

make their distinctive hallmarks on Gethsemani and the individuality of their abbas provides an excellent focus for each of these chapters.

The text is well written and succinct but it is the superb illustrations that really make this book. Aprile must have mined the Gethsemani archives and in doing so she has discovered real gems which are beautifully reproduced to a very high quality. In her introduction she describes the book as a "personal history", the collective biography of a community over time, and this is an approach well suited to telling the story of a monastery and its monks.

*The Orchards of Perseverance: Conversations with Trappist Monks About God, Their Lives, and the World.* by David D. Perata. pp. 201, Ruthven, Iowa: St. Therese's Press, 2000. ISBN: 0967213509. \$17.95.

*The Orchards of Perseverance*, in contrast to *The Abbey of Gethsemani: Place of Peace and Paradox*, is a very intimate book about Trappist life in the United States. This book consists of a series of interviews, printed in essay form, between the author and ten members of the community of the abbey of New Clairvaux in Vina, California, a daughter house of Gethsemani founded in 1955.

In very personal terms the monks interviewed tell their story of how they came to join the monastery, the joys and trials they have faced along the way and why they have stayed, or not as the case may be. The monks interviewed range from the abbot, novice master and other older members of the community down to a postulant, David Rosenberg, who later decided that the monastic life was not for him. The author interviews David Rosenberg a second time a few years after he left the monastery and his reflections back are an interesting insight into the effect of the monastic life on him from a perspective usually omitted from books of this kind.

This book is well illustrated with photographs of the interviewees at various stages of their monastic lives, along with photographs of the monastery itself. The accounts are presented with humour which is also evident in some of the photographs which occasionally border on the cranky. But, like any album of family photographs that is often the way.

After a brief history of the Cistercian Order and New Clairvaux, along with a brief introduction to some of the aspects of Trappist life, the interviews with the monks begin with a photograph of the sign on the entrance to the monastic enclosure "Monastic enclosure - community members only". This is an image which very simply sums up the accounts that follow as readers are invited into both the personal and community life of the monks.

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