

Money & Business

Section **3**

Pit-Stop to Riches: A Monastery

When a group of people decide to remove themselves from society in an atmosphere that demands round-the-clock obedience, the result can be either a software company or a monastery. **August Turak**, founder of the Raleigh Group International, a software concern in Raleigh, N.C., takes part in both.

Since 1996, Mr. Turak has spent more than five months at the secluded Mepnik Monastery, where about two dozen Trappist monks live near Charleston, S.C. "He's the real thing," said Father Christian Carr, a longtime friar there.

Mr. Turak rises at 3 a.m. with the other monks, then dons a monk's habit for a day of prayer and chores on the monastery's egg farm, with 40,000 chickens. "They make you realize how much energy we burn up every day on unproductive activities like jealousy and anger," Mr. Turak said last week from Israel, where he is conducting some business before visiting the holy sites.

A 47-year-old bachelor, Mr. Turak was raised as a Catholic. He sold his company, which had 23 employees, earlier this year to MuTek Solutions of Israel, where he remains chief of United States operations, for a sum that he describes as "enough to put a smile on my face."

DEAN SMITH