



**EDITOR'S DESK**

*The United States' Region has had to live through difficult moments this summer. We regret to inform you that two very special Assumptionists have died in the past few weeks. Fr. Albert Emile Brochu, A.A., founder, and for many years director, of the Assumption Guild, died on June 30<sup>th</sup>. He was buried in the Assumptionists' plot in St. Anne's Cemetery in Fiskdale, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. On August 13<sup>th</sup>, Fr. George H. Tavard, A.A., internationally recognized theologian and ecumenist, died suddenly at the airport in Paris, France, as he was boarding a plane to return to the United States. Fr. George was buried in Paris.*

*In this issue of the newsletter we present the Assumptionist retirement home in Worcester. A.A. Fathers Robert Fortin and Eugene LaPlante, and Brother Armand Lemaire share their thoughts with Pat Haggerty. In addition, Beth Fleming offers the reflections of three pilgrims (Fr. Donat Lamoth, A.A., Sr. Noula Cotter, R.A. and Liz Clayton) who were in Rome on June 3, 2007, for the canonization of Marie-Eugénie de Jésus, Foundress of the Religious of the Assumption. There are also the stories of two Assumptionist Center Lay residents, Brian and Christian, who give their important witness to the Assumptionist groundwork of building Christian Community.*

*Also in this newsletter our team was joined by Joe Pagano, who will keep us informed about the Assumptionist lay initiatives in the North American Province and around the world.*

*Lastly, for the first time in the history of our newsletter, you will find a request to join in our annual financial appeal to support the Assumptionists.*

*Once again, thank you for your continued support and encouragement of our newsletter. If there is anything that you would like to share with our team, please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mail at: [newsletter@assumptio.org](mailto:newsletter@assumptio.org).*

*For more stories and information on the Augustinians of the Assumption, please visit our website at: [www.assumption.us](http://www.assumption.us).*

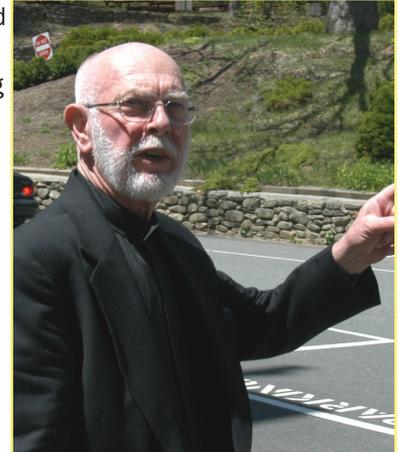
**ADVANCING THE KINGDOM - AT ANY AGE** by Patricia Haggerty  
*A Conversation with three special Assumptionists*

What could possibly pull me away from a beautiful, sunny day at the beach? I had been spending time on the New Hampshire coast with my family enjoying the sun, sand, and surf. However, the opportunity to interview some Assumptionists about their retirement was something I couldn't turn down. I wanted to find out what Assumptionist retirees did while living at the residence on Old English Road.

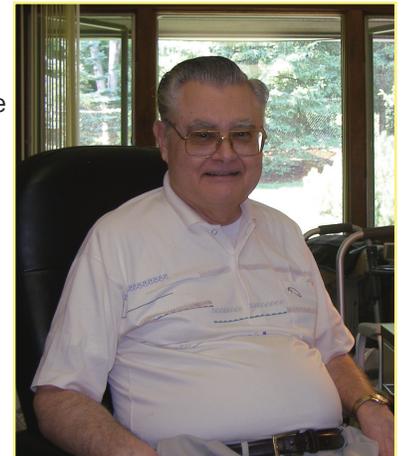
What I had envisioned as an interview turned out to be a wonderful conversation with three members of the Assumption community. When I arrived at 50 Old English, Father Eugene LaPlante greeted me. I had never met Father Eugene, but he welcomed me like a familiar guest. I should not have been surprised because the welcoming spirit of Assumption is a hallmark of the community and its members. Wherever you visit—whether it's a parish, an academic institution, or a community residence—Assumptionists will make you feel at home. They are warm, friendly, and sincere. That was such the case during my visit in July.

Father Eugene and I were joined by Father Robert Fortin and later by Brother Armand Lemaire. All three gentlemen were extremely articulate and open about their lives and their spirituality. I was amazed to hear about what they had done before arriving at this juncture in their lives. Two of the three had experienced quite an intercontinental array of adventures. Father Eugene spent time in Rome, Moscow, and twenty-five years in Canada. Father Robert spent time in Moscow, Paris, Boston, and fifteen years in Jerusalem. Brother Armand, amazingly, spent fifty years working in the business and finance departments of Assumption College.

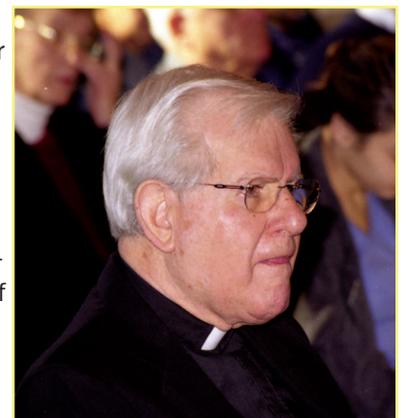
No matter where their vocations led them, each of these men had a similar



Father Eugene LaPlante



Father Robert Fortin



Brother Armand Lemaire

continued from page 1 start. They were drawn to the Assumptionist way of life because of the example of other Assumptionists. They were influenced by the compassion and sincerity of these mentors. Working and studying among them, gave each of these men the spark for their own religious lives. They viewed their vocations as an opportunity to look at the "greater good of all." They all agreed that "advancing the kingdom" remains their all-important consideration. I could better understand, as we spoke, what separates the laity from the religious. Father Robert noted that there is a "sacramental significance" to the priesthood. Father Eugene spoke to the "impediments to spirituality" that exist for the layperson. Brother Armand sadly commented that young people don't have the "influences" available as examples to the religious life. How true!

As to the idea of retirement, I am convinced there is no such thing for these energetic gentlemen. When I think about the concept of retirement, I think of a kind of withdrawal, a slowing down. These men are still at high speed in many ways. Father Eugene continues his ministry as the chaplain at Babson College while helping out at Wellesley College. He works on French and English translations for the community and writes murder mysteries in his spare time. Father Robert spends his time immersed in French translations, writing for community publications, and working on several books. As he describes his work, "It's a 24-7 kind of thing." Brother Armand still works for Assumption College on the Board of Directors. He works "almost full-time," as he put it, for the Director of Alumni Relations.

Father Eugene is now 75. Father Robert will be 75 in September, and Brother Armand is 83. Together, they represent over 170 years of

commitment to the religious life and to the Assumptionists. What a remarkable accomplishment! Their commitment is still firm, and their enthusiasm is still obvious. To them, retirement is simply a "reality check." It is an opportunity for reflection, renewal, and remaining useful to the community and their world.

My thanks go to these Assumptionists for giving me further insight into the Assumption way of life. They confirmed my view of the accessibility of the Assumptionists.

**DEVELOPMENT OFFICE CORNER**

*We, the Assumptionists of the US Region depend heavily on our fundraising campaigns. Without the support of our Friends, we could not continue our services and ministry.*

*In this annual appeal request it is important for you to know that the Assumptionists must rely on the generosity of good people like you. With your ongoing support, we will continue to pursue our mission by extending the Kingdom of God. It really takes every individual's support to help us maintain the many ministries we do in the US Region. It also helps us provide for our elderly brothers and continue the training of future Assumptionists.*

*Please take the time to reflect prayerfully upon God's many blessings in your life. We ask you to please consider a donation to our annual appeal as you "walk humbly with God." In this annual appeal, we urge you to support the Assumptionists. Please help us in our financial needs. Your donation of \$10, \$20, \$50 or more, combined with donations from other Friends, will enable us to continue our ministry and mission.*

*Thank you for the act of charity you will offer to the Assumptionists.*

**George H. Tvard, A.A.**



Born - February 6, 1922  
Professed - December 27, 1943  
Ordained - March 02, 1947  
Deceased - August 13, 2007

**Albert Emile Brochu, A.A.**



Born - March 10, 1914  
Professed - October 7, 1936  
Ordained - March 20, 1943  
Deceased - June 30, 2007

*Our hearts are restless until they rest in you*

St. Augustine

**the assumptionist...**

a quarterly newsletter of the US Region of the Augustinians of the Assumption

Director of Development: Tomasz Kierul  
Editors: Donald Espinosa, A.A., Beth Fleming, Patricia Haggerty, Joe Pagano, Mary Ann McCue  
Design: Natalia Kierul

330 Market Street Brighton, MA 02135  
Tel 617-783-0400 Fax 617-783-8030  
newsletter@assumptio.org  
www.assumption.us

### ASSUMPTIONIST CENTER IN BRIGHTON, MA - LAY RESIDENTS' REFLECTIONS

It was pure chance that I came to know – and live at – the Assumptionist Center in Brighton. Teaching philosophy in Rome, I was awarded a one-year fellowship at Boston College for research and work on a book that tries to demonstrate the (philosophical) ‘Logic of Christianity’.

This chance – a Roman acquaintance, a Benedictine sister with family in Boston, mentioned the Assumptionist Center and its proximity to Boston College – turned out to be a true blessing: not only because the place is ideally situated, not only because of the many assets it offers from a ‘practical’ point of view, creating a perfect environment for my work – but, rather, because the community at the Assumptionist Center (comprised of religious, lay residents, and staff members) set a concrete example of the practical or lived ‘logic of Christianity’: an unconditional humanity. For Christians, of course, this humanity is rooted in faith, prayer, and meditation – and these are pivotal in Assumptionist community life as well; but I had already known many religious communities during my life and career within the Church – and nowhere had they been able to create such a unique and welcoming atmosphere as at the Assumptionist Center Brighton, full of kindness, hospitality and, not least, a good sense of humor – which, after all, according to Peter L. Berger, is also a “signal of transcendence”.

One of the aspects that make life in this community especially attractive is undoubtedly (and certainly no less for the religious than for the lay residents) the manifold backgrounds of its



Christian Göbel

members, young and old: even though relatively small in numbers, it is immensely rich in most diverse and colorful vitae and professions, united, however, in a shared Christian and human attitude towards life and towards others.

Thank you all! May the spirit of this community continue to make it such a great place! For my part, I hope to be able to come back soon, even if only as a visitor.

by Christian Göbel

When I came to Brighton from rural Pennsylvania in the fall of 2004 to attend Boston College Law School, I knew that it would probably be my best chance to grow closer to God before the responsibilities of work and family would require me to focus my energies elsewhere. The Assumptionist Center, I soon found, was the perfect place for me to live. There are always remarkable people to talk to over meals and at social gatherings. I might discuss such different things at dinner as the doctrines of Catholicism versus Lutheranism, the



Brian Bialas

political conflict in Congo, or the current state of Red Sox Nation. Permeating everything that goes on at the Assumptionist Center, however, is a deep knowledge of God and desire to serve Him. Everyone together is trying to live a Christ-centered life and to realize what that means. It really is a very special place.

After three years, I now have graduated from law school and have come to realize the full impact that living in religious community has had on my spiritual life. I started law school without knowing who the Assumptionists are or the activities that go on in a religious order. Now, however, I understand the value of daily devotion to God through formal prayers, mass, and a commitment to learn from one’s brother. I have learned that there is nothing more important to a student, or to anyone else for that matter, than putting God in the center of everything. Whether in work, study, or raising a family, true happiness can only be found through a relationship with God. This is a lesson that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

By Brian Bialas

**“The community, by the quality of its life and work, bears witness to the Good News. Healthy or ill, young or old, we share this apostolic mission with our brothers, each according to his vocation and situation.”**

Rule of Life #19

**ASSUMPTIONIST LAITY MOVEMENT** by Joe Pagano

The 2005 General Chapter's articulation calling for greater lay collaboration precipitated the formation of an International Commission consisting of four laypeople and two Assumptionists. We met for the first time last September in Rome for two days, we'll meet again in Paris this month and finally next summer- perhaps in the US. At the meetings and throughout the year we exchange initiatives originating on the local level and share aspirations for a common formation for lay people throughout the world. The process has been exciting and difficult. With only one member of the commission fluent in two languages, having no common language makes it difficult, but sharing a common bond with The Assumptionists makes it exciting.

**MARIE-EUGENIE MILLERET DE BROU DECLARED A SAINT BY POPE BENEDICT XVI** by Beth Flaming

It was an awesome wet day in June that brought together Fr. Donat Lamothe, A.A., Sr. Nuala Cotter, R.A., and Liz Clayton, Associate Missionaries of the Assumption volunteer, among many others celebrating a special and saintly woman. Here are some of their collective thoughts about the holy event, where truly they experienced the meaning of Marie Eugenie's words: "The earth is a place for the glory of God."

"It was a great privilege to be present at the canonization of Blessed Marie- Eugenie, founder of the Religious of the Assumption", writes Fr. Donat. It took place during the Mass on Trinity Sunday, June 3, 2007 celebrated by Pope Benedict in the great space within the arms of the Bernini Colonnade before St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. But the celebration lasted for three days, not counting the pilgrimage that many sisters and friends had taken in the preceding week to places in France associated with the new saint. Sr. Nuala adds, "She'd come a long way from a childhood more Christian in name than in belief, which had, nevertheless, prepared her for her future as a pilgrim and foundress. Her mother had given her a foundation in the kind of practical virtue that attends to the needs of the poor, while her father had encouraged her love of learning. But something, or rather Someone, was lacking - Jesus Christ. She found him slowly, first through suffering - the divorce of her parents, the death of her mother when she was only 15. At 19, she went to listen to a preacher at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. What she heard cut her to the heart and changed her whole life. By the age of 22, she would begin the foundation of what became the Religious of the Assumption."



More than 100 years after that foundation, June 3, 2007 dawned grey and cool, the sound of rain hitting the windows. Liz explained that "The pilgrims tried to remain optimistic, thinking that it would soon clear, but as we settled into the puddles that had pooled in our seats we had to face facts: the rain wasn't going anywhere. And yet, while

the rain may have put a damper on a Red Sox game or a day in the park, it did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm that morning in St. Peter's Square. The clouds may have been low but spirits were high - and the best was still to come!"

The Mass began at 10:00 AM with the arrival of Pope Benedict. The penitential rite followed and when the Pope mentioned the names of those to be declared saint in his opening remarks, applause rose from the various pilgrimage groups associated with each one. I can assure you that the acclamation from the Assumption family was the loudest! It was very loud indeed during the actual rite of canonization that began shortly thereafter. The Litany of the Saints was sung and then the pope pronounced the declaration of canonization. Cardinal Martins expressed the thanks of the Church. "Our" Marie Eugenie now belonged to the whole Church in a new way.

As she shared her canonization day with three others, so Marie Eugenie founded the Assumption alongside others; her tremendous gift for friendship led her to attract and reach out to many young people, both women and men, who joined her in the effort: two of the closest were Kate O'Neil, a young Irishwoman who would become her "right arm," and Emmanuel d'Alzon, an energetic priest from the south of France with whom she would exchange 4000 letters over a forty-year friendship.

Sr. Nuala recounts that "I was thinking about that genius for friendship as I sat dripping in the Square, reflecting on all the people I'd already seen around town, many wearing our distinctive pilgrim's scarf or the navy blue baseball cap with Marie Eugenie's signature embroidered on the side, not to mention all the sisters in the purple and white of the Assumption! All that humanity, came from all corners of the globe, from every continent, all as wet as I was, and just as happy, too. More than 100 years after her death, Marie Eugenie was still gathering people, speaking a word of hope and challenge, offering us a way of friendship and communion - with her, with each other, and most importantly, with Jesus Christ.