By Pat Haggerty

Every morning I retreat to my study to start my day with prayer and reflection. It is my quiet time with the Lord. As I told you, I have a favorite chair that serves as a wonderful spot for my daily ritual.

I also have an end-table next to the chair that holds everything I need---especially my books and coffee cup! One can tell a lot about an individual by looking at their desk. I wonder if the same holds true for an end-table.

My little table has a stack of books on it---some that rotate and some that are standards. My standards include the Bible and my prayer journal. The prayer journal contains prayers I've collected over the years, as well as prayers and reflections that I've written. I couldn't begin my day without that prayer journal. I'd be lost without it!

Right now, for other books I have two by James Stephen Behrens, OCSO. Last fall, I happened to be in the St. Joseph's Abbey Gift Shop in Spencer, Massachusetts. I am always on the lookout for interesting spiritual reading. Well, on this particular day, I saw a book entitled, *Grace Revisited.*
The title caught my attention, and so I read the back cover. My interest was definitely piqued!

Behrens is a former diocesan priest turned Trappist monk. He made a life-changing decision after over twenty years of serving as a priest in New Jersey. He left everything to devote himself to the monastic life. This says something about his inner strength and his quest for seeking God. It tells me that the journey is ongoing and that one can always make change to bring about transformation.

If you enjoy reading short essays about simple things in life with a spiritual twist, then this book is for you. If you like visuals to enhance your meditation, then you should consider *Portraits of Grace* by Behrens.
Portraits of Grace

is a collection of photographs taken by Father James with captions accompanying each photo. The pictures are of various spots throughout the Abbey. They are remarkable in their simplicity and in their ability to engender meditation.

These two books are serving me well right now. In a few weeks, they will surely be replaced by some other texts that might be more "Lenten" in nature. I don't even know what they will be yet. Perhaps I will take another trip to the Abbey to find new material, or I will search in my own church gift shop. Whatever they will be, they will certainly add to my prayer life and my morning ritual.

What's on your end-table?