



Dear Friends,

You probably know the Assumptionists and the broader Assumption family through things like the Assumptionist Center, Assumption College, meetings, St. Anne/St. Patrick's, and so on. Maybe you've encountered some priests and brothers only at Mass, and so you don't see beyond the habit or the vestments. Perhaps some acquaintances of yours are Lay Assumptionists, and you've heard their thoughts on Emmanuel d'Alzon and the mission but don't really know what they like to do.

Well, we'd like you to get to know several of them on a deeper level. Start with Fr. Donat's piece on iconography and then dive into the rest of the issue.

Assumptionists—priests, brothers, lay—are artists, bibliophiles, musicians, writers, athletes. They're cooks and martial artists and amateur naturalists. They like to sew or knit. They're movie buffs. They've had fascinating encounters, some of which have led to marriage.

But this is all part of what it means to be a member of the Assumption family. 'Assumptionist' isn't merely a title. It's a way of being.

Happy reading.

Jon Bishop, Editor



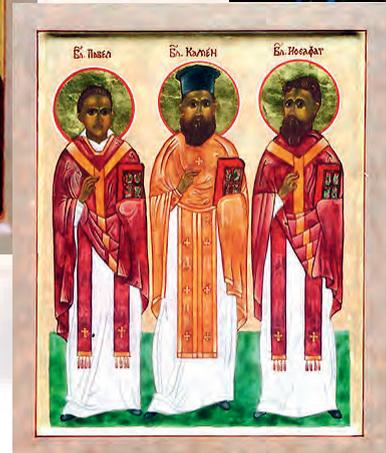
ON ICONOGRAPHY

My interest in icons goes back over forty years. In the 1990s, I began to do "Praying with Icons" devotions with the icons of the Assumptionist collection gathered in Fiskdale. But there was a deep down desire to learn how to paint them myself. The traditional apprenticeship route was out of the question. Taking a year off and working in a monastic icon studio was not possible.

One of the greatest graces I have received in my life was the discovery of the Prosopon School of Iconology and to be initiated to the art of the icon by Vladislav Andreyev and his two sons Dimitri and Nikita, all master iconographers who emigrated from the Soviet Union in the early 1980s. I followed my first "icon retreat" with them at Enders Island in August of 1997 and have repeated that experience several times since then. I have lost track of the number of icons that I have written in nearly twenty years. I always have one in process. It is a form of prayer. The methodology involves as much contemplation as it does technique. Every step is done in reference to Creation, Incarnation, Spiritual Enlightenment and ultimately Union with God.

Perhaps the greatest moment in my life as an iconographer was the invitation from Father General to do an icon of the three Bulgarian Assumptionists martyred in 1952 and declared blessed by Pope John Paul II on May 26, 2002, and to be able to present that icon to the congregation in Plovdiv, Bulgaria on that occasion.

Fr. Donat Lamothe, A.A., professor emeritus of music



SOME SURPRISES FROM MEMBERS OF THE ASSUMPTION FAMILY!



JUMPING INTO THE IMAGINATION



When not studying or doing ministry, I spend time reading comic books and literary novels, watching adventure movies, and sketching people's faces and figures. There is something about the adventures of mythological gods and heroes that fascinates me a lot and I enjoy illustrating what I have read. Historical fiction excites me, too— stories of medieval monks and monarchs, seers and sages, pirates and princesses, dwarves and dragons! I don't think I would ever want to live in a make-believe world, but these little "retreats" invigorate me such that my imagination is sharpened and that I am able to live life with more creativity and some courage.

Bro. Blair Nuyda, A.A., student

INDOOR/OUTDOOR HOBBIES

I have been paper quilling for a number of years. I've done wedding invitations, baby announcements, and graduation gifts. My outdoor pleasure is feeding birds. I have many bird houses and feeders. I've just completed a shed that has enough openings for the birds to come and go easily during inclement weather.

Judy Curboy, Lay Assumptionist



MY LIFE WITH ART

"A picture is worth a thousand words!" And besides, a beautiful picture is great to look at. That's one of the things I learned from Fr. Denys Gonthier's French literature courses at Assumption College. Great art and literature teach us so much and do it in a pleasing way. When I learned that lesson, I decided that art, for me, even more than theology or philosophy, would be a wonderful way to try to understand what life is all about and to entice students to consider some of these same questions by approaching them indirectly, rather than head on.

Fr. Richard Lamoureux, A.A., director of formation

"In response to Assumption's distinctive vocation, we must never cease to keep ourselves available and ready to do new things." (Rule #18)



PENGUINS

People know that I am a lover of words, a writer of sorts and an involved music minister. Did you know, though, that I love penguins? Yes, I do---both the real ones and the not so real. I developed this fixation when I was an elementary principal. I knew I wanted some kind of gimmick to focus on that would bring together students and teachers. I decided on the penguin. It worked! I was able to transfer that concept of a penguin community of caring to my own school community. Since then, I have been attracted to penguins and to penguin artifacts. At one point in time, I had penguin trivets, penguin mugs, and lots of penguin ornaments. I still have a two foot ceramic penguin in my home office.

Pat Haggerty, Lay Assumptionist



For more information on Lay Assumptionists call: 617-783-0400 & for Vocation inform

MATCHED

Something not too many people know about us, though we have never tried to hide it, is that we met online through Match.com. Allison likes to point out that Brian was on the site for several months before he found Allison, while Allison was only on the site for one week! We met in Cambridge for coffee, which turned into lunch and a three-hour date. We were married a year-and-a-half later by Assumptionist Fr. Claude Grenache and now are expecting our first child this spring. None of that would have happened had Brian not spotted a certain lovely lady's online profile and sent her a message!

Brian and Allison Bialas, Lay Assumptionists



FLYING LIKE A RUG

It is always good to unwind, relax, and clear your mind. I cannot think of a better way of doing this than by practicing AIKIDO (a modern Japanese martial art rooted in the way of a Samurai.) I have been involved in AIKIDO on and off for over 30 years. After our children were born, I had a break for 15 years. Three years ago, my son Radek and I joined a DOJO in Worcester. It is such a great pleasure to get your bones thrown around and at the same time build community with many others who are working to bring peace to our society.

Tomasz Jaster, Lay Assumptionist



NEEDLE AND THREAD

As a young child, I remember watching my mother sew. She never actually taught me how to sew, but it was something I embraced once I became a young mother. I made costumes for Halloween and for school projects. I even was so bold as to reupholster a couch and chair that had been handed down. When I returned to teaching, the sewing machine and fabric were put away until recently. Now the projects involve creating beautiful liturgical settings for our chapel.

Terry Johnson, Lay Assumptionist



THE BOOK

About 10 years ago, at the end of summer, I decided to compile all our family recipes. Some were half torn, yellow with age, and some written on small pieces of paper. The "authors" were grandmothers, aunts, mothers and daughters—all great cooks. I brought it to a publisher in Webster who printed it, bound it and by Christmas all our family households had a copy under their tree. To this day, our family refers to it as "The Book".

Sylvia Desautels, Lay Assumptionist



FAVORITE READINGS

I have been an avid reader from a very young age. Heidi, The Bobbsey Twins, Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys were all early favorites. Later, I preferred the military genre and stories on sports figures. Most recently, I have been reading books on the lives of saints and on spiritual growth. But I must admit that I do an adult murder mystery every now and then.

Lynne Brouillette, Lay Assumptionist



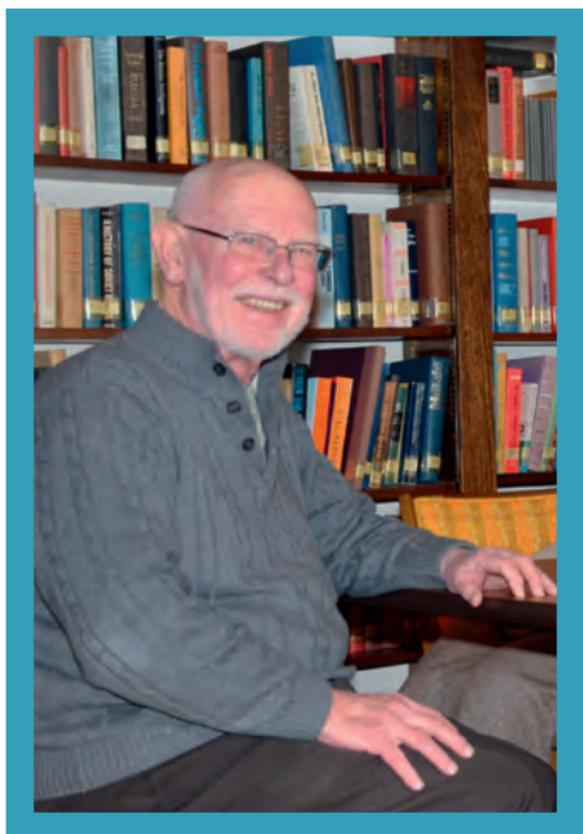
A WRITER REFLECTS



I started feeling attracted to poetry in high school and it never went away. I started writing poetry while at the Montmartre Canadien in Quebec City. Each religious had to write for the Sunday bulletin, and my first piece was a prayer for vocations in poetic form. It was like a push to continue. So I did. Whenever I wrote a poem in French or in English, I'd make a version in the other language.

When I was stationed in Brighton, I was working at Babson College as the Catholic chaplain. It was only a part-time job. I had a lot of free time, so I decided to try prose and perhaps begin an autobiography. But then I thought of doing a novel. I sat at my word processor and typed a title—Cold Morning—and continued typing until the novel was complete. I immediately started a second one, Frozen Days, until I'd finished twelve of them. There were three series of four following the seasons and ending with Summer Squalls or the Carousel Caper. Another, October Surprise, is on the way, but that one will have to wait.

Fr. Eugene LaPlante, A.A., superior of Old English Road





MY SPIRITUALITY



My spirituality
Is
Like
A burning
Multicolored candle.

God Is The flame.

As
The wax
Flows
And drips
And congeals,
It
Forms
An exquisite
Ever-changing
Pattern
That
Is
Uniquely
Beautiful
And
Uniquely
Me.



Fr. Eugene LaPlante, A.A.



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