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Bahamas Connection to St. Ben's & St. John's

Peggy L. Roske
proske@csbsju.edu

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The Bahamas' Connection to St. John's & St. Ben's

...in the news thanks to Hurricane Dorian

The Record
September 20, 2019

The Record Sept. 20, 2019, p. 8

[Map:](#)

https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&id=CE006564CBD4D4AD71075622321FCB8CC2CBD378&thid=OIP.G3GZsYJIV_uhVz2WsJ8VvgHaGI&mediurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nationsonline.org%2Fmaps%2Fbahamas_map.jpg&exph=1066&expw=1200&q=bahamas+map+uncopyrighted&selectedindex=4&ajaxhist=0&vt=0&eim=1


[Hurricane image: https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/video/hurricane-dorian-slams-bahamas-cat-65337869](https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/video/hurricane-dorian-slams-bahamas-cat-65337869)

Our deep connection to the Bahamas began more than a century ago:

~~114~~ Years of Service in the Bahamas, 1891 - 2005

~~128~~ The opening of the Bahama Benedictine Centennial in January, 1991, Sir Henry Taylor, Acting Governor General of the Bahamas, paid tribute to the missionary monks of Saint John's with these words: "The work of the Benedictines in the Bahamas is beyond anyone's estimation." Key dates in the history of Benedictine monks in the Bahamas include:

February 2, 1891
Chrysostom Schreiner, OSB, arrives in Nassau and finds 65-70 Catholics at Saint Francis Xavier Church, built in 1885-86.



Chrysostom Schreiner, OSB, Apostle of the Bahamas

April 4, 1892
Father Chrysostom is shipwrecked near San Salvador Island and vows to continue his work in the Bahamas if his life is spared. The ship's passengers and crew are rescued.

June 23, 1893
Chrysostom purchases Dunmore House (built in 1786) which, as "The Priory," becomes the headquarters for Benedictines who begin to arrive.

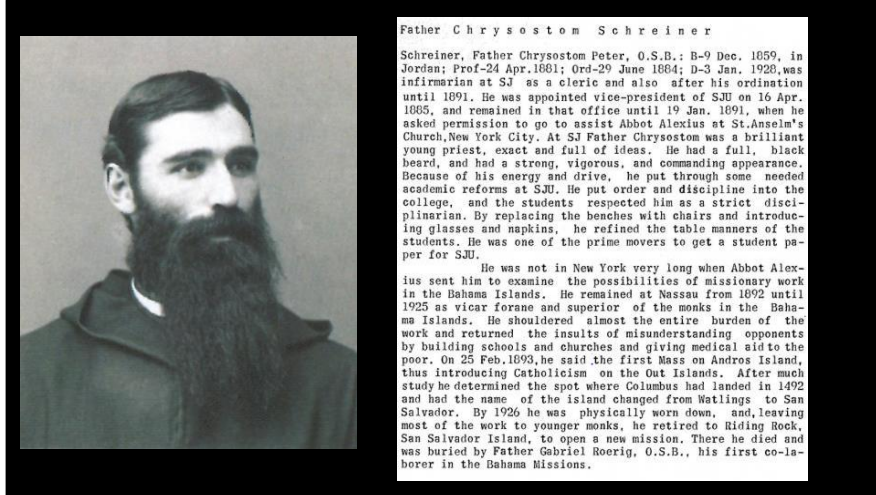
December 29, 1921
Alcuin Deutsch, OSB, is elected fifth abbot of Saint John's Abbey. He begins to aggressively support the Bahama missions with personnel and money.

January 3, 1928
Chrysostom dies on San Salvador Island where he had retired. He is buried overlooking a probable site of Columbus' landing in 1492.

page 20 The Abbey Banner Spring 2005

2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

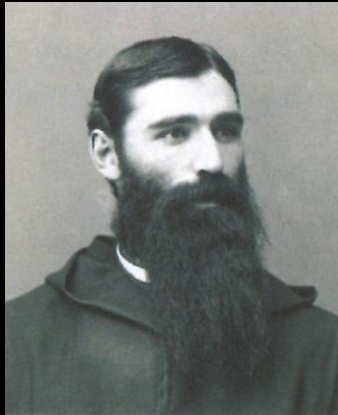


Text: 1956-06 *Scriptorium* Volume 15 Number 01 p.57

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26177>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>



“Father Chrysostom Schreiner left for the East to assume charge of the Bahama mission, which had been entrusted to the Fathers of St. John’s by the late Archbishop Corrigan of New York.

With all his wonted energy Father Chrysostom took this difficult task in hand and despite countless discouragements bore the labors and hardships of this distant and humble mission with great patience.

Father Chrysostom’s departure from the institution elicited many expressions of regret from his many friends. He did not forget them, however, but gave an interesting account of himself and of the conditions prevailing in his new field of labor through the columns of *The Record*” (which he had helped establish in 1888).

Text: [Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota: A Sketch of Its History, by Alexius Hoffmann, OSB](https://www.csbsju.edu/sju-archives/sjuhistory/booksaboutstjohns/hoffmannbook/hoffmannchapter4) Chapter 4, 1890-1894. <https://www.csbsju.edu/sju-archives/sjuhistory/booksaboutstjohns/hoffmannbook/hoffmannchapter4>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

~~114~~ Years of Service in the Bahamas, 1891 - 2005

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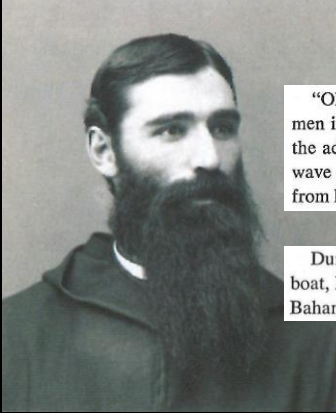
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2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>



April 4, 1891 (11 years before the *Titanic*)

“Oh my God, what a night of terrible suffering and anxiety. Eight men in a mere shell in a bed of sunken rock, a heavy sea rolling over the adjacent reef and rocking us to and fro, the volley of every heavy wave exposing the hideous surface of the rocks, and eight miles away from land.”

During the harrowing hours Father Chrysostom spent in the life boat, he made a vow that if his life was spared he would remain in the Bahamas for the rest of his days as a missionary.

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26177>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

Bottom text: *Worship & Work*, p.209-210 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11143> and <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11144>

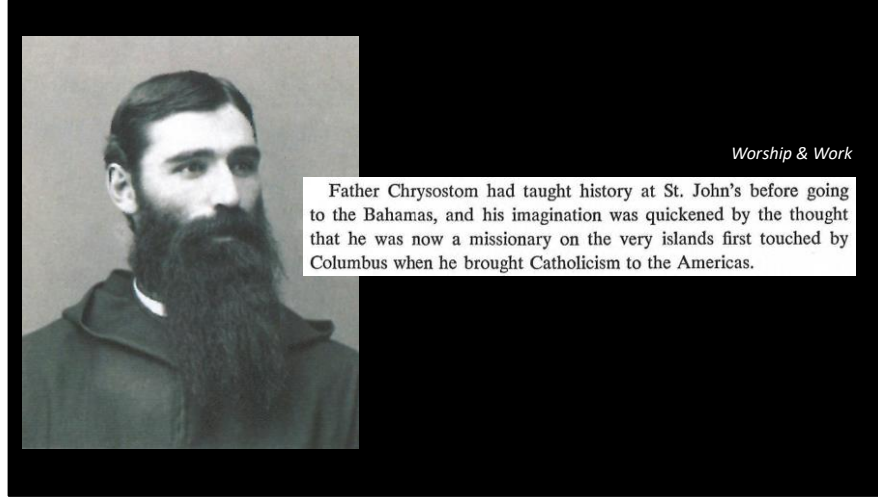


Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

Top text: *Worship & Work*, p.209-210 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11143> and <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11144>

Bottom: p.207 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11141>



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b4/Landing_of_Columbus_%28%29.jpg/220px-Landing_of_Columbus_%28%29.jpg

Text: p.207 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11141>

October 12, 1492: Columbus Lands in the Caribbean

Father Chrysostom organized the first expedition investigating Columbus' landing and sailed through the same waters as Columbus had done. He arrived at the conclusion, after careful study and research, that Columbus had landed on the south side of the island where he could find a lee from the ocean swells, while on the rocky eastern shore there was no safe landing beach. In 1956 the Bahamas Legislature officially restored the name of San Salvador to the island. On 25 February 1951 a scientific expedition arrived at the same conclusion as Father Chrysostom had originally made, and erected a bronze marker on Landing Beach.

Father Chrysostom devoted much time and energy to having the original name of San Salvador restored to Columbus' landfall and succeeded in this endeavor.



(Thus October 12th is Columbus Day – or *Indigenous People's Day*)

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

Map: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/thisday/oct12/columbus-makes-landfall-caribbean/>

Footnote 71, p. 561-562 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11549> and
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/11550>

6

A Bahamas Chronology

The following selective chronology of key dates in the 100-year history of Saint John's Benedictines in the Bahamas has been gathered from Upon These Rocks by Father Colman Barry [Collegeville: Saint John's Abbey Press, 1973] and articles by Fathers Elias Achatz and Silvan Bromenshenkel.


2 February 1891 – Father Chrysostom Schreiner arrives in Nassau where there are 65–70 Catholics at Saint Francis Xavier Church, built in 1885–86.

21 June 1893 – Father Chrysostom purchases Dunmore House (built in 1786), a two-storey structure once used as a military hospital. Henceforth called "The Priory," this becomes the headquarters for Benedictines in the Bahamas.

10 July 1925 – Father Chrysostom retires to San Salvador Island which he believed was the site of Columbus' 1492 landing.

3 January 1928 – Father Chrysostom dies in his sleep on San Salvador and is buried there overlooking a probable site of Columbus' landing.

Milestones for Father Chrysostom

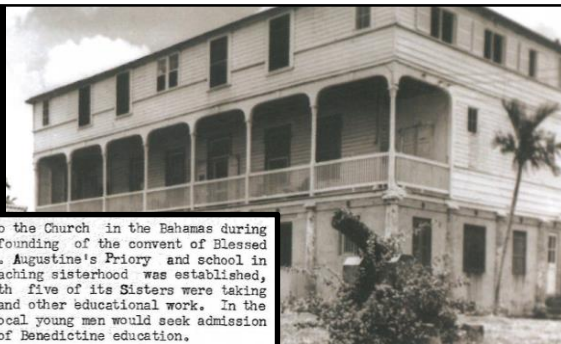


Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

The community was doing a great deal to foster education in the Bahamas.



The two milestone contributions to the Church in the Bahamas during Bishop Bernard's regime were the founding of the convent of Blessed Martin de Porres in 1936 and of St. Augustine's Priory and school in 1945. In the former a Bahamian teaching sisterhood was established, and at the time of the Bishop's death five of its Sisters were taking a full-time active part in school and other educational work. In the priory Bishop Bernard hoped that local young men would seek admission and assist in carrying on the work of Benedictine education.

(Bishop Bernard Kevenhoester was in the class of 1897 at St. John's.)

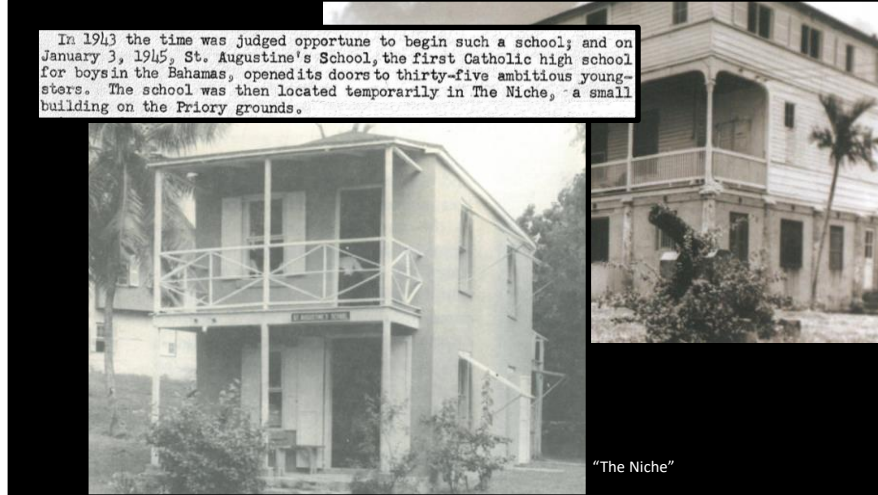
Existing local social and economic conditions were such during this period, however, that the fostering of vocations among the boys was almost an impossibility without some means of watching over them for the greater part of the day. The only solution to the problem appeared to be the founding of a secondary school for them in the environment of a monastery.

Scriptorium August 1952 p.33 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26056>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

NOTE pronunciation: Saint ah-GUS-tin's



Text: *Scriptorium* August 1952 p.33 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26056>

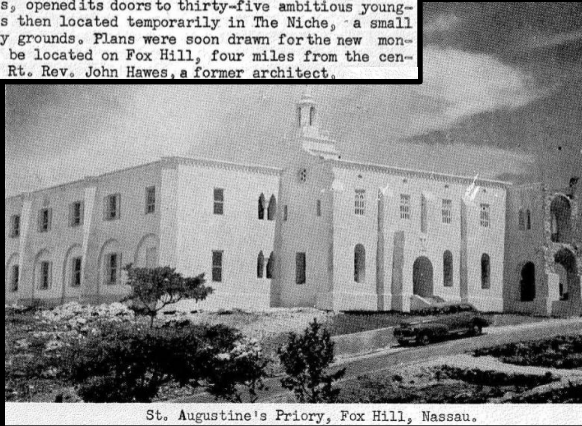
Front photo: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

Background photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

In 1943 the time was judged opportune to begin such a school; and on January 3, 1945, St. Augustine's School, the first Catholic high school for boys in the Bahamas, opened its doors to thirty-five ambitious youngsters. The school was then located temporarily in The Niche, a small building on the Priory grounds. Plans were soon drawn for the new monastery and school, to be located on Fox Hill, four miles from the center of Nassau, by the Rt. Rev. John Hawes, a former architect.



St. Augustine's Priory, Fox Hill, Nassau.

Top text: *Scriptorium* August 1952 p.33 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26056>

Lower text: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

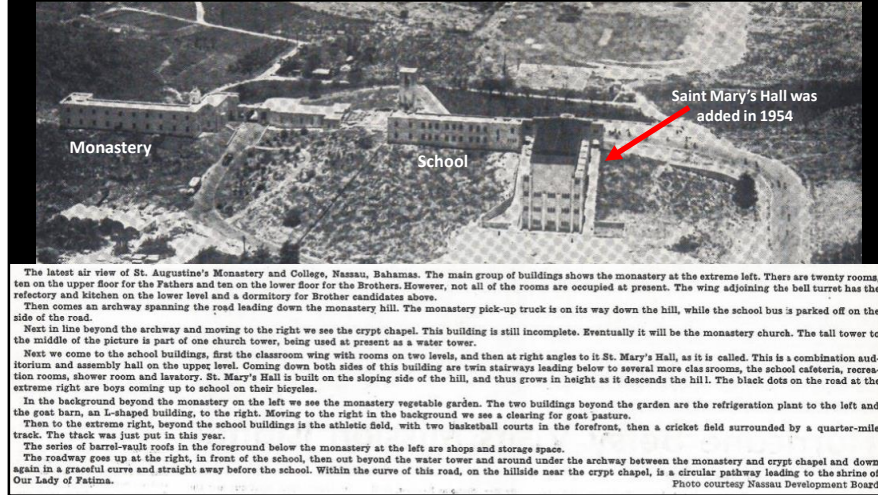
Photo: *Scriptorium* August 1952 p.33 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/26056>



Image: *The Record* Sept. 28, 1956, p. 2 (of the supplement)

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/30790/rec/1393>

Text: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>



The latest air view of St. Augustine's Monastery and College, Nassau, Bahamas. The main group of buildings shows the monastery at the extreme left. There are twenty rooms, ten on the upper floor for the Fathers and ten on the lower floor for the Brothers. However, not all of the rooms are occupied at present. The wing adjoining the bell turret has the refectory and kitchen on the lower level and a dormitory for Brother candidates above.

Then comes an archway spanning the road leading down the monastery hill. The monastery pick-up truck is on its way down the hill, while the school bus is parked off on the side of the road.

Next in line beyond the archway and moving to the right we see the crypt chapel. This building is still incomplete. Eventually it will be the monastery church. The tall tower to the middle of the picture is part of one church tower, being used at present as a water tower.

Next we come to the school buildings, first the classroom wing with rooms on two levels, and then at right angles to it St. Mary's Hall, as it is called. This is a combination auditorium and assembly hall on the upper level. Coming down both sides of this building are twin stairways leading below to several more classrooms, the school cafeteria, recreation rooms, shower room and lavatory. St. Mary's Hall is built on the sloping side of the hill, and thus grows in height as it descends the hill. The black dots on the road at the extreme right are boys coming up to school on their bicycles.

In the background beyond the monastery on the left we see the monastery vegetable garden. The two buildings beyond the garden are the refrigeration plant to the left and the goat barn, an I-shaped building, to the right. Moving to the right in the background we see a clearing for goat pasture.

Then to the extreme right, beyond the school buildings is the athletic field, with two basketball courts in the forefront, then a cricket field surrounded by a quarter-mile track. The track was just put in this year.

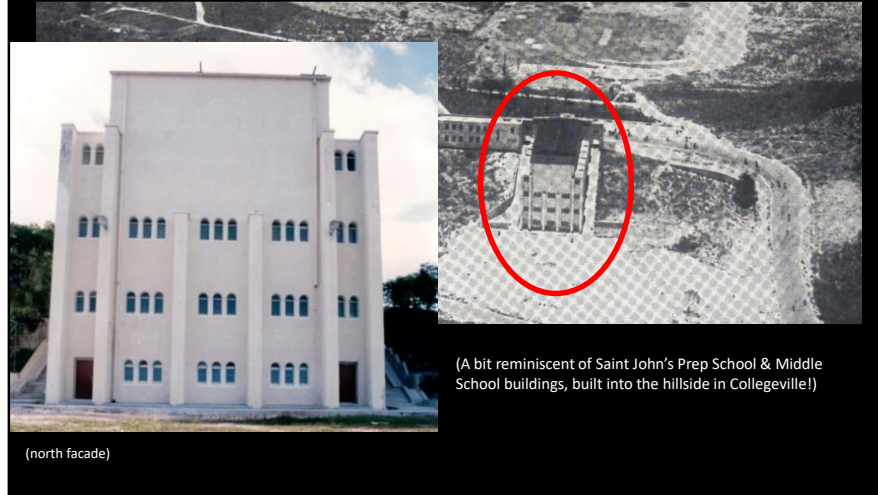
The series of barrel-vault roofs in the foreground below the monastery at the left are shops and storage space.

The roadway goes up at the right, in front of the school, then out beyond the water tower and around under the archway between the monastery and crypt chapel and down again in a graceful curve and straight away before the school. Within the curve of this road, on the hillside near the crypt chapel, is a circular pathway leading to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima.

Photo courtesy Nassau Development Board

The Record Sept. 28, 1956, p. 2 (of the supplement)

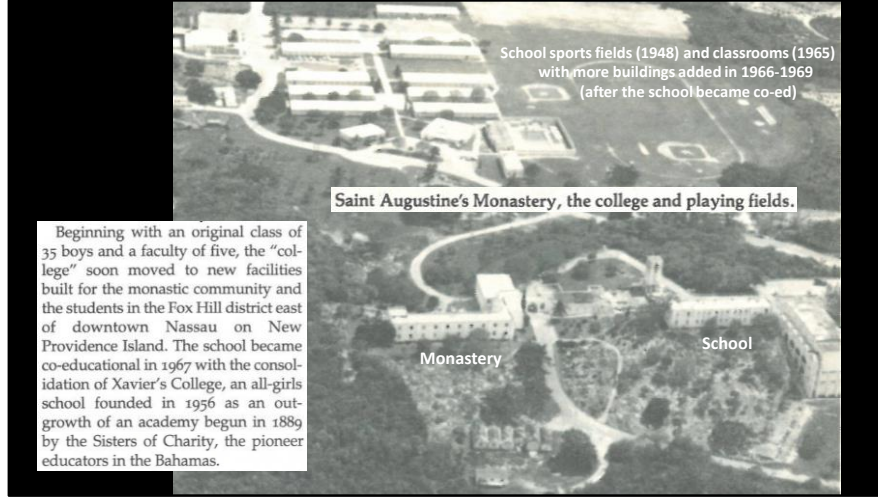
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/30790/rec/1393>



The Record Sept. 28, 1956, p. 2 (of the supplement)

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/30790/rec/1393>

Color photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3



School sports fields (1948) and classrooms (1965)
with more buildings added in 1966-1969
(after the school became co-ed)

Saint Augustine's Monastery, the college and playing fields.

Beginning with an original class of 35 boys and a faculty of five, the "college" soon moved to new facilities built for the monastic community and the students in the Fox Hill district east of downtown Nassau on New Providence Island. The school became co-educational in 1967 with the consolidation of Xavier's College, an all-girls school founded in 1956 as an outgrowth of an academy begun in 1889 by the Sisters of Charity, the pioneer educators in the Bahamas.

Monastery

School

Photo: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>
Text from *Abbey Quarterly* Winter 1995 p. 5 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19949/rec/82>

Why Saint John's University where winter temperatures are thirty-below-zero? We're from the Bahamas where sixty-above calls for sweaters and fur coats.

The Bahama-Collegeville connection began when the original Benedictine missionary to the Bahamas, **Chrysostom Schreiner**, encouraged several young Bahamians to attend Saint John's. Useph Baker and Etienne and Eugene Dupuch were among the first. Eugene composed the "Johnny Fight Song" and became a legislator, Queen's Councilor and leading lawyer.

'31
'28
'34

There are 240 Bahamian alumni of Saint John's. As doctors, lawyers, teachers, politicians and civil servants their influence is felt.

"A Bahamian tribute to the Benedictines" by Pierre Dupuch. Excerpts from an article published December 31, 2007, in *The Nassau Guardian* of the Bahamas



Pictured are several of the executives of the Bahamian Chapter, l. to r.: Pierre Dupuch, Dayrit Butler, Monsignor Preston Moss, Dietrich Reinhart, OSB, Saint John's President, Prince Wallace, Basil Christi and John Young, Saint John's Associate Vice President for Advancement.

Spring 2008
Abbey Banner

2008 Volume 08 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p. 18
Etienne Dupuch '28, Useph Baker '31, Eugene Dupuch '34

To back up a bit:

In 1951, [Benedictine] Bishop Hagarty in the Bahamas petitioned Mother Richarda Peters to send sisters from St. Ben's to help the native sisters (in the St. Martin de Porres order) to affiliate with the Benedictines....Thus began an affiliation between the two monastic communities.



With Hearts Expanded,
p. 339

2 September 1963 – The Bahamian Sisters of Saint Martin de Porres are affiliated with the Benedictine community of Saint Benedict in Saint Joseph, Minnesota.

With Hearts Expanded, p. 338-340; photo p. 339

Bottom text: Text: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

In 1960, two Sisters from the Bahamas attended CSB, graduating in 1962.

They were Sister Mary Bernard (Telzena) Coakley and Sister Bernadette Powell.

CSB's Largest Class Graduates on Memorial Day

Seventy-five women will be graduated by the College of St. Benedict on Wednesday, May 30. The Most Rev. Peter Bartholomew, D.D., Bishop of St. Cloud, will confer the degrees and Rev. Raymond Bonclery, author of THE LINEN BANDS, will deliver the commencement address at Holy Mass offered in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart at 1:00 p.m.

Of these women, sixty-one are candidates for BA degrees and fourteen for BS degrees.

Art: Rita Beyer, Farmington, Minn.; and Juliana Klein, Minneapolis.
Biology: Neerile DeLury, Minneapolis; Mary Rieck, Waterville; Norma Ringhofer, Owatonna and Sister Lucinda, O.S.B., St. Joseph.

Business Education: Christine Hill, Bismarck, N.D.; Virginia Rodon, St. Paul, and Kay Sondag, New Ulm.

Chemistry: Nancy Galman Paulsen, Ames, Tetzala and Carol Wong, St. Cloud.

Dietetics: Sister Rosemary, O.S.B., Bismarck, N.D.

Elementary Education: Geraldine Becken, Richmond; Janice Beer, LeCenter; Judith Brandt, Mary Sue Hill, Mary Martin and Patricia Paulsen, St. Cloud; Jeanne Collins, and Sister Beatrice Leary, P.R.V.M., Fargo, N.D.; Rita Daniels, Catherine Gillispie, Patricia Jackson, Jean Klein and Karen Tell, Minneapolis; Mary Jandra, Bowhus; Mary Louder, New Ulm; Harriet Keenan, Hutchinson; Jean Landherr, Rose Creek; Judy McCarty and Elizabeth Smith, Hibdonville; Sharon McNamara, Hastings; Mary Muchlinski, Ivushee; Jane Fink, Wakarusa; Mary Ann Bushland, Eden Valley; Suzanne Shinsak, Fort Ripley; Carolyn Struthers, Brainerd; Godelia Wagner, New Prague; Kathleen Wermerkirchen, Shakopee; and Sister Bernadette Powell, S.B.M., Bahamas.

English: Meta Boggs, Faribault; Virginia Derus and Kristin Lundholm, Minneapolis; Susan Dikowagar and Mo; and Juliana Klein, Minneapolis.

Music: Joyce Mide, Richmond; Mary Jean Norevartun, Waukegan and Sister Helen Kohler, O.S.B., Olympia, Wash.

Philosophy: Alice Connelgton, Saltonika, Greece.

Social Science: Kathleen Guzikowski, St. Cloud.

Sociology: Mary Kay Borden, Minneapolis; Alice Connelgton, Saltonika, Greece; Gayle Roucher, Crookston; Ann Floyd, Vicksburg, Minn.; Sharon Gowette, International Falls; Patricia Donnelly, Ellen Jokine Thomas, Lakeville; Gretchen Schwahn, Chippewa Falls, Wis.; and Godelia Wagner, New Prague.

News Note

On Sunday, April 1, seven CSB women were inducted into Omega Chapter of Delta Epithon Sigma, National Catholic Honor Society. They are Margaret Paulsen, Mandan, N.D.; Kathleen Guzikowski, St. Cloud; Mary Jean Norevartun, Waukegan; Alice Connelgton, Greece; Sister Helen, O.S.B., Olympia, Wash.; Sister Sigrid, O.S.B., and Sister Cecily, O.S.B., St. Joseph.



With Hearts Expanded, p. 340

1962-05 *The Benet* Volume 27 Number 04 p.8

<https://cdm.csbju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/505/rec/1>



By S. Carol Berg
CSB archivist

On July 10, 1973, the Bahamas celebrated independence from Great Britain.

That same year, two alumnae of CSB: S. Maedene Russell, OSB, superintendent of Catholic Schools in the Bahamas, and Ms. Telzema Coakley, senior officer in the government's Ministry of Education, sought assistance from the College of St. Benedict to provide an in-service program for teachers in the Bahamas. At the time, the Bahamas had no four-year college plan.



Footprints
from the
CSB archives

S. Carol Berg



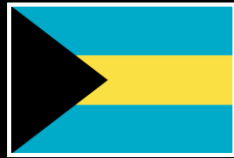
Telzema



S. Maedene



Flag from https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/77/Bahamas_Flag.svg/1024px-Bahamas_Flag.svg.png
 Bahamans program history *The Record* 2003 12 11 p.5
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/31624>
 Photos in CSB Archives



In 1973, when the Bahamas gained its independence from Great Britain, its government turned attention toward improving the country's educational infrastructure. Its only homegrown college was a two-year teacher-training institution.

If the Bahamas were to succeed in their newfound independence, education was of the utmost importance.

The Bahamas needed more teachers with degrees— and its own bachelor's degree-granting colleges— and they asked CSB for assistance.

Flag from https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/77/Bahamas_Flag.svg/1024px-Bahamas_Flag.svg.png

Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*



Back in 1958, the sisters at St. Ben's needed to attain higher education to be qualified to teach in the schools.

S. Mary Anthony Wagner established the Benedictine Institute for Sacred Theology (BIST), which evolved into the School of Theology.

Similarly, the teachers of the Bahamas needed to attain higher degrees to be qualified to teach and hold other positions in the schools, businesses and government of the Bahamas.
They also turned to St. Ben's.

See [Benedictine Institute of Sacred Theology \(BIST\) and Mary Anthony Wagner, OSB](#) [2015]

In 1974, S. Kathleen Kalinowski, CSB Dean of Continuing Education, went to the Bahamas to meet with Telzema and S. Maedene. (All three were CSB alumnae.)



1973

Sister Aaron Kalinowski, M. A.
Esq., and Asst. Dean for Acad. Affairs 1969

Together they devised a plan to assist in the education of Bahamian elementary school teachers, using the structure of the Continuing Education program being perfected in Minnesota.

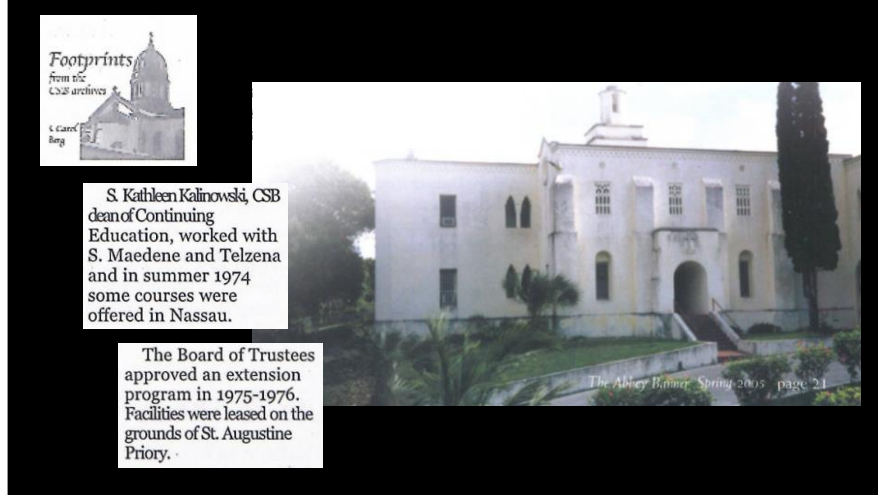
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150

1969 Kalinowski photo: 1969 Faculty Directory <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/1934>

1973 Kalinowski photo: 1973 *Sagatagan* yearbook, p. 81

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/33426/rec/8>

Other photos in CSB Archives



Bahamans program history *The Record* 2003 12 11 p.5

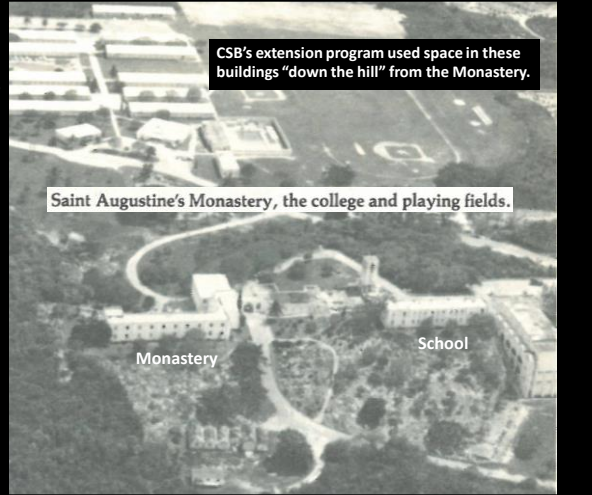
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/31624>

Photo: Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.21

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24099/rec/34>

CSB's board of trustees approved a program in Nassau where local teachers offered evening and weekend courses and CSB faculty members offered classes in summer. Students in the program met CSB graduation requirements. More than 400 students participated during the program's first 20 years.

The Bahamian students generally spent their last semester on the CSB & SJU campuses.



Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150, 152

Photo: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

The program succeeded because of the work of many,
but a few key individuals carried much of the load.

In St. Joseph from 1978 to 1994 :

S. Kathleen



S. Emmanuel Renner



S. Dolores Super



Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 147

Kalinowski photo: 1971 yearbook p. 145 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/38449/rec/4>

Super photo: 1991-92 CSBSJU Employee Photo Directory

Renner photo: Renner: O:\Archives\csbarchives\President's Office\President Emmanuel Renner, 1979-1996

In the Bahamas, S. Clare Rolle ran the program for a few years, as did S. Mary Patricia Russell in her wake. Telzena Coakley directed it from 1977 to 1990.

S. Clare Rolle



S. Mary Patricia Russell

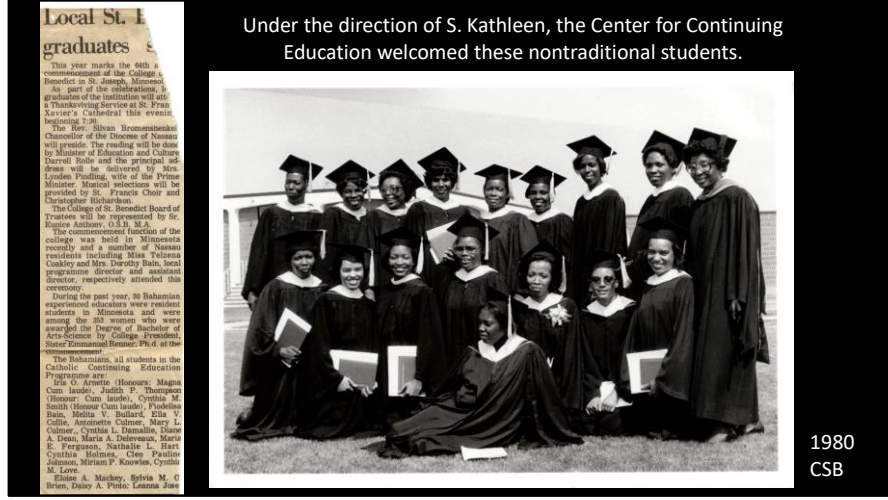


Telzena Coakley



Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 147

Rolle photo from 1973-74 *Student Directory*; other photos in CSB Archives.



1980 photo and newspaper clipping both in the CSB Archives Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 148.



Over the years, CSB developed a strong base in the Bahamas, consisting of non-traditional students and an increasing number of college-aged Bahamian women.

May 21, 1983 Graduation Telzina Coakley, Program Director, and graduates. Photo in CSB Archives. Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 148, p. 153.



1985 SJU Graduation. Photo in CSB Archives.
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150



May 24, 1985 Graduation. Photo in CSB Archives.
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 152

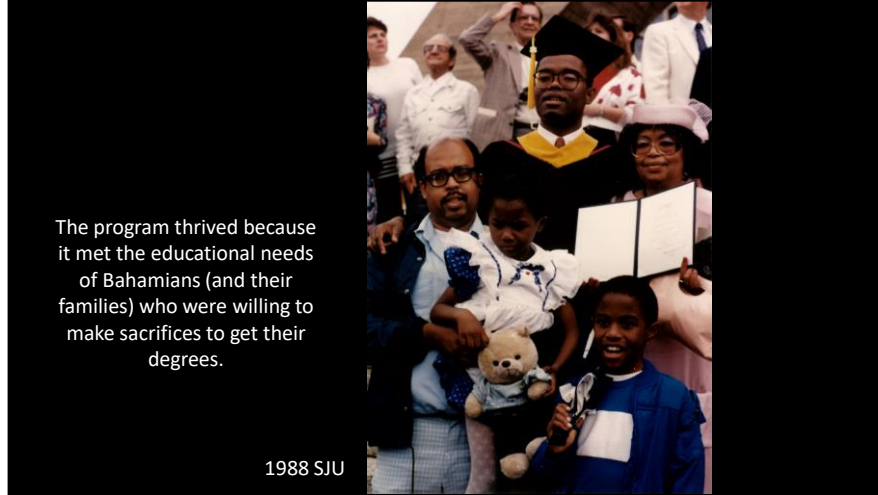


1986 CSB

In a show of Benedictine hospitality, coats, boots, mittens, and scarves awaited the Bahamians arriving for the “spring” semester each year.

Many reported finding welcome and support, especially among their teachers and especially in the Education Department.

May 1986 Graduation. Photo in CSB Archives.
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 152



1988 SJU Graduation. Photo in CSB Archives.
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 147, 151.



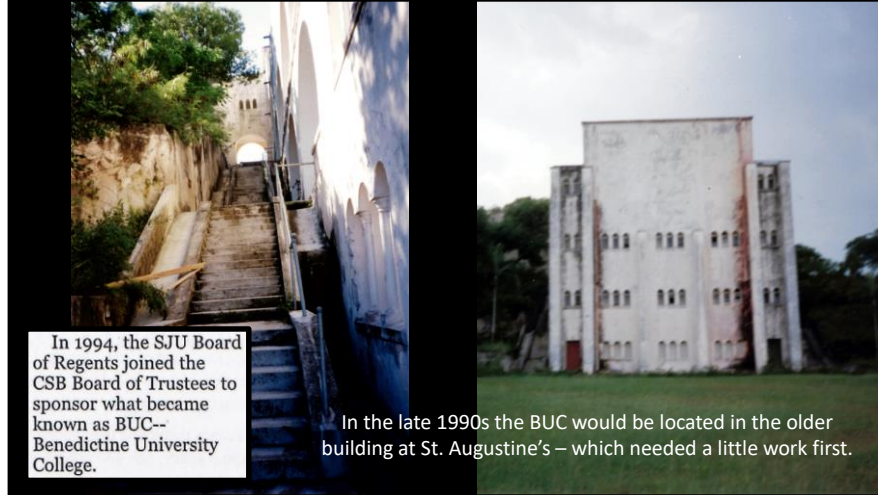
Pamrika Ferguson, Delta Epsilon Sigma 1984
Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150

Her three sisters all came from the Bahamas for her graduation.



Pamrica (second from left) is joined at her graduation by her siblings Pandora ('78), Telzema ('62—director of the CSB extension program in the Bahamas), and Dorothy ('77).

Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150



In 1994, the SJU Board of Regents joined the CSB Board of Trustees to sponsor what became known as BUC-- Benedictine University College.

In the late 1990s the BUC would be located in the older building at St. Augustine's – which needed a little work first.

Bahamans program history *The Record* 2003 12 11 p.5
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/31624>
Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3



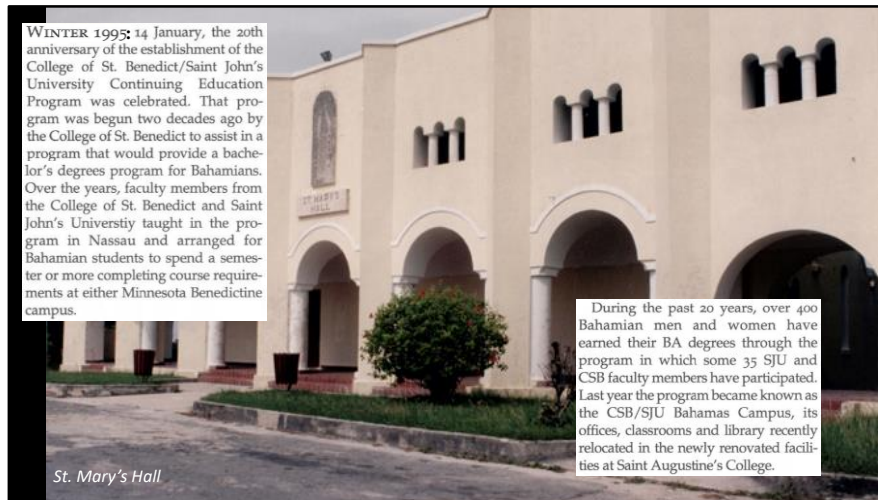
Bahamans program history *The Record* 2003 12 11 p.5
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/31624>
Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3



Left photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3
Right photo, by the archivist, in SJU Archives.



Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3



Abbey Quarterly Winter 1995 p. 5 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19949/rec/82>

Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3

Abbey Quarterly Winter 1996

Bahamas Benedictines Activities


By Daniel Durken, OSB January he taught an interim class on

ST. AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE

The chief work of the Bahama Benedictines is the sponsorship of St. Augustine's College (SAC) which has just begun its second half-century of operation. The current enrollment in grades 7-12 is 942 students, just eight short of capacity. About 38% of the students are Catholic. The faculty numbers 60 teachers, 34 of whom are native Bahamians. The rest come from such countries as Canada, Ireland, Scotland, England, the United States. Two 1995 graduates

The school offers a well rounded educational program focused on college preparation. Forty percent of its graduates go directly to colleges in the USA; 50% attend the two-year College of the Bahamas in Nassau or take classes at the Bahamas Campus of the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University continuing education program and then transfer to schools abroad. The cost of a SAC education is currently \$1,920 per year.

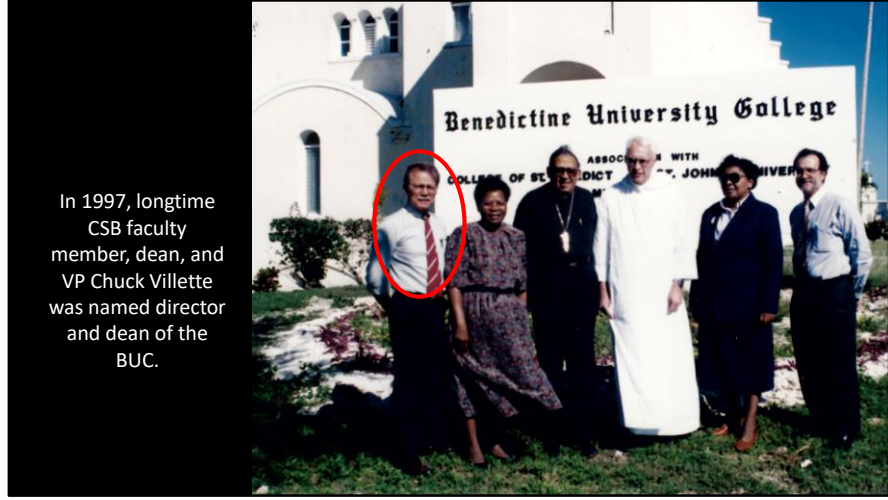
An indication of the popularity of SAC is that in late January of this year some 460 students took the entrance exam for the 180 available places in the seventh grade for the fall term.



A cloister walk of Saint Augustine's Monastery, B.I.

Abbey Quarterly winter 1996 p. 6 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/20006/rec/86>

Photo p. 13 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/20013/rec/86>



In 1997, longtime CSB faculty member, dean, and VP Chuck Villette was named director and dean of the BUC.

Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3



Photo in CSB Archives: AC 07.47.F01 Box 3

CSB/SJU
CONNECTIONS

Published by the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University Institutional Marketing and Communications Office

October 29, 1998

Biermaier Named to Succeed Villette as Rector and Dean of Benedictine University College (Bahamas)

After discussion over some time with Dr. Charles Villette concerning the direction for Benedictine University College (Bahamas) and his own professional and personal concerns, we mutually recognize that a change in the leadership of BUC is necessary. We have approved of the changes in the appointment. Dr. Villette will be relieved of his ongoing responsibilities as rector and dean of Benedictine University College by the end of this fall term. We wish to thank him for the dedicated and generous service which he



Benedictine University College, Nassau, Bahamas

Economist Barry Eichengreen to Speak as Part of Clemens Lecture Series

The SJU Clemens Lecture Series will host economist Barry Eichengreen to present a lecture on "The Asian Flu and the Global Financial Crisis: Can We Prevent this from Happening Again?" The lecture will be held on Monday, Nov. 2, at 8 p.m. in the Stephen B. Humphrey Theater of SJU. The series is funded by a gift from William E. and Virginia Clemens of St. Cloud.

Barry Eichengreen, an accomplished young scholar in international finance and economics, is both John L. Simpson professor of economics and professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley. He has just completed a term as senior policy adviser for the International

1998-10-29 *Connections* p.1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/2212/rec/25>

Sister Ann Marie Biermaier
takes over for Dr. Villette in 1999

*Biermaier Succeeds Villette as Rector
and Dean of Benedictine University
College (Babamas)*

Ann Marie
Biermaier OSB, asso-
ciate professor of edu-
cation, will succeed
Charles Villette as
rector and dean of
B e n e d i c t i n e
University College.



Biermaier

Her responsibilities
began January 1999. Biermaier has had
long experience with Benedictine
University College throughout its growth
over the past 25 years.



Ann Marie Biermaier, OSB

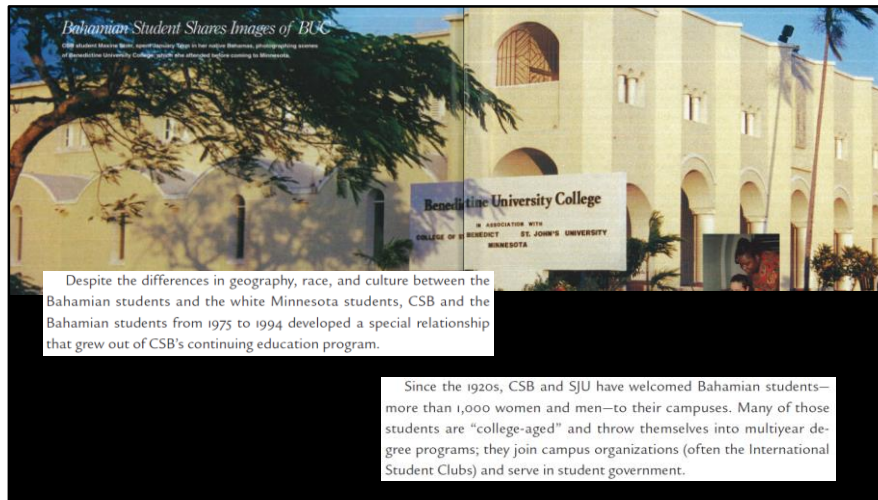
Saint Benedict's Saint John's Magazine Spring 1999

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/6616/rec/26>

1999-03 *Saint Benedict's Saint John's Magazine* Spring p.13

Close-up 1998-10-29 *Connections* p.1

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/2212/rec/25>



CSB/SJU Today, spring 2000, p. 16-17 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/1504/rec/5>
Text from Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 147

And then:

CSB/SJU funded college in Bahamas closed Dec. 2000

By S. Carol Berg
CSB archivist

On July 10, 1973, the Bahamas celebrated independence from Great Britain.

That same year, two alumnae of CSB: S. Maedene Russell, OSB, superintendent of Catholic Schools in the Bahamas, and Ms. Telzena Coakley, senior officer in the government's Ministry of Education, sought assistance from the College of St. Benedict to provide an

Footprints

from the
CSB archives

S. Carol
Berg



University College, offered all the majors and degrees of the sponsoring bodies, CSB and SJU.

For many years, summer offerings often

New colleges sprang up in the Bahamas by the mid-1990s, offering more competition to BUC.

The College of the Bahamas decided to become a four-year bachelor degree institution, and in 1994 a Baptist institution opened up.

Recruitment for BUC fell, and by 1998 there was a large budget deficit. In December 2000 BUC closed.

The Benedictines had succeeded: Bahamians were able to access higher education.

Bahamans program history *The Record* 2003 12 11 p.5
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchNews/id/31624>

Twenty-five years ago, the College of Saint Benedict began a relationship with the people of the Bahamas by responding to a request to assist with in-service programs for teachers. The initial program was intended to serve the needs of elementary teachers who were seeking a four-year bachelor's degree.

This small and focused beginning was encouraged by the Ministry of Education and by 1975-76, the CSB Board of Trustees agreed to the addition of evening classes in the accredited teacher certification program. Since 1994 the CSB Board of Trustees and the SJU Board of Regents have jointly sponsored the CSB/SJU Bahamas Campus. In 1997, CSB/SJU Bahamas campus was officially registered as Benedictine University College, Nassau, an accredited undergraduate college. This relationship has proved most successful. Currently, Sister Ann Marie Biermaier OSB, is the rector and dean of BUC.

When the program began in 1974, there was no other four-year institution on the island and few two-year options. Since then, educational options in the Bahamas have expanded to include several two and four-year programs — options not available to students in 1974. The work of the Benedictine sisters in the Bahamas set the course for a successful, readily available education in Nassau.

The mission of the two U.S. Benedictine communities, to serve God through worship and work in the greater community, will always continue. The work of Benedictine University College offered a unique off-site opportunity provided by one, then most recently two, Benedictine institutions of higher education in the United States. The educational needs we once served can now be met by others. The ongoing liberal arts education we offer is centered in Minnesota where we continue to welcome Bahamians to participate at CSB/SJU as four-year students, much as they have since the early part of the 20th century.

Having fulfilled the goal of making quality, higher education available to the Bahamian people, the CSB Board of Trustees and SJU Board of Regents voted and approved a resolution on Friday, May 5, recommending the Benedictine University College discontinue its operations by December 31, 2000.

Benedictine education in the Bahamas is firmly rooted on the secondary level at St. Augustine's College and will continue to be. We will continue to encourage the enrollment of Bahamian students interested in attending CSB/SJU, and will work closely with current Bahamian students and faculty during this time of transition.

CSB/SJU Today Spring 2000

CSB/SJU Today, spring 2000, p. 16-17 <http://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/1504/rec/5>



“Coakley is considered a trailblazer, both at CSB and in the Bahamas. Aside from directing Benedictine University College, she had a powerful role in enriching, molding, and strengthening the relationship between CSB and the women of the Bahamas.”

Bennie friends and family of Telzema Coakley gathered at Saint Ben's in June to honor her as a recipient of the S. Emmanuel Renner Service Award. Pictured with the award from front row, left to right: Alfrada Cooper '77, Marilyn Darville, Telzema Coakley '62, Mary Hinton (CSB president), Sharon Lockhart, Telzema Shervette Coakley, Dorothy Coakley Lockhart '77. Back row, left to right: S. Ann Marie Biermaier '69, OSB, S. Theresa Schumacher '69, OSB, Evelyn Alfred, Stephanie Ferguson, Tiya Coakley, Helen Kwan, Jean Bain '83, Sade Lockhart-Bain '19.

Challenging Women Since 1913, c2013, p. 150-151

Saint Benedict's Magazine Fall 2017

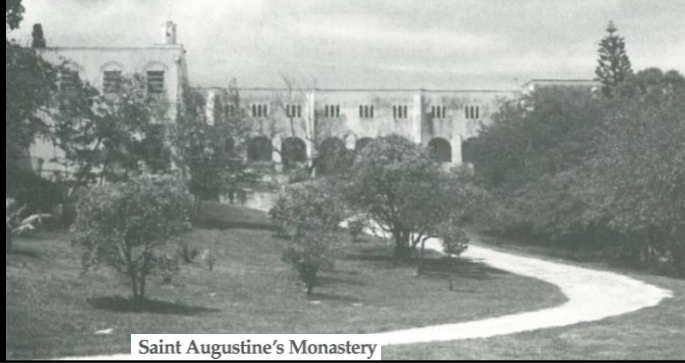
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/9439/rec/34>

2017-09 *Saint Benedict's Magazine* Fall p.39

Left text from Atkins, Annette. *Challenging Women Since 1913*, p. 150-151.

As for the
Monastery:

1967 – Saint Augustine's Monastery becomes an independent priory.

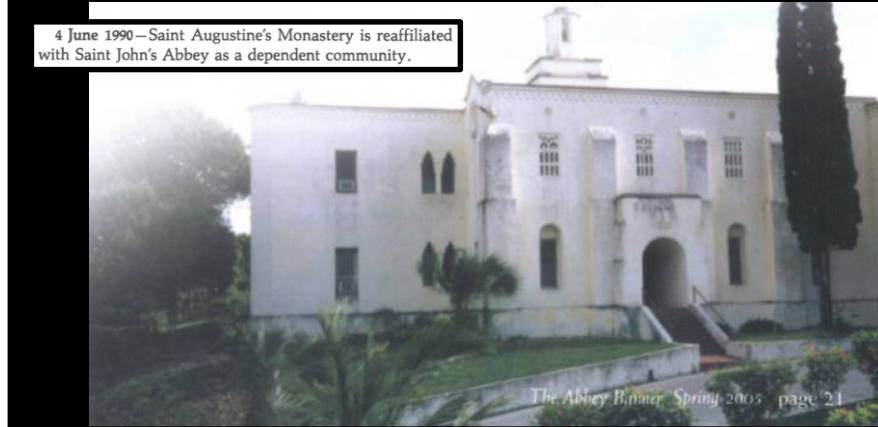


Saint Augustine's Monastery

Text: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>
Photo: *Abbey Quarterly* Winter 1995 p. 5 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19949/rec/82>

...but its independence didn't last:

4 June 1990 – Saint Augustine's Monastery is reaffiliated with Saint John's Abbey as a dependent community.



Text: Winter 1991 *Abbey Quarterly* p. 6-7 <https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/19759/rec/57>

Photo: 2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.21

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24099/rec/34>

Five years later:

Benedictine University College Discontinues

Having fulfilled the goal of making quality, higher education available to the Bahamian people, the College of Saint Benedict Board of Trustees and the Saint John's University Board of Regents voted and approved a resolution on 5 May, recommending the Benedictine University College (BUC), Nassau, Bahamas, discontinue its operations by 31 December 2000.

Since BUC's founding, initially in 1974 when there were no other four-year institutions on the island and few two-year options for the Bahamian people, several two- and four-year programs have been founded there, and can now meet those educational needs of the people.

Benedictine education in the Bahamas is still firmly rooted on the secondary school level at Saint Augustine's College, a seventh through twelfth grade school that will continue its work and encourage enrollment of Bahamian students interested in further education at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University.

Abbey Quarterly Spring 2000

Abbey Quarterly spring 2000 p. 12

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/20251/rec/103>

And five years after that:

On January 18, 2005, the Saint John's monastic chapter voted to close Saint Augustine's Monastery (SAM), Nassau, Bahamas, as a dependent priory and apostolate of the abbey, effective June 30, 2005, due to the lack of monastic personnel to adequately staff the monastery.

This 1786 home of Governor Dunmore became
The Priory, first headquarters of Benedictines
in the Bahamas.

Bahamas Mission to Close — Highlights of Its History

by Daniel Durkin, OSB



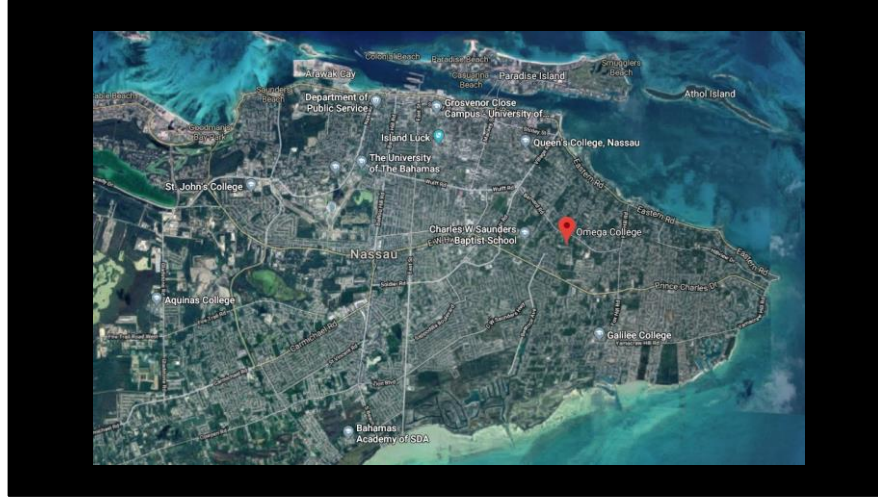
Abbey Banner Spring 2005

2005 Volume 05 Issue 01 *Abbey Banner* Spring p.20
<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/SJUArchives/id/24098/rec/34>

Though Saint Augustine's Monastery has closed, Saint Augustine's College (high school) still exists. The former BUC site is now home to Omega College.



Image: <https://www.google.com/maps/@25.0477232,-77.3049699,94a,35y,168.54h,71.6t/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>
Omega website: <http://www.omegacollegebahamas.com/about.htm>



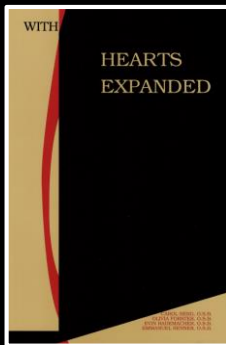
<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Omega+College/@25.0382703,-77.353813,1431m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x892f7c3e5a7e7d13:0x2a7834efdeb1186e!8m2!3d25.0458099!4d-77.305202?hl=en>

To learn more about St. Ben's connection to the Bahamas:

*With Hearts Expanded: Transformations in the Lives of
Benedictine Women, St. Joseph, Minnesota, 1957 to 2000*

404 pages
North Star Press of St.
Cloud, 2000.

Available online in the
CSB/SJU Libraries' [Digital
Commons](#) collection and in
print in the libraries.

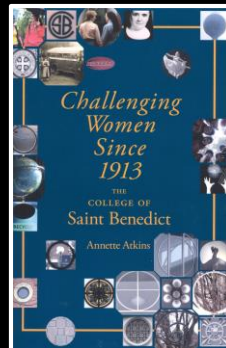


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*Challenging women since 1913:
the College of Saint Benedict*

266 pages
College of Saint
Benedict Press,
2013.

Available in the
CSB and SJU
Libraries' print
collections.



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7251
.S185
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2013

<https://cdm.csbsju.edu/digital/collection/CSBArchives/id/9439/rec/34>

2017-09 Saint Benedict's Magazine Fall p.39

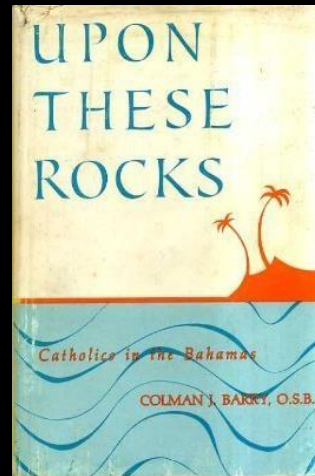
To learn more about St. John's
(and St. Ben's) connection to
the Bahamas:

*Upon These Rocks:
Catholics in the Bahamas*

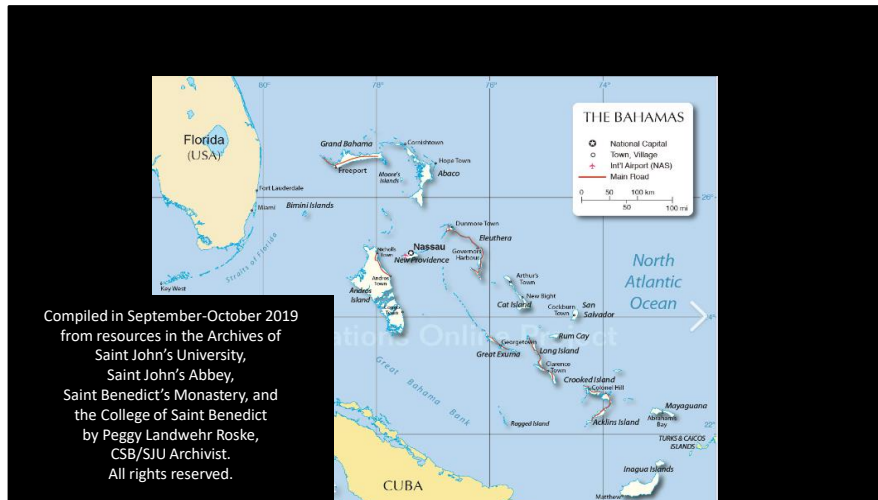
by Colman Barry, OSB

582 pages
St. John's Abbey Press, 1973.

BX
1449.2
.B37
1973



Upon these rocks:: Catholics in the Bahamas by Colman Barry OSB, 1973.



Map:

https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&id=CE006564CBD4D4AD71075622321FCB8CC2CBD378&thid=OIP.G3GZsyIJV_uhVz2WsJ8VvgHaGI&mediaurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nationsonline.org%2Fmaps%2Fbahamas_map.jpg&exph=1066&expw=1200&q=bahamas+map+uncopyrighted&selectedindex=4&ajaxhist=0&vt=0&eim=1
[Hurricane image: https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/video/hurricane-dorian-slams-bahamas-cat-65337869](https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/video/hurricane-dorian-slams-bahamas-cat-65337869)