



PATHWAYS

Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters

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Letter from the Prioress

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"The steadfast love of our God never ceases. God's mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning, new every morning. Great is your faithfulness, O God, great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23). I find myself singing these comforting and hope-filled words of the Prophet Jeremiah frequently these days. They remind us that at the heart of all suffering, death, and loss in our lives there lives the God of life whose love makes all things new. The tender and lovely unfolding of another springtime here in the Northland is again a proclamation of that awesome truth.

As we behold and immerse ourselves once again in the beauty of new life bursting forth and unfolding into fullness all around us, may we let God's abiding grace heal and restore our broken spirits, transform our burdened and fearful hearts, and bring us into a new flowering of love and compassion which proclaim that indeed "God's mercies never come to an end."

May these excerpts from the writings of St. Mechtild of Magdeburg, a 13th century mystic, anoint and fill your hearts with a new awareness and deepened experience of God's unimaginable and intimate love for you and all creation.

"Divine Love is so immensely great!
Great is its flow,
for Divine Love is never still.
Always ceaselessly and tirelessly
it pours itself out
so that the small vessel which is ourselves
might be filled to the brim
and might also overflow."

"When are we like God?
I will tell you.
In so far as we love compassion
and practice it steadfastly,
to that extent
do we resemble the Heavenly Creator
who practices these things
ceaselessly in us."

"God has enough of all good things
except one:
Of communion with humans
God can never have enough."

Let us live always in the wonder of God's goodness and love and grow in communion with our Creator, one another, and all creation.

Lovingly yours in Christ Jesus, our joy and our peace,
with abounding gratitude and prayer,

Sister Lois Eckes

Sister Lois



God as the Master Gardener

By Postulant Therese Carson



Each spring I rejoice to see new growth emerging from the frozen earth, but also must learn again that my control over my garden is an illusion. There are greater forces at work in it than mine. The same is true of the interior landscape of our souls. Let me explain.

I am standing in my garden as the last snows melt into the earth. The first flowers to appear each spring are the spears of purple crocus, then pasqueflowers all glimmering with fine hairs. On Easter morning I look for their blooms whose cupped petals hold the promise of new life in Christ. As spring comes in force I watch the angular shoots of daylilies, deep green Asiatic lilies with frilly ruffs, angelicas bursting with raw vigor, the smooth whorls of hosta, the complicated unfolding of bleeding hearts. Ostrich fern and lady's mantle open their green hands upwards, and I breathe an Alleluia at their resurrection from a wintry grave.

There comes that brief time when I believe it will stay under control. The hosta leaves fill the space allotted for them, the angelicas in the damp shadows pause at four feet, and the ferns hover below the porch rail, their fronds waving gently in the breeze. Then they shoot up, out and over, and the real garden is off and running. Paths vanish under hosta and lady's mantle, the porch disappears behind ferns, and the rose shrubs bloom in a clotted mass of clear pink, deep rose, blood and cream. The angelicas are headed to nine feet, and everywhere seeds of last year's corn poppies sprout to add a splash of riotous red.

It has moved once more beyond recall. I put down my secateurs and twine and, humbled, watch herbaceous armies dance the tango in the wind as they climb sunward. Hummingbirds and dragonflies dart among flowers; bees drink nectar; the cherry becomes a cloud of tiny pollinating wasps; and in the small pond, frogs begin to sing. I am humbled, sensing the touch of a Master.

Why don't we bloom like this, with exuberant joy? Are we so afraid of losing control that we settle for being a tame patch of petunias? Jesus told us to trust in God's oversight. "Observe how the lilies of the field grow; ... not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. If God so clothes the grass of the field ... will He not much more clothe you?" (Matthew 6:28-29). St. Paul consoled the struggling Church in Corinth with this promise: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has the mind of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9). Read that with excitement! It means God invites us to become a beautiful garden, *if only we can give up control*. The problem is we all want to be in charge; never mind we are timid gardeners. So we settle for being tidy plants that wither in times of spiritual drought, until one day we admit maybe God is the better gardener.

We learn to trust God only by failing, over and over again. When you fail, Christ waits for you. He helps you know yourself, warts and all. When you think no one can love such damaged goods, He holds you tenderly and whispers, *I love you completely. We will face your darkness together and you will learn to love yourself as I love you.*

Let me tell you a secret: *we are all damaged goods*. We hold onto rubbish that drags us to the earth and blinds us to the love God offers. When we face our failure honestly and turn our lives over to God, we relinquish the rubbish and begin to grow.

When you turn to God in your dark night and tell Him your secret pain, He will stun you with love. Confess your unbearable loneliness and He will sing you *Nessun dorma*. Ask Him to hold you, and He will sweep you around in a wild tango that will leave you breathless and utterly in love with Him. Let Him lead. He danced the universe into existence and knows all the steps.

After all this, try – just try – to be a petunia patch. The Master Gardener will grow you into a garden fruitful beyond dreaming, filled with wonderful things you were afraid to try. He will give you deep roots to survive droughts and storms and the bitterest winters of the soul. He will bless you even through your grief, turn your sorrows into joy, and fill you with His peace. "I will put My law within you and write it on your heart; and I will be your God, and you shall be My people" (Jeremiah 13:33).

Now, go seek God and ask Him to start planting.



Sister Profile: Sister Mary Richard Boo

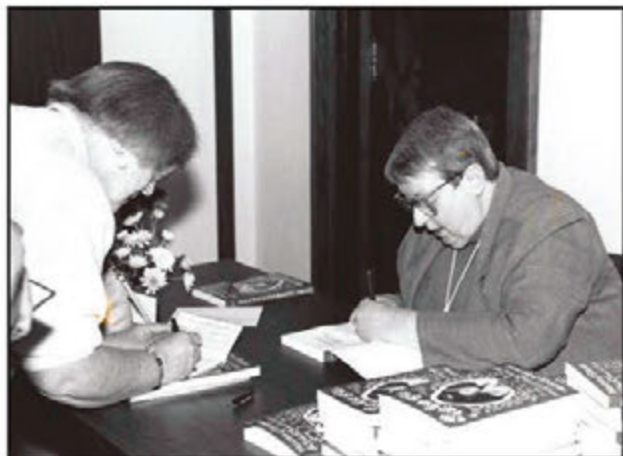
By Sister Margaret James Laughlin

Photo courtesy of CSS



Sister Mary Richard (Margie) Boo, born and raised in Pine City, Minnesota, was the third child in the family of Clinton and Julia Boo, having been preceded by Sally (later Sister Julie Boo, CSJ) and Dick, and followed by Dan. One or more dogs were also members of the family. When the time came for college, she chose to follow her mother's example and enrolled in The College of St. Scholastica in the fall of 1947. Her father advised her to major in art, which she did for a while until persuaded by Sister Joselyn to switch to an English major. Sister Mary Richard graduated from CSS in 1951 and entered the Benedictine community that fall. She was immediately assigned to teach English in Stanbrook Hall High School where she remained until 1961 (excluding novitiate years), having also spent summers earning a Master's degree in English at St. Louis University in 1960. She began teaching in The College of St. Scholastica's Department of English in 1961. In 1966 she earned a Ph.D. degree with an English major from the University of Illinois at Urbana, Illinois, and returned to Duluth to teach at St. Scholastica—or so she thought.

Sister Mary Richard was president of the College from 1967-1971. "Under her leadership St. Scholastica saw a substantial increase in enrollment, the change to coeducation, the completion of a \$3 million science building, movement toward individualized instruction, initiation of a faculty-student senate, appointment of a dean of instruction and a full-time chaplain, national recognition by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, opening of a student union, and participation in a number of federally subsidized programs."



Sister Mary Richard signing copies of House of Stone



*Sister Mary Richard Boo,
President of The College of St. Scholastica*

Once again Sister Mary Richard returned to teaching at CSS where in 1980 she was the recipient of the College's Lavine Award for Excellence in Teaching and in 1992 the Burlington-Northern Faculty award for Research and Writing. At the request of Prioress Clare Marie Trettel, she had been granted a leave of absence to write the history of the Duluth Benedictine community as part of its 1992 centennial celebration. That book, *House of Stone*, was published in 1991. The spring 1993 issue of *Minnesota History* says of her completed work, "The history of the Benedictine Community in Duluth received unusually fine treatment in a well-written and carefully researched narrative."

In June 1994, Sister Mary Richard was granted Professor Emerita status. In her retirement years she has continued to do freelance writing and editing—and to walk dogs.

Benedictine Center of Spirituality

By Sister Pauline Micke, Director

The Spirit Continues to Work in People's Lives

In our last issue I told you of the article in the October/November issues of AARP. Six months later, we continue to get inquiries. Three people have come for personal retreats; five more individuals/couples are scheduled and more are working on their scheduling. This has been an unexpected but blessed happening for these people and the Center. Let us keep this ministry in prayer.

Upcoming Event—July 13, 2013 Retreat

You are invited to "God's Reflection in Life!" our summer retreat. Come and explore God's providence in the lives of three very gifted but misunderstood men: Composer Mozart, Artist Van Gogh, and Scientist/Mystic Teilhard de Chardin, S.J. Sister Sarah O'Malley, OSB, MA Theology, will facilitate this journey of how God's providence works in the lives of humans in unusual ways. To register or for more information call 218-723-6555 or email Pauline.m@duluthosb.org. The retreat is July 13, 2013, at St. Scholastica Monastery from 8:45-noon.

Cultivating Compassion Conference



Image courtesy of sdiworld.org's <http://educationalevents.org>

I was privileged to attend the April 18-21, 2013, Spiritual Directors International Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota. Sister Joyce Rupp, OSM, was the keynote speaker as we spent the days reflecting on "Cultivating Compassion on the River." Right on the banks of the Mississippi River as it flows through Minnesota we considered more deeply with Sister Joyce three aspects of compassion: "Compassion for Self," "Compassion and Science," and "Compassion and Suffering." Her opening words were, "My soul has grown deep like the rivers" (Langston Hughes). She went on to say, "Compassion can change the river of the heart just as the river changes the landscape." In subsequent articles from the Benedictine Center of Spirituality we will look at more insights from this conference on the theme of compassion. Blessings on your summer!

Please Pray for the Following Deceased Friends and Relatives:

Janis Noel 12/17/2010
George Piasecki 2/4/2013
Rosemary Ring 2/5/2013
Anthony Peters 2/10/2013
Anne Kvaternik 2/14/13
+Sister Andrine Kvaternik's sister
Lois Socha 2/19/13
Sister Almira Randall's sister
Margaret Lubina Radosevich 2/21/2013

Rev. Eugene Lyttle 3/2/13
Elmer Gottwalt 3/3/13
Kathe Kerness Johnson 3/4/2013
Bertrand J. LaVigne
Jerry A. Grucky
Mary L. Svecz 4/4/2013
Msgr. Lawrence O'Shea 4/4/2013
Father Bruce Engen 4/9/2013
Donald Andrews 4/12/2013

We are pleased to announce an error in our last listing: Mary Ann Mrak Berg is not deceased; we noted the death of a woman of a similar name and made the error.

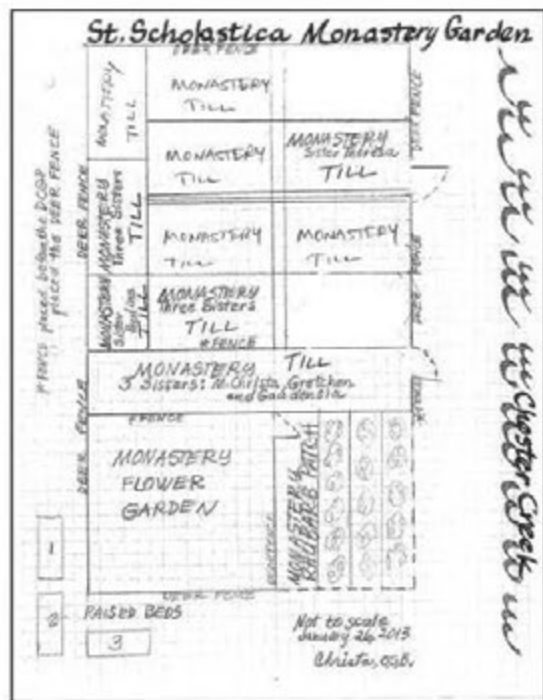
Plotting: A Conspiracy of Growing Things

By Sister Gretchen Johnston

Down by Chester Creek on the north side of the bridge on the college entrance is a large garden. About sixty by seventy feet of it is vegetable, but part is the Monastery rhubarb patch. Part is a flower garden for the Monastery, out of which come many flower arrangements for Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. About the vegetable garden one might wonder, as many indeed have: "Whose garden is that?"

The answer is many-faced. The rhubarb patch and the flower garden have always belonged to us. The vegetable garden currently belongs to the Duluth Community Garden Project (DCGP). Before 1996, the entire vegetable garden belonged to us, providing us with many fresh vegetables to supplement the store produce we buy. The garden was designated for DCGP in 1996, in part because it was growing more difficult for us to take care of, although now we have more plots and are planning to again bring the vegetables to our kitchen. We applied to the DCGP for a portion of it. One agreeable "side effect" of having the DCGP in the garden space was many interesting conversations with other gardeners.

The entire garden except the rhubarb patch is surrounded by a tall deer fence. There used to be no fence at all, so Sister Mary Christa Kroening asked if the College maintenance staff would put up snow fence around our plot. It was unsightly, orange, and unfortunately didn't deter the deer. Over the smaller vegetables she used to keep row cover, pegged down with sticks and stones. When she wanted to weed or to see how the vegetables were growing, she had to remove the sticks and the row cover and then replace them. The next few years saw the growth of a real deer fence, much to the dismay of the Duluth deer population.



Sister Mary Christa Kroening's garden plan

Where there is a garden, there are critters. Besides the deer, we have had woodchucks, skunks, rabbits, a raccoon, and always a plethora of chipmunks. Sister Pauline Micke live-trapped these animals (all but the chipmunks) and one of our volunteer drivers took them far away and released them. Calling the DNR, Sister Pauline found out how to release a live-trapped skunk without getting sprayed: approach the skunks holding a blanket so they didn't see her. Then, with the trap covered with the blanket, release the door spring and the skunk will run away. Tongue-in-cheek, she suggested that we start a petting zoo!



Live trap

Each of us gardeners has a specialty vegetable. Sister Pauline is a zucchini grower extraordinaire. From a mere 10 plants, she can get upwards of 120 zucchini. She uses them in everything: jam, bread, cookies, cakes, soups, casseroles, and anything else one can think of. One of the vegetables Sister Mary Christa always plants is kohlrabi, but she can never plant enough for the whole Community. One of the reasons is that they are so labor-intensive: they need to be started indoors because of danger of frost. When they are about three inches tall, she transplants them. She would also like to plant more potatoes. Beets are Sister Theresa Spinler's specialty. Every year she makes many jars of pickled beets to sell at our Christmas sale. They are popular, as they always go fast.



Beans



Kohlrabi



Zucchini flowers and small zucchini

Vegetable gardeners: we may be planted in full shade or sun. We are frost hardy, drought-, flood-, and disease-resistant. Nothing can keep us away from the garden.

As the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations (Isaiah 61:11).

Pathways will feature our flower gardens and gardeners in another issue.

Photo by Sister Patricia Anne Williams



Beets and pickled beets

All photos except beet photo by Sister Mary Christa Kroening

REMEMBERING THINGS PAST: STANBROOK HALL HIGH SCHOOL

By Sister Margaret Clarke



When Bishop McGolrick encouraged Sisters from St. Joseph, Minnesota, to establish an independent community in Duluth in 1892, one of his objectives was to have a Young Ladies' Academy similar to the one Mother Scholastica Kerst had opened in St. Joseph while Prioress there. From the very first, the Sisters undertook this project, creating Sacred Heart Institute in their first downtown motherhouse and then moving it to the Kenwood Avenue site in 1909 to become Villa Sancta Scholastica Academy. In 1912, with the opening of the junior college at the Villa, competition for space between the academy and the college began. Additions to the building, which was eventually named Tower Hall, in 1920 and 1928 gave a bit more breathing room. Finally, in 1936, Mother

Agnes Somers and the Community began a building program aimed primarily at providing more space for the now four-year College, to include a central chapel, College library, and a whole five-story building to house the high school and initial formation programs of the Community. This provided classrooms, administrative offices, parlors, lounges, laboratories, dining rooms, and residential areas for high school boarders, aspirants, postulants, novices, and a number of Sisters. Mother Agnes, always the anglophile, named it "Stanbrook Hall" after the well-known Benedictine abbey in England.

The high school moved into its new building after the Christmas holidays in January 1938. The first graduating class of 36 young women included three who would become Sisters the following September: Sisters Agatha Riehl, Renee Cormier, and Mary Paul Ludwig. Sister Agatha recalls "I was an aspirant and remember moving to the fifth floor of Stanbrook which provided us with dormitory space. Since the elevator was installed sometime after we moved in, I remember carrying all our possessions up five flights of stairs. This included some of the lighter furniture and other dormitory things."

With the expansion of high school space and its beginning as an independent entity separate from the College, enrollment gradually grew with the number of day students now greater than boarders. During the thirty years of its existence, enrollment averaged 250 students per year with forty to fifty seniors graduating each spring. Most students were Catholic, but there were also girls of other faith traditions as well. As the reputation of the school grew, a trend began for the leading families of Duluth to send their daughters to Stanbrook for a year or two before shipping them "back east" to one of the exclusive girls' schools. Catholic culture dominated, and one alum, DeeDee Lauer Killian '49, noted: "Sr. Timothy directed many musicals and plays, and it seemed as though the non-Catholics always had the 'kneeling' parts."



Stanbrook Hall High School Crest

Students wore uniforms from October 1 to May 15: the first uniform was a blue corduroy jumper with a white blouse with long lapels. This was eventually replaced by a navy blue wool suit (purchased from Mrs. Silver's dress shop in the East End) with white blouse, white anklets, and saddle shoes. It was soon discovered that if one wore the suit jacket it was necessary only to iron the front of the blouse. Skirt lengths could be quickly altered by rolling the waistband, and were regularly checked by one of the Sisters by making the student kneel on her desk chair. If the skirt did not reach the chair seat, it was too short! The school crest, adopted in 1939, was worn on the jacket pocket.



*Sister Ann, Sister Frances Joseph,
Sister Lisa, and Sister Dolora at
Stanbrook Hall in 1966.*



*1953 Boarders (resident students) left to right: Sandy
Mueller, Ann Hinsperger, Eileen Gruber, Jean Gurno,
Mary Kiss, and Carol Robertson*



*1961 Hall Chatter staff L to R:
Pat Cruikshank, Judy Matzke,
Nancy Krause, Mary LaLiberte,
Betsy Brewer, Mary Beerhalter,
and Cyd Slabodnik*

Stanbrook was accredited by the University of Minnesota and the North Central Association and affiliated with Catholic University. Its curriculum was always directed toward college preparation; besides classes in English, history, and religion, there were sciences through physics, math through higher algebra, and multiple-year language choices of Latin, French, Spanish, or German. Home economics, typing, art, and music were also offered. There were many dramatic presentations and musical programs which involved most of the school. Barbara Martini Johnson '55 recalled being in the orchestra for four years mainly because she was the only viola player in school, having come with six viola lessons. She wrote: "Once the orchestra put on an all school assembly and each section performed and presented their instruments. I had practiced my solo, "Dreaming" by Schumann, for six months to really show off my instrument. When the viola section stood, my moment in the spotlight had been trimmed to four notes. . .the (open) strings on the viola!"

Besides the academic offerings of the school, there was great emphasis on deportment. Jean Rossman Erwin '41 said: "The outstanding contribution of the school other than scholastic excellence was the emphasis on 'ladylike' behavior. This wasn't too popular during our school years: we were fined a quarter for sitting on the arms of chairs, crossing our legs, chewing gum, slamming doors, and numerous other things I've probably forgotten. The main goal of our instructors was to graduate refined students from the hallowed halls of Stanbrook. And this was achieved." Nevertheless, there was an undercurrent of mischief. Margaret Norman White '57 mentioned: "Some girls managed to get into a cloistered area and stretch Saran Wrap on the toilets. Another managed to string popcorn on the curtain stretchers in the laundry and jumped into a cart with laundry in it when she heard someone coming." In my own case I had a two-period long class to accommodate chemistry labs. On one April first, when the bell rang to end the first period, all the class members whipped out candy and started eating it. I thought it was actually pretty funny until the voice of Sister Enid, who was subbing for principal Sister Margaret James, came over the intercom saying in no uncertain terms that all must be punished. I collected 25 cents from each one for eating above ground floor. The student body was also treated to a multi-day workshop on gracious living by a well-known speaker. The most remembered precept from this event seemed to be "Carry a hatpin on a date in case of emergencies and keep a Sunday newspaper between you and your date and all will be well."

Continued on page 10

The greater number of faculty were Sisters; a number of laywomen were also employed and became part of the Stanbrook extended family, among them Gladys Swanson, Mina Lorix, Geraldine Backstrom, Barbara Esbensen. At one time, we gave Barbara a certificate making her an "honorary Benedictine." Her husband Thorwald mentioned this to a monk that he met at an educational conference. "How was that accomplished?" asked the monk. "Oh, in the usual way," replied Tory. Over the years, about seventy Sisters served on the faculty, and each deserves mention, but space does not permit it. The principals included Sister Bernice Braegelman, Sister Raymond McLaughlin, Sister Mary Horgan, Sister Isabelle McKeague, and Sister Margaret James Laughlin. Many graduates recall their admiration for Sister Mary, the epitome of ladylike behavior, but also a person of great kindness and understanding.

In the mid-1950s, Sellwood Hall on East Second Street, one of Duluth's stately homes, was donated to the Community and remodeled as a residence for up to 23 high school boarders and two Sister prefects. Students were transported to and from the Kenwood campus by bus, and a housekeeper and cook for the evening meal were hired. The "Sellwood Girls" have their own collection of reminiscences, as do the former prefects.



1948: Orchestra members at the annual spring concert



1945 Junior Class Officers L to R: Irene Artley, Marcia Nolan, Pat Fitzgerald, Mary Anne Lewis

In the fall of 1963 the new Duluth Cathedral High School was opened, with a brand new building and a student body that was half male. Stanbrook enrollment began a four-year decline so that by 1967 there were only 150 students—not enough to pay the expenses. The decision was made to close the school, a difficult one for all involved. Nevertheless, in its 30 years of existence, it had educated about 1500 students, most of whom would certainly agree with Beatrice Freischle Taus '46 who wrote: "My four years at Stanbrook Hall are one of the happiest memories of my life! Friendships made are still alive and well today. We received a good education that prepared us for future endeavors. We were blessed with dedicated teachers who took personal interest in developing our potential. I am grateful to my parents for giving me the opportunity to attend Stanbrook Hall. Stanbrook taught me self-respect, self control, accountability and responsibility which enabled me to be an asset in my husband's career and in other civic and church activities. For these gifts, I am grateful."

Sister Margaret Clarke taught physical sciences and math at Stanbrook from 1962 until it closed. She still believes, in some fashion, that "they closed the wrong school. . . ." Quotations from alumni were collected by Mary Kay (Remington) Staudohar '64 in hope that someday a much longer account of Stanbrook history might be written.

HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrating Creativity: July 22 – 26, 2013

By Sister Dorene King



Photo by Andi Therrien

Sister Mary Josephine Torborg demonstrating "mystery painting" with 2012 participants

What happens when plants encounter children in "Celebrating Creativity?" What happens when paints mingle in mysterious ways? How can a kind and smiling Benedictine Sister create and tell stories in such a way that we are compelled to listen? How do mosquitoes add to the fun with their buzz?

Explore and discover the whats and the hows

Don't miss this chance, so register now.

Create and celebrate in this week of fun

Come to the Monastery and see how its done.

All children who will be going into the fifth and sixth grade in the Fall of 2013 are invited to explore and celebrate their creativity. "Celebrating Creativity" will be held the week of July 22 – 26 at St. Scholastica Monastery. For further information and to pre-register for this program, please contact Sister Dorene King, OSB, at McCabe Renewal Center (218) 724-5266.

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

By Sister Mary Rae Higgins and Andi Therrien

The Sisters hosted the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, April 25, 2013, in Rockhurst Dining Room at the Monastery. Meridith Schifsky provided gentle harp music during dinner, and some of the Sisters provided good-hearted musical entertainment afterwards.

Sister Lois Eckes (third from left) and Sister Mary Rae Higgins (first on left) awarded volunteer service pins to Barb Coffin, info desk [second left] 10-year pin; Koresh Lakhan, driver [fourth left] 5-year pin; Karen Ostovich, info desk [second right] 5-year pin; Jude Collins, music [first right] 10-year pin. In absentia a 15-year pin was awarded to Liz Askelson (decorations); 10-year pins to Ron Hon (driver) and Fran Kessel (info desk); and 5-year pins to Lyle Johnson (driver) and Sharon Rolle (gift shop).

The Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery are most grateful to all the volunteers who give us so many hours of their time and talents in the duties they perform for us. If you are interested in becoming one of our volunteers, please check our web site at <http://www.duluthbenedictines.org/join-us/as-a-volunteer/> or call Sister Mary Rae Higgins, Volunteer Coordinator, at 723-6600.



Photo by Sister Patricia Anne Williams

STANBROOK HALL REUNION

All graduates of Stanbrook Hall are invited to join us for the Stanbrook Hall Reunion at 2 p.m. July 27, 2013. For more information, call 218-723-6536.

RHUBARB FESTIVAL

JUNE 29, 2013 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. 11th Ave. East and London Road, Duluth. Admission is free and benefits CHUM.

Our Continuing Journey into a Future Filled with Hope

Fourth in a series of articles by Sister Judine Mayerle, Chair, Monastery Strategic Planning

Strategic planning can be a journey into the unknown, a process that for us can be described in the words of the poet Rainier Maria Rilke (*Letters to a Young Poet*), "It is not the answers that show us the way, but the questions."



Consultant Donna Fyffe facilitated an afternoon session during an April Community Weekend for strategic planning at the Monastery. "The monastic life in and of itself is a ministry," she said. "It is through your ministry that you give expression to your charism in the world."

As we began Phase 3 of our strategic planning last fall, we developed a "process guide" ("Creating Our Shared Future") in which we raised key questions in the areas of our monastic life, our ministries, and our monastic space. Most of the active members of the Community are involved in small groups that research/analyze/and continue to present their findings in response to questions about the quality of our monastic life, our financial situation, leadership, ministries, care of our elders, stewardship of our human and tangible resources, alternate forms of membership, etc. This "long, loving look at our current and future reality" as described by our consultant Donna Fyffe of CommunityWorks, Inc., deals not only with the present day but to the year 2023 and beyond.

The challenges we face today are no bigger than those of our founding Sisters. Should they leave their religious community and families in Eichstatt, Bavaria, and cross the ocean to an unknown United States? Should they journey 1500 miles from the East Coast to St. Joseph, Minnesota, and then 150+ miles more to the missionary Arrowhead Region of the far northeastern part of the state? Impoverished, at first unwelcome in predominantly non-Catholic Duluth, should they use their scant funds to begin elementary schools, build small hospitals for the iron miners and the lumberjacks, buy acres of land far from the city's center on which to build what would one day be a motherhouse and a college, and establish daughterhouses in Crookston, Minnesota, and Winnipeg, Manitoba?

The challenges we face today, however, as we seek to "refound" our Benedictine Community in this second decade of the Third Millennium are probably more daunting than those faced by our founding Sisters because where they saw increasing membership, we see diminishment; where their members were predominantly young, ours are more demographically diverse with a rising median age; where their initial poverty was gradually overcome by small but steadily increasing income, we see a decrease in revenue; where their ministry to the immigrants was clear (staffing hospitals and schools as more women became members of the new Community), the continued growth of our sponsored ministries in health care and education increasingly rests in the hands of dedicated lay leaders. And where they lived during a time of great expansion of Catholicism and religious life in the United States, we live in a period of decline not only in vocations to religious life and the priesthood, but in the membership of the Catholic faithful.

Theologian and spiritual writer Sister Sandra Schneiders, IHM, has studied the shifting dynamics of women's religious communities in the first part of the twenty-first century and asks, "Have we been underestimating the immense vitality of that cohort of vigorous women who are being studied increasingly by sociologists as the subjects of a new developmental life stage that has enormous potential for world culture, the so-called 'third-agers'? Those people who are between 65 and 85 or older, which is precisely where the bulk of women Religious are today?" (*Prophets in Their Own Country: Women Religious Bearing Witness to the Gospel in a Troubled Church*). Women religious will not look today or in the future as they looked in the past, she writes, "either in outer appearance, or in age, or in numbers, or in lifestyle, or in ministry, but will continue to be what they have been since the first century, disciples, personally called by Christ to commit themselves totally to Him."

The questions we have raised and to which we are responding through our strategic planning address and embrace our diminishing membership, our rising median age, our decrease in financial resources, and a change in our ministries, even as we embrace our many blessings, such as our newest members (seven in Initial Formation), the continued growth of The College of St. Scholastica and the Benedictine Health System which we founded and sponsor, and our ongoing involvement in social justice issues.

Although minor questions in the larger context of strategic planning—should we create a handicapped entrance for Stanbrook and an enclosed link from Stanbrook West to the Chapel?—the architectural plans which showed how the two projects would affect the look of our buildings and their cost in terms of dollars and the amount of space each would take resulted in our decision against construction.



Photo by Sister Judine Meyerle

Sister Mary Haddad discussed a variation on the traditional model of sponsorship at a Community Weekend at the Monastery in February.

Our ministry of sponsorship in health care and higher education was included as a Community Directive ratified in May 2011: "To create a model of sponsorship reflective of our values, capacities, and the needs of our sponsored institutions; to provide orientation and mentoring for new Sister membership on our sponsored ministries' boards; and to continue to enhance our commitment to mission effectiveness."

Our strategic planning this past February included several presentations by Sister Mary Haddad, RSM, Senior Director of Sponsor Services for the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), who asked: "You have multiple ministries—education, social service, retreat work and spiritual direction, health care—how do you determine what is necessary in order to steward those ministries into the future? What is needed to ensure the mission and values, the ongoing tradition of the Duluth Benedictines? How will you pass your spirit on to the next generation so that spirit becomes operative in a new reality? How can you best steward your tradition of sponsorship?"

What is needed? How can we best steward? How will we pass on the tradition?

"It is not the answers that show us the way," the poet Rilke writes, "but the questions." And so our monastic Community—most of us the "third-agers" described by Schneiders—continue to seek the questions that "will lead us into the wilderness" where "God will speak to our hearts" (Hosea 2:14).

And what is the Spirit saying to the Church—and to us? "To bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18).

We believe that God's plan for each of us and for our monastic Community is deeper and broader than any of us could imagine. Our strategic planning thus far affirms this belief.

We have dedicated our strategic planning to Our Lady Queen of Peace and continue to ask her intercession as patroness of our journey into "a future filled with hope" (Jer. 29:11).



Photo by Sister Ann Marie Hahnwright

Sister Judith Oland participated in a role-playing activity during a strategic planning Community Weekend in March.

PAX CHRISTI MINNESOTA TO MEET

By Patrice Critchley-Menor, Member of Duluth Pax Christi and Director of Social Apostolate, Diocese of Duluth

"Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements. Like a cathedral, peace has to be constructed, patiently and with unshakable faith. Wherever the strong exploit the weak; wherever the rich take advantage of the poor; wherever great powers seek to dominate and to impose ideologies, there the work of making peace is undone; there the cathedral of peace is again destroyed."

Homily of John Paul II, Solemnity of Pentecost, Coventry, England May 30, 1982

In an effort to build the Cathedral of Peace to which Pope John Paul refers, the local Pax Christi group is hosting the Annual Statewide Assembly of Pax Christi on Saturday, September 21, 2013, with Edwina Gateley as keynote speaker.

Pax Christi USA describes itself as promoting the call of Christian Nonviolence. Locally, Pax Christi expresses itself in a small community of women religious and laity who gather monthly to share prayer, friendship, discussion, and soup. Sister Maria Volk, OSB, the group's leader, consistently prepares meaningful and challenging prayer to set the tone for each meeting. Such prayer is vital for discussion and action on issues of peace and justice, and orients us as followers of Christ.



Pax Christi Duluth members who attended the April meeting. Front row left to right: Mary Tanner, Jean Kilgour, Sister Maria Volk, Andy Anderson. Back row left to right: Elizabeth Miller, Patrice Critchley-Menor, Sister Mary Rae Higgins, Michelle Naar-Obed. Photo by member Kate Bradley.

Members represent a variety of life stages, which is necessary to address an issue as large and essential as peace. Participants are single, married, retired, in high school, and both men and women. In the initial planning of the Statewide Assembly, the group, who are all involved in their community in a variety of ways, knew there were many issues to potential topics. The crises that detract from peace today are many: homelessness, racism, human trafficking, hunger, job losses, and more. As Easter People, the goal for the Assembly will be to discuss these challenges in an atmosphere of hope, giving participants the tools, enthusiasm, and support necessary to build the Cathedral of Peace.

While considering keynote speakers, the name Edwina Gateley surfaced early. Sister Maria Volk called Ms. Gateley "a prophet of the day, a mystic and international lecturer who has an important message for our day." Ms. Gateley is a poet, artist, writer, lay minister, and single mom.

Ms. Gateley's commitment to living in solidarity with marginalized populations and prayerfully committing to solutions is very evident. In 1969, after living in Uganda, she founded the Voluntary Missionary Movement, which provides a vehicle to increase opportunities for the laity to engage more deeply in the missionary life of the Church. Since that time, thousands of volunteers have served throughout five continents.

Following a year spent among the homeless and those involved in prostitution, she founded Genesis House in Chicago in 1983. Genesis House provides support and nurturing for adult women caught up in prostitution. In addition to providing services to women exploited by prostitution, Genesis House engages in advocacy to change the structures that allow such exploitation. Her commitment and experiences combined with her deep faith and spiritual writings made her a natural choice.

The theme of "Exploring the Call to Reclaim God in the Face of Violence, Schism, and Evil" was developed in conversation between the leadership of the local group and Ms. Gateley. Our world is experiencing a crisis in solidarity, where those who are marginalized or in need are often blamed for their own hunger, poverty, or other needs. Such a crisis in solidarity exposes a need to cultivate a deeper awareness of human dignity, a freer love of others as an extension of our love for God. Pope John Paul II recognized this crisis in solidarity and challenged us by saying "it will be necessary above all to abandon a mentality in which the poor—as individuals and as peoples—are considered a burden, as irksome intruders trying to consume what others have produced."

Promoting peace is a complex task. Local issues affecting our neighbors include human trafficking, a lack of affordable housing, increasing levels of poverty, and hopelessness. According to the 2009 American Community Survey, poverty in Duluth now exceeds one in four. The study further notes that nearly 39% of Duluth families with children under age five live in poverty. At the time of this writing, CHUM is reporting more families than ever requiring emergency shelter. This is not unique to the Duluth area, as poverty rates are increasing nationwide.

There are also issues of global solidarity to consider, like severe global poverty, violence in the Middle East, and climate change. Droughts, floods, and other natural disasters brought on by climate change are affecting the poor at a disproportionate rate. Violence in the Middle East claims the lives of many innocent people each year. Speakers on global issues will include the witness of a Syrian woman sharing her story as well as a presentation on climate change.

Facing such serious issues can be overwhelming and discouraging; however, an excerpt from the description of Ms. Gateley's keynote address promises we will be "affirmed, encouraged and...called to hope and new life." Following the keynote, participants will be able to choose smaller workshops that will assist us in moving forward as people of faith to live out our common call to care for the least among us and protect the common good. Gary Boelhower of the Theology and Religious Studies Department of The College of St. Scholastica will be leading a workshop entitled "Rooting Our Work in Prayer." Brian Rusche of the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition will discuss advocating for policy that protects the marginalized.

All interested people are invited to participate in this prayerful and uplifting Assembly as we find hope together in a world of need. The cost is \$35 per person, including lunch. People interested are invited to contact Sister Maria Volk at 218-723-7058.

Marce Wood: Artist, Poet, Storyteller, Seeker

By Sister Jeanne Ann Weber

I first came to know Marce when she became a lay associate at St. Scholastica Monastery in October of 2009. She helped me in the liturgy office and chapel. I appreciated her creative gifts and her caring spirit. She embraced our monastic way of life especially in prayer, the Eucharist, ministry with the Sisters, grounds keeping, and Fridays in our gift shop, as well as many other jobs that she remembers fondly. She left at the end of July 2010 to become more involved with her family and to continue her work as a caregiver. Her ties with the Monastery, she delights in saying, are vital to her Catholic journey.



Marce Wood (right) and St. Scholastica Monastery Oblate Judy Peterson. The two women work together in ministry at St. John's Parish, Grand Marais, Minnesota

Marce has worked as an artist-in-residence in many schools and communities throughout northern Minnesota. She has exhibited her work throughout the state including the Tweed Museum of Art, Talley Gallery, Governor's Mansion Art Show, and Plains Museum. She shows and sells her work at Lizzard's Gallery in Duluth. Our 2012 Monastery Christmas card image was Marce's. This past winter Marce completed five commissioned drawings for the Benedictine Health System's meeting room.

Her most recent art exhibit was sponsored by the Catholic Studies Program, directed by Fr. William Graham, at The College of St. Scholastica. The exhibit opened on December 8, 2012, and was entitled *Prayers for Eden*. The day began with the celebration of the Eucharist for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, followed by a procession to the exhibit rooms for a blessing and incensing of her art and poetry that accompanied each piece. Many people were blessed. Her next exhibit will open at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis on August 4 this summer and will continue through August 25.

In Marce's Artist's Statement she recalls the teachings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who says that all of life is created with precision and intention to glorify God and evolve the human soul toward His holy ways. In creation the divine assails us, penetrates us and molds us:

"With simple, accessible imagery and brilliant colors I attempt to honor the vital connection and conversation between all of creation. I retell stories from scripture, stories of the beloved saints, as well as sharing my own dreams and personal stories. I pick up my pencils to enter into the land where stories and art are born. In the brutal and sublime process of birthing, my own soul awakens, examines, writhes and bends also into a new form."... "My heart, like your heart, is as a child's. It is with open heart that I hope you too will walk fearlessly and freely into these images and find your own stories. I believe with the unceasing balm of love that so freely flows from the sacred hearts of Mary and her Beloved Son, Jesus, that we can heal and delight in all relationships and grow toward the promise of Eden, here again on Earth."



Photo by Andi Therrien

Our Lady Protector of the Waters
Copyright © Marce Wood

Better Beds for Benet Hall

Thank you! Thank you! Our Annual Appeal this year asked for support in funding 28 new assisted-living beds for Sisters in Benet Hall—the Monastery's infirmary. The response was immediate and enabled us to reach our fund-raising goal with a little left over for future bed repairs and other Benet Hall needs. Your abundant generosity fills our hearts with deep gratitude, and we are humbled by the graciousness of your giving.



Photo by Catherine Wright

The beds allow for movement of the mattresses in many ways. Better for the Sisters; better for the nursing staff.

The elderly and infirm Sisters who live in Benet Hall or in the nearby rooms on second floor of Stanbrook West deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness in a special way. Here are comments from some of them:

Sister Estelle Charron:

"Yes, I like my new bed. I was chosen to try out another kind of bed they were considering, and before that I had used two others. This bed is very good, very restful. Unlike the others it can adjust in several ways to make a patient more comfortable, and it can be raised and lowered so the nursing staff does not have to bend over or physically strain themselves so much."

Sister Margaret James Laughlin:

"I love it. It's soft. It's hard to describe: it's like it moves with you."

Sister Mary Richard Boo:

"It used to take a few minutes for me to drift off to sleep, but in the new bed, it's just a matter of seconds."

Sister Marilyn Micke:

"I was tired yesterday afternoon so I came into my room and sat down here in my chair and fell asleep. After just a few minutes I woke up again. I decided to lie down in my bed, and so I did and went back to sleep right away. But when I woke up next, it was two hours later! It's a very relaxing bed."

Sister Lucille Geisinger:

"I can sit at an angle in my new bed. It can come up under my knees and the top can come up, and it's very good for my knees and my back."

Sister Mary Henry Landsteiner:

"My new bed is so much better than my old one. No bumps!"

Sister Mary Carol Braun:

"My new bed is wonderful. There are so many things you can do with it. I raise the top of the bed so I can read in the evenings."

Sister Mary Martin Beringer:

"It's better than the old one... I do sleep better, yes, I dream better too. I have happy dreams!"



Photo by Catherine Wright

Director of Environmental Services Lisa Askelson (L) and Sister Theresa Spinler help move new beds to the Sisters' rooms.



Photo by Andi Thierion

CNA Ginger Laurin (right) shows Sister Estelle Charron the ups and downs of the new beds.

Save the Date!

The Continuing Relevance of Vatican Council II

Saturday, September 14, 2013

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. St. Scholastica Monastery

Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Massimo Faggioli Dr. Katarina Schuth, OSF

*Please plan to join us for a reflective and insightful celebration
of the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council.*

This celebration at the close of the 50th anniversary year of the Second Vatican Council is sponsored by the Feminist Theologies Committee of St. Scholastica Monastery and the Theology and Religious Studies Department of The College of St. Scholastica. In addition to the Keynote Speakers, the Day's Events will include a panel of respondents, general discussions, celebration of the Eucharist, and an Italian buffet luncheon.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED BY TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2013.

Registration Fee: \$15.00. Free for students.

For further information contact:

Sister Sarah Smedman @ 218-723-7049 or ssmedman@earthlink.net

Dr. Gary Boelhower @ 218-723-6024 or gboelhow@css.edu

Both Keynote Speakers are experts on Vatican Council II.

Dr. Faggioli, currently a professor in the Dept. of Theology, University of St. Thomas, worked in John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies in Bologna, Italy, 1996-2008. He will speak on "Vatican II and the Future of the Church." His early works, published in Italian, include the first book on Vatican II (2005) that used sources in the Vatican secret archives. His recent books, published in English (both 2012), are *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning and True Reform: Liturgy and Ecclesiology in Sacrosanctum Concilium*.



Dr. Katarina Schuth, a Sister of St. Francis, Rochester, MN, holds an Endowed Professorship for the Social Scientific Study of Religion at The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity at the University of St. Thomas. Her address is entitled "Vatican II after Fifty Years: Effects on Our Spiritual Journey and on Our Ecclesial Life." Recognized as an expert in seminary education, she has published numerous articles and books on Catholic seminaries and schools of theology, among them: *Reason for the Hope: The Future of Roman Catholic Theologates* (1989) and *Educating Leaders for Ministry* (2005).

The Panel of Respondents includes: Dr. Gary Boelhower, Sister Theresa Jodocy, OSB, and Dr. Denise Starkey.

The celebration of the 50th anniversary of Vatican Council II is the latest of the works of the Feminist Theologies Committee (FTC), established in 2004 at the request of then Prioress Sister Kathleen Hofer. The purpose of the FTC is to provide for serious study of feminist theologies in a collaborative setting, primarily in two ways: through selection of readings in and organization of discussion groups; and through engaging speakers and workshop presenters on aspects of feminist theologies. This study is open to all members of the Benedictine Community and to other interested persons in our larger geographic area. Membership on the Committee has changed over the years but currently includes Dr. Gary Boelhower, Sister Elizabeth Farias, Sister Agnes Fleck, Sister Beverly Horn, Sister Mary Josephine Torborg, Debra Waites, and Sister Sarah Smedman, Chair.

Since the fall of 2005, the FTC has facilitated a study group of Sisters, a priest, and laity who have read and discussed new theologies published since Vatican II by both women and men. Theology—to be differentiated from doctrines or articles of faith—is the attempt to understand God as revealed in the Bible and other sacred texts, in nature, and in relationships among peoples in various environments. Although any attempt to explain God is inadequate because God is ineffable, theology is the “art and science of [learning] what we can know . . . about God in an organized and understandable way.” We have read and discussed works that discuss the nature, naming, and immanence of God and works that discuss ways in which the patriarchal system—that has dominated social, political, and religious systems for centuries—controverts the compassion at the core of all major world religions, i.e. the principles of equality, justice, and care for all women, children, men, and the natural world. We have read/discussed theologies that look at these issues from the ethical, sacramental, sociological, anthropological, and scientific perspectives as their authors propose new theologies relevant to our personal human experiences in today’s world. To name a few of the works we have studied: *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Catherine Lacugna; Ivone Gebara’s *Out of the Depths: Women’s Experience of Evil and Salvation*; Elizabeth Johnson’s *Truly our Sister: a Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints and Quest for the Living God*, as well as the United States bishops’ critique of the latter, her response to their criticism, and their response to her response; and Sallie McFague’s *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age*. Currently the group, which meets monthly from September through May, is reading/discussing Anne Hunt’s *Trinity: Insights from the Mystics*.

The FTC has sponsored a number of speakers germane to our purpose, some just for the Sisters, many for the general public as well. Desirous of sparking interest in studying feminist theology and providing all with a common base of knowledge and understanding, the first to speak to the Benedictine Community were Sisters Beverly Horn and Sarah Smedman, who gave brief presentations on: (a) the history and development of the feminist movement, and (b) the work of feminist theologians. The talks were followed, as is the usual procedure, by a question-answer and discussion period. A partial list of guest speakers with their topics includes: Delores Dufner, OSB, from St. Benedict’s Monastery, “With What Language Will We Pray?”; Joan Mitchell, CSJ, from St. Catherine’s College, “Women Leading from Fear to Faith in Mark’s Gospel”; and internationally famed theologian/liturgist/musician Miriam Therese Winter, MMS, from the Hartford Seminary in New Haven, “Celebrating the Liturgy of Life” and “Spirituality in a Quantum Universe.” The FTC has co-sponsored lecturers with both the Theology and Religious Studies Department at CSS and with Temple Israel, including Dr. Susan Ross, Loyola University Chicago, “Seeking Light and Beauty: Women, Justice, and Sacramentality”; Dr. Diana Hayes, Georgetown University, “Here I Am, Send Me: A Womanist Journey of Faith”; Jane Yolen, “Spirituality in Books for Children and Young Adults.” With Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd we have co-sponsored two three-day events celebrating *The Saint John’s Bible* that culminated in an ecumenical awe-inspiring worship service.

The Feminist Theologies Committee of the Monastery is particularly pleased to be co-sponsoring the Vatican II celebration with the CSS Dept. of Theology and Religious Studies. Both groups are heavily engaged in the planning and enthusiastically looking forward to September 14. We hope that many of you will be able to join us.

By Sister Sarah Smedman

SISTER PROFILE: Sister Patricia Anne Williams

By Sister Patricia Anne Williams and Andi Therrien

I was born on May 8, 1951, to Anne and Ken Williams of Rockaway, New Jersey. My sister Marie was born 11 months later and my brother Ken 11 years later. I attended our parish school, St. Cecelia, through the 8th grade. Special memories of those years include my First Communion and Church processions. Tears would silently fall from my eyes as I moved in procession before the Monstrance during the singing of *Pange Lingua* when the priest transferred the Body of Christ to the side altar on Holy Thursday (back then I blamed the tears on the incense—now I know they were a stirring of my heart for God.)



Photo by Andi Therrien



Other memories include my family's religious traditions. I still hear us singing "Silent Night" before our manger on Christmas Eve. I remember practically living in the church Holy Thursday (Last Supper), Good Friday (Stations of the Cross), Holy Saturday (praying at the tomb), and Easter Sunday! As a young adult I was a member of our Parish Council and adult choir, and I played guitar for our parish prayers group, "Light of Christ." I was in Rome for the Canonization of St. John Neuman by Pope Paul VI and attended a Catholic Charismatic conference in Ireland.

In 1980 I moved to Phoenix, Arizona, to work for the IHS (Indian Health Service) as labor, delivery, and newborn nursery nurse. I became a parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle where I attended Mass several times a week, sang in the choir, and was a member of our Lady's Sodality. It was Sister Francesca Caskey's hospitality (and persistence) that began my friendship with the Duluth Benedictines living and teaching there. Praying the Liturgy of the Hours, helping around the convent, eating meals, and recreating together became a constant in my life. One day I was asked if I had ever considered a religious vocation to which a fast "No" was the answer. No questions were asked, and I continued to be welcomed. Then one day at the convent (because of an incident) I realized the extent of the "human condition" and went home that night thinking, "Wow, they have some faults just like I have." That moment changed my "No" to a "maybe." Gradually, with discernment, questions, and two desert retreats I finally said "Yes" to that question of a religious vocation.

In September of 1987 I entered as a Postulant and made My perpetual profession in 1993 here at St. Scholastica Monastery with my family from New Jersey all present (the only time my brother was here—he died several years later a few months after a bone marrow transplant.) Nursing ministries have been the NICU at St. Mary's Medical Center, pediatric home care, and Benet Hall (our infirmary). I was also a nanny for an infant and toddler. I presently work at the Benedictine Health Center in the pre-school classroom. As a photographer I take photos for our Development Office as needed.

"The Spirit moves in mysterious ways," The one-time IHS Phoenix employee now wears the IHS (Greek for Jesus) profession ring of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.



Sister Patricia Anne (center) and her family

MILESTONES ALONG THE WAY

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour



Photo by Jeff Frey; courtesy of CSS

Probably the most common metaphor used to describe the mystery of human life is that of a journey. We are all en route to some goal or destination, and we commemorate the milestones reached along the way from the simple marking of a child's growth on a doorpost to observing birthdays, graduations, and anniversaries until another marks our final earthly passage. Christians, sealed through their baptism in Christ, anticipate their final goal by yearly liturgical participation in the Paschal mystery of dying with Christ in hope of sharing also in His resurrection and are nourished throughout life by their encounters with Christ in the sacraments. But what about persons who have accepted Christ's invitation to devote themselves entirely to Christ? Can they too mark off milestones of accomplishments along the way?

Technically, they cannot, for seeking transformation into Christ is a lifelong process that frail human beings can never fully achieve in this life. Yet, they can with joy and gratitude celebrate the years during which the Lord has sustained them in their efforts and hope, and so religious also commemorate milestones in the passage of time spent in pursuit of their goal.

Though there are numerous paths sanctioned by the Church through which individuals strive for closer union with and service to God, those called to Benedictine monastic life enter into a lifelong "school of the Lord's service" in which they learn "to prefer nothing to Christ" and to live in peace with others in community. Their service to the Church and world bear fruit in proportion to how well they incorporate these elements of monastic life which embody the two great commandments.

So through what stages must they pass and what lessons must they learn in this lifelong school? Who are their teachers and what examinations will they need to pass? Fortunately, they have in the *Holy Rule* a simple guidebook that outlines for them how to follow the precepts of the Gospel in living a life for God together with others with the same goal. Because it is based upon the wisdom of the Scriptures and incorporates prayers from the Old and New Testaments, it is adaptable to both men and women and needs only cultural adaptation to the times. Over the course of more than 1,500 years it has been a model of Christian life that has produced countless saints for the Church and still bears relevance for today.

The contemporary woman who enters a monastery of "active/contemplative" Benedictine women today will learn from the start that her journey is always along a two-way street between herself and the Community who will both support and evaluate her progress. Gradually she will learn the advantages and challenges of living in community and of giving up her own will for the sake of the common good. Following the Affiliate stage in which both she and the Community got to know one another and discerned that she would be a likely candidate, the woman seeks entrance into the Community by coming as a Postulant, a period that may last from six months to two years. During this time she becomes grounded in the Benedictine way of prayer and work and takes classes on prayer, Scripture, and Catholicism. When both she and the Community discern that she is ready to proceed to the next stage, she may apply to enter the Novitiate.

The Novitiate, as designated by the Church, must be a minimum of one-year of strict separation from "the world" during which the candidate focuses on the meaning of the vows (or promises) she is to make in First Monastic Profession and takes further classes on church history, monastic history, religious life, and the documents of Vatican II. During this year she is called "Sister" and may request a new name in religion. Upon a satisfactory evaluation, she may request to make First Monastic Profession for a period of three years, following which, she and the Community will decide if she is ready to make Perpetual Monastic profession.

Traditionally, the Community marks these rites of passage during the summer in connection with the feast of St. Benedict on July 11 and also commemorates the Silver, Golden, and Diamond Jubilees of Sisters' professions near the Feast of the Assumption. Watch our next issue of "Pathways" to rejoice with us in the milestones we have reached along our way.



Sister cooks left to right: Sister Lelia Hartung, Sister Celine Plante, Sister Bertille Goblirsch, and Sister Rebecca Burggraff



Fisher Sister



Sister Rebecca and her sister, Marie Burggraff

Sister Rebecca Burggraff

July 13, 1923—February 5, 2013

Sister Rebecca (Evelyn) Burggraff died February 5, 2013, at St. Scholastica Monastery. Born in Cloquet, Minnesota, July 13, 1923, she was the daughter of Henry N. and Mary (Trettel) Burggraff. Sister was in her sixty-ninth year of monastic profession at St. Scholastica Monastery.

The youngest of eleven children, Sister Rebecca was strongly influenced by her Catholic upbringing and her large Catholic family and knew from her youth that she wanted to enter religious life. After graduating from high school at age 18, she asked to be admitted to St. Scholastica Monastery as a postulant. She professed her monastic vows July 11, 1943.

Sister Rebecca began her ministry in food service as a cook at Our Mother of Sorrows Convent in Cincinnati from 1944 to 1951. The next three years she served as a cook at the Monastery in Duluth. From 1954 to 1956 she continued this ministry in food service on mission at Cathedral School Convent in Duluth, at St. Mary's Convent in Duluth from 1956 to 1959, and at Our Lady of Victory Convent in Minneapolis from 1959-60. She then returned to St. Scholastica Food Service, which also provided service to The College of St. Scholastica and Stanbrook Hall High School. From 1964 to 1968 she was the Food Service Supervisor at Somers Hall at the College and then was transferred to the Monastery from 1968 to 1974 as a Food Service Supervisor.

From 1974 Sister Rebecca served as a clerk in Accounts Payable and as manager of the duplicating office at CSS. Sister then returned to her food service ministry in 1979 at the Monastery until she retired in 1993. She then assisted in the Monastery Development Office from 1993 – 2003.

Sister Rebecca celebrated her Silver Jubilee August 15, 1968, her Golden Jubilee July 11, 1993, and her Diamond Jubilee August 15, 2003.

Sister Rebecca was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers Tony, Ben, Henry, Ernest, and two infants, Ted and Joe, and her sisters Margaret Zegan and Agnes Goad. She is survived by her sisters Marie Burggraff and Bernice Paulson, sister-in-law Lucille Burggraff, her Sisters at St. Scholastica Monastery, including her cousin Sister Clare Marie Trettel, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.



L to R: Sister Grace Marie Braun, Prioress in 1983, with Silver Jubilee celebrants Sister Ingrid Luukkonen and Sister Thea



Sister Thea and her brother Ralph

Sister Thea Sandusky

June 4, 1908—March 11, 2013

Sister Thea (Phyllis Lenore) Sandusky, 104, died March 11, 2013, at St. Scholastica Monastery. Born to Fred and Joanne (Zellman) Sandusky on June 4, 1908, Sister Thea was from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, and was in her fifty-fourth year of Benedictine monastic life.

Although Sister Thea felt called to religious life at a young age, she graduated from Moore's Business College in Racine, Wisconsin, and did secretarial work for a number of years. In time, she cared for her aging parents. With the death of her mother in 1956 and her father in a nursing home, she sought entrance into St. Scholastica Monastery.

She became a postulant on September 14, 1956, professed her Triennial Vows on July 11, 1958, and her Perpetual Vows on July 11, 1961. In 1960 Sister Thea assisted with the elderly at St. Ann's Residence, which was then part of St. Mary's Hospital. When the new St. Ann's Home opened in 1963, she began a 23-year ministry as the Information Desk receptionist and clerical assistant.

She continued to use her skills as a clerical worker and caretaker to the elderly when she returned to the Monastery in 1986 by assisting at the Information Desk and in Benet Hall (the Monastery's nursing unit). She also assisted with mailings in the Development Office when needed. In 1998 Sister Thea became a resident of Benet Hall where she faithfully prayed for members of the Community and many others outside the Community.

Sister was a life-long lover of literature and classical music—she especially appreciated a good mystery. In 2008 Sister Thea celebrated her one-hundred year birthday and her Golden Jubilee—both testaments of her joy in “being in the Lord’s service.”

Sister Thea was preceded in death by her parents and her brothers Donald and Clarence Sandusky. In addition to the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, she is survived by her beloved brother Ralph, nieces and nephews, and many friends.

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*"Heal the broken
with comforting words of God.
Cheer them gently
with earthly joys.
Be merry
and laugh with the broken
and carry their secret needs
into the deepest silence of your heart."*

St. Mechtild of Magdeburg