

CHRISTMAS, 2006

The Sienkewicz Family

The Bird's Nest West

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2006 has seen many changes and adventures in our lives. Our technology has also improved to the point that our annual letter can be accompanied by a photo gallery, which we hope you will enjoy.

The year began with Tom's trip to Rome in January with twenty-four Monmouth College students. The highlight of this trip for Tom was being able, for the first time in his life, to look out over the FORUM ROMANUM from the Tabularium on the Capitoline Hill. He was so fascinated with this view that he literally stayed for several hours to watch the sunset and moonrise over the forum. The variations in light over the forum were striking! For the group, however, the highlight was unquestionably a Papal audience at which four MC students were able to shake the hands of Benedict XIV. If you look closely in the photo at left you can see Tom behind the religious sister in the foreground.



March brought an unexpected opportunity for Tom and Anne both to travel to Paris with another group of MC students. On this trip they were pleased to spend time with old friends, Viv Edwards and Chris Morris, who traveled from Britain special for the occasion, as well as with our French maman, Mme Fouché. We also brought with us a traveling companion named Flat Stanley who belonged to Jesse, the son of Anne's cousin Tina in Maine. You can see Anne and Stanley in front of Notre Dame in the photo.



salamanca in Parc Guell.

In June Tom traveled to Barcelona for a site visit for a potential college off-campus program. He really enjoyed this city and highly recommends it as an exciting and off-the-beaten-track Roman site. The remains of the city the Romans called Barcino include the largest underground Roman archaeological site in Europe and an excellent archaeological museum. In the photo at left, you can see Tom not at a Roman site, but at Gaudi's famous



Most of our summer was devoted to preparations for Julia's wedding to Víctor Martínez on August 19, 2006 at St. James R.C. Church in Thomaston, Maine. Julia and Víctor had been dating for several years and we are delighted to add him to our growing clan—now consisting of two daughters, three sons, six dogs and six cats when we are all gathered together! Víctor is a working on his Ph.D. in art history at the University of Illinois. He is a Roman archaeologist and many of Tom's colleagues have accused him of organizing an arranged marriage. We include Julia and Víctor's engagement photo for the benefit of those of you who do not subscribe to the *Monmouth Review Alas* or the *Jalesburg Register Mail*.



In April Richard left for a teaching position in Osaka, Japan, where he has been teaching English to "ankle-biters" as he calls them, as well as other age groups. He likes Japan but has decided that he does not enjoy teaching. Unless he finds alternative employment in Japan he will probably return to the U.S. next March, right after his father goes to visit him for a week. Until then his address is #305 Flowrence Ishibashi, 4-17-29 Ishibashi, Kieda-Shi, Osaka-Fu 563-0032 JAPAN.

Since Richard's departure for Japan meant that he would not be able to attend Julia's wedding, Tom decided to borrow a variation on Flat Stanley and create a Flat Richard to attend the wedding in his stead. Evidence of Flat Richard's presence at the wedding is provided at left.

Julia spent the summer working for the U.S. Dept. of Interior again, this time at Hill-Stead House in Farmington, Connecticut. She is now A.B.D. and beginning work on her thesis which deals with Thomas Cole and other nineteenth-century artist-architects.

In the midst of wedding preparations, which would never have gotten done without the expert help of Julia's Aunt Debbie in Maine and Aunt Toni, in New Jersey, Tom did get a chance to plant a garden and we were blessed this year with a plethora of cucumbers and zucchini in addition to our usual bounty of tomatoes and peppers. This was an especially good year for pears and we were literally giving them away at one point.

The wedding location made it easy for us to get to Maine this summer. Anne's parents are doing quite well for octogenarians and much better than they were last year. Anne's mother is home and much more mobile than she was. Her father does an amazing job of caring for her and for the house and has become quite the cook. They are fortunate to have Anne's brothers Carl (living with them) and Jack (living nearby) to assist them when necessary. The wedding took place in Maine especially so that Julia's grandparents could attend the ceremony. At right you can see Anne pinning a corsage on the lapel of the suit her father purchased special for the occasion. At left she is doing the same for her mother.



The wedding ceremony was quite satisfactory. We were pleased that Tom's friends Paul Sullivan S.J. and Robert Giovenco could officiate as celebrant and deacon respectively (see photo below, at right) and that Julia's cousin Roy (now a freshman voice major at Elon University!) served as cantor and soloist (see photo below, at left).

The wedding was also an occasion for joyful family gathering, after too many funeral reunions, including one for Tom's uncle Jerome



just after Easter. All of our immediate family were able to attend except for Richard (in Japan) and his cousin Tracy San Filippo (a junior at Mt. Holyoke and spending the semester in New Zealand). We include several family portraits, especially ones of Tom and his siblings (below, right), of Anne with her family (below, left), and of the bride, her sister and many of their cousins (below, right) so you can see how time has flown by. Toni's daughters, Christina and Theresa are flourishing.



Chris is an engineer in the Baltimore area and Theresa only recently learned that she will enter medical school in Arizona in the fall. Their mother is living in New Jersey, at least for the time being.



Jack's son Tim is now thinking pre-med in his sophomore year at Boston University while Nick, a junior in high school, has discovered girls. Marie and her husband Kyle are living still in far northern Illinois with their growing menagerie. In addition to the two dogs and four cats they had last year, they have added Peaches, a diabetic miniature poodle who had been one of Marie's patients and whose elderly owner could no longer manage. Marie deserves kudos for lasting almost a year before adopting one of her patients! They are in the process of purchasing their own home and their new address, by Christmas, will be 711 Wauconda Rd., Wauconda IL 60084.



The newlyweds, by the way, are living in Julia's old house (307 S. New Street, Champaign, IL 61820) with two redbone coon hounds to keep life from becoming dull.

Believe it or not, we have one more trip to mention, before we close. In October Anne and Tom traveled to San Francisco to visit her Aunt Bernie and her husband George Worthy. Anne had never been to California before and George, who is a retired travel agent, is an excellent tour guide, so we had a wonderful time. Our favorite spot in the Bay Area is undoubtedly Muir Woods, but we offer a shot of the Golden Gate as proof of our visit.



Other than the trip to the west coast, our fall has been relatively quiet. Anne continues to serve the needy at the American Red Cross while Tom deals with his largest-ever Latin reading class. Would you believe that eighteen students chose to read Caesar and only eight Catullus? (Tom would have predicted the opposite enrollments.) The college has finally (!) approved a second full-time position in classics so he is also busy trying to hire a new colleague for next year. *Excelsior!*

We hope that this holiday season finds you all healthy and happy and looking forward to a happy MMVII!