

PATHWAYS



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Dear Friends of the Monastery,

This issue of *Pathways* brings us to the season of Lent and the coming of spring. And while we look forward to a release from cold and the budding forth of new life, we also joyfully anticipate events celebrating our 125th anniversary as an independent Benedictine Monastery. Each issue of *Pathways* this year will highlight an aspect of our history, but will also reflect on who we are today. You will find a further reflection on 'then and now' each month on our website.



With spring on its way, we were delighted to find that Mother Scholastica Kerst's journal, written in German script and often displayed on the Feast of St. Scholastica, included an essay about spring. The translation of her journal of six essays is one of the projects undertaken in honor of our anniversary year. The translator, Matthew Heintzelman from the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library of St. John's University, believes Mother Scholastica composed these essays as class assignments in her younger days as a Sister in the community. The first is *Der Fruhling* or *Lenz* (Lent) which means *spring*, and we can now read her enthusiastic and poetic description of the joys we will soon experience.

Our celebratory year gives us the opportunity to look backward in gratitude and forward in hope to what lies ahead. We are not the same community we were 125 years ago, and yet we are. Those 32 women who founded our community promised through a vow of stability to remain faithful to each other in their seeking of God together, and to work together to fulfill the dream of providing for the needs of the people they were called to serve, especially in health care and education. We have inherited their legacy and celebrate their mission, successfully fulfilled, but like those pioneering women we, who are smaller than we have been but equally committed, continue to seek God together day by day. And like them we move forward into an uncharted future with the certainty that God is with us.

Our latest leap of faith includes the expansion of our spirituality ministry with the opening of The Center for Spirituality and Enrichment, offering renovated space at the Monastery for longer overnight retreats with more guest rooms, meeting rooms, and a new conference room. This expansion allows the Monastery to offer additional opportunities for personal and group retreats, workshops and seminars on a variety of life topics and spiritual interests, in response to what we believe are the needs of our time and region.

We reach out, as our founding Sisters did, for partners to help us fulfill this new dream and to lend support in prayer for, as Benedict says, "Whenever you begin a good work, you must earnestly ask God to bless it in prayer." We give thanks to the women and men who have carried us to this point, and to all of you for giving thanks to God with us for all that has been and all that will be, "that in all things God may be glorified."

Gratefully in Christ,

Sister Beverly

Sister Beverly Raway, OSB

Eddie: Loving the Ones We Have Tamed

by Sister Therese Carson

I have had the privilege to live with three dogs. The first two were wondrously normal; and then there was Eddie. Eddie was a mix of spaniel and Jack Russell terrier whose first owner left him at the local Humane Society. He was emotionally scarred, having known only brutality in his brief life. When I would put on his harness for a walk, he would bite my hand. *I'm a tough*

Photo by Christina Marbury



guy and you're not going to hurt me, he was saying, eyes bulging and hackles raised, but he never bit hard. Then, when I was sitting quietly, he would slip onto my chair and curl up against me, always with one eye open and watching. Under this veneer of fear was a creature that wanted to love and be loved. What I needed was the key to open his heart and let him begin to heal.

A visit to a dog trainer confirmed the abuse, along with attention deficit and hyperactivity. She taught me how to be the 'alpha dog,' to create boundaries and structure to overcome Eddie's insecurity and rebuild his trust. It was hard. For months, hardly a day passed without an inner voice whispering, *You can give him back*. Yet I couldn't. For me he was the fox in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's beloved story *The Little Prince*, who warns, "If you tame me, we shall need each other. It will be as if the sun came to shine on my life. I shall know the sound of a step that will be different from all the others." And, "You become responsible forever for what you have tamed."

I eventually tamed him, as far as anyone could tame this wild, wounded creature, and in turn he tamed me. He came to recognize my step and I knew his voice, and we shared five rewarding years. Eddie always held onto a bit of his wildness. I learned never to let him off the leash, for he loved his freedom and could outrun the wind. When a good and loving man bought my house, just before I entered the Monastery, he adopted Eddie knowing what he

was taking on. I was then free to enter monastic life, but to this day I bear the emotional responsibility. In my memory, he is always running, never still long enough for a clear photograph.

Each of us is like a wild creature tamed by God's firm and loving hand. On our hearts God has deeply inscribed, *I have made you and you are Mine*. God knows

the sound of our steps when we come in prayer, and runs to embrace us in wild joy. God is the sun shining on us. A wild animal does whatever it takes to survive, but God gives us boundaries to guide us in the right path. Without God, our lives are solitary and selfish, our true purpose locked and hidden from us. With God, we become community, for others share our needs and have a claim on our time and attention.

We are entering the season of Lent, where the Gospel readings build inexorably towards Christ's Passion, death and resurrection. Jesus, God-With-Us, will be misunderstood by everyone around him. Even those who have spent three years at his side will desert him and flee. Yet he goes on loving them to his death and beyond, responsible forever for the dim, dear creatures he has tamed.

In the end, what Eddie taught me is to love others as Christ loves me, even when it is hard. We can meet in the middle ground and love without having to resolve our differences for, when we love as Christ loves, God turns the key in the lock, all the tumblers fall into place, and we are made whole.

Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

by Sister Pauline Micke, OSB (pauline.m@duluthosb.org)



Reverend Cheryl Fleckenstein, with “Journey into the Holy Presence” with attendees of the Women in Jesus’ Genealogy



Blessings and prayers for you, your family and friends as we begin 2017. This year marks the 125th year of St. Scholastica’s presence in Duluth. There will be more about this throughout the year. It is also the ninth anniversary for the Benedictine Center of Spirituality, and you will hear more about how this ministry is expanding.

We closed 2016 with our Advent Retreat, a most inspiring and growth-giving experience led by Rev. Cheryl Fleckenstein. She used the women listed in Matthew’s account of Jesus’ genealogy to show how God’s will works through everyone, including sinners, to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth.

Then on January 21, Sister Therese Carson presented “Practicing the Works of Mercy Until We Get It Right”, followed by a lively group discussion of ways to bring mercy to the people of Duluth.



Sister Therese with Practicing the Works of Mercy

We will continue to listen to your evaluations through which you tell us what you need to be nurtured and grow into your lives in a holistic way. Two upcoming retreats are our response to your input and requests:

March 11: Lenten retreat, “Stories of Our Thirsting, Seeing, Dying, and Rising”, led by Father Steve Ulrich and Sister Pauline Micke, OSB. Using Gospel readings from the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent, we will consider how we encounter God, who faithfully loves and leads us to journey as intentional disciples of Jesus Christ.

May 6: “The Supper of the Lamb: Transforming the Ordinary into the Extraordinary”, led by Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau, OSB. We will see how our sacramental life, particularly the Eucharist, helps us understand how the ordinariness of our lives is “charged with the grandeur of God,” as Gerard Manley Hopkins puts it in his poem *God’s Grandeur*, transforming it into something extraordinary.

We are grateful for your support, prayers, and participation as you partner with us in nurturing and growing all aspects of our Ministry. Together we seek “to nurture others on their sacred journey of becoming all that God created them to be.” (From the Mission Statement for the Benedictine Center of Spirituality.)

For Spiritual Direction, Sabbath Days, and Fifth Steps, call Sister Pauline at 218-723-7086.

Facing Forward

by Sister Edith Bogue (vocations@duluthosb.org)

“I forget the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me.” (Philippians 3:13, Jerusalem Bible)

Pope Francis often tells Catholic organizations and religious communities that they cannot be “just a well-organized NGO with a bunch of pastoral plans.” He describes the Church as a field hospital for those wounded in the struggles of modern life. The light of the Gospel and the encounter with Christ must be at the heart of any ministry we undertake. When people come through our doors, “We must always welcome them with a big heart, like family,” he said. “Being in the Church is being at home with mom.”¹



This perspective guides us, too, in the celebration of anniversaries. As the Duluth Benedictines celebrate the anniversary of our founding 125 years ago, our gaze is drawn backwards over the path we have traversed. How much growth has sprung from such simple roots! The College of St. Scholastica developed from our first girls’ academy; it now instructs 4000 graduate and undergraduate students around the nation. We sponsor dozens of hospitals, clinics, and eldercare facilities through the Benedictine Health System and Essentia Health. All are rooted in St. Mary’s Hospital, which Mother Scholastica Kerst and six sisters established in 1888. Duluth Benedictines have since founded or served in dozens of ministries and locations, too many to list.

Mother Scholastica’s amazing energy and fruitfulness are visible in the many ministries she founded in just a few years. The essence of her legacy, though, is closer to Pope Francis’ image. In his homily at her funeral, Bishop McGolrick said, “The Sisters, trained by wise Rule, know that

[platitudes] are not what the poor and suffering need, but friendly aid from those who take up part of the burden and lighten the load by sympathy and kindness.” More important than the list of institutions are the thousands of people: children and adults, Catholic or not, drawn from many races and walks of life. Through the Duluth Benedictines, they encountered God’s love and found themselves “at home with mom.”

The spirituality of anniversaries prompts us to pause. We take time to savor memories. We share them

with others. We give joyous thanks for all that God has done in, through, and to us.

But an anniversary is not a funeral. Scripture does not reminisce about God’s deeds of the past. It recounts them to give us courage and confidence for the needs and challenges of the day. St. Paul, having traveled the world planting churches, counted all his success and trials as “so much rubbish” (Phil. 3:8). From his cramped prison cell, he wrote, “I forget the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me.” He firmly turned his gaze forward, imagining all that God might yet accomplish through him.

As we begin our 125th year in a time of transition in our nation and our world, we need this spirituality of anniversary. We celebrate our successes and our struggles. We marvel at all that God has done. And, facing forward, we say, “Imagine what God might do next.”

Miriam and the women dancing in celebration after crossing the Red Sea. Illuminated manuscript, Tomić Psalter, 1360/63, Moscow State Historical Museum. Public domain, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miriam#/media/File:Miriams_Tanz.jpg

¹ Address to the Ecclesial Convention of the Diocese of Rome, 16 June 2014.

Celebrating 125 Years

by Sister Judine Mayerle (jmayerle@css.edu)

The story of the Duluth Benedictines is a continuation of the story begun 165 years ago, in 1852, when three Benedictine Sisters left St. Walburg Abbey in Eichstatt, Bavaria, for St. Marys, Pennsylvania, in response to the request of Abbot Boniface Wimmer of St. Vincent's Archabbey of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, for Sisters to serve the needs of German-Catholic immigrants in what was known as the "rural frontier." They first opened a school for immigrant girls, then moved West and established several new foundations, among them St. Benedict's Convent in St. Joseph, Minnesota, in 1863, the founding Motherhouse of St. Scholastica Monastery.



Mother Scholastica often looked for land miles from the center of the city on which to build a monastery.

apostolic of Northern Minnesota that St. Benedict's Convent start a school in the Sacred Heart parish. When she left the next morning, she agreed that Sisters would come to live and teach in an old frame building used in former times as a livery barn and carriage house.

A year later three Sisters opened a school in January 1881 with 200 students enrolled. However, the overcrowded building was very cold in an extremely cold winter, and the deplorable conditions in which the Sisters lived and tried to teach led to the school closing in May and the Sisters returning to St. Benedict's Convent. Three years later,



Mother Scholastica Kerst (r) and Sister Pauline Dunphy surveying the newly-purchased "daisy farm."

Our foremothers had probably expected to continue their cloistered European monastic way of life, but their new ministries created a challenging change of lifestyle for them and for the American women who became Benedictine Sisters. Because of often-difficult living situations and the poverty of both the Sisters and the immigrants, the Sisters had to adapt to their new circumstances in order to both survive and serve. Their crowded buildings often housed both convent and school, and later both convent and hospital.

When Mother Scholastica Kerst, then Prioress of St. Benedict's Convent in St. Joseph, Minnesota, stepped off a train in Duluth on a snowy Wednesday afternoon on December 15, 1880, she was continuing the adventure begun by our European foremothers. Hers was an exploratory trip, an overnight visit in response to a request from the vicar



Sisters enjoyed visiting the new property.

when suitable quarters were found, the Sisters returned to Duluth and by the end of the decade were staffing several parish schools and a hospital. When the Diocese of Duluth was established in 1889, Bishop James T. McGolrick desired a permanent community of Benedictine Sisters for his diocese. Thirty-two Sisters from St. Benedict's Convent established a new independent foundation in 1892 headed by Mother Scholastica Kerst, who had completed her term there as prioress.

Our founders went from rented space in Munger Terrace where two units housed both the Sisters and their academy, to the Sacred Heart Institute (our first Motherhouse) shared with students, to the purchase of 160 acres of land on Kenwood Avenue miles from the city's center. There they built Tower Hall where the Sisters' residence wings mingled with classrooms, offices, and student bedrooms. A major construction project begun in 1936 saw completion of the Chapel/Library complex, the cloister walks, and Stanbrook Hall, a private girls' high school, which included Sisters' residence areas. Construction of Stanbrook West in 1991, the first building designed specifically as a Sisters' residence, resulted in their withdrawing from their residence space in Tower Hall. In the mid-1990s a major renovation of Stanbrook Hall High School, which closed in 1967, converted the former high school building to offices and meeting rooms, guest rooms, a kitchen and dining room, and residence space for the Sisters.

Throughout our history the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery have taken on challenges unheard of for women of their time: persistence in starting education in the Diocese of Duluth despite the quality and paucity of housing and classrooms; their purchase of the 160-acre "daisy farm"; the beginning of a college in 1906 with only six students ("Villa Scholastica"); the building in stages of Tower Hall, which today is regarded as an architectural and historical landmark; the huge building project begun in 1936 as World War II was breaking out in Europe (the Chapel/Library, Stanbrook Hall, and the connecting cloister walks); the difficult decision in 1984 to exchange the beautiful three-story space of Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel with that of the halfway below ground single-story library to ensure the continued growth of The College of St. Scholastica and provide a barrier-free chapel for the monastic Community and guests. In 1986, as the Community gathered for the blessing of the baptismal



The first section of Tower Hall which included the South Tower was completed in 1909, followed by the gymnasium (now used as the Little Theatre) built in 1921. The remainder of Tower Hall including the North Tower was completed in 1929.

font during the Rite of Entry to our new Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, we prayed, "Thank You for the power of a vision, the strength of an idea, the courage of imagination."

When Mother Scholastica first arrived in Duluth to determine whether she should send Sisters here to teach, she couldn't know what she was setting in motion: that she would become Prioress of the Duluth foundation, that the Sisters would build schools, hospitals, a college (which celebrated its Centennial in 2012), and a Benedictine Health Center (known today as "Benedictine Living Community of Duluth") that would become part of the Sisters' own Benedictine Health System (established in 1985), one of the largest Catholic senior care organizations in the country, with more than 40 senior care communities in six states.



View of campus from above College Street (under construction in foreground), c. 1940.

The Sisters who came to Duluth in 1892 might have just smiled had they been told that the Community would respond to the needs of the Church in a variety of ministries—including education, spirituality and retreat centers, pastoral care to the sick in health-care facilities and the homebound, the arts, and advocacy for peace and justice issues through board and committee memberships. It was probably inconceivable that their ministries would expand beyond Minnesota to Phoenix, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Cincinnati, and Antofagasta, Chile. They had no idea when they began as a daughterhouse of St. Benedict's Convent that they would establish two independent foundations (Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Crookston, Minnesota, and St. Benedict's Monastery in Winnipeg).



Novices return from working at Sacred Heart Shrine, 1950s.

Indeed, Mother Scholastica had no idea when she shivered in the cold wind coming off the big lake behind the Duluth train station after her long and tiring trip from St. Joseph, that just over the hill west of Lake Superior lay acres of rocky land covered with trees and daisies where she and her small band of courageous Sisters would build what over 125 years would become a 186-acre campus, home to St. Scholastica Monastery, a coeducational college with undergraduate and graduate degrees, and a health-care complex.

Our Community began in small Duluth neighborhood parishes and then grew and was formed on this beautiful wooded hillside on Kenwood Avenue with its magnificent view of Lake Superior. During our 125-year history the Community was led by the fourteen women pictured below as we responded to the challenges of the times. Although the images selected for this and subsequent articles that will be carried in Pathways and on the Monastery web site (www.duluthbenedictines.org) during the celebration of our 125th anniversary cannot be considered representative of our years in Duluth, we hope they provide a glimpse into the past that began as a dream in a field of daisies. And it all began and has grown by “the power of a vision, the strength of an idea, the courage of imagination.”



Mother
Scholastica Kerst
1892–1911



Mother
Alexia Kerst
1911–1916



Mother
Celestine Sullivan
1916–1919



Mother
Chrysostom Doran
1919–1924



Mother
Agnes Somers
1924–1942



Mother
Athenasius Braegelman
1942–1954 1960–1966



Mother
Martina Hughes
1954–1960 1966–1972



Mother
Verona LaBud
1972–1975



Mother
Grace Marie Braun
1975–1987



Sister
Clare Marie Trettel
1987–1993



Sister
Danile Lynch
1993–1999



Sister
Kathleen Hofer
1999–2005



Sister
Lois Eckes
2005–2015



Sister
Beverly Raway
2015–present

Mother Scholastica's Essays

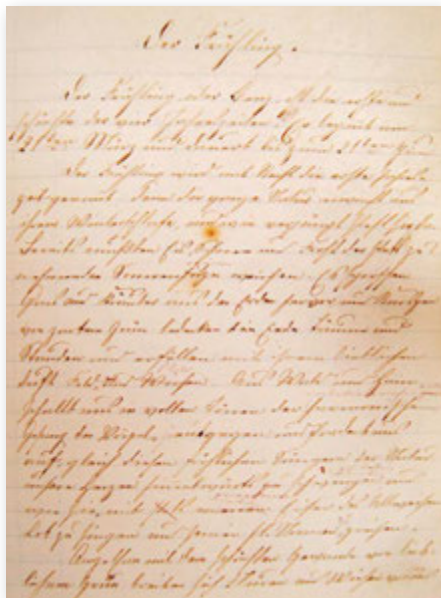
Among the unidentified items in our monastery archives was a small book of essays, written in an older German dialect by Mother Scholastica Kerst before she became our Community's founder and first Prioress. Last winter we photographed the journal and sent it for translation by Matthew Heintzelman of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library at St. John's University. The essays read a little like school assignments, possibly for high school or college. The books from which she quotes – poetry, mostly, though not all – were published in the mid-19th century. Here is the translation of the first three pages, an ode to spring.

Spring* is the first and most beautiful of the four seasons. It begins on March 21 and lasts until June 21.

Spring is rightly called the first season, for all of nature awakes from its winter slumber and appears rejuvenated. Ice, snow and frost have to retreat before the steadily increasing warmth of the sun. Grass and weeds sprout from the earth, and buds of tender green cover trees and bushes and fill the field and farmland with their sweet scent. From forest and grove the harmonious [melodious ...] song of birds resounds toward us and prompts us—just like these cheerful songsters of nature—to turn our hearts heavenwards and sing enthusiastically the praise of the Omniscient One and to worship His holy name.

Dressed in the most beautiful cloak of sweet green, the farmland and meadows spread out before us, adorned with flowers of every kind, like costly jewels that captivate our senses with their sweet aroma and magnificent ornament of colors, and invite us to thank warmly the Creator of such beauty.

* Lenz = "Lent" – this is a second, poetic word in German for Spring.



Fields for crops – the farmer's hope – lie before us, spread out widely, and the sumptuously emerging fruit offers a magnificent sight. From the cloudless sky the sun shines so peacefully on us and fills the plants and animals with new energy for life.

In the spring, more than any other time, the entire region stands ready to evoke joy in us. All sad thoughts must disappear when we wander out into nature on a charming spring morning, and a joyful feeling embraces us.

Spring offers us a beautiful image for youth. Just as the sky is cloudless in spring and all of nature provides an agreeable sight, so also is the time of youth a time of pure, untroubled joy and a time in which sin and vice are unknown. Just as one sows [seeds] in the spring and makes every effort to encourage their growth, hoping to reap a generous harvest, so too must youth be a time to fight evil inclinations, plant virtues and sow good seed, if one wants to enjoy peace in old age and one day achieve happiness.



...As Dying, and Behold We Live: An Older Sister's Reflection

by Sister Mary Catherine Shambour (mcshambour@duluthosb.org)

"We are treated as dying, and behold, we are alive" (2 Corinthians 6:8-9).

It seems that we are always commemorating some event or another, and the older we get the more anniversaries we attend. This is good, as it reminds us of where we have been and where we are going.

This summer we will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of our Benedictine community in Duluth, and while we remember all the good works that God has accomplished through us, we also realize that we have come to the end of one era and are on the brink of a new, uncertain one. Like the vast majority of religious communities in the United States, the ageing of our membership and the scarcity of new vocations have necessitated radical changes in our ministries and way of life. After years of prayer and discussion, with the blessing of the Church and trust in God, we have turned over the leadership and management of our major institutions to responsible lay leaders, who embrace our values and will carry on our mission.

But what about the present Community? Are we saddened by all these changes? Of course! On a human level, we grieve the loss of each passing Sister and the closing of many of our endeavors, but we are reminded that "here we have no lasting city, for we are looking for the city that is to come" (Hebrews 13:14). New life comes out of the death of the old, for the Holy Spirit is forever making something new. Change is the continuing story of our evolving universe, as well as the hope-filled message of the Gospel culminating in the Paschal mystery. Thus, we accept the need for change in both our personal



and communal lives in order to achieve final transformation in Christ.

Our Community has lived with change from the time of its foundation in Duluth in 1892. We saw phenomenal growth in the first half of the twentieth century and then a drastic decrease in membership in the latter half. This change was an unexpected fruit of the Second Vatican Council, which asked the whole Church to respond to the needs of a rapidly changing world. Religious orders were asked to return to the spirit of their founders. For us it meant a shift in emphasis from very active ministry to deeper spiritual formation and a more

contemplative lifestyle. This opened new ministries in adult religious education, parish ministry, chaplaincy, counseling, and spiritual direction. Benedictine houses became more truly monasteries: houses of prayer, peace, and welcome.

After Vatican II, we rejoiced in the positive changes in our lives and in the new status and roles open to all the People of God, empowering them to apply their faith to address the problems and needs of the world. Now fifty years have passed, and the world's problems have multiplied alarmingly, threatening the entire planet and human life itself. Unfortunately, in large part the Church has remained silent on key issues, and many people in prosperous nations have abandoned their faith as having nothing to do with the world's crises or their own lives. The Church desperately needs an awakening call, even a Third Vatican Council, to awaken Christians to ways they can respond in faith to the needs of an ever-more

interdependent world. Through his action, example and encyclicals, Pope Francis has pointed out that these issues are moral problems, and that Christians must address them together with all people of good will. Will we heed his message? Are we willing to change? What can we do?

The Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery continue to work and serve through their ministries.

Despite diminishing numbers, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery continue to work and serve through their ministries. Specifically, we have an important mission to fulfill by assisting “all people of good will” to deepen their spiritual lives in these troubling times. Accordingly, we are expanding our Center for Spirituality and Enrichment, where people seeking a place of quiet and peace may

deepen their faith. We invite you to pray with us, make a private or directed retreat, seek spiritual guidance, share in some of our spiritual resources, or participate in some of the programs we will be offering. We also can provide a setting for groups interested in cooperating with other groups to bring about transformation in their own lives and the world. If you are interested, watch for announcements about the Center’s offerings.

Who knows what might result from such cooperation among Christians and all people of good will? Let us have the same faith that is so well expressed in a contemporary hymn from Africa:

*“If you believe and I believe and we together pray,
the Holy Spirit must come down
and set God’s people free!”*

Please Pray for the Following Deceased Family and Friends

Tom McCarthy	5/3/2010
Eileen McCarthy	9/19/2016
Eugene Firmine	11/27/2016
Donna Bolander	12/3/2016
Marvel Elaine Blais	12/11/2016
Jean Monica Hooper	12/23/2016
<i>Niece of Sister Margaret James Laughlin</i>	
Faith Engels	12/28/2016
Edward Henry Schneider	1/7/2017
Dr. George Walter Lukovsky	1/10/2017
Cecelia M. Venne	1/12/2017
<i>Sister of +Sister Renee Cormier</i>	
Lucille Burggraff	1/24/2017
Patricia Shipp	1/26/2017

“I Was in Prison and You Visited Me”: Dedicated Lay Volunteers Carry on Sisters’ Prison Ministry

by Sister Sarah Smedman

In 1989, Sister Timothy Kirby began her ministry at the Federal Prison Camp in Duluth, Minnesota, after former Bishop Roger Schweitz of Duluth suggested she apply for the Chaplaincy position. Not interested in the administrative work involved, she volunteered to work with the prisoners instead. She began a Catholic Scripture Study Group that met Wednesday evenings, where participants read and studied the Scripture passages for the following Sunday’s Liturgy of the Word. She provided brief films and Sunday by Sunday, a four-page commentary on the readings. On Sunday mornings, she presided at a Worship and Communion service, while a diocesan priest celebrated Mass on Thursday evenings.

An ironic blip in Sister Timothy’s volunteer service was that twice she was suspended for three months for violation of protocol. The first time when a prisoner embraced her, she hugged him back; the second time, she received a phone call and talked with an ex-prisoner before the limited time in which he was permitted to contact people from the Prison. Both of these occasions evidence Sister Tim’s concern, compassion, and love for those she was serving. Neither affected the impact of her work. “So many of these men,” she said, “are really good people who made mistakes.” She observed them “grow spiritually, look at themselves more deeply, rearrange their priorities, and discover they need God in their lives.” Sister Tim felt “privileged to help them through their searching.”

She continued this ministry until shortly before her death on December 22, 2010. During those years, she was awarded Certificates of Appreciation signed by the Prison’s Warden and Chaplain every year

from 1991 through 2010; in 2002, she was named Volunteer of the Year; and in 2008, she received the President’s Volunteer Service Award, a national award from The President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation.



Jim Doyle Elizabeth Liebenstein Donna Effinger Dick Larson

Sister Timothy’s ministries are continued by a faithful and faith-filled group of lay volunteers: **Donna Effinger, Jim Doyle, Dick Larson, and John Herbertz.**

A graduate of The College of St. Scholastica, now retired, **Donna Effinger** was a chaplain in various medical centers for most of her life. In 2003, Sister Timothy asked her

to consider substituting when Sister had to be out of town. After first accompanying Sister Tim and noting particularly her emphasis on God’s everlasting love and on the men’s need to take on the work of forgiveness – both God’s forgiveness and their self-forgiveness – Donna agreed to substitute. “Thirteen years later,” Donna says, “I continue to be grateful for that opportunity.” That partnership continued until Sister Tim, in the 92nd year of her life, had to withdraw from the ministry.

At that time, the Prison Chaplain asked Donna to take over the Sunday ministry. Not yet retired, Donna agreed to lead the liturgical worship service one Sunday a month; she would, she said, recruit three others to form a team. Because no one has picked up Sister Timothy’s Wednesday night ministry, the Monastery continues to subscribe to multiple copies of Sunday by Sunday in Sister Tim’s memory, and sends them with Jim Doyle to the Prison. On Wednesday night, the prisoners themselves gather to study, discuss, and respond to the following Sunday’s readings and responses.

On a typical Sunday, the celebrants follow the format for Holy Communion outside the Mass, which lacks only the Eucharistic Prayer by a priest. That rite begins with sharing of the Liturgy of the Word, which the men themselves have prepared for on the previous Wednesday, and includes opening music, the penitential rite, the Gloria, the oration, the Scriptural readings for the day (in both English and Spanish), a reflection on the readings, and the petitions of the faithful. The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows, with the Lord's Prayer, and the Communion rite. The men are invited to participate in various aspects of the Communion service, some of them reading in public for the first time and reading God's word; some provide music for the service that varies with their talents.

To form that team of four, Donna turned naturally to **Jim Doyle**, whom Sister Tim had already engaged to assist in the Prison ministry. (At present, other members of the team who alternate Sundays are Dick Larson and John Herbertz.) Fifteen years ago, Sister Timothy invited her former student and lifelong friend, Jim Doyle, to work with her at the Prison. He accepted and began to work with her at the Wednesday evening Study Groups. During those evenings, Jim was impressed by Sister Tim's non-judgmental attitude, her emphasis on the men's need for self-acceptance, and her ability to relate their lives to the Scripture readings. As Sister Tim's health declined, Jim also participated more fully in the Sunday service. Through the work that Sister was doing, Jim noted, "the men seemed more at peace with themselves . . . and were developing a type of support group to help themselves."

Jim was privileged to be with Sister Tim at her last meeting with the prisoners. "I watched," he said reverently, "as she was stepping down from the altar with two large men, one on either side, carefully guiding her. They were near tears. They knew she was near the

end of her life on earth." Jim reflected, "I cannot put into words the lessons I have learned from my ministry at the prison." As Jim is there only a short time each month, he doesn't get to know the names of the men. "However," he says, "there is an instant when I give them Communion and our eyes meet – they always look directly into my eyes – when names don't matter. Our souls connect on a deep spiritual level that cannot be defined." Jim attributes such connections to the environment Sister Timothy developed, now some years ago.



*Sister Timothy Kirby at the prison entrance, 2006
(photo by Clint Austin)*

When **Dick Larson** was invited to join Donna and Jim in sharing the Sunday services for Catholic inmates of the Prison Camp, Dick says he "thought of the Gospel passage where Jesus tells his disciples [and me] not only to care for the poor but also to visit those in prison. It was easy to say 'yes' to their invitation."

In the five years since, Dick claims to have become a small part of the prison community. By prison policy, Dick's time with the inmates is limited, but "I still have to be able to see and feel the confinement they experience and their need for hope and patience." Some, perhaps many, "see prison time as a turning point where they can be socially and spiritually free to be themselves." Dick notes that during the Sunday service, while offering the reflection on the readings, he is conscious of the need to be sensitive to the prison environment, but still hopes to touch on relationships and attachments that have cast a shadow over their lives. It is Dick's habit during the recessional hymn to linger at the back of the chapel to wish each person well until he sees them again. Dick feels he receives great benefit from his ministry, and hopes "that the inmates of the Prison Camp . . . find spiritual benefit also."

John Herbertz is the newest member of the Prison Volunteer team. Currently a social worker at the Lake Superior Community Health Center, he met Donna

and Dick at St. Benedict Catholic Church in Duluth, where he and his family have been parishioners for 23 years. Possessed of an infectious sense of humor, John not only speaks Spanish to be more inclusive of the Latino prisoners, but intersperses his reflections with jokes that evoke laughter and lighten the moment; an example: “What instrument do the apostles enjoy playing in their boats? The castanets!” John muses, “I do feel it is a great privilege and blessing to be with the men because we are there in their time of real need.”

Chaplain Liz Liebenstein, who was a chaplain for the Federal Bureau of Prisons from 1993 to 2015, ministered at the Duluth Prison beginning in 2011 and so had never met Sister Timothy. However, for four years she oversaw, worked with, and knew these lay ministers well. Her words – and the following are but few – testify to their commitment to carry on this ministry of our Benedictine Sisters. Sister Timothy’s “care for the men and commitment to the ministry at the prison,” Liz says, “are reflected in the work of those who succeed her, serving in honor of the work she had begun years ago.” She continues, “Although faith formation, scripture study, and worship are vitally important, what is even more basic is that the men understood – without a doubt – that they had not been forgotten, and that they were never alone. Prison is an exceedingly lonely place . . . and to discover that they have people, they belong, and they are loved without condition is fundamental to their healing. . . . [M]en would tell me they had found loving family and a deep sense of belonging in the church – in prison!” The four volunteers carrying on this ministry of the Benedictines, Liz avers, have continued to create “a sense of community for men who have lived lives defined by loneliness, chaos, and alienation [They have] helped the inmates to realize their own sense of giftedness and call upon their own lives . . . through shared worship.”

Then, specifying special gifts of each volunteer, Liz continues: “Jim can be counted on to bring humor and always a thoughtful message that leans toward social

justice. As a convert, Dick brings a great sense of respect for the tradition. Donna helps the men to feel more comfortable, being tender as she invites them to come closer, to really share in the experience of Holy Communion. And John wants everyone to know they are welcome, spending hours translating his reflections into Spanish for our Latino inmates. . . . I loved to hear how Sister Timothy continued to minister as she grew older and certainly more frail, giving a blessed opportunity for the men to show tenderness and the love of God toward her.”

Chaplain Liz, now serving here at the Benedictine Living Center, also expresses her gratitude to the Sisters for keeping in prayer the men, their families, and “our government who holds their fragile lives in its hands”. She thanks us for providing *Sunday by Sunday*, “cherished by some of the Catholic men,” which helps them prepare for Sunday worship and is a “powerful reminder that faith is not so much about our set of beliefs, . . . but how we live our daily lives in response to the graciousness of God.”

As we Sisters age and grow fewer in number, we are grateful beyond words to God for the lay women and men who carry on our ministries in today’s world. Likewise, we cannot sufficiently express our gratitude to these women and men, dedicated to our charism and values, who are as committed as we Sisters to keeping Benedictinism alive and well, and in the future.

Sister Sarah Smedman can be reached at ssmedman@earthlink.net.

Sister Profile: Sister Mary Christa Kroening

by Jan Barrett

Sister Mary Christa Kroening was born August 15, 1929, to Lydia and Arthur Kroening, the oldest of six children, and was given the name Virginia Mae. Her Grandma Schmid baptized her over a bucket of water at home, fearing that Grandma Kroening would baptize her in the Lutheran church first. She grew up in Springfield, Minnesota, where her father was a fruit and vegetable dealer. She recalls harvesting unsold seed potatoes from the annual boxcar load and then hilling, weeding and harvesting them. “What dad didn’t sell, we had to plant. This is how I developed my green thumb and love for gardening,” she says.

She attended Catholic School through eighth grade and graduated in 1947 from Springfield High School as valedictorian. Although attending college wasn’t an option, as valedictorian she had many job opportunities, and spent four years with White Swan milling company where she learned railroad transit and international shipping. In 1950, she sailed to France and Italy, and came home eager to further her education and follow the “call”.

She enrolled at the University of Minnesota, but when her friend Carolyn Schmidt brought her to Duluth for a tour of The College of St. Scholastica, she decided to transfer after her first year and majored in Elementary Education. She recalls wondering why a Sister in full habit would be running so quickly, then noticed a skunk lurking nearby. Later on, as Sister Mary Christa, she would teach elementary school in Hibbing and Crosby, and at Sacred Heart in Duluth. She recalls that there was no such thing as a snow day. “Sometimes after ice storms, we would crawl uphill on our hands and knees to school.” She earned Master Degrees in Systematic Theology and in Liturgical Studies at St. John’s University, Collegeville, Minnesota.

Her vocation began with her seventh grade teacher, Sister Alcantara, a Franciscan whom she greatly admired. Her parents wanted her to marry and have a family, but over their objections she entered the Monastery in 1953, and made her First Monastic Profession in 1955. “I was very

homesick and lonely,” she recalls. “My parents didn’t visit me for five years.” Eventually they acquiesced, and when her father died he was buried with his cherished “I’m the Father of a Nun” card, which he proudly carried with him so the angels would know that his daughter was a Benedictine Sister.



After teaching, Sister became the Monastery’s Director of Liturgy for 16 years, and was instrumental in the chapel’s redesign. In 1997, she became Senior Consultant of Liturgical and Ritual Services for the Benedictine Health System (BHS), one of our sponsored institutions. She was a consultant for construction and redesign for

27 chapels, and provided liturgical services for 6,000 employees. She published many prayer books and other works, and created a culture rich in Benedictine tradition and values. When she retired in 2014, she left thousands of heavy hearts behind, but her legacy continues in BHS rituals and traditions.

Sister Mary Christa lives on Benet Hall, the Monastery’s care center. She enjoys attending Mass, visiting with friends, reading, and playing Double Solitaire with Sister Martha Bechtold. At the moment she is reading *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* by Margaret J. Wheatley. While I visited with her, she looked out the window of her room to the Monastery courtyard and Chapel beyond, smiled, and said, “I have an easy life.”

Where the Ideal and the Actual Meet

by Sister Sarah Smedman

My interest in literature of the prairie was sparked on a Sunday drive west from Fargo, North Dakota, with my mother. Scanning the landscape surrounding us, I commented, “Mom, this land unnerves me. It is so big. Its immensity overwhelms my little self.” “Oh?” she responded. “Its unlimited wide-openness makes me feel so free. The possibilities it offers are endless.” Struck by our different reactions, I suddenly remembered Ole Rolvaag’s *Giants in the Earth*, one of Mom’s college books (with her hand-written notes) that I had read as a teen-ager and had literally moved into Per Hansa’s and Beret’s world on the prairie. Then and there, I decided to research and read as much “prairie literature” as I could dig up. Believing I was on to something new, I was surprised by the number of explorer’s journals, poems, essays, picture books, and novels for children and adults, as well as some literary criticism that had been written over the last few centuries.

Beginning with Kathleen Norris’ *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography* (1993), I read with delight her conjecture: Perhaps some people love the prairie because it is so expansive that they feel a part of a universal whole, and some people feel uneasy, small, as though their very selves are in danger of dissolution. Is it [she asks] because they sense there the presence of the holy? Which people? Mom and I. In literature? Certainly Per Hansa, a pioneer who saw this new land as full of promises and limitless possibility; and Beret, so frightened that she curtained their windows and hid herself and her children in a trunk to prevent the vastness from devouring them.

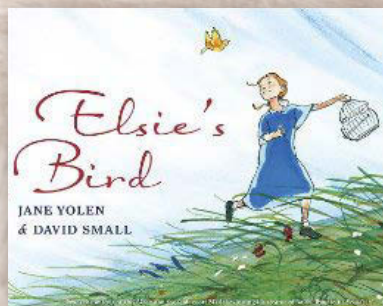
Essayist Henry David Thoreau wrote of the far distance on the horizon as the place “where the ideal and the actual meet.” What detains “the eye and the imagination [is] the infinite, level, and roomy horizon, where the sky meets the sand, and heavens and earth, the ideal and the actual, are coincident, the background into which lead the path of the pilgrim.” (Quoted in Robert Thacker, *The Great Prairie Fact and Literary Imagination*, 1989, 105)

Common images depicting the prairies are prevalent in literature, from the earliest explorers’ journals to 21st century novels. Rather than from a list here, “taste their flavor” through the following passages from but a few prairie picture books and novels for children, young adults, and adults.



“When Emily first saw the prairie she thought of a green-gold ocean. ... Their wagon was a boat with waves of grass flowing around it.”

(Trottier et al, *Prairie Willow*, 1998, n.p.)



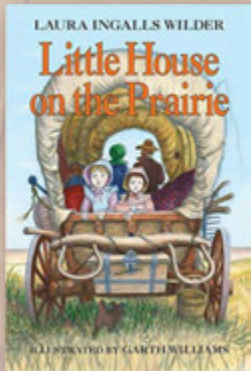
“She might not have gone west had she known the only sea there was a sea of grass. ... Here there is only grass and sky and silence. ... wind through the grass ... she was afraid to lose herself in the silence of the prairie.”

(Yolen and Small, *Elsie's Bird*. n.p.)



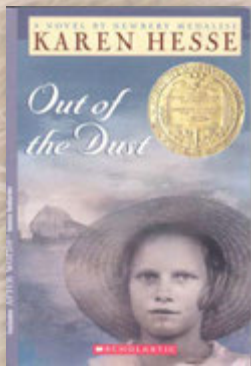
“The prairie was like a giant plate, stretching all the way to the sky at the edges—just nothing, nothing in a big circle all around us. ‘This is a country that can drive you mad, that’s for certain.’”

(Conrad, *Prairie Song*, 1995, 3, 87)



“In a perfect circle the sky curved down to the level land, and the wagon was in the circle’s exact middle. All day long . . . trotting and walking and trotting again, but they couldn’t get out of the middle of that circle.”

(Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie*, 1935, 13)



“The wind snatched that snow right off the fields,/ leaving behind a sea of dust/ waves and/ waves and/ waves of /dust,/ rippling across our yard. . . . The wind took my voice and busted it/ into a thousand pieces.”

(Hesse, *Out of the Dust*, 1997, 33, 144)



“Bright, clear sky over a plain so wide that the rim of the heavens cut down on it around the entire horizon, . . . A gust of wind, sweeping across the plain, threw into life waves of yellow and blue and green. Now and then a dead black wave. . . . ‘Tish-ah!’ said the grass. ‘Tish-ah, tish-ah’ . . . Never had it said anything else—it bent resiliently, but it did not break, but it complained aloud every time, for nothing like this had happened to it before.”

(Rolvaag, *Giants in the Earth*, 1927, p. 3)

Forthcoming: Prairie Picture Books and Novels

Background photos by +Sister Noemi Weygant, OSB

Highlights

2016 Christmas Bazaar a Rousing Success

by Sister Therese Carson

In most years, the Sisters hold a Christmas Bazaar where they sell handmade and gently used items for very reasonable prices. In this, as in everything, we follow St. Benedict's directives. In Chapter 57 of the Rule he says:

"If any of the work of the craftsmen is to be sold, those responsible for the sale must not dare to practice any fraud. ... In the prices let not the sin of avarice creep in, but let the goods always be sold a little cheaper than they can be sold by people in the world, 'that in all things God may be glorified' (1 Peter 4:11)."

Thanks to the efforts of donors, volunteers, and buyers, we raised \$14,000, which will help pay for new windows in Sisters' rooms in Stanbrook West. The present ones are almost 30 years old and let in the winter winds.

Sister Theresa Spinler, Mary Tanner, and Kathy Noble are already planning for the next bazaar on Thursday, December 7, 2017.



Jude Collins



*Left to Right: Nancy Erickson, Mary Gallet, Kathy Noble.
Bottom: Lisa Roseth*



Meridith Schifsky



Ruth Jimenez



*Left to Right: Ramona Kruchowski, Pam Christensen,
Gerry McGraw*



Sister Mary Catherine Shambour, OSB

Highlights, continued

Blessing of the Crosses

by Sister Therese Carson

Children coming into the hospital are frightened, and need some loving symbols of safety. To this end, Sister Joan Marie Stelman, Director of Mission Integration for Essentia St. Mary's Medical Center, gave plain wooden crosses to Duluth's Catholic schools for the students to decorate in bright colors. These now hang in patient rooms in the Pediatrics Unit. When each child is discharged from the hospital, he or she is given the cross to bring home as a reminder that God stayed with them through their illness.

On December 6, the Feast of St. Nicholas, Bishop Paul Sirba celebrated Eucharist in the hospital chapel, and blessed the baskets of crosses before they were delivered to Pediatrics. Children in Superior, Wisconsin, decorated another batch; Bishop James Patrick Powers of the Superior Diocese blessed these and gave them to St. Mary's Hospital Superior.



Monastery Takes Part in Holiday Mail for Heroes

by Jan Barrett

This last November, the Monastery Gift Shop hosted Holiday Mail for Heroes, an American Red Cross program that allows us to show our appreciation to those who serve our country by sending them Christmas wishes. The Sisters and College of St. Scholastica students were invited to fill out cards (complimentary of the Monastery Gift Store), which were then collected by the Northern Minnesota Chapter of the American Red Cross and delivered to members of the armed forces and veterans.

On December 15, 2016, the program came full-circle as the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth hosted a special event for residents, staff and, most importantly, for veterans, who gathered for a celebration of their service. The program opened with Christmas songs and a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a presentation by Dan Williams of the Northern Minnesota Chapter of the American Red Cross. Veterans were then given cards from the program.

Benedictine Living Community of Duluth is a member of the Benedictine Health System, a nationally recognized Catholic, mission-directed, values-based health care system providing a full spectrum of health and housing services to ageing adults for over 35 years. Based in Duluth, it is sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.

Pictured here is Colonel Penny Dieryck, retired from the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth, as she delivers cards and Christmas wishes to veterans at the Benedictine Living Community.



Highlights, continued

Blessing of the House

by Sister Therese Carson

In the Gospel of Matthew, we hear about eastern magi following a new star, sign of the birth of a great king, to Jerusalem. There they meet King Herod, a subtle and evil man, jealous of any rival to his power. Herod questions them closely and is told they had first seen the star two years ago. He sends them on to Bethlehem but asked they return and tell him where the king might be so that he, too, might worship.

By the time the magi arrive, Mary and Joseph have found better accommodations than a cattle shed, and so the magi find Jesus in a house. Warned by a dream, the magi avoid Herod on their route home. We remember these men, who honored Christ without knowing exactly who he was, on the Feast of the Epiphany, the manifestation

of Almighty God's coming to earth. The Blessing of the House honors this encounter of human wisdom and divine grace. The Community gathers to sing hymns and pray; the prioress incenses the Sisters and the house. Then a Sister marks the lintel of the door with "20 + C + M + B + 17", where the current year frames the letters C, M, and B, separated by crosses. These recall the traditional names of the magi – Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar – and also the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house."

May God bless your house this year, and may it be a haven of peace and blessing for all who enter.



Sister Theresa Spinler, OSB



Sister Beverly Raway, OSB



L – R: Sisters Melanie Gagne, Martha Bechtold, Agnes Sitter, Claire Marie Trettel, Victorine Sitter

Blessing of Candles and Throats

by Sister Therese Carson



On the Feast of the Presentation, also called Candlemas, liturgical candles are blessed for the year's service. This year we were unable to have a priest come on February 2, so our candle blessing took place on February 3, the Feast of St. Blaise, patron saint of illnesses of the throat.

Before Mass, the Sisters assembled in the Gathering Space around the Baptismal font, where Fr. Lee Flaherty blessed representative candles with the waters of Baptism, reminding us of our own consecration to God's service. After Mass, he blessed throats with the traditional words, "Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." To which each replied, "Amen."

Highlights, continued

Flowers in Winter

by Sister Therese Carson

Minnesota winters start early and go long, with bitter cold and deep snowdrifts. When the world outside is a somber charcoal drawing in grey and white, some potted flowering plants brighten our day and help satisfy our yearnings for springtime.

Every Christmas, Sister Johnetta Maher receives a pot of amaryllis bulbs from her nephew, David Vidmar. She sets it on a west-facing window ledge in the cloister, to give the growing stalks enough light and to share her mounting excitement with all who pass. This year's pot gave an especially glorious display of red speckled blossoms edged in deep red. You can see from the photo how extravagantly it bloomed.

Our life in Christ is a little like this. When life looks bleak and the world feels cold and remote, God pours over us unexpected blessings, whether a sunny day or a compassionate gesture from a friend. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17).



Sister Johnetta Maher, OSB

Beringer Guiding Light Award Winners

by Sister Therese Carson

On Tuesday, January 17, Sister Beverly Raway and Sister Luella Wegscheid represented St. Scholastica Monastery at the Woodland Hills' annual Beringer Guiding Light Award Presentation.

Woodland Hills of Duluth began in 1909 as St. James Home for orphaned children, staffed by the Sisters of St. Scholastica. Renamed Woodland Hills in 1975, it provides mental health and justice programs for young people at risk due to trauma. Sister Mary Martin Beringer served at St. James from 1962 to 1975. Devoted to "her boys," she helped raise them to be healthy, balanced adults, and continued to love and advocate for them through prayer until her death in 2016.

In 2002, Woodland Hills instituted the Beringer Guiding Light Award in honor of Sister Mary Martin, who received the first reward. Each year the award recognizes individuals or organizations for



Ann Mars, Sister Luella Wegscheid, Bruce Mars, Sister Beverly Raway, and Jeff Bauer.

Highlights, continued

their championing of youth in our region and state. This year's recipients are Robert Mars, Jr., awarded posthumously, and Jeff Bauer. Accepting Mr. Mars' award are his wife Ann and son Bruce. Representing the

St. Scholastica Community are Sister Beverly Raway, Prioress, and Sister Luella Wegscheid, niece of Sister Mary Martin.

Class Begins at Sister Gaudensia Mwanyika's School in Tanzania

by Sister Therese Carson

Several years ago, Sister Gaudensia came from St. Gertrude Convent in Imiliwaha, Tanzania, one of our Twinning monastic communities, to earn a degree in Education at The College of St. Scholastica. While pursuing her own studies, she was surprised to see students with physical and educational handicaps alongside her in class because, she said, in Tanzania handicapped children are not allowed to attend school. This inspired her to build a school for handicapped children. After graduating in December of 2015, she stayed a month to raise funds locally, and then returned to Tanzania to begin construction. Thanks to your support, the school opened for classes on January 16, 2017.

She writes, "The first day of my school went well. I started with fourteen children, and hope that the number will increase. Transportation is a big challenge: our school is outside of the city, and we need to purchase a car to pick up the children in the city and bring them to school. Some parents are able to bring their children, but most cannot afford private transportation. But I still thank God and you for all this achievement."

And we thank God for Sister Gaudensia, who saw a need, rolled up her sleeves, and organized donors and workers to turn it into a reality. May God bless her, her construction workers, and the teachers for helping give these students a brighter future. As you can see in the pictures, the children are eager to learn.

If you wish to support Sister Gaudensia in her ministry, please use the enclosed donation envelope, check "Twinning (Chile/Tanzania project)", and write "for Sister Gaudensia's School." Make the check out to St. Scholastica Monastery. We will make sure she receives your support.



Benedictine *Friends Across Campus*

by Sister Therese Carson with Sister Kathleen Del Monte

It can be difficult for students to be away from home for the first time. In the Benedictine Friends across Campus program, a college student is paired with a Sister who becomes mentor and friend, sharing one-on-one throughout the year (perhaps a meal in the Monastery dining room, attending a concert together, or taking in a movie), as well as in monthly group activities.

The year's events kicked off in September with the ever-popular ice cream social in the Monastery dining room, where new students were matched with a Sister friend and old friends were reacquainted. The following month the friends worked together to pack shoeboxes of toys and toiletries for Operation Christmas Child, which are shipped to children all over the world. Giving gifts is even better than receiving them.

This past November, Sisters shared their vocation stories with a group of Friends. The most common question from our students who are searching for their own unique way was, "But how did you know this was where you were being called?" Sisters Josine Krausnick, Mary Josephine Torborg, and Donna Schroeder witnessed their response to how God was working in their lives. For Sister Kathleen Del Monte, who is the Associate Vice President for Mission Integration, Frederick Buechner said it well: "The place God calls you to is where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." The students learned that a vocation is not a single decision but a journey, where every part of our life carries us to the next, and where each gift we are given serves to move us onward.



Sister Josine Krausnick with her Friend

In December, the campus community met in the Chapel for Advent Vespers, a beautiful ritual of candlelight, prayers and music. Afterwards, they gathered outside for the annual Lighting a Tradition tree-lighting ceremony in front of Tower Hall, where they held candles and sang carols, honoring the light shining through darkness. January found the Friends watching the beloved movie *Alleluia*, filmed at the Monastery in 1967 on the 75th anniversary of the founding of our community, when the Sister Friends were themselves younger.

In February, the group will work together on a service project, preparing bags of toiletries and other items for those who live at the margins of Duluth society. The Lenten Prayer Service will take place during our March

gathering, organized by a Sister and her student Friends, where they strengthen their leadership, planning, and teamwork skills, and learn the deeper meaning behind Catholic liturgies. The year closes in April with a special brunch, where we celebrate the friendships that have developed over the years and honor in a special



Sister Barbara Higgins and her Friends across Campus

way our graduating seniors. Sisters and their student Friends have an opportunity to share a bit about their relationship as well as the student's post-graduate plans. May each of us continue to respond to the sacred call to pursue that place "where deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

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*On our hearts
God has deeply inscribed,
“I have made you and you are Mine.”*

**Join us for Sunday Eucharist at 11:00 a.m.
in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel
*Celebrating 125 years***

