

# PATHWAYS



NEWSLETTER OF THE BENEDICTINE SISTERS

DULUTH MINNESOTA

Summer, 2005

Vol 16, No. 4

## Summer Sings

By Sister Sarah Smedman

Summer is my favorite season. Although I am unable to put adequate words to the “why,” I do thrill to summer in the words of Emily Dickinson: “A something in a summer’s noon/ A depth—an Azure—a perfume/Transcending ecstasy.” My excitement over summer has much to do with gardens and dates back at least to the summer I was eight years old, when I discovered in my grandmother’s basement a battered, black-covered, musty-smelling book—repulsive really, until I opened it. The book: Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden*. I opened. I read. I absorbed. And I was enchanted, an enchantment that has lasted.

In the novel, the spoiled, sallow, skinny nine-year-old Mary Lennox discovers a desolate garden (a secret world of its own) and two friends: a robin and Dickon Sowerby. As the children restore the garden, Mary not only blossoms herself but also heals her invalid cousin Colin, both spiritually and physically. In the height of the summer, exulting in the garden’s riotous colors—poppies of all tints, hordes of roses, fair fresh leaves, buds of all hues, all dancing in the breeze; the golden sun; the lush green grass, the azure sky—the children feel a mysterious force at work, but they do not know how to name it. Colin calls it Magic and at that moment is sure that he will “live forever and ever.” Because Colin feels that he wants “to shout out something, something thankful, joyful!” the children form a circle and sing the doxology. When Mother Sowerby intrudes upon the ritual, she avows that she, too, believes in the Magic, though she calls it by another name. But what, she asks, does that matter, since people all over the world call “The Big Good Thing” by various names. The joy, not the name, is what matters to the “Joy Maker.”

When I was eight, I could only have said that *The Secret Garden* made me feel happy, serene. Reading the book years later, I thrilled to discover that it has stood the test of time

as a fine piece of Romantic literature. I began to think more deeply about why it continues to evoke joy in me. I know now that it reassures me that Eden is recoverable, literally and symbolically in gardens. The book is a source of hope, reminding me of what the poet Hopkins proclaims: that though we have despoiled planet earth, “The world is [still] charged with the grandeur of God./It will flame out like shining from shook foil; . . . Because the Holy Ghost over the bent/World broods with warm breast, and with ah! bright wings.”

The flaming feast of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost, ushers in summer, the season when the Spirit comes with the force of a strong, driving wind, resting upon each of us, giving us the power of utterance, promising to enliven us, to challenge us, and to give us the graces we need to face up to those challenges (Acts 2:1-11). As Peter attests, God will pour out upon everyone—even slaves, both men and women—a portion of the Spirit; then daughters as well as sons will prophesy. And the “great resplendent day” of the Lord *will* come (Acts 2:14-21).

Now I have a clearer understanding of why I have always loved *The Secret Garden* and why I experience such joy in gardens. Both the novel and vibrant gardens remind me that the Holy Spirit continues to dwell within us, that “nature is never spent;/There lives the dearest freshness deep down things” (Hopkins). Books and gardens everywhere increase my appreciation of the richness of diverse understandings of, and approaches to, God, the “Big Good Thing,” among peoples across our earth.

So, summer sings in me: “Satisfy us with thy love when morning breaks/that we may sing for joy and be glad all our lives” (Psalm 90).



# *A Letter from the Prioress*

Dear Friends,

In fall 2002 Benedictine men and women in the United States presented a statement opposing the proposed and unprecedented pre-emptive attack against Iraq. Today more than ever we see that violence and war do not lead to peace. Thousands of vulnerable people in Iraq have died or been displaced from their homes. As followers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we find the current situation irreconcilable with that Gospel.

Earlier this year, Benedictine Peace Statement 2005 (see page 3) was signed by 2,357 Benedictine women and men, from sisters' federations and men's congregations throughout the United States. The Peace Statement was sent to President Bush and Dr. Condoleezza Rice during Holy Week by Right Reverend Timothy Kelly, OSB, on behalf of the Benedictines in this country.

For centuries Benedictines have been dedicated to peace. Benedictine monasteries throughout the world carry the word PAX, or peace, on their walls and over their doors. It was to Benedictine monasteries that refugees streamed in the Middle Ages. It was Benedictines who strove to make warfare a moral matter during those times. It was Benedictine monasteries that were havens for those threatened with violence and hatred. It was Benedictine monasteries that preserved the culture of hospitality and peace during times of war and chaos.

For us, Benedictine Peace Statement 2005 is not a political statement. It is a statement relating our deep and profound belief now, and from centuries past, that

peace cannot result from violence, that peace is not the result of the powerful overwhelming the weak, that peace cannot happen when the arrogant and the rich ignore the poor and those in any kind of need.

Peace is a monastic mission. It flows from a Benedictine spirituality lived daily in our monasteries. It comes from the order and regularity of daily prayer in community, from quiet and contemplation, from daily work done in service of others. Inside and outside our monasteries Benedictine peace calls us to justice, to value and respect the other, to give to the poor, to be open to the stranger, to care for the weak, to protect and guard the earth and its resources.

Some are called to do great things to achieve the peace the world wants and needs. However, all of us can be peacemakers in our own individual worlds by our acts of kindness, thoughtfulness, compassion and by our forgiveness. As St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Live a life worthy of the calling you have received, with perfect humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another lovingly. Make every effort to preserve the unity which has the spirit as its origin and peace as its binding force" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

May each of our hearts be filled with peace, may we live in peace, work for peace, and spread peace to all who share our world.

*Sister Kathleen Hofer*

Sister Kathleen Hofer





# Benedictine Peace Statement 2005

As Benedictine men and women, we reverence the Gospel of Jesus Christ who is called the “Prince of Peace.” Our Benedictine manner of following the gospel has continued for 1500 years through faithfulness to this gospel, which teaches us to be just to all, receiving all as Christ, and welcoming especially the poor, the sick and all who are needy.

We believe that violence does not yield peace. We are concerned about the military and political ethos of our own country where justice is defined on the basis of our self-interest rather than on a consciousness that we are part of a common humanity. We are deeply disturbed by policies of disinformation which create distrust of our nation:

- policies that incarcerate citizens, contrary to our Constitution;
- policies that incarcerate foreigners without regard to accepted rules of war;
- policies approving methods of interrogation contrary to the Geneva Conventions;
- policies that promote the use of brute force rather than negotiation;
- policies which indicate our unwillingness to consider the advantages of a world court where questions of fair treatment of vulnerable persons can be adjudicated.

As Christians and Benedictines we call for a return to the basic moral principles of our nation, principles of justice for all, hospitality to the oppressed and the immigrant, recognition and acceptance of legitimate differences, help for the poor, the deprived and the sick. We as a nation must know that the user of power is accountable to God, that might does not make right, that respect for all people is the duty of the civilized nations of this world.

As Christians and Benedictines we believe that “Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from [God] is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also” (1 John 4:20).

Our brothers and sisters include all peoples, all races, all nations. If we are indeed pro-life, we must be for the lives of all the people of this earth. With Pope Paul VI in his address to the General Assembly of the United Nations, our cry from the heart is, “No more war. War never again.”





# Going To Be A Teacher

By Sister Josine Krausnick

I cannot remember a time when I didn't want to teach children. After receiving my associate degree from a small junior college very close to my home in Nebraska, I taught for a year in a small town a few miles away. I had just learned about a lay teacher program begun by the Sisters of St. Benedict at The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, Minnesota—wherever that was! It sounded good to me, and during that first year of my teaching I applied for entry into the program. I was accepted, and the following September I found myself teaching second grade at Our Lady of Victory in Minneapolis. During that year, as we were finishing our “what I want to be when I grow up” unit, a small member of my class asked me, “Miss Krausnick, what do you want to be when you grow up?” There was a pause as I tried to collect myself, when another child spoke up: “That's silly—she's going to be a teacher!”

I didn't finish the lay teacher program as planned. Instead I followed God's plan and entered the Benedictine community in Duluth in September of 1958. Since that time I have taught every grade from first through eighth with varying degrees of involvement and a wide variety of curricula.

I came to Phoenix and St. Thomas the Apostle School in 1965, taught second grade for two years, and was then asked to teach junior high English. This was such a challenge for me as I had been involved with only primary grades before this time. It's amazing how many talents you discover when you allow yourself to be exposed to the challenge. I remained in this position long enough to see the two classes I had in second grade graduate from the eighth grade. That was very special.

I returned to Minnesota and continued teaching, this time in the middle school grades. In 1978 I was asked to return to Phoenix and St. Thomas. I have been teaching fifth grade ever since, and now fifth and sixth grade social studies—and other selected subjects. My work in social studies has given me a deeper appreciation for the planet we occupy and the challenges of taking care of it, of keeping peace and justice among its inhabitants, and of building something better for its future generations. My newest passion, I suppose you could call it, is geography.

Each year I coordinate our participation in the National Geographic Bee, and most of the time our school champion passes a test to qualify for the Arizona State level of this contest. We have made it to the top ten finalists in the state, but we have not yet had the state champion and gone to Washington, D.C. We will keep trying—and having fun doing it.

St. Thomas the Apostle has always had high academic standards and was awarded a Blue-Ribbon status for excellency, an honor given to only a few schools nationally each year. In the 2003-2004 academic school year, St. Thomas the Apostle turned 50 years old. What a grand celebration we had—for more than a year! We remembered the Benedictine Sisters from Duluth who came to St. Thomas the Apostle in 1953. Several Sisters, including the first principal, Sister Devota LaVoie, attended our alumni celebration.

One of the most challenging aspects of teaching today—and at St. Thomas the Apostle—is keeping in tune with the technology of our time. Over the past few years our school has been acquiring a SmartBoard for each classroom. This is an amazing combination of computer and wall screen with all sorts of activities, teaching devices, and endless possibilities for learning. We can project an internet article, map, chart, or anything else onto the screen. In math, we work problems on the board, erase, begin again—and no chalk dust to clean away! Since the students have experienced this latest classroom technology longer than I, they teach me as I teach them.

St. Thomas has long been one of the top as well as one of the largest Catholic schools in the diocese of Phoenix. Our enrollment of about 620 is almost at capacity, with most of the classrooms having a waiting list. I consider this a part of the legacy of the Benedictines who have taught here and who have set high standards of academics and faith living. It is exciting to watch the influence of our Catholic education system take leadership in the community, and it gives me great hope for the future of our Church and of our country.



## Sister Mary Jean Tuttle Honored

By Vicky Siders

Sister Mary Jean Tuttle was honored this spring by St. John's School of Theology•Seminary as one of the first women to graduate from a Roman Catholic theologate that had previously prepared only seminarians. The Benedictine Institute of Sacred Theology (the earliest name given the program) graduated its first class in 1962. On March 31, 2005, St. John's School of Theology•Seminary presented the Sister Mary Anthony Wagner, OSB, award to Sister Mary Jean and three other graduates of that first class at Mary, Mother of Our Redeemer Chapel. Other graduates were recognized *in absentia*.



Photo by Anna May Kampa

Sister Mary Jean Tuttle was among four Sisters who attended the award ceremony honoring 1962 graduates of St. John's Benedictine Institute of Sacred Theology. From left: Sister Angelo Haspert, Sister Mary Jean Tuttle, Sister Jeanne Giese, and Sister Ernestine Johann.

According to Sister Mary Jean, "This was the first time in the Catholic academic world that women were allowed to study for a Master's in theology." The plaque presented to the Sisters at the ceremony reads:

"We lift up your example of courage and faithfulness in responding to God's call to serve the Body of Christ. We thank you for your labor in the fields of human need. We pray God's blessing upon you and your continued presence to your sisters and brothers in faith."

## Happy 90th Birthday Sister Rose Marie Larkin

Sister Rose Marie Larkin entered monastic life in 1933 and served for many years as a teacher at St. Timothy's in Chicago, The College of St. Scholastica, and Duluth Cathedral. Then, later, she trained as a nurse and worked at St. Mary's hospital.

Sister says, "My retirement came in stages after some nursing in San Francisco and at St. Luke's in Duluth. I was then asked to rebuild the "Lady Garden" behind the Monastery, and I worked at it for twenty years." At 86 Sister Rose Marie found she had to take life easier physically. "Now I pray and have found that to be the best assignment of all—the full Liturgy of the Hours and many other devotions."



Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier

"What's good about living to an old age is that the longer you live, as honestly as you can, the more wonderful do you come to see how beautiful is the will of our Creator God. And if He permits us to enjoy the faculties He gave us (and time) as I have, we can get to know Him and His will even better as we gratefully accept the gifts of others."

"Each First Friday I contemplate his Passion as I see it portrayed by Mel Gibson. And every day I get to meditate the inspirational *Mysteries of the Rosary* (the life of Jesus) as written and sung by Danielle Rose Skorich. For all of the gifts of my old age I am most grateful. I hope that my last years will honor God in some way."

# Another

By Sister Linda Wiggins and Sister Margaret James Laughlin

*Photos from Monastery Archives*

Located west of the Monastery, at the top of the hill, Gethsemane Cemetery reigns on high, providing a splendid view of Lake Superior. More than just a “place,” Gethsemane is a world in itself. Slightly tilted on its axis, the “Sisters’ cemetery” is circled by a roadway, marked at intervals with large wooden crosses representing the Stations of the Cross.

Rows of pristine gray stone markers identify the deceased Sisters. No extensive adornment will be found here—one lovely statue of the *Pieta*; an occasional modest bouquet will signify a friend or family member recently visited. Yet rarely will anyone come upon a more beautiful world than this one. Rows of fir trees whisper messages while wild flowers bask in pined sunlight along the road. Deer amble across the green in the early morning and evening. A mother fox might bring her young ones for a romp on a warm summer evening. In the fall the pungent scent of apples delights walkers, while the crackle of snow and tiny footprints indicate frequent visitors in winter.

Gethsemane is a world of paradox: perpetual activity amid quiet rest—the abundance of life blooming amid this simple pastoral setting. Nothing illustrates more the Benedictine ideal than this world where the assurances of Christ radiate in natural wonder: a crossroad of heaven and earth.



Gethsemane Cemetery occupies the very top of the hill behind the St. Scholastica Monastery buildings. But it hasn't always looked this way!

The same view of Gethsemane Cemetery in the fall of 1912 shows a road “wide enough for two buggies to pass,” several of the Stations of the Cross, and, in front of the statue of the *Pieta*, each marked with a small white cross, a row of fourteen burial boxes containing the bodies of Sisters who had died between 1892 and 1909 and who had been buried in the Diocesan Calvary Cemetery. The cost of “bringing our Sisters home” was donated by the firm of Flood and Horgan, forerunners of Dougherty Funeral Home.





# World



These gates were installed in 1912; a handwritten, undated, unsigned note on the back of this archival photo says "Iron gates given to scrap iron drive in WWI." However, 1930s-era pictures show the small side gates still in place.



This replica of the Lourdes Grotto shrine, located along part of the original road that has been sodded over, is dated 1910. By the mid-1930s weather and erosion had taken a toll, so it was removed.



At the same time (1912) a traditional set of fourteen Stations of the Cross was installed along the road, beginning just inside the main gate and ending near the cemetery crucifix. They were the gift of Mrs. Peter Kerst, mother of Mother Scholastica and Mother Alexia, who is buried in front of the crucifix. These stations were replaced in 1998 by simple wooden crosses (see first photo) with the title of each station (Scriptural Stations approved by Pope John Paul II in 1991) carved into the wood.



On some special occasions Mass was celebrated in the Ascension Chapel, which abutted the huge mound of the water reservoir required before city water reached the area. The building was torn down and the mound removed in the 1980s to provide additional burial space.

This current view, looking south, shows the original graves in the row to the far right; Farther south, the crucifix marks the graves of the former prioresses of the Community. The area behind the *Pieta* is currently being used for burials.





# Highlights

By Sister Armella  
Oblak

## Sister Salene

Sister Salene Dopwell is a native of St. Vincent and the Grenadines where she grew up with her father Alwyn and mother Norma, two brothers, and one sister in the small town of Calliqua. St. Vincent has a population of 110,000, and its capital is Kingstown. It also includes a chain of islands called the Grenadines or "Gems of the Antilles."

Sister Salene is a Sister of St. Joseph of Cluny, which was founded in 1798 in France. Sister's community has about 100 sisters, who live on five Caribbean Islands working as teachers, nurses, and pastoral and retreat directors. For the past ten years Sister Salene has been a teacher at St. Joseph's Convent Secondary School. Sister is spending time at St. Scholastica Monastery to be renewed physically and spiritually so that she can discern better ways of addressing her many challenges. She is convinced that her stay here will help lead her to a greater effectiveness and a better way of living. She says, "Although apprehensive when I first arrived at the Monastery, after meeting a few Sisters and having spent one day, I felt at home and at peace. Somehow from then on, I began finding the Salene I once knew, and the Sisters of St. Scholastica have helped me a great deal more than they will ever know by just opening their doors and sharing their sacred lives with me."

When she leaves us in June, we will miss her quiet ways, her smile, and all she did for us. She will remain in our prayers as she returns to find God in her daily service to others in her native country.

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Sister Salene Dopwell

## Volunteers Honored

On April 18, 2005, thirty-four of our forty-eight volunteers and their guests joined the Sisters at Evening Praise in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. During the dinner that followed, violinist Frederick McDougal and acoustic guitarist Calvin McCorison played delightful pop music and light classics as background music.

This is the time of year when all the Sisters express their gratitude for the 2,877 hours of time so generously given by our volunteers. We could not get along without their help in Monastery Books and Gifts, Benet Hall, gardening, transporting Sisters to and from appointments, music ministries, *Pathways* mailings, and at the information desk.

Sister Mary Rae Higgins, who became Director of Volunteers in January of this year and who organized the appreciation event, presented the volunteers who were honored for years of service. Sister Kathleen Hofer welcomed the volunteers and their guests and awarded pins to Fred Olson for five years of service, Gary Erickson and Mary Amundson for ten years of service, and Marge Mathison for fifteen years of service.

One of the highlights of the evening was a parody written by Sister Almira Randall about our volunteers and set to the tune of "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy." She brought down the house with her impromptu directions to Sister Armella Oblak, who sang the parody with her, and to the Sisters she drafted to play the supporting roles of flag wavers.



Photos by Sister Edith Bogue

Volunteers left to right: Pat and Carol Thompson, Mary Deutsch, and Katherine and Ron Hon



## Day of Reflection and Renewal

The environment at St. Scholastica Monastery is conducive for making a good retreat: space for prayer, reading, relaxation, discussions, walking, and enjoying nature at its finest. Space for privacy as well as for group dynamics is available. All of these, however, are but the trimmings. The important part of any retreat is good people who are seeking time for listening, praying, discussing, and reflecting. These are the gifts that the 18 members of St. Mary's/Duluth Clinic Chaplaincy Department (which serves St. Mary's Medical Center, Duluth Clinic, St. Mary's Hospital of Superior, and Miller Dwan) brought with them to the day of renewal and reflection at the Monastery this past month.

According to the retreatants, Father William Graham's presentations during the day were inspiring and thought-provoking. The rest of the day the group reflected on Father's comments and enjoyed the outdoors and the quiet atmosphere of Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel.

Discussions over lunch were lively and reflected the spirit of renewal felt by all. The most frequent comment was, "We have to come back to the Monastery again." These responses gave us renewed assurance that the Benedictine mission and values are alive and well in our sponsored institutions.

## Benedictine Friends

There is a touch of sadness along with fond memories as the Sisters and college students who met regularly during the school year part for the summer. This is especially true for those graduating. Such was the case on April 17 at a brunch held for the Benedictine Friends group in the Somers private dining room. Those graduating in May—Ali Bailey, Maurita McKay, and Darcie Koll (who couldn't make it to the brunch)—received crosses with signatures of the Sisters who had been their friends for a year or more. These relationships were very special and could very well continue for years to come. In their own words:

*"It has been great to know I have a spiritual support system in the Monastery and that my friends and I can discuss topics that range from prayer to pizza."* Maurita McKay

*"Having a friend across campus is like having a two-way mirror: the gift reflected in the joy each one gets from just having the other one around."* Sister Marilyn Micke

*"My interactions with Sister Judine enabled me to further develop my spirituality. I will miss not being involved in Benedictine Friends and not seeing Sister Judine, but I know the relationship fostered will continue to grow and we will remain in contact."* Ali Bailey

*"I believe that the program provides a wonderful connection between the Monastery and the College. The students and Sisters get to know one another on a personal basis. It's a great experience for all involved."* Sister Mary Rochefort

Classes are coming to an end, final exams are already in progress, and students are busy preparing for departure—but fall always follows summer. Before you know it, old and new friendships across campus will begin and /or continue to grow and flourish.



Benedictine Friends

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier

## VOCATION MINISTRY

*By Sister Mary Rochefort*

*Whatever you ask in my name, I will do (John 14:14).* It is with trust in these words of Jesus that we continue to believe that God will send new members to our community. The Vocation Ministry Task Force has written several prayers that can be prayed for vocations to the religious life and priesthood. We invite you to join us in praying the following prayer:

### *Prayer for Vocations*

*Loving and gracious God—  
we pray that You bless women and men  
with the grace of vocation  
to serve You  
as Sisters, Brothers, and Priests.  
May they welcome Your call  
and have the courage to respond.  
We believe You will hear  
and answer our prayer.  
Amen.*

For further information regarding vocations to St. Scholastica Monastery, contact Sister Mary Rochefort at (218) 723-6505 or [mrochefo@css.edu](mailto:mrochefo@css.edu).

## STANBROOK HALL REUNION 2005

*By Rita Rosenberger*



The Stanbrook Hall Reunion Day will be Sunday, July 24, at St. Scholastica Monastery. All are welcome to attend, and we especially encourage the anniversary classes (1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, and 1965). Please join us for Mass, brunch, conversation and tours.

Sisters will be on hand to visit with you, and Monastery Books & Gifts, the Heritage Room and Scholastica Photography & Framing shop will be open. Monastery Books & Gifts has Stanbrook Hall sweatshirts and t-shirts for sale both during the reunion and at other times.

You may come by yourself, bring a classmate, or organize a whole group—just let us know that you will be here. In order to plan for brunch, *we need all reservations by July 1*. There is no charge to attend the Stanbrook Reunion, but please register in advance by contacting your Class Representative. If you do not know who she is, call Rita Rosenberger, Development/PR Office (218) 723-6536 or email [DuluthMonastery@aol.com](mailto:DuluthMonastery@aol.com). We hope to see you in July! Until then, you can take a quick trip back without even leaving your chair, by visiting our web site at [www.DuluthBenedictines.org](http://www.DuluthBenedictines.org).

## PATHWAYS



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# In Loving Memory

Sister Valeria Lessard, OSB, 98, St. Scholastica Monastery, died at the Monastery on Thursday, March 3, 2005. She entered the Duluth Benedictine community in 1924 and professed monastic vows in 1926. Sister Valeria was in the 79th year of her monastic profession.

Sister Valeria was born on October 4, 1906, and raised in Lambert, Minnesota. She attended elementary school there and graduated from Oklee High School, Oklee, Minnesota. In 1924 she entered the Benedictine community at St. Scholastica Monastery and took classes at The College St. Scholastica, the former Duluth Normal School, and the former State Teachers' College in order to fulfill requirements for her teaching certificate.

Sister Valeria taught kindergarten and/or primary grades in St. Bridget's, Minneapolis; St. Francis, Brainerd; St. Clement's, St. James, and St. Peter's, Duluth. She also taught at St. Timothy's School in Chicago, Illinois. She spent one year as a prefect at the former St. James Children's Home, Duluth.

Health problems necessitated her retirement from teaching in 1955. From that time until 1997, Sister Valeria served in many different ministries. She was housekeeper at Holy Name Convent, Wayzata, Minnesota, and at St. Joseph Convent, Chisholm, Minnesota. She took night duty at the former St. Ann's Home, Duluth; was an admitting clerk at Hibbing General Hospital, Hibbing, Minnesota; performed general household duties at St. Scholastica Monastery; and was sacristan at St. Ann's Residence, Duluth, for fifteen years.

In 1979 Sister Valeria was one of twelve Sisters who went to Worcester, Massachusetts, to establish a new mission. She returned to the Monastery in 1982. From then until her retirement in 1997 she was a companion, sacristan, and housekeeper at St. Mary's in Stockbridge, Wisconsin; and a companion at St. Hubert's in Hubertus, Wisconsin, and at St. Mary's in Richland Center, Wisconsin.

Sister Valeria was an excellent teacher, loved by students and parents. In addition, Sisters who did their student teaching under her guidance found her a patient and generous mentor. Sister Valeria brought fun and laughter wherever she was stationed. She was a woman of deep faith; during her retirement years she spent many hours each day in prayer and was seldom seen without her rosary. She also maintained an interest in people—community members, family, and former students—and delighted in visiting with all who came to see her.

Sister Valeria was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Valerie (Allard) Lessard, and by six brothers and five sisters. She is survived by the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and by many nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

*Photo by Sister Joyce Fourier*



## PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING DECEASED RELATIVES AND/OR BENEFACTORS:



Marie Skul  
Helen Hedman  
Edward G. Brandt  
Elaine Larsen Henrichs 10/3/04  
Ruth "Mickey" Hayes Klein 12/18/04  
Agnes Burcar 2/8/05  
Rosella Harney 2/9/05  
George Gray 2/12/05  
Doris E. Olson 2/21/05  
Frank F. Farwell 2/21/05  
Peter Fried 2/26/05  
+Sr. Clement Fried's brother  
Mary C. Cich 3/3/05  
Bernice Schmitz 3/8/05  
Louise M. Tucker 3/17/05  
Gordon J. Falconer 3/22/05

Stella Rankin 3/27/05  
Charles F. Wagener 3/29/05  
Evelyn H. Peterson 4/7/05  
+Sr. Laura Marie Bedow's sister  
Margaret Elizabeth Monroe 4/13/05  
Sr. Marguerite Baxter's sister  
Ralph Miller 4/4/05  
Milton G. Fider 4/14/05  
Paul W. Beaupre 4/26/05  
+Sr. Jeanette Beaupre's brother  
Betty Jane Rimstad 5/3/05  
Luella Wegscheid 5/15/05  
Sr. Luella Wegscheid's mother  
Sr. Mary Martin Beringer's sister  
Frieda R. Vito 5/16/05

# Mass for Pope John Paul II

By Sister Armella Oblak

There was a sense of unity in all present—Sisters, students, faculty, and residents of the Benedictine Health Center and Westwood—as we gathered in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel on April 6th to celebrate the Eucharist and to pray for Pope John Paul II. It was an opportunity to remember our beloved pontiff as we celebrated his life of service to the Catholic Church and to the entire world. Accompanied by Beth Kaiser at the piano and Sister Mary Carol Braun at the organ, the congregation—led by the College Liturgical Choir—sang hymns of praise and joy that rang throughout the chapel and cloister halls.

Reverend William Graham gave an excellent homily on the meaning and history of all the rituals associated with funerals and burials as well as a tribute to Pope John Paul II. In his words, “The next generation of scholars, including theologians, sociologists, and historians will have the task of examining and interpreting the phenomenon of these days and years.” We pray for Pope John Paul II and ask God’s blessing on Pope Benedict XVI.



Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier

April 6, 2005 Mass for Pope John Paul II

## Pope Benedict XVI

Cardinal Josef Ratzinger honored Benedictines throughout the world when, elected pope, he chose the name Benedict XVI. Most media reporters immediately mentioned the previous Popes Benedict, but few seemed to offer information on St. Benedict, author of the *Rule* by which Benedictines live their monastic lives.

St. Benedict was born in Norcia, Italy in 480. Disillusioned with the life he saw as a student in Rome, he left that city and went first into the nearby countryside of Subiaco, where he lived as a hermit. He was joined by others attracted by his simple and holy lifestyle who wished to be his disciples.

Benedict then went to Monte Cassino, where he built his first monastery. It was there that he and his monks began a way of life that was to have a profound influence not only on the Europe of his time but on the world up to the present day. While abbot at Monte Cassino, Benedict wrote his *Rule*. The *Rule* of St. Benedict, considered one of the most important documents of Western Civilization, challenges us to a life of ongoing conversion, a life of growth and inner transformation. Benedict died March 21, 547, while in prayer at Monte Cassino.



By the ninth century, all of the monasteries in the Holy Roman Empire followed the *Rule* of Benedict, and Benedictine missionaries had evangelized and established monasteries in what is now France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Italy. They brought with them “the Cross—Christianity; the Book—literacy; and the Plow—the dignity of labor” transforming the barbarian invaders of late antiquity into the cultured Europeans of the Middle Ages. In recognition of this, in 1964, Pope Paul VI declared St. Benedict to be Patron of all Europe. It is no doubt this patronage that the current Pope Benedict XVI invoked in choosing his name, seeking modern Europe’s re-awakening to its Christian heritage.