



# PATHWAYS

*Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters Duluth, Minnesota Vol. 26, No. 3 • Lent 2015*



Published by  
Sisters of St. Scholastica  
Monastery, Duluth, MN

Produced by  
Monastery Development /  
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*Pathways* is published  
quarterly and is distributed  
among friends, relatives,  
associates and benefactors of  
the Sisters of St. Scholastica  
Monastery.

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## A Letter from the Prioress

Dear Friends of the Monastery,

Of all the images used to describe our Lenten journey toward the joy of Holy Easter, the lovely, evocative one depicted on the front of this issue of *Pathways* is, I believe, among the most meaningful. Just as new life persistently breaks through the crust of earth, hardened by layers of winter, and bursts forth into brilliant and resilient bloom, so does Christ, in His persistent love, penetrate our hidden inner dark doings to free us from the forces that hold us in bondage. Through our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we let God's grace gently, yet powerfully, work the earth of our hearts so that Christ's Easter love can burst forth anew within us, blossoming profusely in works of compassion, justice, and care for our beloved Earth.

Our Lenten/Easter journey leads us into the very heart of the Paschal Mystery (the dying and rising of Christ), inviting us to find there the pattern and meaning of our own life journey. Some years ago, Anthony Podavano wrote a reflection on how wondrously nature proclaims again and again the triumph of Christ's Easter Life in us.

*"No matter how long or fierce the WINTER, SPRING forces its way through the tons of ice and snow. . . . After all the savage cold and shattering wind, the EARTH grows GREEN with HOPE; and FLOWERS, so fragile they could not be touched, force their way through the DARKNESS of the earth to the MORNING SUN.*

*No matter how horrible the DEATH, how unbearable the pain. . . . despite the tons of stone and dirt against the tomb, EASTER HAPPENS and LIFE GROWS GREEN as all the forces of death are exhausted."*

May God's strong and tender love fill you with a resilient hope in the Easter Life of Christ bursting forth within you and our world. May your lives grow green with the beauty of God's grace shaping your hearts into the likeness of His own.

Lovingly yours in Christ with Easter prayer  
and deep gratitude for the gift you are,

*Sister Lois Eckes*

Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress







## S LENT SAFE?

By Sister Donna Schroeder

For the last few years my annual physical has begun by the doctor asking me if I feel safe in my environment. I say “yes” because I know that what she means is: are you free from physical or emotional battering. Later I find myself reflecting on the question because a sense of safety is a multi-faceted reality. Since we live in a constantly changing environment, the question could pertain to economics, environmental concerns, political frustrations, social problems, the health and well-being of family and friends, and more. One area pertinent to many of us aging seniors is the diminishment of our own physical and mental capacities and the changes in lifestyle those shifts make necessary.

However, I also find myself asking: can there be too much safety? A security that results in a life of comfort and complacency or a dedication to convenience is not apt to be a very interesting or fruitful life. Would it even be good if we could eliminate all risk from our lives? Who has not been jarred by hearing someone “who has everything” complain about boredom? In Chapter 49 of *The Rule of St. Benedict* we are told that the life of a monk ought to be a continuous Lent. “Since few, however, have strength for this, we urge the entire community during these days of Lent to keep its manner of life most pure and to wash away in this holy season the negligences of other times.” To “wash away negligences” we need an examination of conscience. Perhaps one area in which we should examine our consciences is whether or not we are driven by an insatiable need for security. Are we saving things we have not used for years in case someday they might be needed when there are others who need those things now? How much time do we spend worrying about things we cannot change? We are called to love God wholeheartedly and to love our neighbor as ourselves. What does that mean in the context of our own lives?

As followers of Christ, our effort to live the good news should be a joyful one because really living the Gospel is a life of love. As we reflect on our lives, there are positive and practical things we can do to grow in the love of our neighbor. If we see Christ in others, the task is made simple though not necessarily easy. It is quite possibly risky. We may spend time and energy without being rewarded by thanks. Yet, the fruit of a life with such risk is a special kind of beauty. I have had the joy of knowing many people truly seeking to live the Gospel and have seen that they acquire a kind of beauty that is more potent than anything Estee Lauder could manufacture. Being in the presence of people whose faces reflect compassion and concern for other people is a kind of safety net that is better than a significant bank account. Recessions do not destroy it. Such people are blessings in the lives of many others as well, and they are evidence that Christ is with us. If Christ is with us, we have safety enough.





# CONSECRATED LIFE: A FUTURE STILL TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour

Photo by Jeff Frey; Courtesy of CSS



Faithful readers of *Pathways* and other Catholic periodicals have noted that 2015 is designated as the Year of Consecrated Life and realize that this certainly includes the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery! While we applaud attention being focused on the role of consecrated life in the Church, realists among us look at the statistics and wonder where it is headed. When we frequently are asked why our Sisters are not out in the parishes, we must respond that we would love to be there but do not have the Sisters to send. We can look back with pride at the more than fifty schools and catechetical schools in which we served, at the College which we founded, the hospitals we built and staffed, the health-care system we founded, and the thousands of lives that have been and are still being touched through our ministries, but must acknowledge that the vast majority of these Sisters are retired after long years of service or have gone home to God. While we rejoice in our few new members, we know that they alone cannot replace the hundreds who have gone before them. And this situation, with a few exceptions, is the “new norm” throughout our country where the average median age of women

religious for ALL communities is in the high seventies and in the eighties for some congregations. So what are some realistic expectations for this special year?

Under the leadership of Pope Francis who designated this Year, its first objective is “to make a grateful remembrance of the *recent* past” (meaning the past fifty years since the Second Vatican Council). Though religious communities were affected by the same crises facing the world and the Church during those years, the second objective—a real test of our faith—is “to embrace the future with hope.” A third objective for all religious is “to live the present with passion” and thus help people to realize “the beauty of following Christ” in the various types of religious vocations.

As various collaborative initiatives are undertaken in dioceses and religious communities during this year, my hope is that committed Catholics and especially religious will exude the spirit of joy and outreach that our Holy Father is infusing into our violent and threatened world. As a seasoned religious who has persevered in hope through more than sixty years of consecrated life, both before and after Vatican II, I can sincerely say to anyone discerning how to respond totally to God’s love, “Go for it and don’t be afraid!” It is a rich and meaningful life filled with “the hundredfold” Christ promised—along with inevitable trials that every state of life entails. For the skeptical and discouraged who see little purpose or future in religious life, I remind them that Jesus’ special invitation to generous souls is a constitutive part of the Gospel, for there would be no Church had not some unlikely persons accepted the invitation.

It is truly a sign of the Holy Spirit working in the soul of a baptized Christian whose faith has been nourished, to reflect on how best to please God with one’s life. Jesus’ response to the young man who asked Him that question was “to keep the commandments” (Mk 10:21). When the man answered that he had done so all his life, Jesus “looked on him with love.” This is a comforting reply for all people who sincerely strive to do the same, especially when doing so is out of sync with the prevailing culture. Sadly, this is where many of our young people are content to stay. However, during this year especially let us urge young people with a deeper longing in their hearts to reflect on the rest of the story: “You are lacking in one thing: Go, sell what you have, give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”

This is the timeless challenge of the Gospel that particularly our American faithful need to hear again. Rather than lamenting the loss of the never-to-be-repeated peak of religious vocations of another era, let us accept the fact that God, who is forever creating something new, can accomplish wondrous deeds through even a few dedicated souls. This has always been the case, so let us encourage hesitant discerners who want to do great things for the world to imagine what entrusting all their talents, zeal, and energies to the power of the Holy Spirit could do for humanity. Let us stress the tremendous graces, opportunities, and freedoms consecrated life makes possible through professing religious vows rather than focusing on what one gives up, which pales in comparison.

The challenges that the passing generations of American religious faced were met and overcome. The challenges religious face today are global, involving the very future of the planet and humanity. Christianity itself is facing the greatest persecution in its history. Who will bring the presence of Christ to God’s people? Truly, consecrated life is a “future still to be accomplished.”



## Sister Almira Randall: On Turning Ninety

The day I turned ninety I was walking down the hall to my room when somebody asked me, "Almira, how does it feel to be ninety?" I hadn't really given it any thought. Then I realized I didn't feel any different than I had the day before when I was "only eighty-nine." I've been asked to write about it, however, and I decided to do it in the form of memories: childhood memories, teaching days memories, McCabe memories, etc.

**Childhood memories:** I remember sitting on a little red chair in the basement watching my mother wash clothes. I remember Dad pulling me—and later my sister Pat and me—in a little wooden cutter around the block in the snow. We were bundled to the hilt.

**Teaching days memories:** What a glorious way to spend your life! If you happen to be lucky enough to spend them with God's littlest ones, you are blessed indeed. Two of my favorite memories are of two very small boys. Let's call them Billy and Tony. In the first instance, five or six of us were sitting around the "spool table"—I holding up flash cards and the boys reading them each in his turn. Suddenly Billy folded his arms over his chest and calmly informed me, "I'm not saying no more words." And he didn't. He meant what he said. In another case it was Tony who brought things to a halt when he announced to the world, "I ain't gonna dance no more." "Fine," I told him. "Sit down there and think about how you're behaving." Some ten minutes later I asked, "Well, what did you do?" He looked up at me and said, "I think!" "And what did you think?" I asked. "I'm not gonna tell you!" And that was that!

**McCabe days,** of course, bring memories of the smell of warm homemade crusty loaves of bread, fresh out of the oven.

Oh, yes, life has been full of memories and well worth living!



Photo by Sister Kathleen Del Monte

## Oblation Ceremonies

By Sister Edith Bogue

On December 14, 2014, Cassandra Brissett made her Oblation at St. Scholastica Monastery. "Casey" has been an Oblate candidate for many months while she studied the *Rule of St. Benedict* and how she could use it as a guide for her life.

A second Oblation ceremony took place January 24, 2015, when Francesca Palmer made her Oblation at Morning Prayer with many Sisters present. This was especially fitting as Francesca often joins the Sisters at Morning Prayer. She also volunteers in other ways at the Monastery.

Oblates are Christian laypeople—men and women, some Catholic and others from various denominations—who love and practice Benedictine spirituality in the midst of their everyday lives. Oblates meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon, reading and learning about a specific topic while supporting each other on the spiritual journey. You can learn more about the Oblate life at our blog, <http://oblosb.wordpress.org> or by sending email to [oblates@duluthosb.org](mailto:oblates@duluthosb.org).



Left to right: Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress, Sister Edith Bogue, Oblate Director, and Cassandra Brissett.

Photo by Sister Therese Carson



Francesca Palmer signing her Oblation document

Photo by Sister Edith Bogue





## “Seek Peace and Pursue It”

By Sister Lisa Maurer



Saint Benedict, in the Prologue to his *Rule*, calls us to “seek after peace and pursue it” (Prol. 17). What is this peace that we are to seek and pursue? Have you ever considered what peace actually means or what it consists of? The word peace seems to evoke different meanings for different people. Peace is one of those words we hear all the time. It is used all the time in many diverse situations. Many times we speak of peace without giving a thought about what it really is and what it really means.

For some, peace means the absence of war and conflict. No one is fighting or arguing or showing tempers or hatred. No overt violence occurs. For many this is peaceful; to them this means peace.

For others, however, peace means feeling respected and loved. People feel calm and secure; there is a sense of cooperation and enthusiasm, genuine care and concern for others. For many this means peace.

One way of understanding peace is to explore distinctive ways of naming peace. One might consider the idea of negative peace versus positive peace. Negative peace is generally defined as the absence of conflict or violence. A ceasefire in a war-torn land is negative peace. In the day-to-day setting, a negative peace may exist when all expressions of disagreement or struggle are blocked. The absence of conflict or violence does not necessarily lead to a positive situation. Hence, this type of peace is labeled as negative. Positive peace, on the other hand, is more like the concept of shalom. Every person is valued and feels valued. Right relationships flourish. Not only is conflict absent, but a feeling of fellowship and friendship exists. People are motivated by each other and strive to be the best for one another. People are able to be who God dreams them to be. They feel safe. This type of peace is labeled as positive.

Yes, peace is a gift from God, yet it is something we must strive for. It is more active than passive. It is an action rather than a feeling. It is about becoming who and how God is calling us to be. Finding peace can at times be difficult. In some ways, it may be easier to avoid evil. Yet even if we completely isolate ourselves from all the evil in the world, there is no guarantee we will have total peace. After all, we live in a world that “longs to be set free from its slavery to corruption and groans and suffers” (Romans 8:21b-22a). Still, we are called to be people of peace. It is God’s gift to and dream for his people.

Being a person of peace does not assure freedom from trouble. Noticeably, a person of peace is assured that the promises of God are sure and certain even in the midst of life’s uncertainty. Continuing in this hope will result in a future inheritance filled with God’s gift of peace. Day-to-day life will always bring new challenges to peace, but every day also holds a renewed promise from God; a promise of peace that is totally unlike the peace the world offers. For Jesus said, “I give you peace, the kind of peace that only I can give. It is not like the peace that this world can give. So don’t be worried or afraid” (John 14:27).

let



Peace be your Quest and Aim  
(Ps. 34:14-15).

So, how do we seek peace? How do we pursue it? To begin with we must avoid evil. Peace cannot exist where evil dwells. Once we turn from evil, we then must seek peace and pursue it. There is a bit of a difference in seeking and pursuing. To seek is to go in search of. To pursue means to follow and overtake. Therefore, we must go and find where peace is. Once we find it, we are to follow it. We are to chase after it with every effort to overtake it and make it our own.

*Good and gracious God,  
You call us to a life of peaceful, compassionate living.  
Send your Holy Spirit to us as we strive to be peacemakers in our world.  
Give us grace to seek after peace and pursue it.  
We pray this in the Name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.*

the **Love** of **Christ**  
must come before all else—  
you are not to act in anger  
or nurse a grudge—

Rid your heart of all deceit.  
Never give a hollow greeting of  
Peace— or turn away when  
someone needs your **Love**.





## Sister Profile: Sister Mary Martin Beringer

By Sister Luella Wegscheid

Sister Mary Martin Beringer was born on April 19, 1922, the youngest of five children of Martin and Regina Beringer. Her siblings were Ambrose Beringer, Lorene Wegscheid, Luella Wegscheid, and Kathryn Wegscheid. (All four of these children married siblings in the Wegscheid family.) She appreciated her early upbringing as a child on the family farm south of Perham, Minnesota.

Her early education was in a one-room schoolhouse with all eight grades. While she attended public high school in Perham, she remembers Sister Monica Simon and Sister Prudentia Moran coming from St. Scholastica Monastery to speak to young women who were interested in attending college. Their visit influenced Sister Mary Martin to go to Duluth to enter St. Scholastica Monastery on September 8, 1939, and begin her college studies. This was a challenging time for her as it was the first time that she was so far away from home.



*Sister Mary Martin with children at St. James*

After teaching in Duluth and Wayzata, she was sent to St. James Children's Home where she was assigned to care for infants and very young children. From there she returned to teaching in Duluth and being a teacher and principal in Chicago. She then was again sent to St. James Children's Home (later renamed Woodland Hills) to be a childcare worker and group mother for senior boys. She served in that capacity for 13 years. When a new Prioress was elected for the Community in 1975, Sister Mary Martin was called back to the Monastery to serve as the Director of Temporalities. She served the Sisters very faithfully and kindly in this ministry for 19 years.

In 2001 Woodland Hills inaugurated the Beringer Guiding Light Award, honoring Sister Mary Martin for being a guiding light for so many at Woodland Hills. This honor is greatly appreciated as Woodland Hills holds a very special place in her life. She continues to support the organization and the many workers who carry on the wonderful work that is being done there. The Beringer Guiding Light Award is presented annually to several deserving individuals who have positively affected the work at Woodland Hills.

On April 19, 2012, Sister Mary Martin celebrated her 90th birthday. In the opening prayer for the meal Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress, referred to the important place Sister Mary Martin has had in the lives of those who know her. It is impressive to think of the number of lives she has positively influenced. This was a joyous occasion with many relatives and friends joining in the celebration. The truly special guest was her 96-year old sister, Lorene Wegscheid, who was able to come from Perham, Minnesota, to attend the celebration. In fact, this was the last time she saw Lorene before her death in October of that year, leaving Sister Mary Martin as the only surviving member of her family.



*Lorene Wegscheid, Sister Mary Martin, Sister Lois Eckes at Sister Mary Martin's 90th birthday celebration in 2012*

Sister Mary Martin has celebrated many Jubilees of her religious profession: 25 years in 1966, 50 years in 1991, 60 years in 2001, and 70 years in 2011. She is grateful for God's call to enter religious life, the opportunity to work with children for many years, the opportunity to be a part of the special and rewarding work at Woodland Hills, and of the time she now has to devote to more prayer. Residing on Benet Hall has given her that special time. She is very content and happy in her religious life.



## Benedictine Center of Spirituality

By Sister Pauline Micke, Director

The cold temperatures and winds of last month have not diminished people's hunger for spiritual growth opportunities.

In addition to Spiritual Direction, which continues to grow, and people seeking "Sabbath Days" for quiet reflection, we are seeing a growth in groups/Churches seeking our help in providing opportunities for nurturing their spiritual lives.

We hosted a group of Lutheran Pastors in December who spent the morning reflecting on what it means to live "in Christ" as St. Paul speaks of so often in his writings. We had very positive evaluations from this group.

Our retreat work—both the retreats held here at the Monastery and those retreats and presentations that we are doing "out there" for churches and other groups—continues to increase. Our Winter Prayer Retreat January 24, 2015, included 30 participants. We made prayer beads with each bead a blessing for some part of the home. We used ritual and art to create an environment that reflects God's presence in us and all who enter our homes. Each person wrote a personal blessing for the home to bless all who live there as well as guests.

We are receiving registrations for the February 28, 2015, retreat, "Living the Covenant of God's Unconditional Love," which will be held from 9 a.m. to Noon here at the Monastery.



*Photo by Sister Therese Carson*

To register for the Lenten Retreat or to schedule an event for your church or group or a Sabbath Day(s) for yourself, call 218-723-6555 or email [Pauline.m@duluthosb.org](mailto:Pauline.m@duluthosb.org).



## Prayer Space for your Home

By Sister Luce Marie Dionne

Photo by Sister Therese Carson



What is a prayer space? Many of you may have journeyed spiritually, and have already set up an area with symbolic items where you can sit for some time to pray. If you research the many religions on earth, you will find they all have traditional locations for prayer, if not in the home, at least in some form or another, some with instructions. It is all so fascinating. And what is a prayer space for a Christian? We could presume the Bible is on the stand; the crucifix is on the wall in each room; the icon is on the desk; a couple of candles may be lit. Why would I need a prayer space? This is also a very private question within the privacy of the home, and should remain as such. No one needs to know.

Perhaps a better question is: "What would motivate me to make such a devotional scene in my home? The reality is that first, a prayer space is in the heart. God is love. God exists out there in the universe, but also in the heart. A prayer is love communicated in the mystery of that Great Love which at times surprises us wherever we are, with

whomever we meet, or whenever we are in the midst of some event. God is everywhere. Christ also taught the two great commandments. One could imagine them as two "prayer spaces": To love God with all my heart, my mind, and my soul. The other is reaching to our neighbor. I think this is where it all begins. God demands sincerity of heart. This is about the attention we give to grace in the mystery of God's love for us.

However, Scripture also reminds us to go to our room and close the door to pray. That prayer space is also important because it gives "room" for the need to be with God, intentionally, every day in the home. We could call it a home within a home. When life gets tough, what a grace to have this prayer space waiting for me where I can rest in the silence of God. It is a communal place where I can pray for someone when I cannot otherwise reach that person, or where I can send a prayer-love-message to anyone I may think of. It is also an intercessory place where I can offer my prayers for the suffering in the world, which at times can be unimaginable. And what a delight it is to have this worship niche to give thanks for all that God has done for me. It could be that the connection to my prayer-space-home is that connection to my heavenly-home.

This prayer space is also transient. It is both a place for me to go and a place that comes along with me. And yes, I can bring this sacred dwelling wherever I go, symbolically or maybe literally. It is the movement of God's grace. A home can also be transient. The Benedictines and the *Rule of St. Benedict* make it clear that we are merely guests in the Monastery, rising and dying each day within the Paschal Mystery of Christ, when we will then eventually reach our heavenly home. We are all on an earthly journey. This prayer space can be the site of stability in my life of transience, as well as the site of transience in my life of stability.

Therefore, again, what would motivate me to prepare a prayer space? You will have to answer that question for yourselves, deep down in your hearts. As for me, it serves in reminding me of the necessity of my time with God. It is a place where I can come home, taking a leap of faith each day and affirm my life in Christ. It is a place of memory, reminding me of God of the past, as well as of the future. Most importantly, it is a place for the presence of God, NOW. It is a place of a human love trying to touch that Great Love. God's love is already present within our lives on earth, through the Holy Spirit. We only have to choose to be in that sacred . . . prayer space.



## Phoenix Transplants

By Sisters Barbara Higgins, Sarah O'Malley and Theresa Jodocy

*St. Scholastica Monastery gave a warm welcome to three Sisters returning from working in the Phoenix Diocese: Sisters Sarah O'Malley, Theresa Jodocy, and Barbara Higgins. The three had been assigned to ministry in Phoenix back in the 1960s, 70s, and 90s to continue the work there begun by the Duluth Benedictines in 1953. However, before beginning their ministry in Phoenix, they had served in the Duluth Diocese, all in elementary schools as teachers, principal, and young adult ministry. The three Sisters together served a total of sixty years in the Duluth Diocese prior to their assignments in Phoenix.*

*People have wondered, "Why Phoenix?" When Sister Chrysostom Doran was the Community Prioress in the early 1920s, she had a nephew who was in the seminary studying for the priesthood. She promised him that if he ever had a parish with a school, Duluth Benedictine Sisters would staff the school. In 1953 her promise to him was kept, and the first Benedictines were assigned to teach at St. Thomas the Apostle School, and then to work in other ministries of the Church in the Phoenix Diocese. Each Sister will write the story of her personal ministry in Phoenix and what her ministry is now that she is once again serving in the Duluth Diocese.*



### Sister Theresa Jodocy

I, Sister Theresa (then Sister Matthias), had just completed my Master's degree in Education/Administration in 1967, when I was assigned to become the fifth principal of St. Thomas the Apostle School in Phoenix, which then had an enrollment of some 650 students. I succeeded Sister Hilda.

At the time I began my ministry in Phoenix, it was still part of the Tucson Diocese. In December of 1969, a busload of our eighth grade students welcomed Bishop McCarthy at the airport as the first bishop of Phoenix. During my 35 years in that Diocese I served with all five bishops. After ten years as principal I felt a need to change my ministry. For several summers I attended the University of San Francisco and completed a Master's degree in Theology. I went on to teach school and was Dean for four years at Xavier College Prep for girls in Phoenix, then

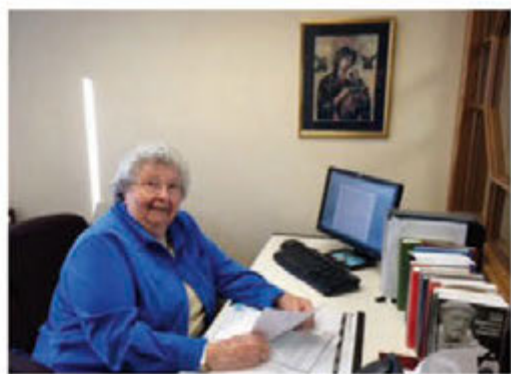
left the Diocese to teach six years in Chicago at Notre Dame High School for boys, teaching and serving as chair of the Theology Department.

Subsequently, I returned to Phoenix to begin the remainder of my 35 years in the Phoenix Diocese. I began my work teaching adults in three different parishes on the east side. My ministry work included the RCIA; returning Catholics; processing marriage annulments; training ministers to the sick; preparing lectors and Eucharistic ministers; preparing funeral liturgies for families for their loved ones; setting up parish spirituality libraries; teaching catechists and teaching Scripture. Working in these parishes was my most rewarding ministry. During my last two years in Phoenix I served as a religious and spiritual educator to the Chaplains in the Chandler Regional Hospital, as well as preparing prayer services for the families of patients and bringing the Eucharist to the sick.

My return to Duluth from Phoenix called for a huge adjustment, especially to the climate. It was not long before I was invited to volunteer at the Duluth Diocesan Pastoral Center, working in the Marriage Tribunal with annulments. This past year I have also been teaching a course in Church History to our Sisters in formation.

*Continued on Page 12*





Sister Theresa at work in the Marriage Tribunal

Presently, I am seeking opportunities to teach Scripture, for which I have a passion and which my experiences in Chandler, Mesa, and Tempe have nourished. I continue to offer my services where needed at the Monastery, doing leisure activities with the Sisters, reading, and playing Scrabble, jigsaw puzzles, and cards.



### Sister Sarah O'Malley

Be at peace—by St. Francis de Sales. *“Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life; rather look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will lead you safely through all things.”*

How true this prayer has been for me. After years of teaching in various elementary schools in the Duluth Diocese, I moved into parish ministry in Duluth’s West End Catholic Parish. This pastoral change was due in part to my theological studies at St. John’s University during the exciting time of Vatican II. It was also my Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experience that gave me the skills and love for ministering to the sick and elderly, especially in parishes. For eleven years I experienced “Team Ministry” in new and creative ways.

When, 30 years ago, I was assigned to St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Phoenix, I became Director of Pastoral Care—a ministry I dearly loved during my 14 years there. Then a new but similar opportunity opened for me at Most Holy Trinity—a small, multi-cultural parish. It was to the credit of dedicated lay ministers that pastoral care flourished during my 12 years there.

Change once more over these past three years—as Retreat Ministry has become my new focus. I gave 14-18 retreats per year to people in parishes and other settings. The positive response of the retreatants has been an encouraging sign to me of the need for and value of this ministry. I enjoy Retreat Ministry and find it both challenging and rewarding.

Now after 30 years of growthful ministry in Phoenix, I am a transplant, living at the Monastery in Duluth. It has been a huge change—but not without its many blessings. My hope is to continue Retreat Ministry in the Duluth Diocese. I welcome any opportunity to present retreats one to three hours in length on a wide variety of topics, including saints, prophets, and witnesses.

I am deeply grateful for my Benedictine Community, for God’s loving guidance, and for the beautiful people whose lives have intertwined with mine over these many years. Pope Francis’s directive to “get out there with the folks and spread the Joy of the Gospel” is what I hope to do. Being a transplant brings many blessings!



A morning retreat with Francis of Assisi, Cardinal Bernardin, and Pope Francis, July 2014





*Senior gathering St. Patrick*

## Sister Barbara Higgins

Greetings from Phoenix. . . oops! My nineteen years of ministry in the desert did shift back to St. Scholastica Monastery on June 26, 2014. Returning to Duluth where I began my many ministries in the Duluth Diocese from 1955-1992 is a coming home. Let me share briefly my Phoenix experience before I give news of my new ministry here at the Monastery.

In 1995, after a health sabbatical, I was encouraged to seek a ministry in the Diocese of Phoenix while living with a group of Sisters at St. Thomas the Apostle convent. My search led to St. Patrick Catholic Community in Scottsdale where I was hired as RCIA director; then on to Senior Ministry and Prayer Ministry and later Senior Life Ministry, a total of fourteen years. These last five years were a focus on our Seniors involving three parishes. Such an enriching experience! In 2009 I discerned a need to lessen the work hours. I left St. Pat's staff and began focusing on spiritual direction,

with the parishes of St. Pat's and St. Rose in Anthem, Arizona. Occasionally, requests were made for my offering a spiritual presentation on God, prayer, etc. I felt very comfortable in these roles, since I had earned a Master's in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University with a strong focus on Spirituality and Spiritual Direction.

In 2013 my presence was requested at our Monastery in Duluth. I was needed. After nineteen years of ministry in Phoenix and surrounding areas, it was time to say adios to the many outstanding people I had the privilege to serve and love. So, my move from the desert to the north country of Duluth became a serious process of letting go, moving forward, and trusting God that my relocation would be a peaceful one.

My new ministries here in the Duluth area began in August, 2014 and are as follows:

**Spiritual Direction:** in conjunction with our Benedictine Center of Spirituality, I offer group and individual spiritual direction in a private, comfortable setting. I welcome directees who seek God in their daily lives.

**Director of Benedictine Associates:** The Benedictine Associate program offers a live-in experience for women who receive room and board in exchange for volunteer services here at the Monastery. Opportunities available during this program would include joining the monastic community at daily Eucharist, Liturgy of the Hours (Morning, Midday and Evening Prayer), and sharing meals with the Sisters. In addition, cultural and spiritual possibilities are available through the Benedictine college here. My role as director of Benedictine Associates, though new, is beginning to come alive as I interact with interested women.

When time allows I hope to mingle with our College students as a presence on their turf as they go about their active campus lives and to offer an interest in their concerns as a listening ear and possibly spiritual guide. I look forward to this ministry.

The beauty of the desert, the sun, and mostly the people are all missed. However, returning to our Monastery and to Duluth where I grew up and was spiritually nourished in my formative years is a true coming home. God is good all the time!



*So, where is the sun?*



## The Sisters and The Bishops

By Sister Joan Marie Stelman

As the Diocese of Duluth celebrates its 125th anniversary this year, it seems an appropriate time to look back on the long, intertwined history that our Community has with the Diocese. If you have read *House of Stone* by Sister Mary Richard Boo, you will know of some of the difficulties that arose in the early 20th century between the Community and episcopal authority. What you may not know is the longer history of the supportive relationship between the Bishops of Duluth and the Sisters.

Bishop McGolrick is considered a co-founder of our Community with Mother Scholastica. It was his invitation to her that started our journey. You may be aware that when we first settled here, our first home was at Munger Terrace. The Sisters occupied half of the structure, and the Chancery offices and the Bishop's residence were in the other half. Even after the Sisters and the girls moved up the hill to our new home, the Bishop was a frequent visitor. There are records of recitals given in his honor, and he would preside over convocation at the beginning of the school year and graduation in the spring. He celebrated the Eucharist on the feast of Corpus Christi when the girls made their First Communion and led the procession. When Mother Scholastica died, he mourned the loss of his dear friend and presided at her funeral.



*Bishop McGolrick on the Feast of Corpus Christi with the girls who made their First Communion.*



*Bishop McGolrick starts a footrace during "Villa Day" at the beginning of the school year in 1912.*

The Bishops were considered honorary Presidents of The College of St. Scholastica and continued to preside over major events for decades. Bishop McNicholas thought so highly of the Sisters' teaching abilities that when he became the Archbishop of Cincinnati he asked for the Sisters to come and teach in his diocese.



*The Bishop's Banquet at The College of St. Scholastica, December 1945. Bishop Welch is in the center.*

Bishop Thomas Welch, who led the Diocese for 33 years, was well known to the Sisters and to the students, who dedicated one of their yearbooks to him. A highlight of the year was always the Bishop's Banquet just before Christmas. In 1938 he consecrated Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. The Bishop even had his own quarters at the Monastery—and his own housekeeper. If you are facing the Chapel, the winding stairs at the left leading up to the door that enters Stanbrook Hall by the cloister walk was known as the "Bishop's stairs" because his office was the first door on the right in Stanbrook Hall. Bishop Schenk also presided at College events until his health began to fail.





*The senior class is presented to Bishop Welch, December 1952*



*Photo by Sister Therese Carson*

*A watercolor of St. Gertrude's in Washington, D.C. by Bishop Paul Anderson*

Bishop Paul Anderson was another especially good friend. When he would visit Washington, D.C., for any kind of conference, he would stay with the Sisters at St. Gertrude's. He took painting lessons from Sister Mary Charles McGough and became an accomplished watercolor painter. During the sesquimillennium in 1980—the 1500th anniversary of St. Benedict's birth—he was an integral part of the Community celebrations.



*Bishop Roger Schwietz, +Sister Lelia Hartung, Bishop Brom, and +Sister Georgene Vukelich visiting in the Monastery dining room.*

When he was succeeded by Bishop Robert Brom, work began on a new residence for the Bishop. In the interim, Bishop Brom lived at St. Ann's Home, where Sister Georgene Vukelich was the administrator. He was very grateful for her help and friendship, and he continued to write to her after he became the Archbishop of San Diego until her death. Bishop Brom blessed the new Chapel and Library in 1986. Bishop Roger Schwietz was a frequent visitor to the Monastery, often presiding at Sisters' funerals.

As time has gone by, schedules and responsibilities have changed; the Sisters do not serve in as many locations in the Diocese where they would encounter the Bishop. Although there has been less personal interaction between the Bishops and our Sisters, we are grateful for their support and involvement with our Community and the ministries we have started.

*Bishop Paul Sirba visited with Sisters on Benet Hall shortly after his arrival in Duluth and shook hands with +Sister Devota LaVoie, who was over 100 at the time.*

*Photos courtesy of CSS Archives and Monastery Archives unless otherwise noted.*



*Photo by Sister Edith Bogue*



## Baptismal Fonts Designed

By Sister Luce Marie Dionne

On All Saints Day, November 1, 2011, there was a celebration at St. Benedict's Catholic Church in Duluth for the dedication of a new baptismal Font. On January 11, 2015, on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, there was another celebration for a new baptismal font at St. Michael's Church. This is the second font I have been asked to help bring to fruition in design and construction.



*St. Benedict's Church Baptismal Font.  
Infusion—water flowing up from the  
center on to the sides of the octagon.*

*St. Michael's Church Baptismal Font.  
Infusion top section—water flowing  
into the semi-immersion bottom section.*



Historically, baptismal fonts were once located in the gathering spaces, aligned with the Altar in the sanctuary. We are seeing a renewed interest in doing this for Churches. Liturgically, the font also makes the connection to the eight sides of the octagon, symbolizing the octave week to Easter Sunday, the eighth day of Christ's resurrection. The fonts represent Christ's abundant life, which began first and foremost in the beginning when God created the waters of the universe, and in time when St. John the Baptist poured water over Jesus Christ in the Jordan. Baptism reminds us all of the wellspring of a new life in Christ.

I am interested in the sacrament of Baptism. I would like to continue to serve you and to participate theologically by designing more fonts, unique to each Church I encounter. As an architect, I am also available for any new work, renovations, or additions for your churches and institutions related to your communities. I may be reached at St. Scholastica Monastery at 218-723-7084 or at [LDionne@css.edu](mailto:LDionne@css.edu).



## Open Book: A Sister Profile

By Sister Linda Wiggins

On this Monday morning I gaze out the window to see fat, gently-falling snowflakes covering the ground with such pristine whiteness. All is adorned with a sense of mystery because the usual landmarks are hidden. Such a clean new day, such possibilities await, such crispness invades the cloudy, murky light of a January morning. With my usual cup of coffee in hand I enter my writing room, wriggle into my chair, click on the computer and view the blank word document page. Another pristine white world beckons my thoughts to appear in neat, measured lines of font. Here is my work, my world. I am a writer.

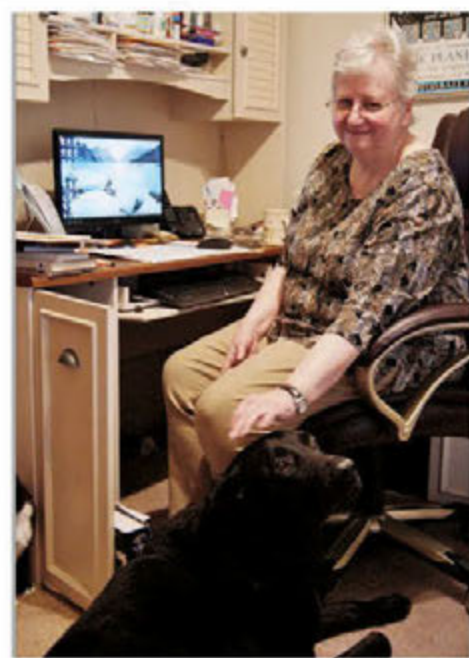
For the past ten years (yes, **TEN** years) I have been writing a book on Sister Noemi Weygant (1907-1995) titled *Photographing God: A Spiritual Biography of Sister Noemi Weygant*. Sister Noemi was a professional photographer and writer. She published fifteen books, numerous essays and articles, and was a prolific poet, in addition to being a nationally and internationally known prize-winning photographer. About the only thing she could not do was carry a tune—she was tone-deaf. Her Benedictine community described her as a “character.” Most of the rest of those who knew her (which at times has seemed like half of the world population) described her as wonderfully “dynamic” and definitely “genuine.”

Discovering and writing about Sister Noemi’s spiritual development has been an intense seeking of God within cosmic leaps, microcosmic dimensions, spiraling insights, and ancient wisdom, all under the auspices of a common day. Her spirituality radiated an intense awareness of God’s constant presence in our earthly world. How could I work inside Sister Noemi’s spiritual pathway all these years without making some astounding discoveries about my own spiritual path? I could not.

Since Sister Noemi and I both came to the Benedictine community after having spent a considerable amount of our lives in the “real” world, we both had certain expectations of what living “in community” would encompass. Here we would be able to love God fully each day because we would have the mutual support of our Sisters in Christ in a holy place of serenity, joy, and freedom from worldly “ambition,” “egoism,” “jealousies,” and “meanness.” Guess what? We were wrong. In addition, we were incredibly short-sighted about our own imperfections.

In Benedictine community life, strength doesn’t reside in numbers because of sheer muscle power, but in the opportunity to love more deeply by unconditionally loving each other, imperfections included, and acknowledging such imperfections in ourselves. Such a foundation for living gave Sister Noemi the ability to open her heart, her arms, her spirit to the sacredness of life each day. She saw incredible views through her camera—physical and metaphysical. She saw all life forms as being connected to each other and to God. All life is dependent on such connections. Holiness is found in “being” in relationship with all other life. Sister Noemi’s biography will be finished this year. My spiritual journey continues with the Benedictine community of St. Scholastica; my work as a writer will also continue to wherever God leads me. Each day I spend in community and in front of a blank page I consider a blessing, a challenge, and a true illustration of God’s most tender mercy.

Photo by Sister Therese Carson



Sister Linda in her writing space with Edward



# Highlights

## Sister Gaudensia Mwanyika Graduates!

By Sister Therese Carson

Photo by Sister Kathleen Del Monte



Sister Gaudensia Mwanyika graduated December 13, 2014, from The College of St. Scholastica with a Master's degree in Education. She came to St. Scholastica Monastery from St. Agnes Monastery, our Twinning Monastery in Imiliwaha, Tanzania, in late autumn 2007. She arrived in the evening and thought, "Why is it so dark already?" The next morning she looked out on a white world. She had never seen snow, and was so excited she ran out and filled her pockets. Soon she learned to make her first and only snow angel. Coming to Duluth was a culture shock. Our way of life was different: strange food, cold weather, and no venomous snakes.

Although she spoke English as a third language in Tanzania, she spent three days at the Alternate Learning Center in Duluth to prove she could manage college classes in English. At first she struggled with the Minnesotan accent, but soon felt at ease.

As a student teacher in Duluth she taught African history and culture to students of all ages in many different schools. There she saw children with learning disabilities and physical handicaps taking classes with everyone else and then after school studying one-on-one with tutors. She said in

Tanzania the public schools are poorly funded, and children with disabilities do not attend school. In college she saw people with physical and learning challenges taking courses with her. It was a revelation.

While researching and writing her Master's thesis, Sister Gaudensia took a long, hard look at the education system in her home country and was unhappy with what she found. While talking with some friends about what each would do if they won the lottery, she said, "I would build and staff a school in Tanzania for the disabled." In her vision, slow learners would be taught at their own pace in a well-built school with enough teachers, books, and supplies. She would start small with a first grade class and slowly add every year. It would be named *St. Scholastica Medium English School for Students with Learning Disabilities and the Handicapped*. Eventually the special school would be integrated with public schools so all could learn together regardless of ability.

Her dream will take a lot of grant money, fund-raising, and hard work, but she has help. Friends and colleagues here started a nonprofit organization to funnel donations to the new school. Sister Gaudensia is happy to be returning home with a plan to make a real difference. "We must all think less about ourselves and more about helping others. Coming to the United States for an education was a privilege that I will share with the people of Tanzania."

## CSS Student Winners Have Dinner with Prioress and Subprioress

By Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau



The winners of the "Who's That Sister?" Scavenger Hunt which took place last spring at The College of Saint Scholastica "cashed in" on their prize late last fall. Megan, Amber, and Alisha each had won dinner at the Monastery with a guest in the company of the Prioress. It was an extra special celebration, as Megan was also celebrating her upcoming graduation from College at the fall convocation. Based on the amount of laughter and giggling which was heard coming from their table, a good time was had by all.

Left to right: Sister Josine, Subprioress; Megan; Emily; Amber; Sister Lois, Prioress; Elizabeth, Alisha, Margaret.



## Highlights, Continued

### A Most Welcome Visit

By Sister Theresa Jodocy

A great surprise was given to four Sisters at the Monastery this past November by seven ladies from International Falls. One of the women, Janice Nagurski Carlson, read in the Diocesan paper, *The Northern Cross*, an article about my 60th Jubilee the summer of 2014 and contacted me. I taught Janice and the other six ladies when they were in second grade and again in seventh grade when I was assigned to teach at St. Thomas School in 1957. Janice wondered if she and classmates could come for a visit. All seven ladies arrived at the Monastery November 22 and stayed until the next day. During the visit we learned that one of the guests, Theresa Lucca Rud, received her degree in elementary education and had returned to St. Thomas to teach. She taught in a classroom next to Sister Jane Casey, and the principal at the time was Sister Claudia Cherro. Another Sister, Sister Sue Fortier, taught their siblings in the seventh grade. Visitors were Janice Nagurski Carlson, Carol Iraci Melloy, Terri Lucca Rud, Pamela Balaski Hill, Margaret Susan Schneider Fraik, Helen Pleimling Trickey, and Pat Sullivan.

The evening of the visit was filled with laughter and stories of their experiences at St. Thomas School. They brought class lists, class pictures, and scrapbooks that covered many of the special years they had with us Sisters. It was a joy to have them come back for a visit and to meet the other Sisters here at the Monastery.



Sister Jane Casey, Sister Claudia Cherro, Sister Sue Fortier, and Janice (Nagurski) Carlson



Front left to right: Margaret Susan (Schneider) Fraik, Helen (Pleimling) Trickey, and Sister Theresa Jodocy. Back left to right: Janice (Nagurski) Carlson, Carol (Iraci) Melloy, Terri (Lucca) Rud, Pamela (Balaski) Hill

### Religious Storm Storm's Den

By Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau



Sister Paule Pierre and Sister Barbara visit with CSS student

Sister Barbara Higgins, Sister Mary Catherine Shambour, Sister Mary Rochefort, Sister Donna Schroeder, Sister Lisa Maurer, Sister Theresa Spinler, Sister Ingrid Luukkonen, Sister Elizabeth Farias, Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau, and Fr. James Datko were present to CSS students in a special way in Storm's Den during *National Vocation Awareness Week* this past November. The Sisters and Father visited with the students during lunch time, inquiring about how they were doing, how classes were going, and challenging them to think about their life's journey to date. Had they given any thought to which vocation God was calling them – religious life, priesthood, marriage or single life? Lively conversation was enjoyed by all, and the students enjoyed receiving the special prayer cards that the Sisters had brought to share with them.



## *In Loving Memory*



*Sister Mary Richard and friends*



*President of CSS 1967–1971*

### **Sister Mary Richard Boo** ***June 20, 1929—November 13, 2014***

Sister Mary Richard Boo, 85, prominent in higher education, died peacefully on November 13, 2014, at Essentia Health East St. Mary's Medical Center. Margaret (Margie) Boo was born on June 20, 1929, in Pine City, Minnesota, the third child of Clinton and Julia (Hurley) Boo. After graduating from Pine City High School in 1947, following her mother's example she enrolled at The College of St. Scholastica, a decisive factor in her life's journey. In January 1952 she entered the Benedictine Community of St. Scholastica and began her life as a religious. She professed her triennial vows on July 11, 1953, and perpetual vows on July 11, 1956. On June 15, 2003, she celebrated her Golden Jubilee and on August 11, 2013, her Diamond Jubilee, commemorating sixty years of monastic profession.

Sister Mary Richard graduated in 1951 with a B.A. degree in English from The College of St. Scholastica; subsequently, she earned an M.A. from St. Louis University in 1960 and a PhD. from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana in 1966, both in English, with minors in journalism, philosophy, art, and history. Her M.A. thesis was a study of the poetics of Emily Dickinson; her dissertation, *Dicken's Myth of Society*.

A brilliant teacher with a cogent sense of humor and keen understanding of and compassion for her students, Sister Mary Richard spent the first ten years of her professional career as a teacher of English, art, and journalism at Stanbrook Hall High School, Duluth. From 1961-1963, then again in 1966, she served as an Assistant Professor and Chair of the Department of English at The College of St. Scholastica. After a period of postdoctoral study in administration at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., Sister Mary Richard returned to The College of St. Scholastica as its president, from 1967-1971.

During Sister Mary Richard's presidency she oversaw several accomplishments significant in the growth of the College, among them the construction of the Science building; the beginning of co-education at the College; the establishment of a Board of Trustees, which included lay members as well as Sisters; and the initiation of a faculty-student Senate. During that time she also served a term as Vice-president and President-elect of the Association of Minnesota Colleges.



After Sister Mary Richard's resignation as College President in 1971, she remained at the College as a professor in the Department of Language and Literature. From 1979-1980, she served as Chair of that Department; then from 1981-1985, as Chair of the Humanities Division. As a faculty member she chaired or served on several crucial College committees, i.e. the Committee on Tenure and Promotion, the Faculty Welfare Committee, the Committee on Finances, and the Shea Memorial Lecture Committee.

After receiving The College of St. Scholastica's Max H. Lavine Award for Excellence in Teaching, she also served on the Lavine Award Committee. Sister Mary Richard was a much-beloved and excellent teacher; both her former high school and college students continued to visit and acclaim her throughout the rest of her years.

Sister Mary Richard was also active in civic and Benedictine Community affairs. She chaired the Benedictine Health Center Board of Directors and served on the Board of Directors of Advocacy Plus (consulting services for the handicapped) in St. Cloud, Minnesota. She served on the Monastery Council, and from 1991-1995 was Secretary of the Benedictine Sisters; from 2008-2011 she wrote the Annals for the Monastery. After her retirement in 1994 she continued as a freelance writer and editor, and was a major contributor to the text of *For the Love of Learning: The College of St. Scholastica Story* (2011).

Undoubtedly Sister Mary Richard's best and most widely known publication is the carefully researched and candid history, *House of Stone: The Duluth Benedictines* (1991). In the Spring 1993 issue of *Minnesota History*, the reviewer notes that "Sister Boo approaches her topic from a surprisingly feminist perspective...as a community history, *House of Stone* is an impressive and often moving story of a remarkable society of religious women."

Herself a most remarkable woman, Sister Mary Richard, despite a life-long physical handicap, never deterred from any action or work that kept her from accomplishing whatever she set out to do. In 2011 she moved to Benet Hall, the Monastery's nursing section, where she continued what perhaps she most loved: feeding the birds and walking friends' dogs, especially Murphy, a cockapoo belonging to a Westwood resident who also became one of her dearest friends. Courageous, confident, witty as long as she lived, Sister Mary Richard inspired all with whom she lived and worked.

Sister Mary Richard was preceded in death by her parents and her brothers Richard and Daniel Boo. She is survived by her sister Julie Boo, CSJ, of St. Paul, cousins, including Ben and Mary Boo of Duluth, several nieces, nephews, many devoted friends, and her monastic community.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING DECEASED FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Patricia Campbell Foley 4/16/2014  
Mary McKenna  
Patrick McKenna  
Frances Lamberson 10/16/2014  
Thomas A. Daugherty 10/26/2014  
Patricia Ann Dow 11/6/2014  
James S. Pappas 11/6/2014  
Yvonne Shenett Beaudry 12/1/2014  
Joseph Liegey 12/5/2014  
Sister Renata Liegey's brother  
Ruth D. Roehl Eisinger 12/14/14

Roy Higgins 12/19/2014  
Sister Mary Rae Higgins and  
Sister Barbara Higgins's brother  
Dr. Dwight Hoeg 1/2015  
Alice Jobin 1/15/2015  
Fred Salo 1/18/2015  
Jerry Krausnick 1/19/2015  
Sister Josine Krausnick's brother  
Evelyn Gagne 1/24/2015  
Phyllis Fremont 1/28/2015  
Claire Worth 1/29/2015



# In Loving Memory



*Sister Lucille in the Spiritual Resource Center, 2009*



*Sister Lois Ecker, Prioress, and Sister Lucille at the Community's blessing of her book, July 18, 2009*

## **Sister Lucille Geisinger** ***August 14, 1937—November 20, 2014***

Sister Lucille Geisinger, 77, died peacefully on November 20, 2014, at St. Scholastica Monastery after a long illness. Sister Lucille (Jeanette) was born on August 14, 1937, in Maple Lake, Minnesota, the third of Alfred and Isabelle (Windolph) Geisinger's four children. She was in her fifty-fifth year of Monastic Profession.

A transforming time in Jeanette's life journey began when she was seven years old and had to leave her Maple Lake farm home for Gillette State Hospital for Crippled Children in St. Paul to begin her five-year "home" life (1945-1950) as an inpatient with tuberculosis of the right hip joint. During her time in the hospital her family moved to Big Lake, Minnesota, where they bought their own farm. Sister Lucille states in her book, *Varmints in My Vinegar Cup*, "this hospitalization so profoundly influenced my subsequent life" that upon graduation from Big Lake High School she came to The College of St. Scholastica to pursue a career in Medical Records.

During her first two years at the College she became aware of an internal searching for something more than a "career"; she felt "the Christ within" inviting her to join the Benedictine Community. She entered the Community in 1957, made her first Monastic Profession in 1959, her Perpetual Monastic Profession in 1962, and celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2009.

Sister Lucille's life as a Benedictine Sister had a number of ministries which began with elementary education (6 yrs). During the late 1960s Sister Lucille was diagnosed with acute rheumatoid arthritis at which time she was advised to move to a warmer climate. From Chicago, Illinois, where she had been the Assistant Chief of Medical Records at Hines Veterans Administration Hospital, she moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where she continued her health-care ministry (16 yrs), writing articles, beginning her book, and tutoring college students from Arizona State University (11 yrs.). In 2002 she returned to St. Scholastica Monastery to become the Director of the Spiritual Resource Center (10 yrs.). Her rheumatoid arthritis became very disabling, so she began her ministry of prayer and quiet suffering until her death.

Sister Lucille was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, Charles Geisinger. She is survived by her two sisters, Patricia Starboard of El Paso, Texas, and Frances Carbajal of Tucson, Arizona, numerous nieces, nephews, and her monastic community.





*Sister Madeleva with 4th and 5th graders, square dancing at St. Anthony's 1954-55*



*At Fatima, Portugal, 1994*

## **Sister Madeleva Schur, OSB** ***May 20, 1920—January 15, 2015***

Sister Madeleva Schur, OSB, 94, died January 15, 2015, in the Benedictine Health Center. Born in Mountain Iron, Minnesota, on May 30, 1920, she was the daughter of Rowland and Emma (Gagnon) Schur. Sister was in her 73rd year of Monastic Profession.

Raised in a strong Catholic family, at age four Gertrude won a picture of a Guardian Angel, which she cherished and which spawned her lifelong devotion to her Angel. Within a year after graduating from high school, she sought to enter St. Scholastica Monastery. She professed her Triennial Vows on July 11, 1941, and her Perpetual Vows on July 11, 1944.

In her yearning to follow Jesus, Sister Madeleva wished to be a teacher and received a B.S. degree in Education from The College of St. Scholastica, with further studies at St. Paul Teachers' College and graduate studies at UMD. She provided remarkable loving service as an elementary teacher in Catholic schools on the range and in Minneapolis for 35 years (1942-1977). During this time she also served as Principal at Holy Rosary in Lake Linden, Michigan, and Principal and House Supervisor at St. Margaret Mary School in Duluth and St. Mary's School in Pine City, Minnesota. In addition, she felt privileged to care for her mother, first at home and then at the Benedictine Health Center while she continued teaching in Virginia, Minnesota, and then working at St. Ann's in Duluth.

Sister Madeleva celebrated her Golden Jubilee on July 28, 1991; her Diamond Jubilee on February 11, 2001; and her 70th Jubilee on August 14, 2011. She felt grateful to have the opportunity of joining the "Peace Pilgrimage" to Fatima, Portugal, seven times. On her last pilgrimage she renewed her vows of 60 years and led a decade of the Rosary in the "Capalinha" (Chapel of Apparitions) on July 22, the Feast Day of St. Mary Magdalen, her patron saint. Afterward she declared, "It was an awesome Feast Day to remember."

Sister Madeleva was preceded in death by her parents Rowland and Emma, her brothers Chester, Harold, James, and John and her sister Rachel Stenrud. Besides the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, Sister Madeleva is survived by her siblings Herbert H. Schur and Burrell Kubacki, and devoted nieces, nephews, and friends.



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**“Easter happens  
and life grows green  
as all the forces of death  
are exhausted.”**

Anthony Padavano