

From a  
letter to a  
congregation



*How could a week in the woods with other writers and Benedictine monks benefit me – or you, with whom I'm called to serve as pastor?*



*The easy answer I could give is, "The writing time will enrich my preaching." And that's true enough. The extended time to write will build an essential skill used in preaching. Yet, indirectly improving my preaching skill is not the only reason for my taking part in a writing residency. Writing also deepens me as a woman of faith.*

Written by a participant in the  
June '07 *Writing and the  
Pastoral Life* Workshop



INSIDE  
THE

# COLLEGEVILLE INSTITUTE



FOR ECUMENICAL & CULTURAL RESEARCH

Volume 1, Issue 1

August 15, 2007

## SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

- **Praying with Imagination: Artists Encounter the St. John's Bible.**

The Institute combined efforts with Saint John's School of Theology in early June to provide an occasion for 10 individuals to reflect on selected illuminations from the new handwritten Bible, and to practice their art in light of those reflections.



- Later that month, 12 Pastors joined us for the workshop, **Writing and the Pastoral Life: A Week with Eugene**

**Peterson.** One participant wrote, "I'm delighted that such a workshop as *Writing and the Pastoral Life* even exists. That I am attending it is even better."

- In early July, Michael Dennis Browne facilitated the workshop entitled **Believing in Writing: Poetry, Prose, and Prayer** for writers who are exploring religious themes in their work. Each of the 12 participants experienced long stretches of writing time each day, along with group discussion time geared towards individual projects.

- We ended the summer by hosting our third

writing workshop **Putting it on Paper: Effective Writing for Congregational Life.** Ten young pastors from around the country and into Canada joined workshop facilitator Mary Nilsen in learning ways to transition from academic writing, to writing for a congregation.

- Our three workshops were part of **Words Making Worlds: The Ecclesial Literature Project**, funded by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.



## INSTITUTE UPDATES

- A reminder that our new website is up and running. We are excited about the layout, page design, updated content, and site navigation. Since we believe that a website is dynamic, rather than static, we welcome your comments and suggestions for changes or additions. [www.collegevilleinstitute.org](http://www.collegevilleinstitute.org)
- The replacement of the roofs is underway, as is the upgrading of our smoke detector and safety alarm system. All the work is scheduled to be finished by the end of August.
- **Staffing Changes:** **Kari Schroeder**, a junior at the College of Saint Benedict, joined the staff in early June. Kari assisted with each of the summer workshops and now is busy helping prepare for the arrival of the resident scholars. **Mary Beth Banken**, Coordinator of Finances, departed from the Institute the end of July after three years of service to the Institute and 18 years of overall service to the SJU community. Thank you, Mary Beth!

## RESIDENT SCHOLARS

### Capital Campaign Update

As of early August, we have reached the over half-way point in our **Faith Leadership for an Ecumenical Future Campaign!**

To date, we have received \$1.2 million in campaign pledges, \$330,000 in estate gifts, and 60% of board members and honorary life members have pledged. We are encouraged by your support, and are grateful for your generosity.

### ANNUAL BOARD MEETING REMINDER:

\* Thurs & Fri, Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>

\* At Collegeville Institute

\* If you haven't already reserved your Abbey Guest House Room and would like one, call Elisa at 320-363-3366.

We are in the midst of preparing for the arrival of our five incoming scholars and their families for Fall '07.

#### Steven Chase:

Associate Professor of Christian Spirituality, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, MI. Project: *"On Earth As It Is: The Face of Nature in Spiritual Formation"*.

#### Peter Huff:

Professor at Centenary College in Shreveport, LA. Project: *"Popes in a World of Religions: Papal Interfaith Vision from John XXIII to Benedict XVI"*.

#### Robert Hurley:

Professor, Faculty of Theology, Laval University, Quebec, Canada. Project: *"Liberation through Story: The Bible & the Spirit of the Child"*.

#### Carol Neel:

Professor of History, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO. Project: *"The Dialogues of Anselm of Havelberg: Apocalypse and Ecumenism in 20th Century Thought"*.

#### Steven Ostovich:

Professor of Philosophy, College of St. Scholasica, Duluth, MN. Project: *"Biblical Eschatology and Political Theology"*.

## KILIAN MCDONNELL WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE



**Michael Dennis Browne**, poet, librettist & Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Minnesota, has been appointed as the 2007 Kilian McDonnell Writer-in-Residence. The Institute is already familiar with Michael's exceptional work through his leadership of Institute writing workshops, most recently, **"Believing in Writing: Poetry, Prose, and Prayer"**. Michael has published many books of poetry and prose, and has received numerous honors and awards for his teaching and writing. He has also collaborated as librettist with composer Stephen Paulus on several projects including the church opera *"The Three Hermits"*. His works include:

- *Things I Can't Tell You* (Carnegie Mellon University Press), 2005
- *Give Her the River*, picture book, paintings by Wendell Minor NY, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2004.
- *Greatest Hits 1965-2000*. Youngstown, OH: Pudding House Publications, 2001.
- *Selected Poems 1965-1995* Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1995.
- *You Won't Remember This*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1992.
- *Smoke from the Fires*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1985.
- *The Sun Fetcher*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1978.
- *Sun Exercises*. Loretto, MN: Red Studio Press, 1976.
- *The Wife of Winter*. London: Rapp & Whiting; New York: Scribner's, 1970
- "Hymn for America," music by Stephen Paulus, published by Paulus Publications, St. Paul, MN, recorded on CD for *Spirit of America* by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir
- "The Road Home" and "Pilgrims' Hymn," music by Stephen Paulus, recorded on CD for *The Road Home* by the Brigham Young University Choir
- *"The Three Hermits,"* CD (*D'Note Classics*), music by Stephen Paulus, libretto based on story by Leo Tolstoy.

Writers selected for the Kilian McDonnell residency are individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to writing that serves the purposes of the church as well as the religious impulses of a broader community, a record of producing writing that appeals to a broad audience, and a willingness to speak with and educate others about the importance and practice of such writing. The Kilian McDonnell residency is made possible through a grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc.