered to spread the gospel in truth and love to all nations. Although there are various versions of his death, it is likely he served with zeal as a missionary in Persia and eventually died a martyr's death.



ST. MATTHIAS

St. Matthias was late in coming to the community of Apostles. According to Acts, during the days after the Ascension Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers—about 120 of Jesus' followers. Now that Judas had betrayed his ministry, it was necessary, Peter said, to fulfill the scriptural recommendation that another should take his office. "Therefore, it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which he was taken up from us, become with us a witness to his resurrection".

They nominated two men: Joseph Barsabbas and Matthias. They prayed and drew lots. The choice fell upon Matthias, who was added to the Eleven.

Iconography of the Saints

Saint Benedict: Abbot, holding the Holy Rule with the Raven at his feet

Saint Scholastic: Abbess holding the Holy Rule and with the dove hovering.

Saint Gregory: Shown as a Pope but not wearing the Papal Tiara. Gregory took on the office reluctantly always preferring to be living the monastic life.

Saint Walburga: Shown with the Holy Oil and a crown at her feet, referencing her having given up her status as Princess.

Saint Romuald: Shown displaying his famous quote about remaining in one's cell, with a hermitage at his feet.

Saint Hildegard: Shown writing chant with a book at her feet. It is entitled "Scivias", a compendium of her poems and writings.

Saint Peter Damian: Depicted as a hermit who desired a strict life of penance life. He holds a "discipline" in his right hand. Cardinal robes are at his feet, referencing his desire to give up that title and return to the hermitage.

Saint Mechtilde: Mechtilde was known for her great ability to sing and direct chant. She was said to sing like a Nightingale, thus that bird at her feet. She was admired for her great charm and kindness. A pink Calla Lily is symbolic of those qualities.

Saint Anselm: Depicted as an Archbishop with a ship at his feet. The ship is symbolic of his efforts to confirm the independence of the Church, the Barque of Peter.

Saint Gertrude: She was known for her great devotion to the Sacred Heart and for her writings on nuptial mysticism. The book at her feet is entitled "De Divino Amore". She also wears a crown of flowers as a Bride of Christ.

Saint Bernard: Depicted with the Cross and instruments of the Passion, indicating his great devotion to the Passion of Christ.

Saint Frances of Rome: Depicted as Oblate living a life a service of the poor. She wears a towel over her wrist with a loaf of bread in her hand. There is also a basket of bread at her feet.



BENEDICT

Our Holy Father Benedict was born in 480 into a distinguished family in central Italy, studied at Rome, and early in life was drawn to monasticism. At first he became a hermit withdrawing to a cave high in the mountains for three years. Some monks chose Benedict as their leader for a while, but found his strictness not to their taste. Still the shift from hermit to community life had begun for him. He had an idea of gathering various families of monks into one "Grand Monastery" to give them the benefit of unity, fraternity, and permanent worship in one house. Finally he began to build what was to become one of the most famous monasteries in the world—Monte Cassino.

The Rule that gradually developed prescribed a life of liturgical prayer, study, manual labor, and living together in community under a common abbot. Benedictine asceticism is known for its moderation, and Benedictine charity has always shown great concern for the people in the surrounding area.

In the course of the Middle Ages, all monasticism in the West was gradually brought under the Rule of St. Benedict.



SCHOLASTICA

St. Scholastica was the twin sister of St. Benedict.

The twins visited each other once a year in a farmhouse because Scholastica was not permitted inside the monastery. They spent these times discussing spiritual matters.

According to the Dialogues of St. Gregory the Great, the brother and sister spent their last day together in prayer and conversation. Scholastica sensed her death was close at hand and she begged Benedict to stay with her until the next day.

He refused her request because he did not want to spend a night outside the monastery, thus breaking his own Rule. Scholastica asked God to let her brother remain and a severe thunderstorm broke out, preventing Benedict and his monks from returning to the abbey.

Benedict cried out, "God forgive you, Sister. What have you done?" Scholastica replied, "I asked a favor of you and you refused. I asked it of God and he granted it."

Brother and sister parted the next morning after their long discussion. Three days later, Benedict was praying in his monastery and saw the soul of his sister rising heavenward in the form of a white dove. Benedict then announced the death of his sister to the monks and later buried her in the tomb he had prepared for himself.



GREGORY

St. Gregory was born in 540. He was the prefect of Rome before he was 30. After five years in office he resigned, founded six monasteries on his Sicilian estate, and became a Benedictine monk in his own home at Rome.

Ordained a priest, Gregory became one of the pope's seven deacons and at the age of 50 was elected pope by the clergy and people of Rome.

He was very concerned about the conversion of England, sending 40 monks from his own monastery. He is known for his reform of the liturgy, and for strengthening respect for doctrine.

Called "the Great," Gregory has been given a place with Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome, as one of the four key doctors of the Western Church.

An Anglican historian has written: "It is impossible to conceive what would have been the confusion, the lawlessness, the chaotic state of the Middle Ages without the medieval papacy; and of the medieval papacy, the real father is Gregory the Great."



WALBURGA

Saint Walburga is shown with a jar of Holy Oil and a crown at her feet,

She was the daughter of St. Richard, one of the under-kings of the West Saxons, and of Winna, sister of St. Boniface, Apostle of Germany, and she had two brothers, St. Willibald and St. Winibald.

She is represented as an abbess with a crozier, a crown at her feet, denoting her royal birth; Her remains were placed in the Church of St. Walburga. In 893 Bishop Erchanbold opened the shrine and discovered the body to be immersed in a precious oil or dew, which from that day to this has continued to flow from the sacred remains, especially the breast.



Saint Romuald was born in 1070 in Ravenna, Italy

In the midst of a wasted youth, Romuald watched his father kill a relative in a duel over property. In horror he fled to a monastery near Ravenna. After three years, some of the monks found him to be uncomfortably holy and eased him out.

Romuald spent the next 30 years going about Italy, founding monasteries and hermitages. He longed to give his life to Christ in martyrdom, and got the pope's permission to preach the gospel in Hungary. But he was struck with illness as soon as he arrived, and the illness recurred as often as he tried to proceed.

He returned to Italy where he founded a monastery of the Camaldoli in Tuscany. Here began the Order of the Camaldolese Benedictines, uniting the monastic and eremitical lives. He told his monks to "Sit in your cells as in paradise. The path you must follow is in the Psalms----never leave it."



HILDEGARD

Born in 1098, **St. Hildegard** was Abbess, artist, author, composer, mystic, pharmacist, poet, preacher and theologian

When Hildegard was 18, she became a Benedictine nun at the Monastery of Saint Disibodenberg. Ordered by her confessor to write down the visions that she had received since the age of three, Hildegard took ten years to write her *Scivias* (Know the Ways). She also composed short works on medicine and physiology, and sought advice from contemporaries such as Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.

Like all mystics, Hildegard saw the harmony of God's creation and the place of women and men in that.

Hildegard was no stranger to controversy. Hildegard challenged the Cathars, who rejected the Catholic Church claiming to follow a more pure Christianity.

In 2012, Hildegard was canonized and named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XVI.



PETER DAMIAN

St. Peter Damian was born in 988. He escaped poverty and was sent to good schools and became a professor.

Soon, he decided to leave his teaching and give himself completely to prayer with the Benedictines of the reform of Saint Romuald at Fonte Avellana.

The abbot commanded that when he died Peter should succeed him. Abbot Peter founded five other hermitages. He encouraged his brothers in a life of prayer and solitude and wanted nothing more for himself.

Pope Stephen IX made Peter the cardinal-bishop of Ostia.

He asked often to be allowed to retire as cardinal-bishop of Ostia, and finally Pope Alexander II consented. Peter was happy to become once again just a monk. With the monks gathered around him saying the Divine Office, he died on February 22, 1072.

In 1828, he was declared a Doctor of the Church.



MECHTILDE

St. Mechtilde was born in 1240 in Thuringia. She entered the convent at the early age of seven. As a nun, Mechtilde was soon distinguished for her humility, her fervour, and that extreme amiability which had characterized her from childhood. She holds pink Calla Lilies, symbolic of her sweet disposition

She was famous for her lovely voice and was called the "Night-ingle of Helfta". Mechtilde possessed a special talent for rendering the solemn and sacred music over which she presided as domina cantrix. All her life she held this office and trained the choir with indefatigable zeal. Indeed, divine praise was the keynote of her life



ANSELMO

St. Anselm was born in Aosta, Italy in 1033. As prior and abbot, Anselm made the Benedictine monastery of Bec the center of a true reformation in Normandy and England. From this monastery he exercised a restraining influence on popes, kings, the worldly great, and entire religious orders. Raised to the dignity of Archbishop of Canterbury and primate of England, he waged a heroic campaign in defense of the rights and liberties of the Church. For this reason Anselm is shown with a ship, the "Barque of Peter" at his feet.

As a philosopher and theologian he developed a method of reasoning which prepared the way for the great thinkers of the Middle Ages.

St. Anselm exhibited remarkable versatility in his life; a combination of contemplation, prayer, study, writing, and external activity. This was partly the result of the extraordinary talent that God gave him, but it was likewise the fruit of Anselm's faithful exercise of his talent in the study of natural and supernatural truths. But his chief merit lay in his earnest, conscious effort to live in accordance with what he had learned from the study of divine truths.



GERTRUDE

St. Gertrude, was born in 1256. She became a Benedictine nun in Helfta, Saxony. She was one of the great mystics of the 13th century. Together with her friend and teacher Saint Mechtilde, she practiced a spirituality called "nuptial mysticism," that is, she came to see herself as the bride of Christ. Her spiritual life was a deeply personal union with Jesus and his Sacred Heart, leading her into the very life of the Trinity.

But this was no individualistic piety. Gertrude lived the rhythm of the liturgy, where she found Christ. In the liturgy and in Scripture she found the themes and images to enrich and express her piety. There was no clash between her personal prayer life and the liturgy.



BERNARD

St Bernard of Clairvaux was born in 1090.

In the year 1111, at the age of 20, Bernard left his home to join the monastic community of Citeaux. His five brothers, two uncles, and some 30 young friends followed him into the monastery. Within four years, a dying community had recovered enough vitality to establish a new house in the nearby valley of Wormwoods, with Bernard as abbot. The valley was soon renamed Clairvaux, the valley of light.

He was an Adviser of popes, preacher of the Second Crusade, defender of the faith, healer of a schism, reformer of a monastic Order, Scripture scholar, theologian, and eloquent preacher: Bernard was all of these yet he still retained a burning desire to return to the hidden monastic life of his younger days.

Saint Bernard had great devotion to the passion of Christ: "Where can the weak find a place of firm security and peace, except in the wounds of the Savior? Indeed, the more secure is my place there. the more he can do to help me."

He is revered as the founder of the Cistercians.



FRANCES of
ROME

St. Frances of Rome was one of the greatest mystics of the fifteenth century. She was born at Rome, of a noble family, in 1384;

Her youthful desire was to enter religion, but at her father's wish she married Lorenzo de' Ponziani at the age of twelve. Frances was remarkable for her charity to the poor, and her zeal for souls. She won away many Roman ladies from a life of frivolity, and united them in an association of oblates attached to the Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria Nuova; later they became the Benedictine Oblate Congregation. Its members led the life of religious, but without the strict cloister or formal vows, and gave themselves up to prayer and good works. She was remarkable for her humility and detachment,

On the death of her husband she retired among her oblates at Tor di Specchi, and was made superior. Pope Paul V declared her a saint on 9 May, 1608,

She is patron saint of Benedictine Oblates.

The Installation of the Hangings



The hangings were first laid out on the floor of the church.



The hangings were then hung one by one and weighted at the bottom so that they would hang straight.



The first wall of six Apostles was hung.



The second wall of six Apostles was hung.



View of the twelve Apostles seen as you enter the church.



The first wall of six Benedictine Saints was hung.



The second wall of six Benedictine Saints was hung.



The twelve Benedictine Saints seen from the monastic choir.

“THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED
BY SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES,
LET US ALSO LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT
AND THE SIN THAT CLINGS SO CLOSELY,
AND LET US RUN WITH PERSEVERANCE
THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US”

(HEBREWS 12:1-2).