By Fr. Barry Bercier, A.A.



There's a novel called No One Thinks of Greenland. I haven't read it but the title until very recently made good sense. Today people do think of Greenland...though it's less the land they think of, or the people on it, than the ice melting, supposedly because of things happening in the bigger world, the one we come from. But Greenland really does exist and there are people there whose lives really matter, independent of the great self-preoccupations of the modern world. It's in part their relative disconnection from our modern obsessions that got me thinking about Greenland many years ago. Or, you might say, it's Greenland as the *desert* that has attracted me. Or more generally, it is the far North, where things are stripped to the barest essentials, where there seems to be nothing more than rock, ice, sea and sky.....it's that vast and awesome austerity, where even the sun and the day can vanish for months at a time, that beckons to me, and it's the people there whose whole lives breathe that austerity. It's the North as the exact inverse of the "virtual" world that encloses us back here further south. For me, the North is a cleansing remedy to the grotesque excesses that we have come to take for granted and even to seek out as if they were necessary.

