



1927 car at George Fruth home



*Br. Julius Terfehr, OSB, and the first truck
at St. John's*

Judge Himsl family





Alois and Maria Himsl family



John Reisinger family

Peter Eich family



John Knoblach family



In the winter walking was especially difficult, remembers Andrew Merdan:

In the winter when there was a lot of snow, Dad would haul cream once or twice a week to Avon. If there was a lot of snow, he would hang a big stump and tie that on the back of the runner, and that would drag a nice track where we could walk to school. The track would freeze after a while, so you could walk on it like pavement.

*Plowing
snow*

The monks did their part to keep the roads open. Frank Merdan recalled:

The snowplow was homemade. St. John's made it. It had a wing on it, too. They plowed out all the roads, of course, theirs first. They went out on all the neighboring roads, went out to Eich's, and all the way along. It wasn't horse drawn, it was a tractor. St. John's plowed out all the roads, until the towns got their own plows. They didn't charge anything for opening the roads.

First cars

There is some question as to what parishioner owned the first car. Some reports point to the owner of the Rupp Store — the "little Linnemann's" — near the school; other reports point to George Klein as having that distinction. In both cases that first car was a Studebaker — George's a 1912 model. Lawrence Eisenschenk remembers his father buying a new car in Cold Spring in 1923 — for \$365.

Sometimes horses made the first cars seem inadequate:

They would start the engines of the cars, then hook up the horses to the cars, then the horses would pull the cars through the snow to the road.

During the depression owning a car was certainly a luxury:

My husband went to work for the Public Works Administration. He worked for two weeks and the foreman came up to him and told him he was getting a \$6 milk check every month from the farm and he should live on that.

Well, you had your meat and potatoes, you didn't live like you live now; we made it.

I had to take the hot water heater out of my car and sell it for gas. He gave me six or seven gallons for it. Took it right out at the gas station.

I needed \$5.75 to pay on the car; I could not make it. Well, they came out to the house with a hitch and everything to repossess the car. I scattered all over, and finally our neighbor gave me the \$5.75 for the payment.

Two phrases sum up the depression years in Collegeville — "Those were tough times!" and "We made it!" In 1938, as the grip of the depression was easing, the parishioners, under the leadership of the late St. John's University teacher and alumni secretary, Mr. Leo Lauer, formed the Collegeville Community Credit Union. Attending the first meeting were Frs. Luke Fink, Marcellus Leisen, and Timothy Majerus, OSB (then pastor), and Mr. Leo Gambrino of St. Cloud. Fifty-four people pooled their resources that fall to make the credit union work. Leo Lauer was its first president, Ted Schreiner its secretary and treasurer, and Henry Kapsner its vice-president. Today the credit union continues its community service and numbers 1,281 members and \$1,300,000 in assets. Parishioners Walter Goerger, Marianne Hansen, William Cofell, Robert Dumonceaux, and Matthew Zwilling currently serve on its board.

*Depression
years*

Credit union

The needs of the abbey and the needs of the parish sometimes caused tension, especially when both groups shared the same church:



Collegeville Community Credit Union Officers on its first anniversary. First row: Gilbert Meyer, Alois Sauerer, Matthew Zwilling, Matthew Pflueger, Steve Salzer, Julian Botz. Second row: Joe Knoblach, Ben Hiltner, Leo Lauer, Ted Schreiner, Bernard Meyer.





Taking down twin towers



*Cooks and table waiters at Marilyn Phillippi's wedding
in 1963*

Workmen from St. John's





Jubilee of Fr. Abbot Peter Engel, OSB

Anniversary of Louis and Cecelia Neussendorfer, 1947. Left to right: Cyril, Alex, Frances; holding Beverly Braeger; Delores, Carol and Jeanne Winter. Standing: Br. Felix Neussendorfer, OSB, Fr. Rembert Bularzik, OSB, Edgar, Louis, Gary, Kenneth and Bernardine Braeger, Cecilia, Agnes; holding Jackie, Oswald Winter; holding Richard, Lawrence Neussendorfer and Paul Neussendorfer.



A concession is made to one or the other workmen (especially those that work in the power house) to attend the brothers' Mass at 4:45 a.m. Outside of that, no one should attend the brothers' Mass. You have your parochial Mass on Sundays and weekdays at 7:00 a.m. (*August 7, 1938*)*

Do not crowd into the lower chapel during the brothers' Mass; some of you are a nuisance there. Are you trying to get out of contributing your penny to the Sunday collection. (*January 1, 1889*)*

The thirty-one priests who served the parish were St. John's monks. The parishioners generally knew their pastors well and loved them. That the "parishioners loved him" is perhaps the highest honor paid to any priest. The priest who was loved about all the rest was Fr. Abbot Peter Engel, OSB. The 1973 reflections from parishioners who knew this man frequently gave this tribute. Abbot Peter's anecdotes pop up where the old parley:

Abbot Peter

One day we were hanging the door on the hay barn and we did not quite have enough help, and my dad shouted: "One more guy then we can do it." Father Abbot came, he pitched in and helped hang that door.

The stories surround the humanness of that pastor. He knew his people well:

Father Abbot Peter was invited for dinner; the lady of the house handed him a napkin and Abbot Peter seeing that the husband had no napkin called her attention to it. She replied: "*Der ist nicht schlapperich*" (He is not slobbery). He could laugh most heartily over this incident.



First Mass of Fr. Jerome Reisinger

*Golden Jubilee of Sr. Romelda Eisenschenk, OSB.
Sisters Raphael Ann, Leonia, Romelda, Frances Lorraine, OSB*





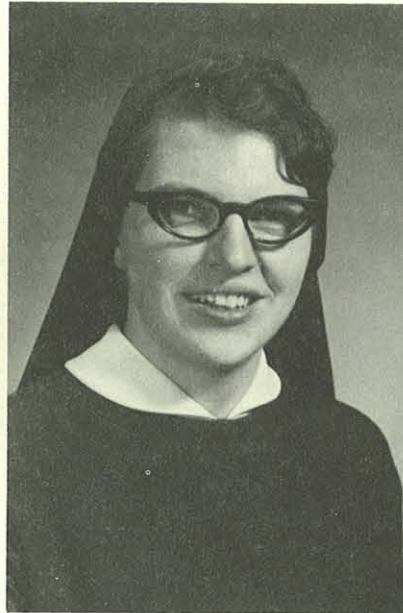
*Right to left: Sisters Marie Zwilling, Carmel Fruth,
Berchmans Zwilling, Genevieve Fruth, OSB*



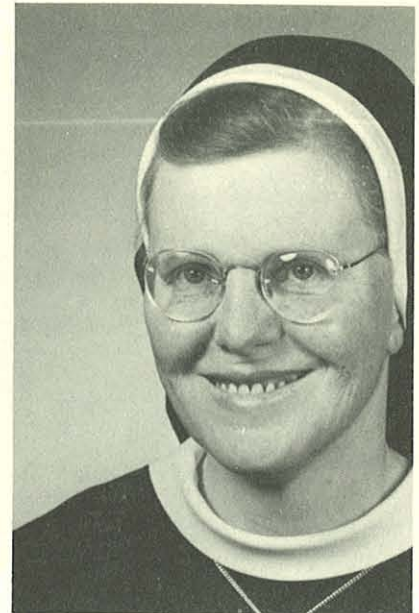
Fr. Conrad Diekmann, OSB



Fr. Godfrey Diekmann, OSB



Sr. Beatrice Eiyneck, OSB



Sr. Elizabeth Klein, OSF



Sr. Theora Dillenberg, OSB



Br. Felix Neussendorfer, OSB



Sr. Crescentia Eich, OSB



Fr. Bernard Lenarz

Sr. Elmer Reisinger, OSB



Sr. Amelia Eich, OSB

