

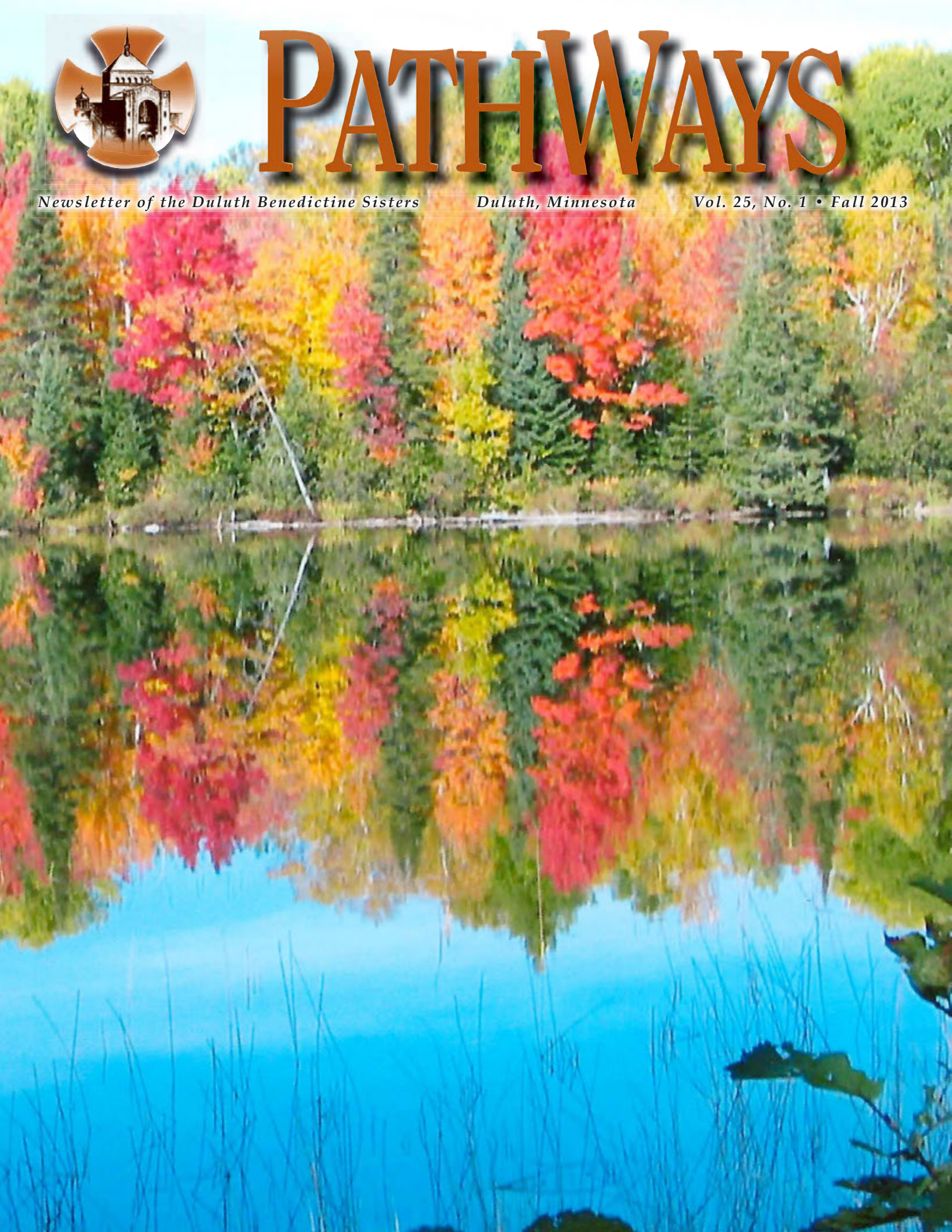


PATHWAYS

Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters

Duluth, Minnesota

Vol. 25, No. 1 • Fall 2013



Letter from the Prioress

“This is what the Lord asks of you:

To act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.”

(Micah 6:6-8)

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Dear Friends of the Monastery,

These words from the Prophet Micah have been among the most formative Scripture passages for me for a long time. They have been singing and resonating in my heart almost daily since July 16 when God called a beloved friend, Steve O’Neil, back Home to Heaven. Steve was a remarkable man who lived the exhortation of St. Francis of Assisi, his great model in living the Christian life: “Preach the Gospel always and sometimes use words.” The passage from Micah, quoted above, was a lamp guiding Steve’s life choices as he sought to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and welcome Him in every person.

Each of us is called to preach the Gospel with our lives. Each of us is called by God to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with God and one another. How we do that is concretized in the here and now of our life call and daily lives. How we do that is inspired and sustained by our faithfulness to daily prayer and the wise nurturing of our whole being—body, mind and spirit. How we do that flows from our lives centered in God, from whose Heart we have come into this world to do good work and become a unique manifestation of our Creator’s goodness and love.

Near the end of his brave five-month battle with a rare form of cancer, Steve heard Jesus say, “Steve, it is time to come Home.” The work he had come into this world to do was completed. His earthly life, which so clearly and wonderfully reflected the life, mission, and teaching of Jesus, was transformed into the glory of life with God forever. There, with all the angels and saints he continues to do good work among and through us.

For each of us there are little people and big people, who like the splendid autumn scene featured on the cover of this issue of *Pathways*, reflect in their lives and work the beauty and goodness of God. They are filled with mercy, seeing the poor and the marginalized with God’s eyes of tenderness, gentleness, justice, and joy. Some of them are living among us still, some have gone back Home to God. They have left us a precious and challenging legacy to embody in our own lives and times and to create our own blessing for those who will come after us. They and we form what we, in our Catholic Tradition, call the “Communion of Saints.” They and we are God’s beloved ones, encircled forever and together in the Divine Age-old Love which surpasses all our imagining and human understanding.

May we travel together on our earthly journey, inspiring one another “to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.” Nothing delights God more than that we reflect and embody in our lives the Divine Life which grows as a seed within us all.



Sister Lois Eckes

Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress



Autumn Reflection

By Sister Sarah Smedman

Photo by Catherine Wright



Autumn. “Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, / Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;” as John Keats described it shortly before his death.

Autumn 2013. Flashback sixty years. June 1953. A degree in English, philosophy, theology, and library science from The College of St. Scholastica. September 1953. A postulant with the Benedictine Sisters. An assignment to teach English. My classroom: Stanbrook 301 with two walls of windows, one facing east, the other north. October 1953. Rows of bent heads—blondes, brunettes, redheads—in deep concentration, writing. I, standing in the back of the classroom gazing out those windows, semi-alert to waving hands indicating some need or other, but actually rapt in the beauty of Duluth’s tree-covered hills, trees vibrant, blazing with color against a brilliant blue sky. Beauty that transported me out of that classroom into *God’s World*. I was exhilarated, filled with a joy tinged with sadness, loneliness, longing.

We had been reading autumn poetry together in class, and Edna St. Vincent Millay had given me words to understand my emotion. “World, World,” she cries, “I cannot get thee close enough! / Long have I known a glory in it all, . . . As stretcheth me apart, . . . My soul is all but out of me.” Many of my students in subsequent years know that poem, and I have never forgotten the last lines, begging of God, “let fall / No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call” — words that expressed my deep desire to hold on to the beauty of the moment despite the knowledge, just as deep, that beauty, like the autumn leaves, is transient—that seasons pass.

I doubt very much that at 22 years old I was consciously aware of the passage of my own life. Despite St. Benedict’s admonition in the *Rule* that one should keep death daily before one’s eyes, who at 22 really takes that personally? Her life is in its springtime.

But as Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poem “Spring and Fall” asks, “Margaret, are you grieving / Over Goldengrove unleaving? . . . Ah! as the heart grows older / It will come to such sights colder / It is the blight man was born for. It is Margaret you mourn for.” Now sixty years after that memorable first year of teaching, and as that beautiful classroom filled with young lives has become a business office filled with machines, I better understand that ache I felt then—and still feel when I drive older Sisters through the dazzling beauty of Forest Hill Cemetery during its season of “goldengrove unleaving.” I am keenly aware that fall’s magnificence, like my life, is transient. That soon the trees will be gaunt but graceful skeletons against a gray sky. Yet, with a beauty all their own. Lonely, longing, but aware that falling to earth is essential to new birth.

Autumn: a seasonal symbol crying out to all who listen: Exult in God’s blessings in earthly life. Grieve its passing. Hope and believe that the transition is but a passage to an unknown, more beautiful and joyous. Once more in the words of the poet Keats: “Ay, in the very temple of Delight / Veil’d Melancholy has her Sovran shrine / Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue / Can burst Joy’s grape against his palate fine.” Deliberately, and with apologies to Keats, I omit the last lines of his poem, choosing to stress, rather than the sadness of melancholy, the power of delight. Delight in the knowledge of the eternal beauty of a heavenly Minnesota autumn.

Sister Profile: Sister Maria Volk

By Sister Mary E. Penrose

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Riding across the prairie young Anna Volk looked at the horizon and the seeming infinite expanse of space before her. She found herself considering the fertility of the earth, the wonder of newborn colts, calves, piglets, and chickens. All this gave her a realization of how intimately she was immersed in a sense of the closeness of her God. This helped her to face any challenges with optimism.

Born in Raleigh, North Dakota, in 1932, Anna was only two and a half years old when her birth mother died. Her mother, Agnes Braun, had chosen for her husband a pioneering German immigrant farmer, Elias Volk, who had crossed the Atlantic from Germany with his three brothers. Agnes must have seen the generous, loving qualities in the young Elias who, unlike other farmers in depression days, refused to dump low-cost surplus milk. Elias said his family would not spill their milk on the earth when their neighbors couldn't afford to buy

it. Instead, they shared their surplus with those in need. It was from such a father that Anna learned her sense of justice.

After her mother's death, Anna's maternal grandmother became her caretaker until her father married Kathryn Winter who proved to be a loving, hardworking, kind woman. Eventually, to their household of eight, they added eight more children of their own. The siblings did not lack playmates! Years later, Elias let the boys take over the farm and, when Anna was in high school, he moved the rest of the family to Flasher. Finally, brother Gene alone remained on the farm to raise his own family.

Anna's older sister traveled to St. Scholastica where she became an aspirant. Upon entering the Benedictine community, ironically, she became Sister Anna. The younger Anna so greatly admired the maturity she saw in her older sister and in her brother Ed, a priest, she wanted to be just like them. Still loving and inspired by the freedom of the prairie, the beauty of the transformation of the seeding of the earth, the miracle of birth in multiple animals, and the timelessness of the horizon, young Anna left Flasher to attend St. Mary's High School in Bismarck and, in her senior year, attended Stanbrook Hall in Duluth. It was then that she, too, decided to choose the life of freedom given to those whose vocation was to seek God. Elias was very happy about their choices. Anna was given the name, "Sister Maria" when she entered the novitiate. It was then that she began the venture into "places I would never have gone on my own."

After several years of teaching and pastoral work in many places, she contracted a life-threatening disease which put her in the hospital for six weeks. This experience helped Sister Maria grow in appreciation for health care services, compassion, and patience. Her doctor surmised that she recovered because she had a direct line to the Divine Healer.

Photo by Andi Therrien



Sister Maria preparing and transporting items for The Rhubarb Festival (a benefit for the programs at CHUM)

Retirement time for Sister Maria has climaxed a life well lived. She has become involved in two fulfilling achievements: membership in CHUM (Churches United in Ministry) and Pax Christi Duluth. The goal of both organizations is to make peace and justice realities in society, and this is very important to her. Pax Christi helped her deal with issues of poverty, inequality, war, racism, and having a concern for the environment. She said her ministry in CHUM was "energizing." She was a leader in their fund-raising projects, and she enjoyed getting to know the Duluth community, especially the Muslims who helped her with these projects.

New Novices: Sister Kathleen Del Monte and Sister Therese Carson



Photo by Andi Therrien

Left to right: Sister Kathleen Del Monte, Prioress Lois Eckes, and Sister Therese Carson

Sister Kathleen Del Monte “On Entering the Novitiate”:

I awoke the morning of August 22, 2013, with the words “This is the day the Lord has made: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!” on my lips. For on this day, when we commemorated the Queenship of Mary, I also was graced to celebrate at Evening Prayer the Rite of Reception as a Novice in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. It was a beautiful ritual in which God’s grace was made profoundly manifest.

The Rite included four parts: *Reception*, in which I expressed my desire to live the Benedictine way of life and to be admitted to the novitiate community; *Naming*, in which I received my Sister name (“From now on you will be called Sister Kathleen Del Monte, OSB”); *Covenant*, in which the Sisters of the Community graciously promise to help me enter more deeply into the Benedictine way of life by their example, affirmation, and prayerful support; and *Entrusting*, during which Sister Lois, our Prioress, entrusted the new novices to the care, love, and guidance of Sister Michelle Dosch, our Director of Novices. I also received the Benedictine medal, a symbol of my identification with St. Scholastica Monastery.

This novitiate year is a special, privileged time of prayer, reflection, and study. I will have the opportunity to delve more deeply into the *Rule of St. Benedict*, the history of monasticism, and what it means to be a monastic woman in the 21st century, as I prepare for my First Monastic Profession. As I begin my novitiate, I am overcome with a deep awareness of God’s all-encompassing love. It is at once humbling, peaceful, joyful. I look forward with prayerful anticipation to this special time of grace.

Sister Therese Carson “Thirteen Things I Learned En Route to Becoming a Novice”:

1. God must really love me, because He called me here to learn how to serve Him.
2. There aren’t as many Sisters as it seemed at first. If you forget a name, she will answer to ‘Sister?’
3. There *are* a finite number of staircases in the Monastery. I don’t think I’ve stumbled on a new one for two weeks. I was on vacation in Michigan.
4. Snow shoveling is good exercise. So is taking the long way to Chapel, through the Monastery and down the cloister walk, three times daily. Watch the Sisters with walkers do so without complaint. Be humbled.
5. Ice at 40 below is more dangerous than ice at 20 above. Wear spikes when shoveling.
6. It really is true: walking from Kenwood Avenue to the front door is like climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. If your lungs fail you, duck into the Science Building half-way up and take the tunnel to the back elevator.
7. There are approximately one billion weed seeds per square foot in the vegetable garden. Pull them while they are young, before they send roots into the bedrock. The same applies to your sins.
8. When you carry every drop of water in the back of a golf cart or trunk of a car, and ladle it out cup by cup on the vegetable plants, you develop an appreciation that half the world’s people live in arid climes.
9. All the Sisters are wise; the oldest are the wisest. Spend time with them: even those who can’t talk are a silent witness to a life with God.
10. Sister ____ likes her pencils sharp. To sharpen them is an honor and a loving service.
11. This is not a perfect life. Turn the roadblocks into blessings by spending time with God.
12. When it feels too hard to go on, hold a crucifix in your hands and tell Him your troubles. Then let Him tell you His.
13. See number 1.

Remembering Things Past: St. Gertrude's School of Arts and Crafts

By Sister Margaret Clarke

Thomas Verner Moore (1877-1959) was ordained a Paulist priest in 1901 and received a doctorate in psychology at Catholic University in 1903. He then studied in Munich and Leipzig and returned to D.C. in 1905 to teach at Catholic University. In 1915 he received an M.D. in Psychiatry from Johns Hopkins and served in the Army medical corps in World War I. In 1919 he made a retreat at Downside Abbey in England and found himself attracted to Benedictine life. In 1923 he and four companions entered the novitiate at Fort Augustus, Scotland, with the intention of returning to the U.S. to establish a Benedictine monastery in Washington D.C. In 1924 the American monks with some Scottish companions founded their monastery near Catholic University. This was to become St. Anselm's Abbey. Dom Thomas returned to his teaching position at C.U.

Concurrently with all of this, he continued a lifelong project of providing care and education for (what would now be termed) intellectually disabled Catholic children. By 1924 he had plans for opening a facility for mildly disabled girls. He had been invited to give a retreat at Villa Sancta Scholastica in Duluth and mentioned this project to Mother Agnes Somers, who brought it to the Community as a possible ministry. As a result, several Sisters were sent to the University of Minnesota and Columbia University to prepare.



Arrival of Sisters , August 1926. Postulant Kathleen Hayden, Sisters Justina Gruesen, Olivia Gowan and Hedwig Gierdahl, Dom Thomas, another Benedictine, and ladies of what would become St. Gertrude's Guild.



The Sisters' residence in 1926, showing the sleeping porch where boarding students resided.

In August 1926 Sisters Olivia Gowan, Justina Gruesen, Hedwig Gierdahl, and postulant Kathleen (Sister Benita) Hayden arrived at their new mission: St. Gertrude's School of Arts and Crafts. A former farm adjacent to the St. Anselm's property had been purchased by the monks. The farmhouse became the convent and residence for some students, and the barn was refurbished as the school. The school which began with two students was soon overcrowded, and in 1928 a new school building was constructed. The old farmhouse continued to house the Sisters until 1968, when a new classroom and dormitory was constructed, and the Sisters moved into the 1928 school building.



St. Gertrude's school built in 1928, later named "Moore Manor."



Dom Thomas with students dressed for May Crowning in 1942.

Over the nearly 70 years of its existence, St. Gertrude's faculty and staff lovingly cared for and educated up to 40 girls per year, ages six to nineteen, who were classified as educable or mildly emotionally disturbed. One brochure from the 1980s describes the philosophy of the school:

"We believe that each child is an unique individual who should have the opportunity to develop to her fullest potential in a secure homelike atmosphere of beauty, peace and love befitting her as a child of God. The primary goal of St. Gertrude's School [is to provide these opportunities] thereby if possible [enabling her] to become a productive and independent member of our society."

Services offered included academic, pre-vocational and vocational training, physical education, arts and crafts instruction, speech therapy, and self-help skills. Monthly field trips away from campus included museum visits, excursions to historic places in D.C., and programs and plays. These trips often included using public transportation and eating in restaurants. Older girls were given the opportunity to learn office skills, and home economics students went to purchase food at the local grocery stores. There was also an active Girl Scouts troop. One newspaper article published in the 1970s notes:

"The Benedictine tradition is apparent in the way the teachers, both Sisters and lay faculty address the students. According to the *Rule of Benedict*, each guest is to be given the same welcome that would be extended to Christ himself. Warmth and affection are mixed with respect for the dignity of each child. . . . The results of this approach can be seen in the graduates of St. Gertrude's. Many are working in civil service jobs, in private offices, nursing homes and hospitals. Some manage their own apartments."

St. Gertrude's was also respected in political and diplomatic circles. Mother Agnes Somers made the most of her periodic visits in the 1930s, meeting Eleanor Roosevelt who generously donated some items from Theodore Roosevelt's home to the Villa, and the French ambassador, who gave her a Louis XV settee and chair which had been hibernating in the embassy basement. (These items are all still in the Monastery Heritage Room.) Rosemary Kennedy had a brief residence at St. Gertrude's but was over the upper age limit, so was not able to stay, as her family had wished. The proximity of the facility to Catholic University also provided housing for Sisters who were attending that institution, and many of them also helped to work with the children.

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Remembering Things Past (continued)



Students and faculty returning by train from an outing, 1950s. Srs. Winifred O'Grady, Teresa Kociancich, Alberta Young in back. Margaret Dwight on right.



Sister Maureen Harney and student.

Many Sisters were assigned to this ministry over the years, some for between ten and thirty years. Sister Maureen Harney was there for more than forty years and was Director for most of that time. She was beloved by all, and eventually the 1968 construction was named for her: Harney Hall. Dom Thomas was actively involved with the school until 1946 when he decided to become a Carthusian monk and moved to Spain to do so. One of the early students, Margaret Dwight, grew up at the school and continued to stay there as part of the St. Gertrude's family for most of her adult life, working in the kitchen and in housekeeping.

An article in the *Catholic Standard* in 1986 quotes Sister Mary Carol Braun, Director for fourteen years: "Before I came here, I never thought I could work with handicapped children, but it doesn't take long to love them. You can't imagine what a thrill just a little bit of progress means and how loving they are." Two parents were also interviewed, and both had nothing but praise. "The teachers are wonderfully dedicated," said one mother. "These children need to learn to do things on their own, and the Sisters make them do what they can do." Another parent, an Episcopalian minister, said, "What I like about the Sisters at St. Gertrude's is that their Christianity isn't the kind that's used to club you over the head. Rather, it quietly radiates out of every pore."

At about this time, a little cloud appeared on the horizon which was to signal the end of the school. In the 1970s the federal government had legislated that parents could request funding for exceptional children if their needs were not being met in the public schools. As time passed the securing of these funds became more and more difficult, so by the late 1980s parents were hiring lawyers to challenge the school districts which were requiring the students to be enrolled in the public schools. This proved to be more costly and less effective as time progressed, so by the early 1990s enrollment had dwindled to a mere handful, and in 1992 St. Gertrude's was closed. The buildings and property were sold to Boys' Town, which established several programs there for disadvantaged boys and girls.

Everyone who ever visited St. Gertrude's was impressed with the atmosphere of love and joy that infused the campus and the care and respect given to each of the residents. This was a truly successful ministry of St. Scholastica Monastery.

Photos from Monastery Archives

Highlights

Retreat of BHS Mission and Spiritual Care Leaders

By Sister Lisa Maurer

Mission and Spiritual Care Leaders from Benedictine Health System facilities across the system recently gathered for a retreat at St. Scholastica Monastery in Duluth. The gathering held July 23-25 was led by Sister Lisa Maurer and Sister Mary Christa Kroening. It was a time for Mission and Spiritual Care leaders to come to the Monastery to spend time with the Sisters and share ministry experiences with one another. The retreat participants joined the Sisters for prayers and meals and had private time for personal renewal, refreshment, rest, and relaxation. Sister Lisa facilitated retreat gatherings entitled “*Our Need for Prayer and Solitude,*” “*Praying Always,*” and “*Guidelines for the Long Haul.*”

It was wonderful to see the interaction between the Sisters and the Mission and Spiritual Care Leaders. The participants truly appreciated being at the Monastery and felt the retreat was very worthwhile. It is always good to take time to focus on who we are as people who witness to God’s love through our dedication to the people we serve,” said Sister Lisa.



“Spirituality without a prayer life is no spirituality at all, and it will not last beyond the first defeats. Prayer is an opening of the self so that the Word of God can break in and make us new. Prayer unmask. Prayer converts. Prayer impels. Prayer sustains us on the way.”

Sister Joan Chittister

Left: Attendees at the Mission and Spiritual Care Leaders retreat.



L to R: Andy Opsahl, BHS Regional Vice President; Karen Finseth, BHC Board Member; Dana Tchida, BHC Director of Housing; Sister Dorene King, BHC Board Member; John Lawien, BHC Board Chair; Bishop Paul Sirba; Katie Redig, BHC Administrator/CEO; Larry Goodwin, College of St. Scholastica President; Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress; Sister Theresa Spinler, BHC Board Member; and Dale Thompson, BHS President/CEO

BHC Ground-breaking Ceremony

August 7, 2013, the Benedictine Health Center broke ground for its new Enhanced Assisted Living Suite that will provide 48 units of assisted living in a new home-like setting. Completion of the addition is forecast for the summer of 2014. Bishop Paul Sirba presided at the afternoon ceremony, with a welcome from BHC Administrator Katie Redig and brief messages from BHS Administrators, College President Larry Goodwin, and Prioress Lois Eckes.

Photos by Andi Therrien

Highlights continued on p. 10

Highlights, continued

Celebrating Creativity Camp Receives Rave Reviews

By Sister Dorene King

“It was AWESOME!” These enthusiastic words summed up a child’s evaluation of “Celebrating Creativity.” “Celebrating Creativity,” a week-long summer program for children who will be entering the 5th and 6th grade in the fall of the year, drew rave reviews from the children and their parents.

What made “Celebrating Creativity” such an awesome experience? Listen in, as the children share their thoughts about the program: “It was so much fun being able to do the stuff we did, because some things I can’t normally do (like making sap and doing the shirts).” “I made new friends. I got to be with my friends from school, the crafts were fun and everyone was very nice.” “I had so much fun that I can’t explain it!! I hope I can come next year. I also liked the painting!” “I liked Mystery Painting because you could just paint something strange but it would turn out amazing.” “I liked how you tied the art and nature together.” “It was really fun and I hope I can come next year.”

Several children expressed their hope to come back next year. Among those children were two who had attended last year. Lisa and Joe Martin, parents of one of the participants, said: “This was the second year our daughter participated in the Celebrating Creativity Camp. She had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed herself. We couldn’t be happier with the experience and highly recommend this camp.”

Next Year: “Celebrating Creativity 2014” July 21 - 25 and August 4 - 8
For further information: Sister Dorene King, OSB (218) 724-5266

Photos by Andi Therrien



Highlights

Centenarians Celebrate

March 31, 2013, Sister Estelle Panger turned 100 years old. Benet Hall friends joined relatives to congratulate Sister Estelle on this milestone. Sister Estelle was born in Cloquet, Minnesota, March 31, 1913, the seventh child of Fred and Jennie Panger. She attended Our Lady of Sacred Heart School in Cloquet and high school at Villa Sancta Scholastica. In her senior year she entered the Benedictine community, as had her two siblings, Sister Eunice and Sister Alicia. Happy Birthday Sister Estelle!

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Photo by Sister Lisa Maurer



Sister Devota LaVoie celebrated her 103rd birthday July 26, 2013, one day before her actual birthday, July 27. Family, members of the Community, staff from various departments, and Sisters all contributed to a happy time in the Benet Hall dining room. Sister Devota was also born in Cloquet (must be the water) and came to the Monastery as an aspirant in 1922. Congratulations on 103 years Sister Devota!

Sister Devota photos by Andi Therrien

Note: Sister Devota died September 19, 2013, as *Pathways* is going to print. Her obituary will be in the Advent *Pathways*.

Please Pray for the Following Deceased Friends and Relatives:

Harry McOuat 8/30/2011
Betty Krafve Belknap 4/13/2013
John L. Thrun 4/20/2013
Marcia Ann Ness 5/13/2013
Merchon Barry 5/14/2013
Geraldine McGirl Snee 5/14/2013
Shirley Defoe 5/15/2013
Robert (Skip) Richardson 5/28/2013
Sister Linda Wiggin's brother
Ernie Godbout 6/5/2013
Fr. James Golden 6/10/2013
Marion (St. Marie) Precord 6/17/2013
+Sister Marianne St. Marie's sister

Eleanor Mayne Donovan 2013
Michael Gerlach 6/28/2013
Lillian M. Schneider 7/13/2013
Steve O'Neil 7/16/2013
John Seelig 7/24/2013
Reinhart Gerwing 7/28/2013
Eleanor G. Pons 7/31/2013
Angela Sanderson 8/2/2013
Bruce Nordin 8/17/2013
Edward R. Nacey 8/29/2013

Received as Christ: Hospitality and the Monastery Information Desk Receptionists

By Sister Ann Marie Wainright, OSB

“As soon as anyone knocks, or a poor man calls out, [the porter] replies, ‘Thanks be to God’ or ‘Your blessing, please’; then, with all the gentleness that comes from the fear of God, he provides a prompt answer with the warmth of love.” Rule of St. Benedict 66. 3-4

As Benedictines we strive for awareness in every moment of how we encounter God—whether that be in communal or private prayer (“ora”), or in our ministry or work task (“labora”). Attentiveness to God’s presence is at the heart of our ministry of hospitality and presence. All are to be received as Christ (R.B. 53.1) because “Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:11).

The monastery “porter”—now the Monastery Information Desk Receptionist—is often the first person a visitor to our Monastery encounters. Our two receptionists at the Monastery Information Desk, Erin Keeley and Joan Tousignant, are an important part of our ministry of hospitality. While volunteers and Sisters also staff the Desk in the evenings and on weekends, many more volunteer- and Sister-hours would be required were it not for these two remarkable women and all that they do.



Photo by Catherine Wright

Erin Keeley



Photo by Andi Therrien

Joan Tousignant

Typical daily tasks for Erin and Joan include greeting and receiving visitors to the Monastery; assisting and directing overnight guests; answering the phone, forwarding calls, and taking messages as needed; answering questions and providing assistance to guests and to Sisters; and generally being attentive to their environment and to others.

A retired social worker to families with children, as well as to those with emotional illness and chemical dependency, Erin began her work as a part-time receptionist six years ago. Possessing a strong need to extend “a feeling of hospitality” to others, Erin greets the Christ in others by “answering the phone with a smile on my face” and being fully attentive and available to whoever comes to the Information Desk, whether that be Sisters with a question or guests arriving for an overnight stay.

Joan is also a retired social worker in chemical dependency and mental illness, as well as a former community organizer. She is in her third year as a part-time receptionist and describes an important aspect of hospitality as acclimating guests to *being* in a monastery. Allowing guests to feel accepted and welcome means helping them understand what to expect during their stay. “I help visitors understand that this is the Sisters’ home. This is where they nurture their lives.”

Erin and Joan both report loving their jobs. Sharing the story of a time she got a thank-you note for “listening and attending,” Erin says, “You never know how much you touch people.” After a visitor jokingly told Joan, “Now that’s a job I’d like—you just sit and smile at people,” she replied, “Yes, that’s *exactly* why I like my job.”

...and it’s why we love Erin and Joan. Thank you for the peacefulness you contribute!

Sister Profile: Sister Clare Marie Trettel

By Sister Mary Rochefort

Sister Clare Marie (Irene) Trettel grew up in Cloquet, Minnesota, the youngest of four children. Family was very important to her parents, Roman and Mary, and their home was often the place of extended family gatherings. These gatherings always included card playing, laughter, and a spread of Polish cuisine—often served at midnight! Irene and her sisters Jeanette and Alvina learned the art of cooking and sewing from their mother. Thanks to them, favorite family recipes have not been lost.

Enjoying the out-of-doors was a great pastime for Irene. Her father and her brother Alois helped her to become an avid fisherman. Throughout her life this sport has remained a favorite activity for her. For many years she and her cousin Sister Rebecca Burggraff spent a yearly week fishing at the Sisters' lake cabin up north.

Family and faith went hand-in-hand in the Trettel family. The family attended Mass and devotions together and involved themselves in parish events at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church. Irene and her siblings attended the parish Catholic School through eighth grade. Following her graduation from Cloquet High School Irene chose The College of St. Scholastica for her undergraduate experience with nursing being her intended major. Her desire to be a nurse was from her brother's illness as a young boy. When Alois returned home from a long stay in University Hospital wearing a body cast, his four-year-old sister announced that she would be the one taking care of him. Surely he must have received a big dose of TLC from her as well as from the rest of the family.

Irene joined the Benedictine Sisters at St. Scholastica Monastery in 1954 and soon after received the name Sister Clare Marie. Not long after that she was asked by the Prioress to change her major to elementary education. Thus began her long tenure in the ministry of education. The many roles she has held include classroom teacher, principal, and superintendent in the Catholic Elementary Schools of the Duluth Diocese as well as various positions in the School of Education at The College of St. Scholastica.

Sister Clare Marie was elected prioress of St. Scholastica Monastery in 1987. It was under her leadership that the Sisters made the decision to build Stanbrook West as a residence hall for the Sisters. The building of Stanbrook West allowed the Sisters who had bedrooms in Tower Hall to move to the Monastery, bringing the Sisters together as community. It also freed up additional rooms for the College's use. Following her term as prioress, Sister Clare Marie returned to the College where she currently serves in Data Management for the School of Education.



Sister Clare Marie and long-time friend Sister Mary Rochefort on the occasion of Sister Clare Marie's Golden Jubilee.

Sister Clare Marie's life has not been all work. She has had the opportunity to travel across our country as well as abroad. She continues to enjoy fishing, reading, playing Scrabble, cribbage, and being with her family.

Although she never got to be a nurse, Sister Clare Marie has cared for young and not-so-young in a quiet, gentle way. She has touched and blessed many lives, including mine. She has been my Sister, my mentor, and my friend for nearly 50 years.



Sister Clare Marie (left) and her sisters at her mother's 81st birthday celebration

In 2009 the School of Education established *The Sister Clare Marie Trettel Distinguished Scholar Award* in recognition of her love of and dedication to education in the Benedictine tradition. One of her colleagues said, "Sister Clare Marie lives the values we cherish." The Distinguished Scholar Award recognizes students with outstanding commitment to education that surpasses the required curriculum. Along with her work at the College Sister Clare Marie also served on several of the Benedictine Health System and the Essentia Health boards and committees.

Miley Goes to Benet Hall

Miley Waverly is just nine years old, but he brings smiles and laughter to many Sisters in and out of the Monastery. Miley, a sheltie, came from Animal Allies to the Sisters who live on Waverly Avenue when he was seven years old. His “formal” name was Miles, but +Sister Verda Clare Eichner, a Waverly dog lover, nicknamed him “Miley.” He is the sixth dog in the long line of Sellwood/Waverly dogs, and is now branching out and sharing his good nature with the infirm Sisters in Benet Hall at the Monastery.

Sister Margaret Clarke and Sister Beverly Raway care for Miley when he deigns to be “at home.” But every day friend Kathy Noble picks him up and transports him to the Benedictine Health Center and then, with Sister Armella Oblak’s and Sister Monica Laughlin’s help, to Benet Hall. Along his route Miley greets residents and invites petting. Sister Margaret Marincel enjoys playing with him before he heads for Sister Monica’s room for coffee time that includes Sister Margaret James Laughlin (both Sister Monica and Sister Margaret James were long-time Waverly residents). Once Miley has seen what is to be had in Sister Monica’s room, he is most anxious to head down the hall, turn left, make another left, and find Sister Mary Richard Boo who is waiting with treats.

People have long known that animals and elderly are a good mix. And Miley Waverly is certainly a good mixer. His attention and love permeate Benet Hall.

As Pathways is going to print, Miley died of cancer on September 20, 2013. It was Will Rogers who said, “If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went.”



Sister Beverly Raway, Miley, and Sister Margaret Clarke



Benet Hall Dining Room, front L to R: Sister Margaret Marincel, Sister Margaret James Laughlin, Miley, Sister Monica Laughlin. Back, Sister Armella Oblak and Kathy Noble



Sister Margaret James, Miley, and Sister Monica



Sister Mary Richard Boo, lots of treats, and Miley, making his selections

Photos by Andi Therrien

Benedictine Center of Spirituality

By Sister Pauline Micke

As we begin a new year, we pray that God will continue to bless our service to all of you. The 2013-14 brochures have been mailed. If you do not receive yours or if you would like to be on our mailing list, contact Sister Pauline Micke at 218-723-7086 or email: pmlittlemick@gmail.com.

Our Summer Retreat was a great success

Photos by Sister Patricia Anne Williams



Sister Sarah O'Malley led 36 participants in experiencing "God's Reflection on Life!" through the lives of Mozart, Van Gogh, and de Chardin.

Update on Continued Inquiries to the AARP Magazine Article

Reponses to the article in the October, 2012, AARP magazine continue to come to us. Several more people have come for individual quiet time, prayer, reflection, and for the summer retreat. More are scheduled to come in the next few months for some "time apart" from their daily lives.

A New Offering This Year—A Retreat in September!

This was the first retreat in a series of different types of prayer retreats. Our facilitator for this retreat used art to help people experience meditation and prayer. Included was prayer, input, and experience making participants' own "Circle of Love" beads for meditation. We hope you will enjoy this new series on prayer.

Upcoming Events

The Advent Retreat will be held Saturday, November 23, 2013, from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. "The Adventure of Advent is to Prepare Our Hearts Anew for the Incredible Love Story Between God and Humankind." Sister Mary Josephine Torborg will be our facilitator. Mark your calendars now for the November retreat.

The ongoing offerings of **Hearing 5th Steps, Spiritual Direction, and Sabbath Days** continue. Contact Sister Pauline Micke for more information or to schedule a session. May your lives be blessed with all good gifts this fall.

Sister Lisa Maurer, Director of Mission Integration

It is no exaggeration to say that my life has been full of wonder and surprise since coming to St. Scholastica Monastery six years ago. For as the *Holy Rule* says, “What is more delightful than to hear the voice of the Lord calling us?” (RB Prol. 19) I could go on and on describing the myriad of ways that God delights, surprises, and challenges me day in and day out. I find wonderment in God’s goodness as each day he blesses our monastic community. Living in accordance with the Gospel and the *Rule of St. Benedict*, we are sustained by God as we respond to the needs of the Church and the world through our varied ministries. Being a member of this monastic community is a daily blessing to me as I am supported to grow into how and who God is calling me to be.

I am continually grateful and in awe of the way that I have been called to do my part in furthering the Mission of the Duluth Benedictines. In March 2012 I began ministering in the Benedictine Health System, one of our sponsored ministries, as the mission integration manager. In July of this year my role with BHS changed as I began serving the Benedictine Health System as the Director of Mission Integration. Now as Director I am called to provide leadership for furthering the Mission and Core Values throughout the BHS. This includes areas of mission, spiritual care, ethics, liturgical and ritual services, and community benefit.



Left: Sister Lisa gives a presentation of the core value of “justice” at Villa St. Vincent in Crookston, Minnesota. Above: Sister Lisa presents the history of the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and their mission of health care to new employees of BHS.

The responsibilities of my ministry touch all parts of the Benedictine Health System. Mission is an integral part of BHS. The mission and core values define the Benedictine Health System and guide every decision. I love it when I get to go out to our facilities to speak about our commitment to our core values of hospitality, stewardship, respect, and justice. It is my joy to minister to those who daily witness to God’s love by providing compassionate and quality care. In my role as director I hold positions on many committees throughout the system. By being active at this level I work to advance the vision of my Benedictine Community as BHS furthers Jesus’ healing mission with special concern for the underserved and those in need.

Chapter 36 of the *Rule of St. Benedict* says that “care of the sick should come before all else, so that they may truly be served as Christ” (RB 36:1). I am proud of my Benedictine Community for creating the Benedictine Health System, and I am both honored and humbled to be a part of it. Today, the Benedictine Health System is a nationally recognized Catholic, mission-directed, values-based health care system providing a full spectrum of health and housing services to aging adults. BHS owns and manages skilled nursing, assisted living, and independent living communities across the upper Midwest and offers services in areas such as therapy, rehabilitation, memory care, home health care, adult day care, and transitional care. The System consists of approximately 40 campuses in six states and serves about 6,000 aging adults on a daily basis and employs over 5,000 individuals.

Serve the Church. Serve society. Serve God in all things. That in all things God may be glorified. These are our goals, and as Benedictines, we spend our lives working toward them.

Sister Agnes Alich: A Profile of Commitment

By Sister Linda Wiggins

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Tall and stately, Sister Agnes is a “presence” when she enters a room with her intelligent, intense brown eyes and a smile that would melt even the hardest heart. Her rich velvet alto voice immediately enhances any conversation. One wonders how such a voice sounds when expounding on complex chemical structures. A retired Chemistry professor, she taught for 46 years at The College of St. Scholastica. Sister Agnes’s passionate engagement with chemistry began, however, much earlier in her life.

As a young child, Agnes found the natural beauty of Northern Minnesota exhilarating. The family lived near the Canadian/Minnesota border in the village called, appropriately enough, “Border.” The beautiful wooded area was resplendent with wildlife and plant life, which provided the seven Alich children with incredible exploring opportunities. The sparkling Rainy River with its crystal-clear water enticed and beckoned the children to observe close-hand another world of life. She perceived the world around her as a giant jigsaw puzzle, and she thrived on learning how each life form was connected to the others.

Her chemistry teacher, Sarah Jane Norton at Indus High School, provided sharp, inspiring lessons, which Agnes eagerly absorbed to learn about the physical world. “Chemistry satisfies my personal need to know our physical world. Its structure is absolutely astounding,” declares Sister Agnes.

During her years of study at The College of St. Scholastica, Agnes spent much time in the chapel alone, thinking, praying, and envisioning how her deep love of the physical world was connected to her deep love of God. How could she love Creation and not love the Creator? How could she truly know the physical world, and not know the metaphysical world? How could she be fully committed to one without being fully committed to the other? Agnes professed her first vows as a Benedictine Sister in July, 1953; she recently celebrated her 60th Jubilee as a Benedictine Sister at St. Scholastica Monastery.

“Sustainability” was a main focus in her last teaching years. Sister Agnes created classes on this subject alone. She worries that current students do not see the study of chemistry as a means to preserve and maintain the balance of our physical world. They do not make connections to the moral implications associated with the use of chemical products, and the imbalance and stress such products create in our natural world. They do not appear to grasp that we are to care judiciously for the earth and nourish it and each other for generations and generations to come.

“There is a plan,” she quietly observes.

Photos by Catherine Wright



Sisters Profess First Vows

By Sister Joan Marie Stelman

This year the Sisters of St. Scholastica observed the feast of St. Benedict (July 11, 2013) in a very special way, celebrating the First Monastic Profession of two Sisters: Sister Elizabeth Farias and Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau. Sister Elizabeth and Sister Paule Pierre professed their vows during a ceremony at evening prayer.

For the last year Sister Elizabeth and Sister Paule Pierre have been novices. This year is one of reflection and study focusing on the vows of stability, obedience, and *conversatio* (fidelity to monastic life) and the *Rule of St. Benedict*, while living exclusively within the community. For the next three years, as vowed members, they will begin different ministries while continuing their study of monastic history and life, preparing for their Perpetual Monastic Profession. Sister Paule Pierre will be teaching at The College of St. Scholastica, leading a Dignitas section entitled “What Does it Mean to be Human?” The Dignitas program is designed to help first-year students to learn the values of The College as well as to hone their academic and living skills. She also will continue to work in the Monastery Liturgy Office. Sister Elizabeth will be responsible for maintaining our Spiritual Resource Center, our library, and will continue her ministry assisting our elder Sisters.

Sister Elizabeth shared that her studies and reflection “brought home to me the sacredness of this step.” For her, one of the most moving moments was when she and Sister Paule Pierre walked down the aisle toward the altar. All the other Sisters in the Community line the aisle facing one another as the novices enter. She said that this “made me aware that the Sisters would be with me every step of the way.” Sister Paule Pierre felt both “very nervous and very confident.” She said, “I recognize the tremendous responsibility that accompanies being a professed Sister... I feel great joy and peace in answering God’s call with a tremendous “yes” to the best of my ability.”

For our Community, this ceremony was especially significant because until relatively recently the Sisters all made vows on this feast day, so that the majority of the Sisters were celebrating their own anniversaries. Although the ceremony may not be identical to what each of us experienced, the vows we profess are the same as is our love and devotion to following Christ in this Benedictine community. The continuity of this tradition reaching back more than 1500 years imbues every profession with greater depth and richness, and seeing the joy on the faces of our new Sisters could not fail to touch our own hearts with hope for the future and with a renewal of the joy we felt as we took this same step.



Photo by Andi Therrien

Left to right: Sister Michelle Dosch, Director of Postulants and Novices; Sister Elizabeth Farias; Prioress Lois Eckes; Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau; and Sister Donna Schroeder, Director of Sisters in First Monastic Profession

En Route to Jerusalem

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour

Photo by Jeff Frey; courtesy of CSS



It was April on the third day of a Catholic group tour to the Holy Land when our capable Jewish guide prepared our bus full of American pilgrims for a sight we would soon behold. “We will be passing through a tunnel,” he said, “and when we come out you will see Jerusalem.” As the bus continued its upward climb, all listened in silence as the sound system then treated us to a moving, artistic rendition of “The Holy City.” As the lyrics moved us into a future, transformed Jerusalem... *“The light of God was on its streets, The gates were open wide, And all who would might enter, And no one was denied...”* we suddenly burst from the darkness of the tunnel to view the golden dome and limestone buildings glistening in the sun as all joined in the chorus: *“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Lift up your gates and sing; Hosanna in the highest; Hosanna to your king.”* For a brief moment, somewhat of a near-death experience, I felt I had finally arrived at my life’s destination.

But back to reality. What did we find? Any pilgrimage made with the right intention is bound to change us in some way. But a trip to the “Holy Land” has special meaning to Jews, Christians, and Muslims for it encompasses their past, present, and future. This is the land where God made Himself known, spoke with the prophets, wrote His commandments on stone and fashioned a people for Himself. But it is also a desert, barren land where man wrestled with God, repeatedly broke His covenant, and suffered one enslavement after another until God finally proved the depth of His unconditional love by becoming one of us, forgiving even those who crucified Him and promising eternal life to all who would believe in Him and follow His example.

And what does one find in this land today? Though there are many things I would like to comment on, in a one-page article that is to speak of religious vocation I would say the greatest lesson the trip held for me is the contrast between the heavenly Jerusalem of our final goal and the earthly Jerusalem of today. For Christians traveling there, I urge you to look at the *total* picture, recalling Jesus’ words about His Father’s house having many mansions and of His desire that there be one fold and one shepherd. And for anyone seeking to assist God’s desire for unity, there could be no greater vocation than following Jesus’ example of devoting one’s life to bringing it about.

Though Christianity’s most sacred sites are found in this tiny country the size of New Jersey and the world’s Christian population today numbers some two billion, there are only about 100,000 Christians in the Jewish state of Israel, and many are seeking to leave. The country itself is a Jewish homeland whose population since its foundation sixty-five years ago has swollen from some 800,000 to over 8,000,000. It is surrounded by enemies on every side and comprises two nations striving to live at peace within one territory each claims as its own. Its capitol is an international city under two different authorities including the walled-in Old City divided into ethnic sections including the Christian quarter currently under Arab control. By U.N. decree the religious sites of the land must be open for all visitors and are under international control which allows for safe and relatively hassle-free but controlled tours which help fuel the economy. In many ways one must commend the diplomatic efforts of many nations that have brought a modicum of peace to this volatile land, another instance of the children of this world being wiser than the children of light (Luke 16:8). Is this the model of unity that Jesus desires?

A day spent following Jesus’ journey into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday followed by the Via Dolorosa leading to His crucifixion and burial site within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre begins, fittingly, with Mass in the *Dominus Flevit* (the Lord weeps) chapel where through the window one sees the Dome of the Rock built by Muslims over part of the Temple Mount sacred to Jews. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built over centuries of wars, invasions, earthquakes is probably the most bizarre of all Christian churches architecturally, and the various Christian denominations that control services in its various divisions are not always the models of unity one would expect to see.

Why do we still have divisions in the earthly Jerusalem among people honoring the same God? Jesus promised peace but told us that He came to bring divisions. Probably there is not yet peace because the divisions are over earthly matters and not the things of God, and we have not yet become the fire of unconditional love that Jesus became for us. Where is your Jerusalem? (Luke 16:8)

“The Earth Laughs In Flowers” *(e.e. cummings)*

By Sister Paule Pierre

If Cummings is correct, then the grounds of St. Scholastica Monastery and College must be laughing uproariously because they are covered with beautiful plants and flowers! Mother Nature does a lot of the work, of course—the actual growing of the plants, blooming of the flowers, and producing the startling variety of bright colors. Yet the grounds and gardens would not be quite as stunning were it not for the hard work of the Sisters, the members of The College of St. Scholastica Garden Club, and other volunteers who spend countless hours planting, pruning, watering, sweeping, and otherwise caring for all the gardens.

A Visit With the Flowers

*Through the Monastery and College entrance
We welcome you
Towards the College or Benedictine Health Center
We direct you*

*We grant you peace
As you walk up to the Monastery door
Or stroll outside the cloister walk to the Chapel doors
Where we will greet you once again*

*Come sit with us outside the College Peace doors
Inhale our aroma
Gaze upon the Library Garden,
Or the planters which grace the Science building*

*To study or spend quiet time with friends
Meet us in the Angelus Garden
To meditate or pray
Seek us out in the Magnificat or Tekakwitha Gardens*

*We greet you at the Athletic Field
We inspire you at the St. Scholastica Shrine
We herald the Sisters whose heritage we uphold
At the entrance to the cemetery*

*Notice us all around the cemetery
Heralding the presence of the Sisters
Whose heritage we uphold
The Stations of the Cross, the Pieta, the Crucifix*

*Come rest with us
At the Shrine of the Sacred Heart
After a long walk
In the Valley of Silence*

*Rejoice with the Sisters
Be blessed by the beauty of the Garden Court
A smorgasbord of color
A place of joy and peace*

*From east to west
From north to south
We beautify your space
We bring you joy*



Sister Mary Josephine Torborg, Chair of The College of St. Scholastica Garden Club, represents many College volunteers who assist with campus gardens.



Sister Lois Eckes tends flowers leading to the main Monastery door.

Gardening is manual labor, prescribed by St. Benedict in his *Rule* for all monks. Manual labor such as gardening helps us stay in touch with the earth. Manual labor of a repetitive nature, which is the case with gardening, offers an opportunity for solitude and meditation. When it is shared as we do it here, it becomes less of a burden, and more fun. As Dr. Seuss said: “If you never did, you should. These things are fun, and fun is good.”

Photos by Andi Therrien and Catherine Wright



Daisies, roses, and Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau



Sister Teri Spinler in the Garden Court



Sister Jane Casey keeps all the sidewalks clean so that all Sisters may enjoy the flowers.



Sister Elizabeth Farias at the Kateri Tekakwitha shrine



Sister Melanie Gagne watering the Garden Court flowers

With so much to be done, it is clear that many Sisters and laypeople, including many who work and study at the College, have participated in the gardening efforts over the years, and still do now. There is no way to account in this article for every person who cares for the beauty of our land. And there is no telling how much benefit is imparted by each person who simply smiles and comments on the beauty of his or her surroundings!

Come, enjoy the gardens!

Tanzania 2013—the Perfect Seven

By Sister Beverly Raway

Sister Beverly Raway recently returned from her seventh trip to the two Benedictine communities in Tanzania that are in a sister-monastery (“twinning”) relationship with St. Scholastica Monastery. Sister Beverly, who teaches nursing at The College of St. Scholastica, has taken students there about every other summer for 11 years.

In many ways this summer’s service learning trip was perfect... the perfect number seven. My first trip to Tanzania to visit the African Sisters of St. Agnes was in 2000, a time of uncertainty, when learning some of the basics of Swahili and figuring out how to pack were the biggest challenges. The exhaustion of the long travel left me teary-eyed and grateful to fall into the loving arms of Mother Clothilde and the Sisters who met me at the airport. The days of exploring the wonders of community life in our twin monasteries were exciting. Everything was new, but the hardest part was adjusting to the relaxed pace. Now I look forward to that relaxed pace and the time to just be while doing the daily chores... setting the table, helping with the children’s baths, washing clothes by hand, feeling the sun on my shoulders while shelling peas... one of my favorite things. There is a meditation in just watching the green orbs spill between your fingers into the big pan that slowly and gradually fills as others join in the task. I know for the Sisters this is an everyday experience, but I sense from them too that this is a time for sharing wisdom and quiet reflection.

Oh, did I say we had some terrific group leaders traveling with us this year? They also made this trip a perfect seven. The leaders were Robert Hoffman and Denise Wise, accompanied by her husband, Bill. Bob took charge of the Chipole group at St. Agnes Convent and handled the finances, while Denise led the group at Imiliwaha and guided us through the challenging logistics of travel. Bill Wise, a welcome addition to the group, delighted us with his talents in photography, water color and knife sharpening—a skill highly appreciated by the Sisters. And our College President, Larry Goodwin, and his wife Annette were able to join us this summer to experience the hospitality of the Benedictine Sisters firsthand. There were the usual welcoming greetings with flowers, drumming, and singing while presenting a cake, but for me the greatest joy was watching their reactions to the overwhelming love and affection of the Sisters. I



Sister Beverly Raway (right), Denise Wise (back to camera), and two St. Gertrude Sisters shelling peas.



The Chipole group with Sister Beverly (3rd from left), Bob Hoffman (2nd from right) and Sister Jane (center front).



Sister Beverly holding a newborn all dressed up and ready to go home.



Students washing their own clothes outdoors in cold water with scrub brushes and using bars of soap made by the Chipole Sisters.

watched with them and grew in my amazement and appreciation of how hard the Sisters work to provide for the people around them, while, at the same time, growing or making most of what they need for their own survival.

As I guided the Goodwins on tour, I was able to point out the changes I have seen from year to year and we could share in the pride the Sisters justly feel in their accomplishments. The Health Center is open at Chipole now and welcomes with gleaming tile floors and fresh paint, the glow made that much brighter by the warm welcome of Sister Raphaelis, my pen pal from the very first days of our twinning, who is in charge. She efficiently led the students through the process of admitting and diagnosing a patient with malaria which the students were soon able to master. The primary school is brimming with students, both boys and girls now, and it was a joy for us to listen as they read to us in English from the books the students helped to arrange in the library. At St. Gertrude's in Imiliwaha there is a newly opened guest house with warm showers and a wonderfully staffed kitchen. We took our turns there with food preparation and dish washing accompanied by singing and much laughter. The Sisters have opened a new hospital, and at the health center there was an abundance of new babies being born. I got to witness that miracle of new life for the first time in Africa ... another perfect seven experience. I took more time for photography and videotaping on this trip. My favorites include recording the sounds of crickets and the voices of the Sisters chanting Compline in the chapel at Imiliwaha in the evening twilight and of hearing the joyful noise as Larry and Annette played with the children on a teeter-totter at the orphanage in Chipole. I could go on... but I think my word limit has been reached. Oh, did I tell you on safari we went to the Serengeti... where I took a gorgeous picture of an African sunset, another first and a perfect ending to a perfect seven.



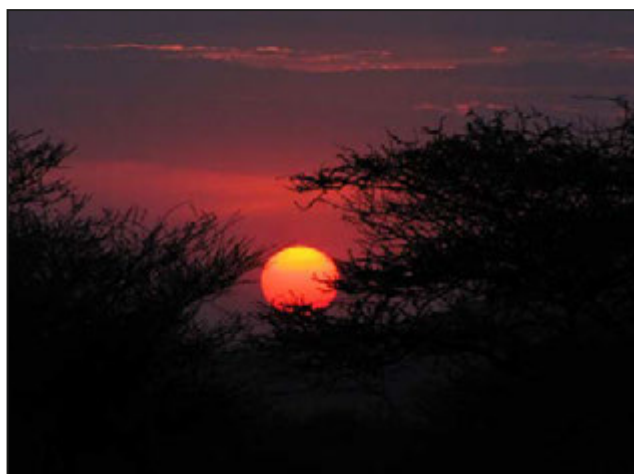
Sister Reginada in Imiliwaha demonstrating HIV testing to Sister Beverly and student Brie Anderson.



Primary school girls reading a book about bees in English to Sister Beverly.



Chipole group with Sisters and leaders (Denise with Bill Wise, back row, and Anette Goodwin, bottom left).

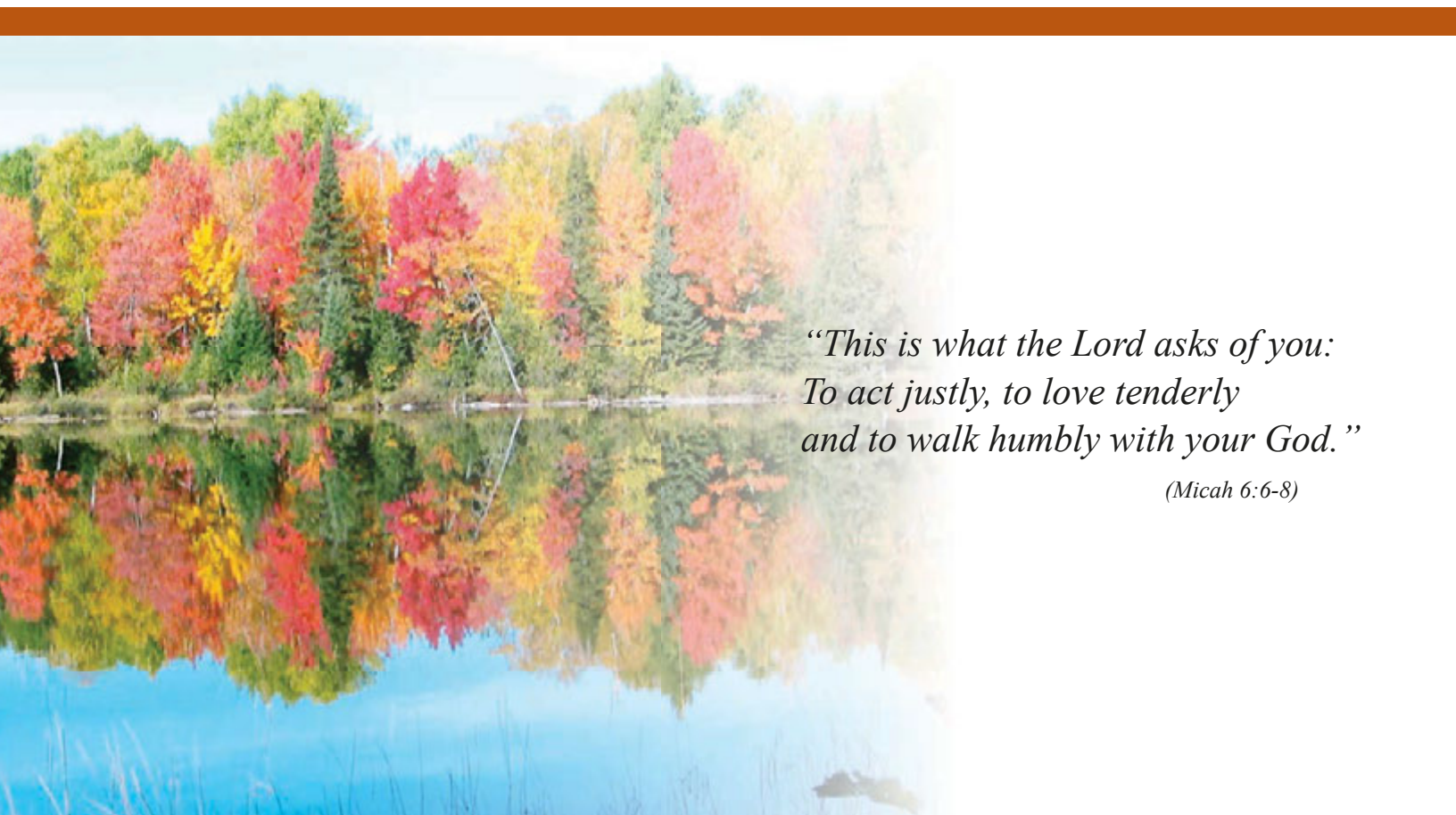


Sunset on the Serengeti – captured by Sister Beverly Raway.

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*“This is what the Lord asks of you:
To act justly, to love tenderly
and to walk humbly with your God.”*

(Micah 6:6-8)