

# Religion

## FILM

# Br. Joseph and the Grotto movie premieres at St. Bernard Abbey

ST. BERNARD MEDIA RELATIONS

It was a dress-up affair on October 17, 2013 as St. Bernard Abbey, in conjunction with the City of Cullman Economic Development and Cullman Chamber of Commerce, rolled out the red carpet in the Abby Byre for filmmakers, actors, and sponsors of the newly-created documentary, Br. Joseph and the Grotto, featuring the life and times of St. Bernard Abbey monk, Br. Joseph Zoettl.

The documentary about Br. Joseph is an inspiring true tale involving folk art, Alabama history, perseverance, and a life of devotion.

In 1892, a young lad - 14 years of age from Landshut, Bavaria, braved the seas to America. Br. Joseph Zoettl left his family to become part of monastic community life at St. Bernard Abbey.

Br. Joseph had an affection for religious life not found in many countries today. His talent for creating small pieces of work out of cement and cast off materials, to creating miniature shrines of churches and landmarks which are now on display in a four-acre garden park in Cullman, Alabama known as Ave Maria Grotto, has left a legacy of labor and love for many generations to come.

It was his talent that inspired siblings, Cliff Vaughn, documentary filmmaker at Red Clay Pictures in Nashville, Tennessee, and Carol Ann Vaughn Cross, a professor at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama to join forces bringing to life a documented story celebrating Br. Joseph's life of perseverance, humility and dedication.

Vaughn grew up in



Mary Vaughn joins her husband, Cliff and children Jack and Maddie, for a walk down the red carpet.

Huntsville and had known about the Grotto all of his life, but it was when he heard Kate Campbell's song, "Ave Maria Grotto," that he felt this story had cinematic qualities, so he tucked it away in the back of his mind and more than ten years later decided the time was right.

Vaughn said, "My sister, Carol Ann, has a PhD. in History with a concentration in the American South, and we were very interested particularly because the story takes place in Alabama creating a strong interest for the film. It has a religious and spiritual effect which speaks to people whether religious or not, and the work itself speaks of Br. Joseph's talents as a folk artist."

Vaughn and Cross spent many hours researching Br. Joseph's life combing through the archives at St. Bernard Abbey and finding all kinds of interesting things pertaining to his work, Vaughn said. "There were literally hundreds of postcards from everywhere that people had

sent to Br. Joseph."

"Br. Joseph was a man of perseverance, humility and had values that don't get celebrated," commented Vaughn.

The filming of the documentary took place at the Abbey at St. Bernard - the powerhouse and the Ave Maria Grotto—and a horse farm in Franklin, Tennessee. A couple of locations in Nashville were used as well. The cast included seven members, with the younger Brother Joseph and older Brother Joseph being played by a father and son.

"It was put together very well," Abbot Cletus said. "It was very interesting to note the changes in America when Br. Joseph came from Bavaria in 1892. Br. Joseph lived to see history in the making from the invention of electricity, the Great Depression, World War I and II to living in the same state as the famous W.C. Handy and Helen Keller."

Vaughn was beside himself with the excitement shared at St. Bernard and how receptive the

community was to the film. "Saint Bernard Abbey and the people of Cullman were most hospitable while we made "Brother Joseph and the Grotto," and last Thursday night's premiere at the Abbey Byre for the Arts was no exception. Everything was top-notch -- fitting for a celebration of Brother Joseph, who has given so much to our state."

A reception was held before the premiere with passed appetizers being served by students of St. Bernard Prep School. A local brewery, Straight to Ale, out of Huntsville premiered their new brew, dedicated to the memory of Br. Joseph and the Grotto, Brother Joseph's Belgian Dubbel. Music was provided by the Saint Bernard Prep School Jazz Band.

Fr. Marcus Voss, Director of Development, opened the evening with a prayer and introduced Kate Campbell whose song inspired the idea for the movie.

Students at St. Bernard were treated to a private showing the following Friday.

While the energy of the premiere will be tough to duplicate, Vaughn looks forward to sharing the film in other venues. <http://brother-josephmovie.com> shows other events already being lined up (Nov. 9 at Samford, Nov. 17 in Elba, Dec. 12

## RELIGION BRIEFS

### Fall happenings

➤ Mt. Carmel Methodist Church will hold a halloween party from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 26, at Berlin Community Center, 3309 Highway 278 E, Cullman 35058, no charge. Best costume prize, refreshments offered.

➤ Mountain Grove Baptist Church, 1770 County Road 513, Hanceville 35077, will hold Hallelujah Day from 4 to 8 p.m. Oct. 27, with inflatables, cake walk, food for all ages.

➤ Abundant Grace Church, 708 9th St. SE, Cullman 35055, will hold a fall festival from 6 to 8 p.m. Oct. 31, with free food, games, candy, cake walk and more. Info: Church office at 256-739-7091.

➤ Mt. Hermon Baptist Church, 4312 County Road 1570, Joppa 35087, will have harvest festival from 6 to 9 p.m. Oct. 31, with glow-in-the-dark games, a train ride for kids, awesome laser light show and music from the popular Christian rock group, Skillet. Everything is free. [www.mthermonchurchjoppa.org/](http://www.mthermonchurchjoppa.org/).

### Kenya Relief's annual 5K

The 2nd Annual Kenya Relief 5K Run/Walk will be via virtual race Saturday, Nov. 2, 2013.

The focus of this year's Kenya Relief 5K will again be to help in the construction of a much needed medical center to be located in

Migori.

A virtual race works exactly like a more traditional one until the day of the event. On Nov. 2, 2013, participants will put on their customized race bibs and run/walk the route and distance of their choosing. The runners/walkers get to pick their terrain, timeframe and environment. No worries of weather delays or cancellations because the run can even be done from a treadmill!

The advantage of a virtual race compared to the more traditional run/walk is that even more of our sponsors' dollars and funds raised by participants will go directly to our goal. Another advantage to a virtual race is that we will be able engage participants from around the world. There will even be people from right here in Cullman, including the pediatric surgical team, participating in Migori.

To learn more about the story and mission of Kenya Relief, please visit <http://www.kenyareliefof.org/>. To register for this event, please go to <http://www.kenyareliefof.org/>.

### Healthier living study group

This group meets at 1 p.m. the fourth Thursday of each month, in the Carriage House at Grace Episcopal Church, 305 Arnold St. NE, Cullman 35055. Info: Lumie Estes at 256-338-5803.

## RELIGION CALENDAR

### SATURDAY

**Benefit singing**  
Blair Congregational Methodist Church, 5131 County Road 1082, Vinemont 35179, will hold a benefit singing for Jeremy Horton's medical expenses, patient with cirrhosis, at 7 p.m. featuring Three-In-One from Moulton. Info: Karen Cook at 256-924-4663 or Pastor Johnie Hobbs at 256-736-3076.

### SUNDAY

**Anniversary celebration**

Bethlehem West Baptist Church, 102 County Road 1215, Vinemont 35179, will celebrate their 125th anniversary at 10 a.m. Old-fashioned dress is optional. Lunch following.

### Homecoming/gospel meeting

Northside Church of Christ, 611 Main St. NW, Hanceville 35077, will have a homecoming and gospel meeting at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday; 7 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, with speaker, Chris Barnett of

Chattanooga, TN; also, 6 p.m. Tuesday will be Harmony 4 as guest singers.

### NOVEMBER 3

**Old-fashioned day**  
Mt. Hermon Baptist Church, 4312 County Road 1570, Joppa 35087, will hold an old-fashioned day from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., with lunch at noon. Special guests will be southern gospel group, Point of Honor, at lunchtime. [www.mthermonchurchjoppa.org/](http://www.mthermonchurchjoppa.org/)

## GOSPEL MEETING

Beulah Church of Christ  
3255 County Road 1223  
Vinemont, AL 35179

Jim Deason Preaching  
October 27-30th, 2013

Sunday Morning 9:30 and 10:30 AM

Gospel Singing Sunday 2 PM

Sunday Afternoon Service 3 PM

Monday-Wednesday 7 PM

Everyone Welcome

# VETERANS DAY SALUTE

## IN MEMORY OF OATIS DYE



U.S. Navy  
Veteran of the Korean War  
1950-1953

Not Actual Size

Salute an  
American  
Veteran in our  
Special Veterans  
Day page on  
Sunday,  
November 10.

Send form along with a photo\* and payment for \$20.00 to:

Veteran's Day Salute  
c/o The Cullman Times  
300 4th Ave SE  
Cullman, AL 35055  
Deadline Thursday,  
November 6, 2013.

Questions, Contact Yvonne Moore  
256-734-2131, ext. 126

## IN HONOR OF JESSE MOORE



U.S.M.C  
2004-2009

Not Actual Size

Please Print \_\_\_\_\_ In Honor

Persons Name: \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory

Form of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Service/War Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Photo optional - Space limited to one person per photo.