

SERMONS IN STONE

The Life and Work of Brother Joseph



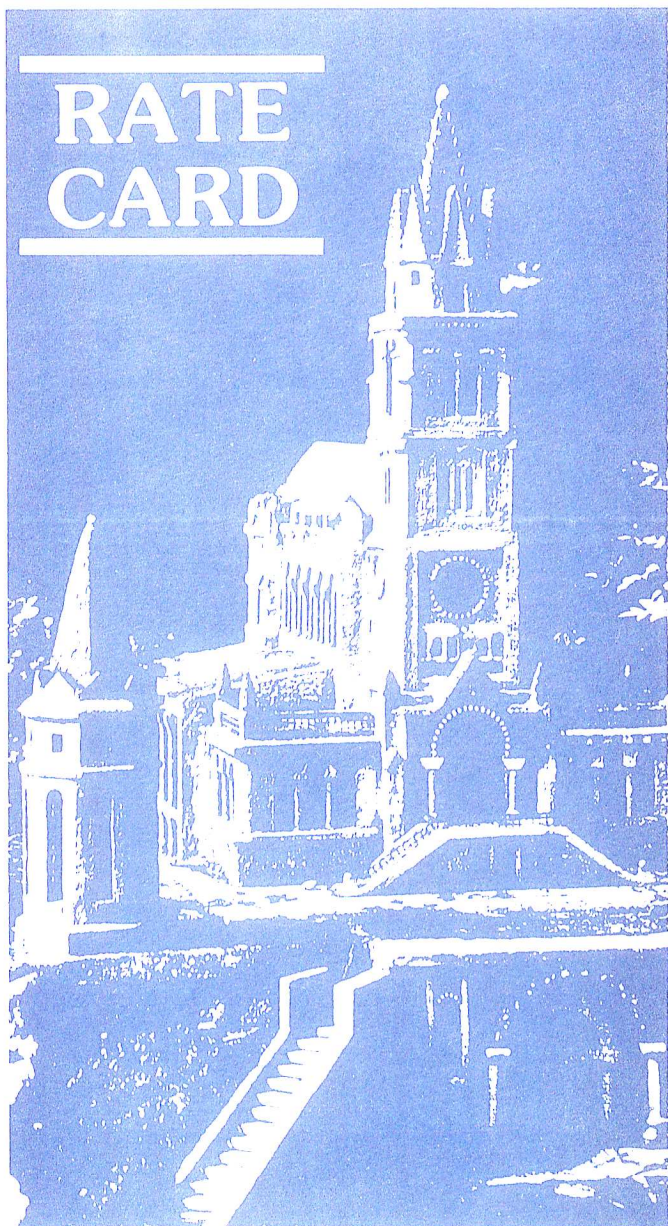
**LITTLE
JERUSALEM
and
AVE
MARIA
GROTTO**

**NEAR
CULLMAN
ALABAMA**

"THE SCENIC SHRINE OF THE SOUTH"

AVE MARIA GROTTO

RATE
CARD



FOUR MILES OFF INTERSTATE 65 IN
CULLMAN, ALABAMA

AVE MARIA GROTTO

"Jerusalem In Miniature"

The Ave Maria Grotto, known throughout the world as "Jerusalem in Miniature", is on the grounds of St. Bernard Abbey, the only Benedictine Abbey in Alabama. Found just off Interstate 65, the Grotto consists of 125 small stone and cement structures landscaped along a two block long hillside.

The miniature versions of world famous buildings and Biblical stories are the creation of Bavarian monk, Brother Joseph Zoetl O.S.B., who spent 70 years of his life at St. Bernard.

Nestled along the shaded hillside are miniatures of the Temple of Jerusalem, St. Peter's Shrine, Noah's Ark, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Pantheon, the Roman Colosseum, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and over a hundred more.

HOURS: 7 A.M. - Sunset, daily
(Closed Christmas)

REGULAR ADMISSION

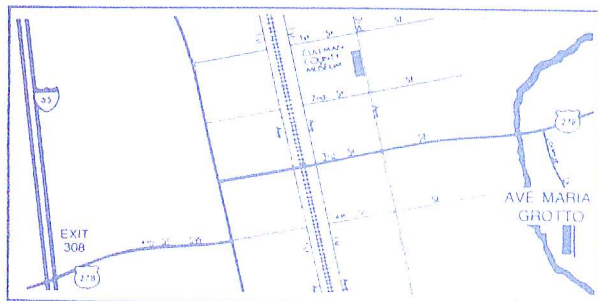
Adults	\$3.50
Children 6-12	2.00
Sr. Citizens (62 & Over)	3.00
Children under 6	Free with Adult

GROUP ADMISSION

Adults	\$2.50
High School Students	2.00
Elementary Students	1.50
Sr. Citizens (62 & Over)	2.50

BUS DRIVER AND TOUR GUIDE ADMITTED FREE WITH GROUP

28 MILES TO DECATUR



49 MILES TO BIRMINGHAM

For More Information Contact:
AVE MARIA GROTTO St. Bernard Abbey
1600 St. Bernard Dr., SE, Cullman, AL 35055
(205) 734-4110



BR. JOSEPH ZOETTL, O.S.B.

THE AVE MARIA GROTTTO

Cullman, Alabama 35055

Open every day 7:00 A.M. until sunset. Free Picnic Grounds are adjacent to the Grotto Parking lot.

The Ave Maria Grotto is a beautifully landscaped, four-acre park designed to provide a natural setting for the 125 miniature reproductions of some of the most famous historic buildings and shrines of the world. These masterpieces of stone and concrete are the lifetime work of Brother Joseph Zoettl, a Benedictine monk of St. Bernard Abbey. Begun as a hobby, Brother Joseph with various materials he could find, an infinite patience and a remarkable sense of symmetry and proportion re-created some of the greatest edifices of all times.

Among the numerous replicas which elicit admiration and wonderment from the visitor are the famous buildings of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, familiar to all from the Bible; Roman Landmarks, as St. Peter's and the Colosseum; the famous Spanish Missions of the American Southwest; and replicas of the famous Shrines of Our Lady, Fatima and Lourdes.

Located on the grounds of St. Bernard Abbey, 50 miles north of Birmingham and 1 mile east of Cullman, the Ave Maria Grotto is easily reached via Interstate 65; U.S. 31 and 278; or Alabama State Highway 69.



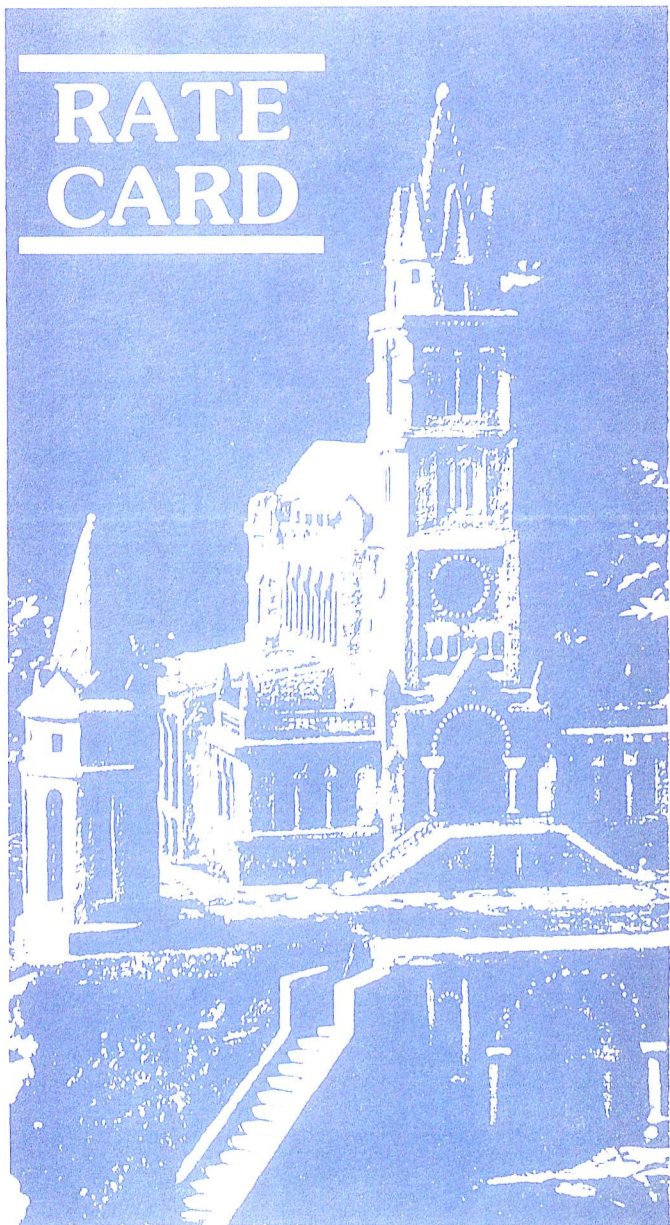
MINIATURE OF JERUSALEM





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...d in art with body and wings.
...amous Benedictine Abbey in Spain
...
...of European and Latin American
...located along the roads, where
...prayer.

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH: these
...in Brother Joseph's home town,
...astle's name means "trust not,"
...It it did not keep a promise of
...e local people. St. Martin's
...Joseph was baptized in 1878,
...in the world, 432 feet.
...ther Joe built this as a tribute
...esigned by Alexander Eiffel,
...amous Eiffel Tower in Paris,
...151 feet high.

...s a tribute to the Red Cross
...note its tiny organ. Brother
...cold cream jars in this
...em?
THE TEMPLE OF THE FAIRIES.
...ren and the dragon. The

THE ROUND TOWER: a mysterious round tower of stones in
Rhode Island considered to have been built by the Vikings.
THE ALAMO: a mission church in Texas. The scene of a
famous battle in which Davy Crockett was killed.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL: The Guardian Angels of all of us
are honored in this small grotto. The blue cross inside the
cave is made from blue ink bottles.

ST. THERESE, THE LITTLE FLOWER. Born in Lisieux,
France, in 1873, St. Therese entered the Carmelite convent
at the age of 16. Her claim to sanctity was the heroic virtues
she practiced in performing the everyday tasks to which she
was assigned. She died in 1897 and was proclaimed a saint
in 1925. This grotto was made from Alabama marble and the
statue is from Italy.

ST. PETER'S BASILICA in Rome, one of Brother Joseph's
most famous miniatures, was constructed in 1954. Brother
Joe began it by using an old bird cage to form the huge
dome. Standing over the tomb of the Apostle Peter, the
first Pope, the Basilica is the largest church in the world,
covering four acres and holding 70,000 people.

MONTE CASSINO ABBEY: Founded by St. Benedict in the
fifth century it is located on a high mountain top south of
Rome. It has been destroyed by wars four times, the last
in 1944 by Allied bombers. Each time it was rebuilt.
ST SCHOLASTICA OF SURIACO: St. Benedict's first monas-

THE WALLS, ST. AGNE
THE VESTAL TEMPLE;
ST. SIXTUS CHAPEL.
rooms and tunnels where
services and the Christ
THE LEANING TOWER O
famous tower as it stand
THE STATUE OF ST. F
itself it honors a saintly
worked for the poor in
orphanages, hospitals,
in New York.

THE AVE MARIA GROTT
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Prompt Succor, or Our
left in St. Benedict, fou
the right is his twin si
the Benedictine nuns. T
wide; 27 ft. deep; The
Maria Grotto obtains its
Joseph beautified the gr
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stalactites which hang f
SCENES FROM THE HOL

T H E T O U R

The first shrine is appropriately BETHLEHEM. Here is depicted the birthplace of Jesus Christ. Above the enclosure is written, "Venite Adoremus," - "Come Let us Adore."

THE TOWER OF THANKS was constructed by Brother Joseph to thank his many friends who sent him materials for his works. The green glass balls on top are from Ireland where they were used as floats on fishing nets.

ST. PETER'S SHRINE: constructed of pumice rock, it honors the first Pope. The word, "Peter" means rock--hence the construction material. Above see the figure of St. Michael the Archangel, represented in art with body and wings. MONSERRAT ABBEY is a famous Benedictine Abbey in Spain known as a pilgrimage site.

WAYSIDE SHRINE: Typical of European and Latin American countries such shrines are located along the roads, where travellers stop and say a prayer.

CASTLE TRAUSSNITZ AND ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH: these two miniatures are located in Brother Joseph's home town, Landshut, Bavaria. The castle's name means "trust not," because the baron who built it did not keep a promise of protection he'd made for the local people. St. Martin's Church, in which Brother Joseph was baptized in 1878, has the tallest brick tower in the world, 432 feet.

STATUE OF LIBERTY: Brother Joe built this as a tribute to his adopted country. Designed by Alexander Eiffel, the engineer who built the famous Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Statue of Liberty stands 151 feet high.

RED CROSS TOWER: built as a tribute to the Red Cross work in World War I.

TEMPLE OF THE FAIRIES: note its tiny organ. Brother Joe used over a dozen old cold cream jars in this structure. Can you find them?

HANSEL AND GRETEL VISIT THE TEMPLE OF THE FAIRIES. Note its beautiful little children and the dragon. The dragon is bound by a heavy chain!

ST. BERNARD COLLEGE BUILDINGS. Depicts the history of the Abbey school. An old log cabin was purchased in 1891 along with 160 acres at \$2.00 an acre to form the beginning of the Abbey. The Map of Alabama with the words, "Here We Rest," refers to the meaning of the Indian word, "Alabama," not to the energetic monks! The LIBRARY and ABBEY CHURCH are hand-cut stone buildings.

CATHEDRAL OF MOBILE, ALA. The Immaculate Conception Cathedral dedicated in 1849 was the first church in the U.S. to be so dedicated to the Virgin Mary under this title. The two domes are discarded toilet bowl floats!

MISSION SECTION: Here Brother Joseph recreated some of the missions founded by the famous California missionary, Franciscan Father Junipero Serra: SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CARMEL, MISSION DOLORES, and SAN BUENAVENTURA.

Other mission churches are SAN MIGUEL, Santa Fe, N. Mex., SAN FERNANDO, and SANTA BARBARA.

THE ROUND TOWER: a mysterious round tower of stones in Rhode Island considered to have been built by the Vikings.

THE ALAMO: a mission church in Texas. The scene of a famous battle in which Davy Crockett was killed.

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ST. SCHOLASTICA OF SUBIACO: St Benedict's first monastery in the mountains near Rome.

ST. ANSELM'S, The International Benedictine College on the Aventine Hill in Rome.

PANTHEON: Built by Romans in 27 B.C. was a temple to all their gods, it later became a Christian Church. Many famous people are buried in it.

VESTAL VIRGIN: the vestal virgins' duty was to keep the lamps burning before the pagan gods. If a virgin allowed the fires to go out, she was put to death.

THE AQUEDUCT: built to carry water into the cities. This one is a copy of the Appius Claudius Aqueduct. ROTUNDA OF ST. STEPHEN: in honor of one of the first deacons and the first martyr of the Christian Church.

THE COLOSSEUM: one of the most popular Roman ruins Much of it remains today. Built as an open air theater for the entertainment of the Romans, it was the site where early Christians were put to death and gladiators fought combats to death.

BASILICAS, TEMPLES and CATACOMBS. Many famous buildings are scattered on the hillside: ST. PAUL'S OUTSIDE THE WALLS, ST. AGNES; ST. LAWRENCE, ST. DOMITILLA; THE VESTAL TEMPLE; TOMB OF ST. PETRONILLA, and ST. SIXTUS CHAPEL. The catacombs were underground rooms and tunnels where the early Christians held their services and the Christians buried their dead.

THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA: Brother Joe built this famous tower as it stands today: leaning.

THE STATUE OF ST. FRANCES CABRINI: standing off by itself it honors a saintly immigrant woman from Italy who worked for the poor in the U.S. She built 67 institutions; orphanages, hospitals, schools and convents. She is buried in New York.

THE AVE MARIA GROTTTO. Standing with the Child Jesus in her arms, the Virgin Mary here is known as Our Lady of Prompt Succor, or Our Lady of Quick Aid. At the viewer's left in St. Benedict, founder of the Benedictine monks; on the right is his twin sister, St. Scholastica, foundress of the Benedictine nuns. This Grotto is 27 feet high; 27 feet wide; 27 ft. deep; The word grotto means cave and the Ave Maria Grotto obtains its name from this structure. Brother Joseph beautified the grotto with its many pieces of colored stone and glass. He built the Altar using bits of crushed glass, stone and cement. He also made the stalactites which hang from the ceiling.

SCENES FROM THE HOLY LAND: This section portrays the life of Our Lord from His birth through His death upon the cross and final Resurrection.

BETHLEHEM CAVE: The very first scene in this section is the beginning of Christianity.

CITY OF JERUSALEM: The GATE OF HEROD leads into the city of Jerusalem, a word meaning city of peace. Here is a famous miniature of Brother Joe's:

THE JEWISH TEMPLE or THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM, the worshipping place of Palestinian Jews. Inside was kept the Ark of the Covenant, in which were the Ten Commandments. The original ark was destroyed in 587 B.C. and the entire TEMPLE was destroyed with the city in 70 A.D. by the Romans.

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Christ on the Cross. Moses
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QUE AND CHAPEL, ANNUNCIATION
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OR TO SIMON CHINAT CH.
LOURDES SHRINE: One of the most popular shrines in the
world. Located in Southern France, it was here that the
Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in a small
cave in 1858. Later this huge church was built and many
miracles have been performed among the thousands of
annual pilgrims. This replica was the last built by
Brother Joe-- in 1958 at the age of 80. (He died in 1961.)
AGONY IN THE GARDEN SHRINE: Dedicated to former stu-
dents of St. Bernard College who were killed in World War
II. The twenty-nine crosses in the cemetery represent the
deceased.

THE AMERICAN FLAG: Brother Joe's way of honoring the
St. Bernard fallen veterans, made from colored marbles,
glass and cement. It has only 48 states, being made before
Hawaii and Alaska entered the Union.
BENEDICTINE MONASTERY IN KOREA. At Seoul, Korea the
Benedictine missionaries operated a large school. This is a
replica of that school. Many Benedictine monks were killed
by the Communists during the Korean War. The three
crosses honor the three St. Bernard alumni killed in the War.
WORLD PEACE CHURCH. In Hiroshima, Japan, dedicated to
world peace in hopes that no more atom bombs will ever be
used again.

OUR LADY OF GUADELUPE SHRINE: The last of the Grotto
stands at the former entrance to the Grotto park

landscaped hillside of
structures, the handiwork
Joseph Zoettel, O.S.B.
St. Bernard Abbey.

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discarded pieces of bu

Brother Joe place
the Abbey gardens but
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site in 1934.

Brother Joseph ga
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FORTRESS OF ANTONIA: attached to the TEMPLE, it was the headquarters of the Proconsul, Pontius Pilate, at the time of Jesus' death. Here Our Lord was scourged and condemned to die on the cross.

GETHSEMANI: at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where Jesus suffered His agony and was taken prisoner.

CRUCIFIXION: the two crosses flank Our Lord representing the two thieves, one known as the "Good Thief," who asked Jesus for forgiveness.

DORMITION ABBEY: high on the hill: a Benedictine monastery on Mt. Zion. The place where the Virgin Mary died, and was assumed into heaven.

THE RESURRECTION: Brother Joe placed the empty tomb beneath Calvary. The Resurrection is the most important mystery of the Christians.

TEN COMMANDMENTS: the two tablets contain the Ten Commandments which were spoken by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai and then written on two stone tablets.

BRAZEN SERPENT: Prefigures Christ on the Cross. Moses was told by God to hold up a serpent on a pole so that those who looked upon it would be saved from the effects of the bite of poisonous serpents.

JACOB'S WELL: At the entrance of the Sichern Valley; Here our Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman of "living water."

TOMB OF LAZARUS: Here Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead; near the home of Martha and Mary.

BETHPAGE, ASCENSION MOSQUE AND CHAPEL, ANNUNCIATION CHURCH, CHURCH OF NAIM: buildings connected with events in Our Lord's life in the Holy Land.

GROTTO OF ST. JOSEPH: patron of Brother Joseph.

THE FIRST "LITTLE JERUSALEM." These miniatures represent Brother Joe's first attempts at constructing small buildings.

MOUNT TABOR: the Statue of Jesus atop the famous mount where He appeared transfigured to His followers. The Basilica commemorates the event.

NOAH'S ARK AND TOWER OF BABEL: Old Testament events recorded in stone and cement.

WAYSIDE SHRINE, DANIEL'S TOMB and CATHEDRAL IN MANCHURIA: The Cathedral was destroyed by the Communists.

HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON: One of the seven wonders of the Ancient World, built by King Nabuchodonosor about 3,000 B.C. Note the many elephants Brother Joe has placed here.

PYRAMID: Tomb of the Pharaohs.

WAYSIDE SHRINES: The Crucifixion and Head of Jesus.

BENEDICTINE SHRINE: Brother Joe's tribute to the Benedictine monks. Note the Benedictine Cross on the top with the word "Pax," ---"Peace," and the Benedictine motto of "Ora et Labora," ---"Pray and Work."

OUR LADY OF FATIMA SHRINE. Notes the appearance of the Virgin Mary in 1917 to three small children in the town of Fatima, Portugal. Mary asked them to pray for the conversion of Communist Russia.

DIE WALD KAPELLE: "The Forest Chapel." A beautiful wayside shrine in honor of the Virgin Mary.

ST. POPE PIUS X: Known as the Pope of Peace, because he worked hard to prevent the outbreak of World War I. Also known for granting the privilege of receiving Holy Communion to small children.

LOURDES SHRINE: One of the most popular shrines in the world. Located in Southern France, it was here that the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in a small cave in 1858. Later this huge church was built and many miracles have been performed among the thousands of annual pilgrims. This replica was the last built by Brother Joe-- in 1958 at the age of 80. (He died in 1961.)

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OUR LADY OF GUADELUPE SHRINE: The last of the Grotto shrines stands at the former entrance to the Grotto park.

The Virgin Mary in 1531 appeared to a Mexican farmer, Juan Diego. A large church was built at the place and has become a famous pilgrimage shrine. Our Lady of Guadalupe is one of the favorites of American Hispanics, particularly in Mexico and Latin America.

The staff of the Ave Maria Grotto thank you for visiting our beautiful shrine. We hope you enjoyed your tour. Please come back....and May God Bless you with a safe journey home.

This short Self Guided Tour was written by one of the Abbey monks, Father Aloysius Plaisance, OSB., Ph.D

A SELF GUIDED TOUR OF THE AVE MARIA GROTTO

St. Bernard Abbey, Cullman, Alabama 35055

The Ave Maria Grotto is located on the grounds of St. Bernard Abbey, the only Benedictine monastery in Alabama, founded in 1891. The Grotto consists of a landscaped hillside of 125 small stone and cement structures, the handiwork of the creative genius, Brother Joseph Zoettel, O.S.B., for almost 70 years a monk of St. Bernard Abbey.

A pleasant two block pathway winds besides these miniature buildings passing in front of a large cavern style Grotto on the lower level of the hillside. Opened in 1934 on the site of a former stone quarry the Grotto miniature park was a continuation of the creative work of Brother Joe, who built his first replicas about 1912, and his last, the beautiful Lourdes Basilica Church replica in 1958, constructed when he was 80 years old.

Brother Joseph was born in 1878 in Landshut, Bavaria and in 1892 came to the newly founded St. Bernard Abbey. His monastic life was spent at the Abbey in daily hours of prayer and in laboring in the Abbey power house. When not busy shoveling coal into the furnaces, he began to construct miniature buildings from discarded pieces of building materials.

Brother Joe placed his cement and stone creations in the Abbey gardens but due to the large number of visitors coming to see them they were moved to the present site in 1934.

Brother Joseph gathered ideas for his creations from extensive readings of history and the bible. Of all the replicas he has seen only about six of them: those of his home town of Landshut and those of St. Bernard Abbey. All the others were constructed from photos or from memory.

Brother Joe who died in 1961 is buried in the Abbey Cemetery, one hundred yards north of the Gift Shop. Visitors are invited to visit his grave.

WELCOME TO THE GROTTO!

GREETINGS FROM

12V AL 3 Published for and Distributed by Ave Maria Grotto, Cullman, Alabama. Printed in Ireland for John Hinde Curteich Inc.



BR. JOSEPH ZOETTL, O.S.B.

THE AVE MARIA GROTTTO

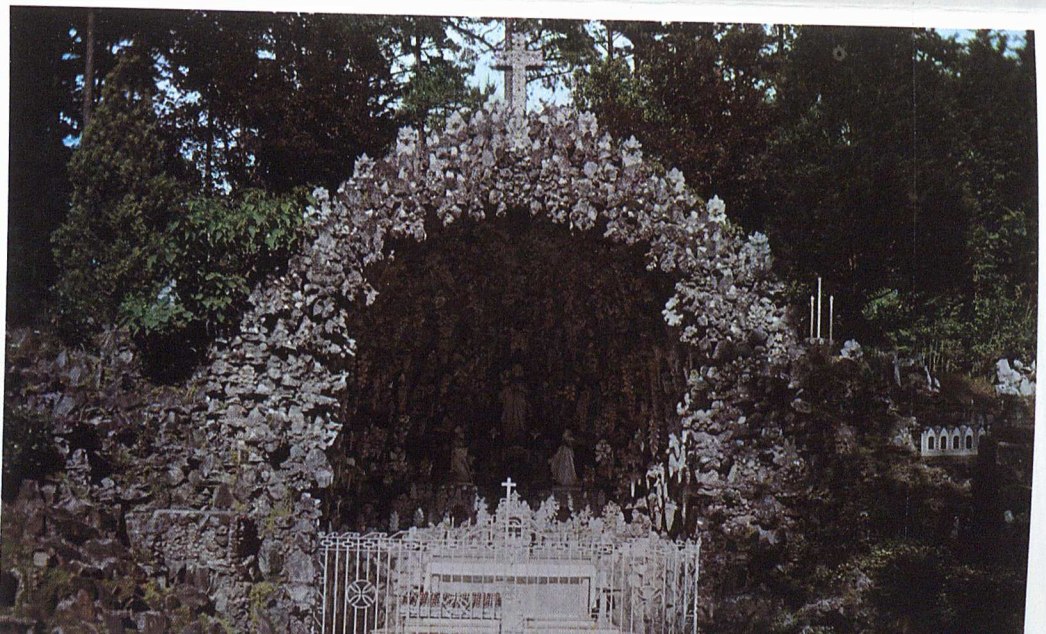
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ALABAMA

"THE SCENIC SHRINE OF THE SOUTH"

DESCRIPTION OF THE GROTTO

The Ave Maria Grotto, the Scenic Shrine of the South, is located on the grounds of St. Bernard Abbey, 50 miles north of Birmingham and one mile east of Cullman. Cullman is reached via Interstate Highway 65; U.S. Highways 31 and 278, and Alabama State Highway 69.

The Ave Maria Grotto was begun as the hobby of a Benedictine Monk of St. Bernard Abbey. Over the years, the Grotto has developed into a panorama of beauty which delights hundreds of tourists daily. Within its four-acre park are contained miniature representations of buildings from all over the world, resting in the natural setting of an Alabama hillside.

Perhaps the most beautiful feature of the Ave Maria Grotto is the main Grotto itself. This creation is a cave, roofed and covered with artificial stalactites, containing an altar of Alabama marble, mosaicked to perfection with small pieces of limestone and Florida seashells. Above the altar is the statue of the Blessed Virgin, flanked by representations of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica. Other smaller grottoes, containing marble statues, enhance the beauty of this larger work.

On a more modest scale are the many cement replicas of buildings and churches which dot the hillside. Among the numerous stone replicas are found copies of edifices of many foreign countries besides an entire section of familiar scenes from the Holy Land. The visitor will see not only some of the more prominent Roman and Palestinian structures, but representations of many famous American Landmarks, including the Alamo and many others of the Spanish missions, all long-famed tourist attractions. Reproductions of European wayside shrines and countless other creations of the builder of the Ave Maria Grotto are placed beside the path which winds its way through this flower-bedecked park.

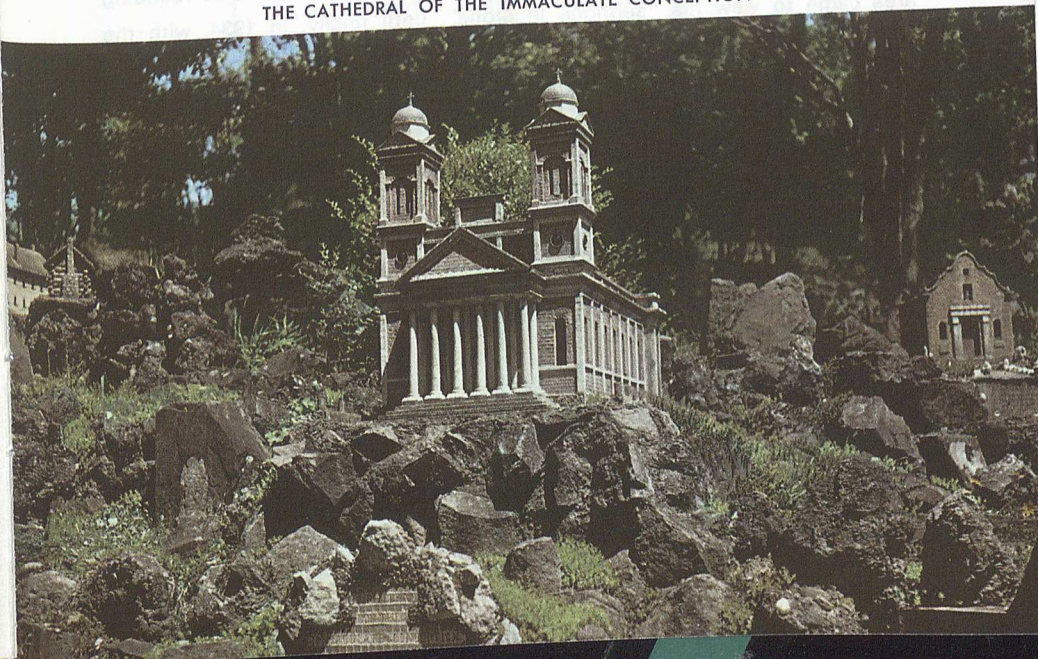
FRONT COVER:

Brother Joseph, O.S.B.,
creator of the Ave
Maria Grotto, at work
on one of the more
than 125 miniature
reproductions.



NATIVITY

THE CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION





Brother Joseph Zoettl, O.S.B. a native of Landshut, Bavaria, was responsible for the creation of the Ave Maria Grotto. He began making cement replicas of shrines and buildings in 1888. As his efforts improved, more and more visitors from all over the area came to view his "sermons in stone", until the dedication of the Grotto, his creations were made all over the nation.

One of the first scenes the visitor encounters is the Nativity. Then follow, at regular intervals along the path, scenes modeled after those in Europe.

The first miniature representation seen is that of the Nativity. It actually stands in Brother Joseph's home town in Bavaria. Other scenes include St. Martin's Church of Landshut, Bavaria, the Red Cross, the life of Hansel and Gretel, and a shrine in honor of the Virgin Mary.

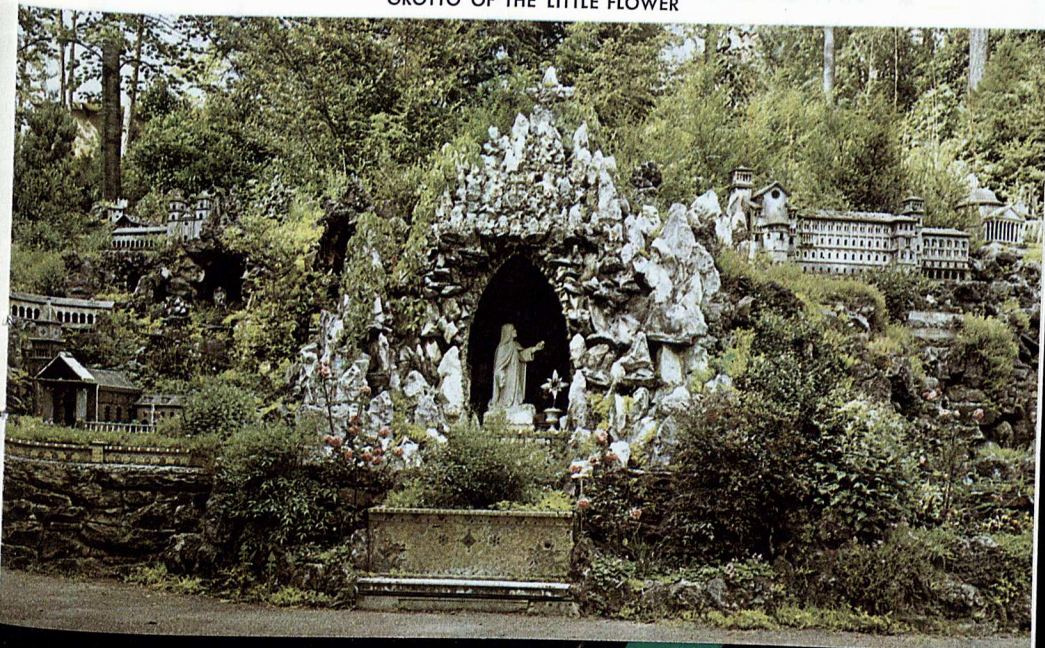


SAN JUAN
CAPISTRANO

Again the tiny buildings appear, this time the mission section depicting the Alamo and many of the Churches built by Father Junipero Serra, the great apostle of the Spanish Southwest. A large marble statue of St. Theresa, the Little Flower, is next, along with a small replica of the convent at Lisieux, France. At this point the visitor's awe increases as he catches sight of the entire layout of the park. It is here that the immensity of the undertaking is realized. The visitor is enthralled by the beauty unfolding before his eyes.

It is a feeling, shared by countless thousands, that no words — however accurate and beautiful — could convey. Brother Joseph, eighty years old in 1958, still worked long hours to expand the collection of replicas, both ancient and modern.

GROTTO OF THE LITTLE FLOWER



shut, Bavaria, is the man
to. This diminutive monk
buildings almost fifty years
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ccessible to tourists from

the Nativity of Our Lord.
several wayside shrines,

a huge castle which ac-
ia, Germany. Then come
oss Tower, Scenes from
Pope Pius XII.



▲ ST. PETER'S ROME

▼ ROMAN MINIATURES





MAIN GROTTA

After passing the statue of St. Theresa, the next group of buildings to come into view are those of the Roman Section. In this section St. Peter's Church holds the prominent spot. Along with this world-famed basilica you will view reproductions of the ruins of masterful architecture such as the Pantheon, the Colosseum, the Roman Aqueduct and the Catacombs. It includes also the famed Benedictine College of Sant' Anselmo, St. Scholastica's at Subiaco and St. Paul's outside the walls of Rome.

Students of architecture are continually astounded by the accuracy of these miniatures. It seems scarcely believable, for example, that Monte Cassino — originally founded by St. Benedict in the Fifth Century, bombed to rubble during World War II — could again rise in such splendid, tiny realism as it does in the midst of other reproductions of the Roman buildings.



THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM

Along with these Old World reproductions
Churches in this country, among them the E
Conception in Mobile, Alabama. Pictured to the
first church in the United States, the Mission
Augustine, Florida. Upon leaving the Roman section
area of the main feature, the "Ave Maria Grotto"
statues of the Infant Savior in the arms of His M
Queen of the Universe." St. Benedict and St. Scholastica
Benedictine Order, kneel at her feet, above a beau
is what is properly called "The Grotto", the e
miniatures together have been grouped under the t
come to be known by this name. The words "Ave
words of the famous prayer, "Hail Mary".



"LITTLE JERUSALEM"

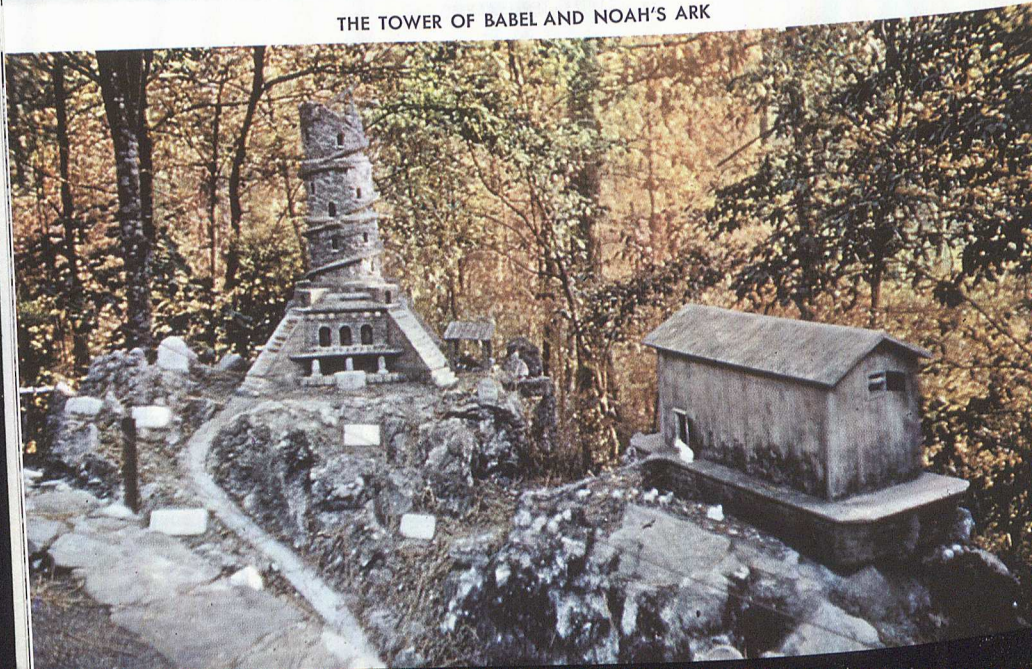
are many replicas of fine
Basilica of the Immaculate
right of the Basilica is the
of Nombre de Dios in St.
n the visitor then enters the
"o" itself. This consists of
other, known as "Our Lady
astica, twin founders of the
tiful altar. Though this part
entire park and all of the
erm so that whole area has
ve Maria" are the first two

As the visitor continues through the Grotto, he finds to the right of the main Grotto, a section which contains scenes from the Holy Land. The most prominent buildings here are the Cenacle, where Christ offered the Last Supper; the Fortress Antonia, where Jesus was kept prisoner; and the Temple of Jerusalem, depicted on the opposite page. Other scenes portray the Crucifixion, the Brazen Serpent of Moses, the Pool of Siloam, St. Mary's Well at Nazareth, Jacob's Well and the ruins of the home of Martha and Mary, with the Tomb of Lazarus.

Around the next slight curve is the original Little Jerusalem. This is the first group of buildings made by Brother Joseph, many of which have been reproduced in other parts of the Grotto.

Next comes Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel. Going back up the hill one passes the Hanging Gardens of Babylon and comes to statues of our Lady of Fatima and St. Pius X. A little grotto depicting Christ's Agony in the Garden is dedicated to alumni of St. Bernard College who lost their lives in World War II. Representative buildings of Eastern architecture round out a tour of the Grotto. In this area, the latest large group constructed by Brother Joseph is a miniature of a Benedictine monastery in Korea. It is dedicated to the Alumni of St. Bernard who died in Korea. To view the Grotto brings peace and calm. Perhaps that is why Brother Joe, in his last work before he died, fashioned, of glass pieces set in cement, an American flag and a replica of the World's Peace Church in Hiroshima, Japan, erected on the site where the first atomic bomb exploded. It seems to say from his grave in the nearby monastery cemetery: "Peace be unto you!"

THE TOWER OF BABEL AND NOAH'S ARK



HANGING GARDENS
OF
BABYLON



LIFE OF BROTHER JOSEPH, O.S.B.

The builder of the miniatures pictured in this booklet was a Benedictine monk. Brother Joseph, O.S.B., born in Landshut, Bavaria, in 1878, and came to this country and to St. Bernard Abbey in 1892 as one of the first students of the newly-founded college.

He later decided to become a Brother in the Benedictine Order. His first assignment was at Stonega, Virginia, where he performed household duties for the various priests who served that territory. He served in this same capacity also in Tuscumbia and Cullman, Alabama. He was recalled to the Abbey where he was assigned to kitchen duty. In 1910 he was appointed to the power plant. While in charge of the power plant, he developed his hobby of building miniature shrines in his spare time.



LOURDES BASILICA

One of the Fathers at St. Bernard had a small souvenir shop in the college building and requested Brother Joseph to make some small Grottoes for his store. Brother Joseph's creation of these Grottoes was well received and sold rapidly, so that his work in their construction took much of his time. This work was the forerunner of the large Grotto, and the income from the sales of the little replicas made by Brother Joseph was used toward the construction of the Ave Maria Grotto.

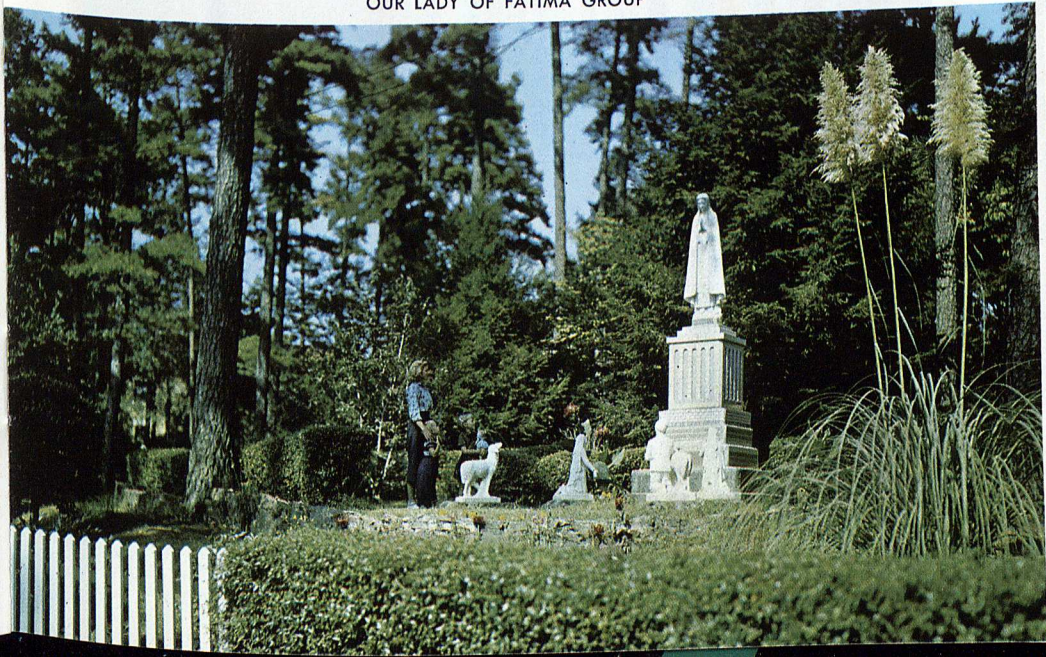
Brother Joseph first erected the miniatures on the monastery recreation grounds. Because of the presence of many of the replicas from the Holy Land, the people named it "Little Jerusalem". Now as a result of the invasion of numerous visitors to view the work of Brother Joseph, Abbot Bernard decided that the miniatures be moved to another location.

The new site was to be on the bluff of the Eight Mile Creek in front of the Administration building, Landscape gardening and terracing of an abandoned rock quarry, under the direction of Father Patrick O'Neill, O.S.B., produced a beautiful setting for the creations of Brother Joseph.

After the construction of the Grotto, the "Little Jerusalem" miniatures were moved to the present site. The Most Rev. T.J. Toolen dedicated the Ave Maria Grotto May 17, 1934.

Numerous friends of St. Bernard sent in statuary around which Brother Joseph wielded his magic in cement, stone, marbles, tiles, shells, rocks, chandelier prisms & beads. These little items - - many sent from all over the world - - have been worked together to form the various shrines and replicas which number about one hundred and fifty.

OUR LADY OF FATIMA GROUP





BASILICA IN FATIMA

On July 11, 1957, the Feast of the Solemnity of St. Benedict, Brother Joseph celebrated his Diamond Jubilee. He had completed 60 years of monastic life in St. Bernard Abbey, and in recognition received from the hands of the Right Rev. Bede Luibel, O.S.B. the "Baculum Senectutis" — the "Staff of Venerability".

Brother Joseph became ill in April 1961 and was anointed on May 1. People thought that his hour had come but almost miraculously he rose from his bed and was able to get around again. However, the end was not far off. A few months later — on Sunday morning, October 15th — Brother Joseph quietly passed into eternity.

After the funeral Mass at his beloved Grotto, his earthly remains were consigned to the Abbey Cemetery, a simple cross with his name marking the spot. As the visitor speeds down the college drive toward the highway, he hardly sees the peaceful cemetery on his left. But if he does he thinks of the humble little monk lying there and of the replicas which grace the grotto. He marvels that one so small could produce something so great and reflects upon the words of the great English poet John Keats, words so appropriate to the present occasion:

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever: its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness, but still will keep a bower quiet for us and a sleep full of sweet dreams."

AVE MARIA GROTTO
Cullman, Al. 35055

AVE MARIA GROTTO

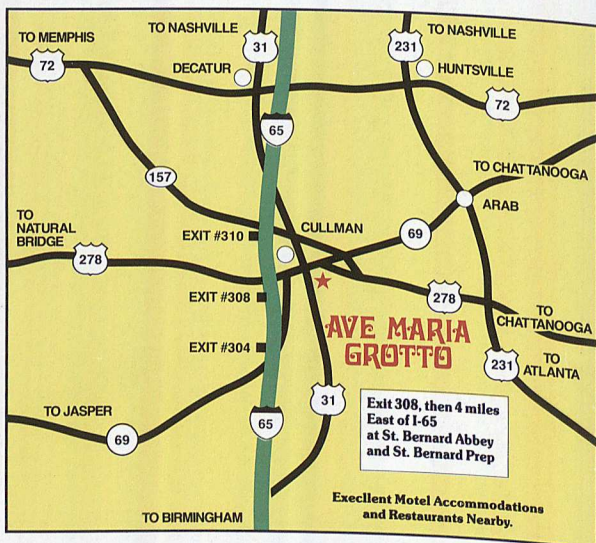
JERUSALEM IN MINIATURE
CULLMAN, ALABAMA



Roman Group

AVE MARIA GROTTO

JERUSALEM MINIATURE
CULLMAN, ALABAMA



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AVE MARIA GROTTO

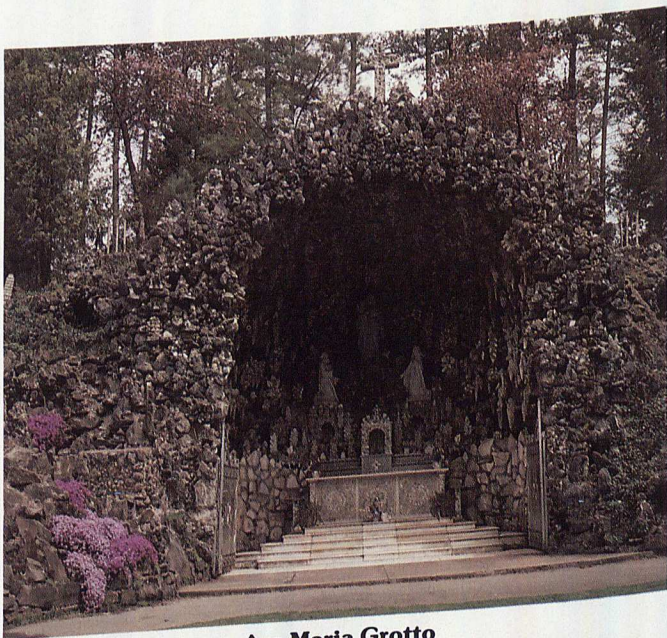
JERUSALEM IN MINIATURE
CULLMAN, ALABAMA



Brother Joseph Zoettl, O.S.B. (1878-1961)

The builder of the miniatures at the Ave Maria Grotto was a Benedictine Monk—Brother Joseph Zoettl, O.S.B. Born in Landshut, Bavaria in 1878, he came to Saint Bernard Abbey in 1892. After becoming a Brother in the Benedictine Order, he was appointed to the power plant for the Abbey, and while there he developed his hobby of building miniature shrines. The first replicas were erected on the monastery recreation grounds, but because of the large number of visitors, a new site was selected and on May 17, 1934 the Ave Maria Grotto was dedicated. Brother Joseph continued his work for over 40 years, using materials sent from all over the world. He built his last model, the Basilica in Lourdes, at the age of 80, in 1958.

The Ave Maria Grotto, located on the grounds of Alabama's first and only Benedictine Abbey, consists of over 125 miniatures, reproductions of famous churches, shrines and buildings from all over the world. Encompassing an area of over three acres, this miniature fairyland was built by Brother Joseph. Brother Joseph who died in 1961 is buried in the Abbey cemetery a short distance from the Grotto gift shop.



Ave Maria Grotto



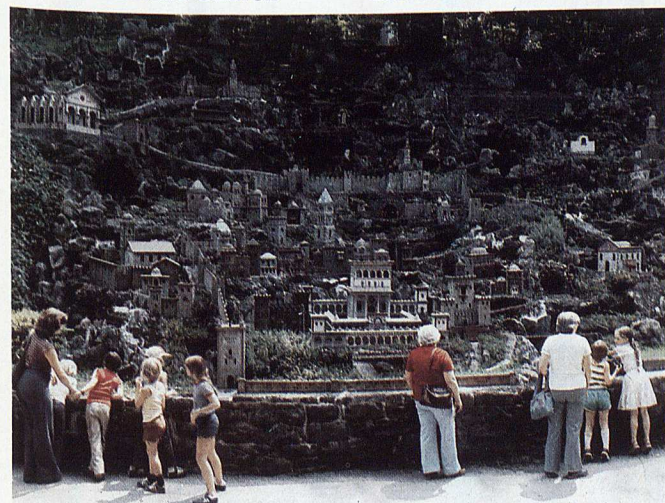
Tour Buses Welcome



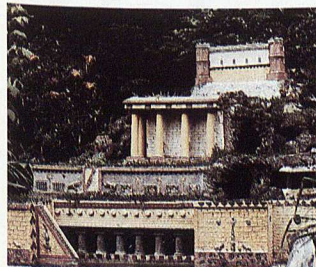
St. Martin's Church



Grotto of the Little Flower



Jerusalem Miniatures



Hanging Garden of Babylon



Lourdes Basilica