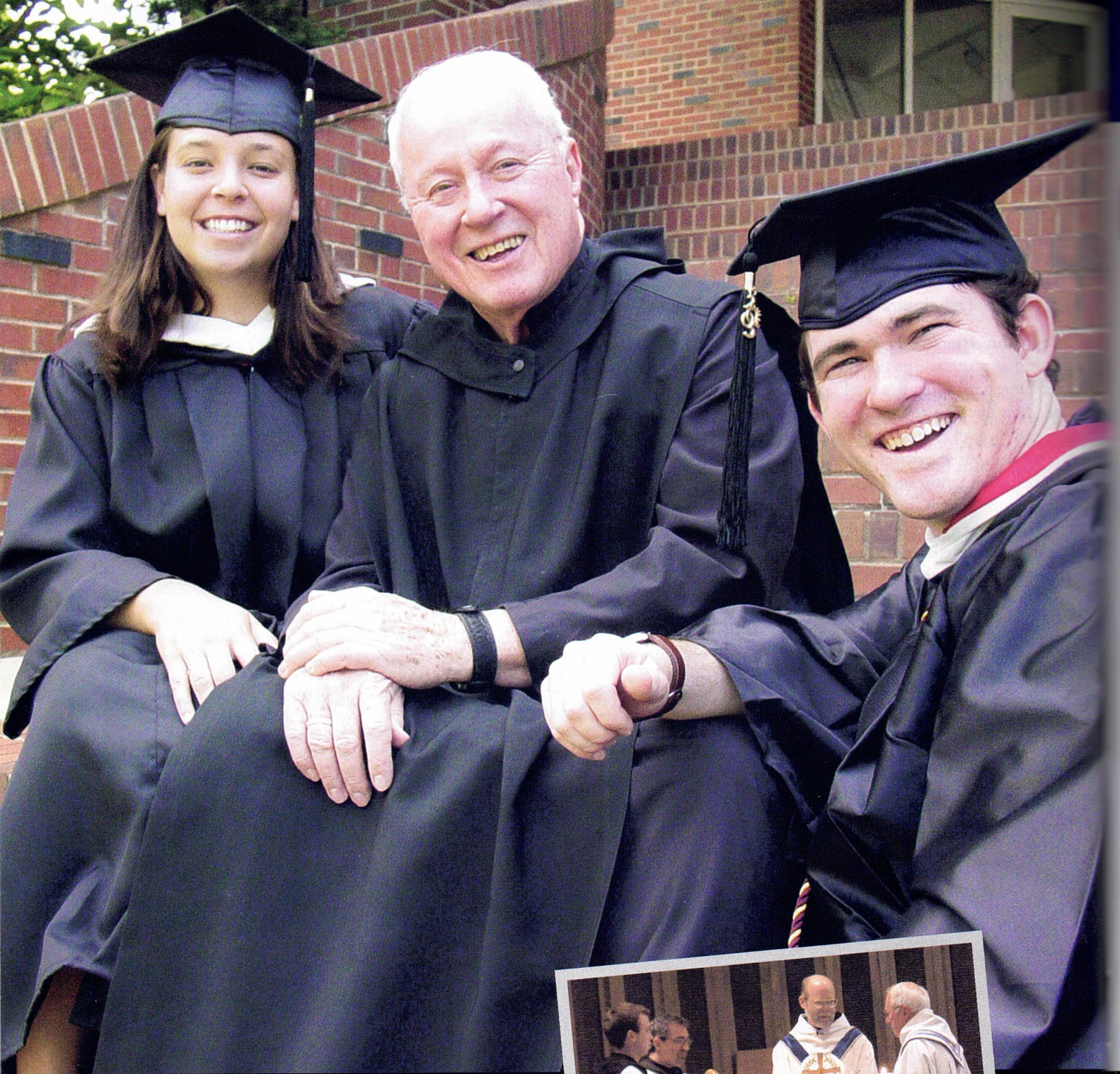
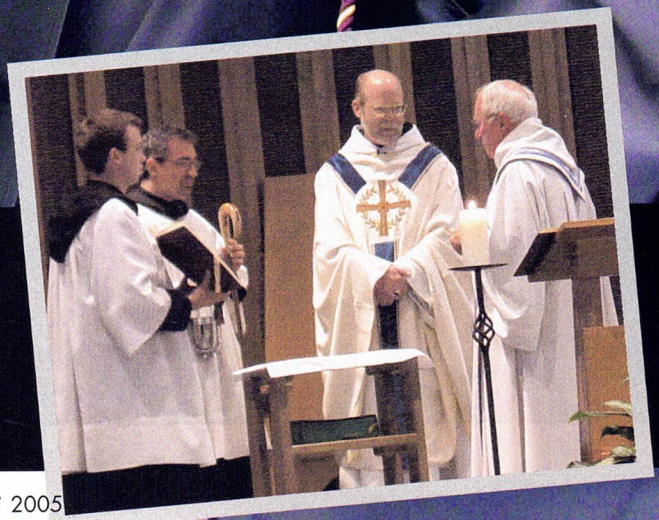


**THE SIMPLE LIFE**  
Saramarie Latham '05, Fr. Kieran  
Neilson, O.S.B. and Sean Dunn  
review the last year and look toward  
the future.



**TERMS OF ENDEARMENT** ▶

Br. Michael Boes, Br. Agostino Fernandez,  
and Abbot Placid Solari, O.S.B. present Fr. Kieran  
with a special staff commemorating his 50 years  
of service as a member of the monastery.



GETTING TO KNOW

By Aaron J. Condon '99

# Father Kieran

Once you meet him, he will not forget you and you will always remember him. You will always see him around campus. Chances are you can see him making the rounds to the different offices on the first floor of Stowe Hall to say hello, riding around on his bike or getting involved with Campus Ministry.

Father Kieran is a man with a love of people and children. He is a lover of sports, especially when it comes to UNC basketball and Notre Dame football. Also, he loves to tell a joke, which is from time to time how he starts his homilies.

## SO, WHO IS THIS FATHER KIERAN?

To begin, Father Kieran is a Charlotte native born on July 2, 1932. Father Kieran grew up in the Charlotte area and came to know the Abbey quite well. By living in the area, Father Kieran and his father would make visits to the Abbey. Therefore, I am sure the visits had an influence on Father Kieran coming to Belmont Abbey College as a student and then graduating in 1954 with a degree in business.

He says he always thought about pursuing the priesthood, however, after finishing college Father Kieran decided to join the Belmont Abbey monastic community. Father Kieran took his first vows on July 2, 1955, the same day he celebrated his 23rd birthday. He was later ordained a priest on May 26, 1960 at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church in Charlotte by Bishop Vincent Waters from the Diocese of Raleigh.

In addition to serving St. Benedict's Parish and School in Richmond, Virginia for over 23 years of his monastic life, Father Kieran has also held a variety of roles for the monastery. He has served as subprior of the monastery, taught religion, assisted broadly in various priestly duties, assisted with the College's admissions efforts and has been a sought-after counselor and advisor. Another post held by Father Kieran was novice master, under whom Abbot Placid studied.

Currently, Father Kieran continues to stay active. He is the Abbey's chaplain, is involved with Campus Ministry, regularly hears confessions and celebrates the Sunday evening student Mass.

I asked Father what his thoughts were on celebrating 50 years as a Benedictine monk. Of course, he was funny, but true with his answer. His answer was he has survived and that most of his future is behind him now.

When I asked Father Kieran whom he admired most, he gave me a variety of people who excel in virtue. One person is his brother-in-law, Robert "Bob" Potter who is a retired federal judge. Father Kieran's admiration comes from Bob's commitment to God, his family and for having integrity and a deep sense of justice. Father also looks to Robert "Bobby" Ross, who coaches football at Army, because of his devotion to his family and faith. Bobby is a graduate of Benedictine High School in Richmond, Virginia. The late Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa are two other people he admires because of the way they led their lives.

As mentioned before, Father Kieran is an avid sports fan. He loves those Tarheels from UNC and was glad to see them win the NCAA Championship. Lately, Father is showing off his UNC clothing more and more. During the college football season, Father Kieran follows Notre Dame. Beyond sports, Father likes to ride his bike and get in some exercise. Father Kieran even takes time out to visit the YMCA in Belmont for water therapy. Besides the physical activities of bike riding and exercise, Father also used to play handball. He believes that taking time out for balanced spiritual and physical exercise is important. A sound body and sound mind. For Father Kieran's musical interest, he likes to listen to blues and folk music.

I began this article asking, "Who is Father Kieran?"

He is a man of amusement, of devotion, of faith and a man with a genuine love of others. For you, Father Kieran, it is my hope that this article may add to your celebration of 50 years of service as a vowed Benedictine monk at Belmont Abbey and may God continue to send his blessings upon you. I thank you for your time and your friendship, which first began when I was a student at the Abbey.

In closing, I'll share a little bit of scripture that Father Kieran has said is important to him. "Again, Amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."  
(Matthew 18:19-20) – AC

