

PATHWAYS



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Pathways

NEWSLETTER
of the Benedictine Sisters

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Dear Friends of the Monastery,

As a true Minnesotan, I can't help commenting first on the weather and the season. I'm watching the greening outside my window as the sunshine pours through and lifts my spirits. It is a phenomenon shared by others who cannot help but mention the joy they feel with this change in the sun and air. Resurrection is all around us. The birds are singing, and a persistent toad trills his piercing call in the woods behind the Monastery. We recently celebrated as graduates crossed the stage with the joy of success and the prospect of new adventure on their faces, and, afterwards, proud family members carried belongings home for the next phase of parenting and sibling adjustment. Another transition will also occur. President Dr. Larry Goodwin is passing the leadership of The College of St. Scholastica to Dr. Colette Geary. We wish success as a new phase of life begins for each of them and for all of our graduates.



At the Monastery we will soon be planting flowers, and my bonsai tree, a Shimpaku Juniper which has been dormant, will be brought back to a spot in the garden where sun, rain, fertilizing, and watchful care will bring it back from the pruning last spring. I look forward to that but also know that it will take vigilance and faithful care for it to grow again. All of this reminds me of Sister Ann Marie's reflection (facing page) on the warmth, loving kindness, and mercy that bring growth, healing, and new life when we are open to it, especially in times of loss. We have again experienced the grief following the death of two of our beloved Sisters who were so generous in sharing their gifts and hospitality with others. We ask you to pray for them and their loved ones who will miss them dearly.

When you receive this issue we will be at the midpoint of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. At the Monastery we have inaugurated a Door of Mercy at the entrance to our dining room. As the Sisters pass through, they encounter an icon of the Good Shepherd purchased on my trip to Rome and blessed by Pope Francis. There are two baskets holding prayer cards featuring a reproduction of Sister Mary Charles McGough's peace doors on one side and a space to write a prayer intention on the other. Each morning the Sisters pick up a card and pray for that intention for the day. All who come to visit are welcome to place a prayer in the basket. Passing through the doorway is a way of reminding ourselves, "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity and peace. Our salvation depends on it" (Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus* #2, April 11, 2015). In our Rome renewal program we were asked to reflect on how we experienced the giving and receiving of mercy. I ask each of you to consider the two questions we were asked: How have I recognized the mercy of God? And, how will I show God's mercy to others this week?

In this issue we celebrate and thank our generous volunteers for the sharing of time and talents. Many of you have also responded to our annual appeal with gifts in support of the projects of our sister monasteries in Tanzania and Chile. We thank each of you for your gift that is indeed a merciful blessing for these communities.

Come to see us when you can and have a wonderful, blessed summer!

Yours in Christ,

Sister Beverly

Sister Beverly Raway, Prioress

Opening to God

Reflection and photo by Sister Ann Marie Wainright, OSB

There is an old story about a wager between the Wind and the Sun. Wind bragged and blustered that he could get a man passing by to take off his coat more quickly than Sun could. Wind blew and blew as hard as he could, which only caused the man to clutch his coat about himself more firmly. The more Wind tried by force to achieve his goal, the more he failed. Wind exhausted himself trying. Finally it was Sun's turn. Sun came out and shone brightly. The man, sweltering in his coat under the heat of Sun's warm smile, took off his coat.

Spring and summer are a time when everything that has been closed off and shut down during winter gradually opens itself to light and life. That peculiar shade of green that only comes in spring appears, and flowers soon follow. The days grow longer and hotter and all of nature seems to slow down, shed her defenses and let herself see and be seen by the sun that warms and loves her into fruitfulness. There is something hidden within creation that longs to be opened, to just be.

The spiritual journey is an opening to God in trust that we are more than what we might seem to be at first glance. It is a shedding of our need to know what is coming before it comes, turning our control over to God who alone knows the human heart and what lies within. By the light of the Son's love and the fiery heat of His Holy Spirit, a unique, individual, human life fully alive opens and gives glory to God.



We too are called to be like the Sun who coaxed the man's winter coat off his back. When we meet someone who is withdrawn or shy, we can coax a smile out of that person with gentleness and accepting presence. When people appear sad, we can listen to them and validate their feelings and let them know it is normal to grieve. When they are angry, instead of reacting defensively we can put ourselves on their side, trying to see beneath the anger to the need for human love and contact that feels threatened in them. Loving kindness and mercy can heal a lot of woundedness in our world, and we can begin to do that one person at a time.

As we journey through the season of summer, watching the abundance of growth, feeling the cooling that comes with afternoon summer rain showers, and letting our brows drip with moisture from the midday heat, let us open our hearts, minds, and souls to the God who gives life to all creation and allow God to work through us to bring mercy into a world that needs it very much.

Pagan Babies and Processions, Palmer Method and Poetry; Memories of Catholic Grade School Years

By Sister Sarah Smedman

When invited to remember together their grade school years, 13 of our current Sisters who had attended elementary schools taught by our Benedictines from St. Scholastica Monastery responded, representing seven schools from the Duluth diocese, three from the St. Paul archdiocese, and one from the Chicago archdiocese. A “What-do-you-remember-from-your-grade-school-years?” conversation revealed much about their Catholic school experiences in the 1930s, ’40s, and ’50s.

What is shared here emerges from the memories of the following former grade schoolers representing their respective schools. (Their baptismal names, if different from their religious names, follow in parenthesis, as do former religious names.)

S. Jane (Mary Jane) Casey	Sacred Heart School, Duluth
S. Claudia (formerly S. Lizette) Cherro	Sacred Heart School, Duluth
S. Lois (formerly S. Mary Stephen) Eckes	Holy Name School, Wayzata
S. Agnes (formerly S. John Marie) Fleck	Marquette School, Virginia
S. Lois Ann Glaudel	Our Lady of Victory, Minneapolis
S. Melanie (Theresa) Gagne	St. Rose School, Proctor
Ss. Mary Rae and Barbara (Mary & Marjorie) Higgins	St. Clement’s School, Duluth
S. Beverly Horn	St. James School, Duluth
S. Arlene (formerly S. Georgemarie) Kleemann	St. Timothy’s School, Chicago
S. Sarah (Marilyn) Smedman	Assumption Hall, Hibbing
S. Clare Marie (Irene) Trettel	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Cloquet
S. Jeanne Ann (Jeanne) Weber	St. Bridget’s School, Minneapolis

Tentatively, the first memory emerged: staying after school to clean blackboards, clap erasers, and simply help the teacher. When Sister Jeanne Ann mentioned the end of the school year ritual of mending and covering textbooks for the next year’s class, an explosion of nodding heads indicated the event was a common memory. Then a flood of common memories flowed freely, overrunning each other.

Ransoming “pagan” babies. Although little about the practice was explained to us, we did understand that it was sponsored by an organization called the Holy Childhood and that we were in some small way missionaries. We contributed nickels and dimes until class contributions had reached \$5.00, the cost of “ransoming a pagan baby.” Sister Agnes remembers intense competition among the grades and that her father gave her \$5.00 when a new campaign started so that her class could win. Sister Melanie, one of eight children, remembers her father responded to her request for money with “We have a good many pagan babies right here.” (Although we didn’t know it then, The Holy Childhood Association “encourages all children to be aware of the needs of children living in mission dioceses over the world.” Now worldwide with its motto “children helping children,” the Association serves the needs of children everywhere.)



*Sister Jean Patrick Bennett with second graders
Photo by +Sister Noemi Weygant*

Classroom celebrations. Most remembered May altars in the classrooms, often with processions and the crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven. Children would take their turns in crowning the Virgin, usually with flowers brought from home gardens. Ordinarily a statue was the center of the shrine, but Sister Jane remembers that when her fifth grade recreated the grotto of Lourdes, she was the Virgin Mary and stood on the ledge of a cupboard, with opened doors flanking her. Sister Sarah, still blushing, vividly recalls her chagrin that when, in the seventh grade it was her turn to light the candle in front of the Virgin, she set the crepe paper shrine on fire. End of the ceremony for that day!

The Mary Queen of Heaven celebration memories evoked memories of other traditional classroom celebrations.

Valentine Boxes. School plays. Christmas pageants. Sister Mary Rae attributes careful planning and artistry to Sister Valeria, and recalls one Christmas pageant when the narrator proclaimed, “A Child is born!” Nothing happened. A second time. Then, in a stentorian voice, a third time: “A CHILD IS BORN!” At that moment a shoebox holding a baby doll skittered from behind the curtain across the stage!

Sister Lois Ann's fourth grade put on a play about the Mass. All the girls, she remembers, liked the handsome boy who played the priest. Sister Barbara remembers an annual Halloween parade where everyone was in costume. In the eighth grade she posed as a *grand dame* and won the coveted prize. For no particular occasion but periodically, the Sisters of most if not all of the schools made wonderful taffy suckers in pastel colors—pink, green, crème—that students could buy. Class picnics to celebrate the end of the school year were also a big hit.

Recess. Some schools had large playgrounds which allowed for outdoor exercise. Sacred Heart, in the middle of the city, lacked such a playground, so children jumped rope and played marbles on the sidewalks or narrow grassy spaces lining them. Sister Claudia relates that every noon recess Monsignor Byrnes came to the playground and the children “would all run to hold his hand and follow him like the Pied Piper.”

Special events were securely fixed in some memories. Sister Clare Marie's first grade teacher, Sister Benedicta, brought each birthday child a big cookie on that special day. After Mass on First Fridays, Sunrise Bakery in Hibbing delivered to Assumption classrooms cocoa and sugared raised doughnuts for breakfast; the doughnuts according to the number each child had ordered the day before. After school at Marquette, Sister Augusta taught interested students, including Sister Agnes, how to crochet.



Sister Barbara Higgins dressed at Halloween as the grand dame.



Sister Sarah Smedman's 7th grade Class of 1944. Sister Sarah front row, third from right.

printing to script, arms were in the air, mimicking the miles of slanted line and running oval exercises that haunted us, as well as the sense of being grown up with our first dips of pens into inkwells.

Almost everyone cherishes the memory of her teacher reading aloud to the class. Stories often settled the children after noon hour or rewarded good behavior at the end of the day. Sister Agnes loved Clementia's “Berta and Beth” stories that Sister Lucy read to her second and third grade; later Agnes checked out the whole *Mary Selwyn* series herself from the school library. Sister Clare Marie remembers bi-weekly walks, class by class, the two blocks to the Cloquet public library. Sister Sarah will never forget Isabelle Thouin, children's librarian at the Hibbing public library, who hosted each class during Book Week to display all the new books and magazines. A child could reserve any book, even the newest Laura Ingalls Wilder, to take out but only when Book Week was over.

Sister Arlene recalls that Sister Mary Martin expected her seventh and eighth-graders to memorize poetry, and both Sisters Jeanne Ann and Lois Ann remember Miss Lenz, who visited their classes every two weeks to teach them poetry, to read it with expression, and to memorize it.

Of course, **religion** played a major role in all curricula. Emphasis was on the *Baltimore Catechism*; the questions became more complex as we advanced in grades. We memorized and recited answers, which had to be word perfect. Sister Agnes was keenly interested in the discussions that followed the recitation, a privilege most of us did not enjoy, although we all are grateful for having learned well the basic theology of the Church. Diocesan catechetical contests brought representatives from all the schools to compete in recitation of answers. Sister Clare Marie did Our Lady of the Sacred Heart proud when she took top honors in the diocesan catechetical contest.

Interestingly, academics didn't pop onto the top of school memories. However, when talk turned to “schooling,” the conversation was primarily of language and literature, the *Baltimore Catechism*, and music. Sister Lois recalls excitedly the first time she actually read, and that Sister Mary Martin let her take the book home to read, so proudly, to her parents. Although Sister Arlene does not remember sounding out letters from phonics charts as Sister Jane does, she believes that Sister Hermina must have been the world's greatest teacher of reading because since first grade she has been an avid and voracious book lover.

Writing, reading, and visits to the library are cherished memories. Everyone enjoyed diagramming sentences and thereby learned English grammar well. When someone mentioned the Palmer Method, moving from

Continued on page 6

Memories of Catholic Grade School Years, Continued

Music. Everyone remembers that music was a major part of school life. Many sang in the children's choir. In those days before Vatican II, daily Mass was usually a Requiem Mass, and we all learned the music for that Mass in Latin, including the *Dies Irae*, which we considered quite an accomplishment. Sister Jeanne Ann remembers that St. Bridget's classes went to the University of Minnesota's Northrup Auditorium for concerts and to participate in music performances. Sister Beverly Horn recalls an event when St. James students, with those from the other Duluth Catholic Schools, performed through recitation and song at the Duluth Armory Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*.



Sister Petronilla Thomas



Sister Agnes Fleck's 8th grade graduation. Sister Agnes front row, 2nd from left.

We loved and enjoyed our teachers, too many to mention all of them here. However, Sister Petronilla Thomas, who taught five of these Sisters at different schools, emerged as the best teacher of most. A Texan by birth, students thought her broad a's hilarious and loved to mimic them by "aasking" her questions. Not only was she fun and funny, but they agreed that she could convince the slowest learner he or she was a genius. Our elementary school teachers had profound effects on our Benedictine vocations. Sister Barbara, one of the first kindergarteners at the new St. Clement's School, attributes her vocation to Sister Valeria's gentleness and care; Sister Claudia decided in first grade that she wanted to be just like her teacher, Sister Victorine, and told her so; Sister Sarah (then Marilyn) met her first sister-teacher, Sister Marilyn, in the fifth grade and was first drawn by the special bond of their names; and Sister Clare Marie attributes her vocation to the example of her eighth grade teacher, Sister Innocent, as a humble, competent professional, and wise, kindly woman. Most of the group, however, acknowledge that their vocations were nurtured overall by the ambience of their elementary schools and their experiences with their Sister teachers.



Sister Sarah Smedman (left) with her 5th grade teacher, Sister Marilyn Micke



Sister Claudia Cherro (right) with her 1st grade teacher, Sister Victorine Sitter

Today, only three of the schools we attended continue, all of them with lay administrators and faculty: St. James School in Duluth, Assumption School in Hibbing, and Marquette School in Virginia. All eleven, however, are alive in our memories. Although there were sometimes crabby teachers and unpleasant situations, what lingers are the happy memories. Perhaps Sister Claudia and Sister Arlene sum up our conversations well: "So many lovely memories. I will always treasure my Catholic school years with the Sisters and Priests. . . . My generation really learned their faith" (Claudia). "My grade school experience was one of fun and caring and learning. The Sisters seemed . . . joyful and filled with love for what they did" (Arlene). Sister Mary Rae is but one who attributed all that she did in her classroom as a new teacher to what her teacher, Sister Jean Patrick, had done. Obviously, we were happy kids who learned from our teachers and loved school!

Photos from Sisters, Monastery Archives, and Sister Therese Carson

Sister Profile: Sister Beverly Horn

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



The Duluth Benedictines have always been a major influence in my life. I was born and raised in Duluth, Minnesota. However, long before I was born both my parents' families were involved in a variety of ways with the Duluth Benedictines. My mother's family lived in West Duluth shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, and the O'Meara's were members of St. James Parish, which at first did not have a Catholic school. St. James Catholic School opened in 1914 with the Benedictine Sisters as teachers. My mother, the eldest O'Meara child, entered the new school in the third grade with her younger brother in the first grade. Subsequently, her two sisters and another brother attended St. James. The Sisters influenced my life through many stories about them from my mother and her family long before I actually knew any Sisters. My father's family, the Horn family, also had many contacts with the Sisters over the years as employees of St. Mary's Hospital. In fact, this is the first time in my entire lifetime there is not a member of my extended family (as far as

I know) at St. Mary's or what is now Essentia Health. My brother and I attended grade school and high school taught by the Duluth Benedictines, and I attended The College of St. Scholastica. When I considered entering a religious community following my first year of college, the Duluth Benedictines were my first choice.

I continued my studies at CSS with a major in nursing, then transferred to St. Louis University and completed my BSN there in 1957. I returned to Duluth and was an instructor in the Department of Nursing at St. Scholastica. I completed my master's degree in nursing at the University of Washington, Seattle, and in 1965 returned to the faculty at The College of St. Scholastica. In autumn of 1969 I returned to the University of Washington in the Nurse-Scientist program and completed my Ph.D. in 1975. The federally funded nurse-scientist program supported nurses to pursue doctoral education in science and the humanities. I then returned to St. Scholastica as chair of the Department of Nursing.

In autumn of 1976 I returned to the University of Washington as a faculty member in the Department of Community Health Care Systems in the School of Nursing and retired in 2001. As a resident in Central Seattle, a multicultural community, I could follow the Benedictine way of becoming a part of the community in which one lives. My local parish was also diverse. I focused my research, teaching, and field work with undergraduate and graduate students on cultural and social determinants of health, while working with the underserved, a large migrant population, and homeless persons. I was fortunate to have Dr. Madeleine Leininger, Dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Washington and founder of transcultural nursing, as my mentor during my doctoral studies and in the following years.

What am I doing now? I returned to the Monastery in 2004 and became involved in Monastery ministries. My current ministry is subprioress, and this involves a variety of responsibilities working directly with the Sisters, which is very rewarding. I serve on several boards of St. Scholastica's sponsored health ministries. I am also the volunteer Executive Director of The Transcultural Nursing Society whose central office is at Madonna University, Livonia, Michigan. The Transcultural Nursing Society has an excellent Director of Operations with whom I am in contact on-line or by telephone almost daily. Some major activities include an annual conference; a Research Journal published six times a year, and certification in transcultural nursing. My life is very full and busy, and I am grateful that I am able to participate fully in our community life here at St. Scholastica Monastery.

Highlights

Under 55 Gathering in Beech Grove, Indiana

By Sister Ann Marie Wainright

Sisters Gretchen Johnston, Kathleen Del Monte, and Ann Marie Wainright attended an inter-federation gathering of women under the age of 55 held at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Indiana. The “Under 55 Gathering” provides a venue for younger women in Benedictine monastic life to meet, network, and discuss issues common in monastic life and across communities. The gathering was held April 21 through April 23, 2016.

Sister Aileen Bankemper spoke on the topic “Benedictine Collaboration: The ‘Labora’ of Our Times.” She described collaboration as rooted in relationship building and as co-laboring that is underpinned by love of Christ.

A Leadership Panel, comprised of Federation Presidents Sister Joella Kidwell, Sister Lynn McKenzie, and Sister Kerry O’Reilly, as well as congregational leader Sister Pia Portmann of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Benedict, addressed the topic of collaboration from their individual perspectives as well and answered questions.

Sister Michelle Sinkhorn gave an update on the T4 Project: “Timeless Traditions, Technological Times” – a grant-funded venture that preserves the wisdom of Sisters electronically in a library that can be used by women newer to monastic life for their formation. Sister Suzanne Fitzmaurice spoke on “Tools for Collaboration,” with a focus on technology— how it is redefining work and facilitating communication and collaboration between people who otherwise would never have been able to meet and work together.

The Under 55 Gathering was planned by a team of Sisters from several Benedictine communities – a prime example of collaboration and technology as a tool in collaboration. The event also included a free evening with several options that included a concert, walking the canal walk and cultural trail in downtown Indianapolis, or a boat ride.



Top l to r: Sister Kerry O’Reilly, Sister Gretchen Johnston. Seated l to r: Sister Kathleen Del Monte, Sister Ann Marie Wainright

Recording and Preserving Sisters’ Oral Histories

By Sister Kathleen Del Monte



Photo by Rob Larson

Students and Sister narrators meet for the first time.

and to the Sisters who so generously shared their time and their sacred stories. By collecting, preserving, and making available these oral history interviews, these Sisters and students are contributing important narratives that might otherwise go unrecorded and that play an important role in American history—stories that illuminate the lives of women religious at large and the noteworthy contributions they make to the community and the country. Thanks to Dr. Rob Larson, Assistant Professor, Communication and Media Studies, without whom the project could not have been a success!

Did you know that students at The College of St. Scholastica and Sisters at St. Scholastica Monastery are participating in SisterStory? What is SisterStory? Part of a \$3.3 million grant awarded to St. Catherine University from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, the Catholic Sisters Oral History Project pairs Sisters with students over the course of a semester. The students then record the oral history interviews of Sisters who volunteer to share a part of their narratives as women religious. The interviews will be preserved in an on-line digital archive in audio, video, and written formats and will contribute to the growing repository about the lives of Catholic Sisters, covering most of the 20th century and beyond.

Many thanks to our hard-working, dedicated students

Highlights

Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau Becomes Police Chaplain

By Andi Therrien

Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau was recently sworn in as a law enforcement chaplain by Sheriff Ross Litman. She is now a member of the St. Louis County Law Enforcement Chaplaincy (SLCLEC). The ceremony took place on February 24, 2016, in the Sheriff's Office in Duluth with Reverend Kevin Norton, Father John Petrich, and Sister Elizabeth Farias as witnesses. Sister Paule Pierre is the first Sister in our Community to volunteer in this capacity.

Sister Paule Pierre made her temporary profession with the St. Scholastica Community in 2013. She is currently receiving training in clinical pastoral education.

"It is truly a privilege, honor, and blessing to be an instrument of the Holy Spirit in serving those who serve others," says Sister Paule Pierre.



Sister Paule Pierre Barbeau and St. Louis County Sheriff Ross Litman. Photo by Sister Elizabeth Farias

Celebrating Friendship: Benedictine Friends across Campus

By Sister Kathleen Del Monte



Sister Claudia Cherro (left) and Sister Pauline Micke (right) work with CSS student to fill jars with brownie mix. Photo by Karla Kulyas.

The Benedictine Friends across Campus group began the spring semester with an ice cream social in January, followed in February by a beautiful Lenten Prayer Service prepared by Sister Mary Josephine and her Friends. At our March gathering, Sisters and students had great fun preparing brownies-in-a-jar. We got messy and had great fun doing it.



Sister Mary Josephine Torborg and her Benedictine Friends. Photo by Jessica Ellingson

Students delivered the finished product to families at the Steve O'Neil Apartments as they shared fellowship and a movie. We ended the semester's group events on Sunday, April 17 with brunch in the Heritage Dining Room where Sisters and students celebrated their year of friendship and honored those who are graduating. The festivities concluded with Sisters singing a special blessing over our students. What better way to celebrate Benedictine friendship!

Sisters Attend Announcement of New CSS President

Photo and story by Sister Therese Carson

On Friday, April 1, about 25 Sisters were present in the Benedictine Commons when it was announced that Dr. Colette McCarrick Geary was chosen as the 12th president of The College of St. Scholastica. She succeeds Dr. Larry Goodwin who is retiring after 18 years.

Sisters Mary Catherine Shambour and Kathleen Hofer served faithfully on the search committee, Sister Kathleen as co-chair. Our Community is very happy with their decision and welcomes Dr. Geary and her family to Duluth.



Sisters Lois Eckes and Danile Lynch attend the announcement ceremony

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Highlights, Continued

Shalom Spiritual Direction Reunion: Transformations and New Horizons

By Sister Jeanne Ann Weber

The 2015 two-year Shalom Spiritual Direction graduates had a reunion at the Monastery on Saturday, March 12, 2016, which was facilitated by Sister Jeanne Ann Weber, Sister Michelle Dosch, and Pastor Al Hendrickson. The Shalom program had focused on both transformation and information/study, designed to enable participants to become more attentive to the presence and workings of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This enables them to become more attentive to the Spirit at work in others, to become a compassionate listener and presence, to become God's vessel with a directee, spiritual companion, and/or within their families, work places, churches, and world. Other program goals were to develop a heightened awareness of the many and diverse ways God is present in and to the world and to grow in the awareness and development of personal gifts for the praise of God and building up of God's kingdom.

The morning began with an opening prayer about life as a journey, a sacred pilgrimage leading to life everlasting. Individuals shared words and experiences that spoke of their journeys and continued transformations leading to presence, compassion, healing, wholeness, awe, surprise, transcendence, and outreach. They shared experiences of deeper prayer, greater ability to be patient, to let go and let God in the challenging circumstances of life, awareness of God's presence during the day, experiencing greater peace, freedom, gratitude, joy, expanded hearts, and the ability to risk at deeper levels of faith, hope and love. They were more aware of God at work within them and through them. There was a greater realization that the little things, the little moments, are not little for in all we are called to love, which transforms ourselves and our world.

Photo by Sister Therese Carson



Some recent and past Shalom Graduates have become spiritual directors or spiritual companions. Some are in spiritual direction peer supervision groups, involved with group spiritual direction, 12-Step groups, and sponsoring, hospice, etc. Some have become more involved with their churches as staff or volunteers, working with children, high schoolers, and adults, including senior citizens. They are involved with faith sharing groups, ecumenical *Lectio Divina* groups (sacred reading of Sunday scriptures), grief groups, prayer groups, and use art, story, dance, and music in the spiritual journey. Some are involved with teaching,

giving workshops, and working individually or with teams to provide speakers and ongoing spiritual formation and education.

A couple former graduates have walked the Camino de Santiago – the Road to Santiago, the pilgrimage route in northern Spain which leads to the shrine/Cathedral of St. James. Many take up this route as a spiritual path or retreat for their growth – being open to how the Spirit may lead. A recent graduate and her two family members are now preparing for this pilgrimage in the fall.

The day closed with a sense of renewal, support, hope, joy, and blessings. There was a desire to have another reunion in the fall. One graduate has created a private Facebook group so we can connect and support each other. This will be an opportunity to post inspirational quotes, links to retreats or events that others may find interesting, book recommendations, prayer requests, etc....as the Spirit continues to move....

Ways of Being Benedictine

By Sister Edith Bogue

Benedictine monastic life is selling like hotcakes, at least in bookstores. When I began to explore monastic life, only a handful of popular-press books promoted the notion that 20th century people might be inspired by an ancient monastic *Rule* or the little-known monasteries in America. Esther de Waal's *Seeking God* and Sister Joan Chittister's *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily* were mainstays for laypeople attracted to Benedictine spirituality. Beyond them, most books were written by monastics for monastics, filled with references to obscure practices.

Something shifted at the end of the last century. Kathleen Norris' *Cloister Walk* was a bestseller for 23 weeks. A trickle and then a river of books followed: on Benedictine prayer, silence, hospitality, simplicity, and more. Early in this century, several monasteries opened their doors to reality TV shows; monks guided ordinary people, mostly unchurched, through a sudden immersion in monastic life. *Into Great Silence* won film awards and drew large audiences, surprising for a documentary about reclusive Carthusian monks.

The popularity of monasticism is exciting, but sometimes misses one element of Benedictine spirituality: it's not a solo endeavor. St. Benedict disparages the *sarabaites* and *gyrovagues* in his *Rule*, monks only loosely attached to a community or roving about doing as they please. His *Rule* is written for *cenobites* – “the strong kind of monks” – who “live in monasteries and serve under a rule and an abbot” (RB 1.13, 1.2). For Benedict, the common life is as much a part of the spiritual journey as prayer, work, and worship.

Benedictines listen for Christ's call in the needs, joys, quirks, and gifts of the members of the community. We make our profession of obedience (from Latin *ob*, toward + *audire*, to hear) to the *Rule*, to the prioress and other leaders, and to the common practice of this particular monastery. In doing so, we proclaim our belief and trust that henceforth Christ's call – both encouragement and challenge – will come to each of us through our Sisters.

Laypeople write these enthusiastic books precisely because they have encountered Christ in the midst of a particular monastic community. Like Judy Valente (*Atchison Blue*) or Carol Bonomo (*Humble Pie*), they come for a quiet day, a workshop, or a spiritual guide. They are drawn to learn and be part of the monastery's prayer, way of life, and spirit of the community.

There are many ways to share our Benedictine spirituality. Oblates promise to apply the *Rule* in their everyday lives. Benedictine Associates live with us, sharing our prayer and work for a time. Dozens of people volunteer at the Monastery; many more share our mission in our sponsored organizations. Countless people simply experience the quiet and peace of the Monastery. People far away connect with us through *Pathways* and our website. All are listening, with the Sisters, for Christ's voice, ready to respond with the “good zeal that leads to God and everlasting life” (RB 72.2). The Sisters hold you in our hearts and prayers.



Image by +Sister Mary Charles McGough © Illustrated Rule of St. Benedict, St. Scholastica Monastery, Duluth, MN

Una Jornada Llena de Bendiciones

(A Journey Full of Blessings)

Article and photos by Sister Lois Eckes and Sister Theresa Spinler



Sisters of Monasterio Santa Maria de Rauten. L to R: Sisters Paz Maria, Susana, Bernarda, Moira Macarena, Jeanette, Cecilia, Sylvia, Isolda, Alicia, Marcella, Victoria.

A truly tender and long anticipated dream was realized when we visited our beloved Twinning Community of Benedictine Sisters at the Monasterio Santa Maria in Rauten, Chile, and also traveled to Antofagasta where our Sisters served from 1963 to 1979. The days spent with our Sisters in Chile were replete with blessings that will forever have a treasured place in our hearts. Following are our personal reflections on this memorable journey, along with the pictures we've included (out of the hundreds of beautiful photos we have!).

Sister Theresa

Returning to Chile after 43 years filled me with excitement, expectancy, and a little trepidation. I had been told to expect tremendous changes and that was the truth.



Adriana with some of her Holstein collection

The three weeks, January 21 to February 10, 2016, in various parts of Chile flew by rapidly. We were blessed to have a friend, Adriana Rivera, who was able to drive us places, give us tours, and explain things. We were so blessed to stay with her in her house for a few days where we could view the orange orchards on the hillsides and even a pasture of Holstein cattle.

Being with our Benedictine Twinning Community was delightful and insightful. The 12 Sisters live a cloistered life, so it was a new experience for me to pray and live their schedule. They live very simple and holy lives filled with joy and great hospitality. I loved praying the Divine Office with them for they not only gathered frequently throughout the day to pray but everything was sung in Spanish, of course. They have beautiful voices and pray the psalms with such light and harmonic voices.

The orchards of oranges, mandarins, apples, avocados, grapes, walnuts, pecans, lovely flowers, and flowering bushes, etc. surround their monastery. Eating fresh fruit is such a treat, but, of course, this all requires a lot of manual labor on their part.

We did return to Antofagasta located in the Atacama Desert in the northern part of Chile where I had once lived. The city has grown immensely to around 3 million in population, stretching along the Pacific coast and climbing

up the Andean foothills. The city is filled with tall condominiums and cars. The school, *Collegio San Jose*, where I taught is really modernized. The last house that I had lived in is gone and another structure is there. Yet, I did recognize a few sites. I was surprised and happy to see solar panels on every street light. The sun is so plentiful and it is good to see it being used for clean energy.



Sisters Theresa, Moira, and Susana in orange orchard



Praying at St. Scholastica Shrine in the Cloister Garden



Sister Susana on "Murray"

As we were waiting in the Santiago airport to board our plane home, we experienced a 6.5 tremor which put us on high alert – a very interesting send-off. All in all it was a marvelous three weeks being with our Benedictine family, our friend Adriana, and enjoying the beauty of the country of Chile and its people.

Sister Lois

From the moment we stepped off the plane in Santiago where Sister Moira, Abbess of Monasterio Santa Maria, and our dear friend Adriana Rivera, were there to greet us, I felt as though we were being welcomed to another real, although as of yet unfamiliar, part of our Duluth Benedictine community. Yes indeed, they are our "Sisters from the South" and we are their "Sisters from the North," as we now like to lovingly reference ourselves. Each day spent with them, whether we were praying, sharing stories of our communities and their histories, partaking in a meal (in silence), working outdoors or indoors, or visiting other Benedictine communities within a two or three hour radius, gave me a deep appreciation for their goodness, generosity, and warm, genuine love.



Sisters dancing the Chilean cueca.



Sister Paz Maria and Sister Theresa dancing.

They are a contemplative Benedictine community living in the town of Rauten, near Quillota, Chile. Because they are cloistered, their ministry happens within the perimeters of the monastery, where people are invited to participate daily in their celebration of Eucharist and the seven Hours of the Divine Office and also to seek spiritual guidance and make retreats. The Sisters also host catechetical groups from the local parishes as well as other groups with a spiritual focus.



The monastery grounds cover approximately 40 to 50 acres on which they tend a variety of orchards. Some of their income is derived from the sale of their produce as well as from their homemade jams, cakes, cookies, and religious art works and articles sold in their small gift shop. We delighted in partaking of the fresh fruit and vegetables from their gardens and orchards, especially the oranges, mandarins, and melons.

I was moved by the beautiful simplicity of their lives and the genuine joy that exudes from within them. They pray hard, work hard, and make time for fun and rest. We had so many spontaneous

laughs as we navigated the waters of language. With the help of our Spanish English dictionaries, Sister Theresa's "resurrected" knowledge of Spanish, the occasional help of Adriana, and the amazing ability of Sister Moira and Sister Susana to speak some English, we did amazingly well.

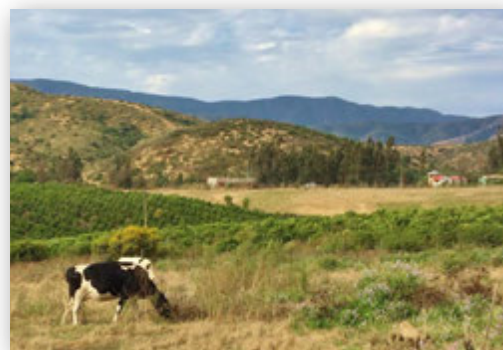
Above left: Sister Lois cracking walnuts from a local orchard. Right: Sister Theresa working in the Monastery garden



It was really difficult saying good-bye to our Sisters in Chile, not knowing when or whether we would ever see some of them again, especially their revered 94-year-old Sister Sylvia, one of their founding Sisters. In that short span of three weeks we discovered and experienced the beautiful deep bond of friendship and love that exists between us. It is a bond rooted in the life we share in Christ and as followers of St. Benedict, a bond which transcends both time and distance, a bond which makes our "twinning hearts" break open again and again with gratitude, joy, longing, and always love.



Monastery Chapel



One of endless pastoral scenes (view from Adriana's home)



Sisters out for a fun day



The Hidden Wellspring

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour

I smile whenever I walk down the corridors of The College of St. Scholastica or the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth and see posted, framed, or inscribed on their walls the Benedictine “values” to which these institutions subscribe. Although the number of Sisters in our sponsored institutions has sharply declined, we have been solicitous to see that our clientele, employees, and administrators are well informed about the history and motivation of the religious women who founded them. They, in turn, have proudly identified the values that they intend to emulate. We saw this recently when students in the College, given the opportunity to participate in the selection of their new president, grilled the candidates on their knowledge of Benedictine values in order to assure the continuance of these values.

St. Benedict, who lived in the sixth century, would be pleased to see people in the twenty-first century recognizing values of community, hospitality, respect, stewardship, justice, and love of learning as flowing from the *Rule* and the way of life he established. He might, however, question why no reference is made to the value – the virtue – on which these are based and to which he devoted the longest chapter of his *Rule*: Humility. The immediate objection raised whenever I mention the subject is that the cultural connotation of words frequently changes over the course of time. In our day “humility” implies being a doormat for people to stomp on at will – certainly not an aspiration!

One must certainly be aware of the time and cultural milieu in which a document was written and understand that it was intended for those who chose to devote their whole lives to seeking God. Nonetheless, I think there is more at play here. My hope is that Benedictine institutions will provide an opportunity for their followers to undertake a serious study of Chapter Seven of Benedict’s *Rule* along with all its Scriptural references, led by a seasoned Benedictine monastic, so they can discover the timeless truths it contains for today.

From the start, the inquirer must be willing to accept the Biblical foundations on which Benedict establishes his twelve steps of humility that lead to God and not object on grounds of political correctness to the first step, which requires that one must “keep the fear of God always before one’s eyes.” In other words, one must desire and seek a relationship with God. Upon this basis the subsequent stages or steps of humility will develop over time.

Most problematic for Americans, undoubtedly, are the sixth step by which “a monk is content with the lowest and most menial treatment and regards himself as a poor and worthless workman,” and the seventh by which “he is convinced that he is inferior to all and says ‘It is a blessing that you have humbled me.’” What do such tenets do to our consumer culture, our striving towards the American dream of success, fame, and fortune? Shouldn’t we want to realize our full potential? What do we owe to society? What qualities do we admire in great leaders? What are signs of American hubris? What’s wrong with wanting the best for ourselves? What’s wrong with becoming Number One?

Benedict’s chapter on Humility is the core curriculum in his “school of the Lord’s service,” for to those who strive for a meaningful life based on Gospel values it teaches who God is, who we are, and what our place is in the universe. Could there be any more important lessons to learn? Why do we resist learning humility when Jesus said, “Learn from me for I am meek and humble in heart” (Mt 11:29). Could it be that we have forgotten the basic paradoxes of our Christian faith: that to be great in God’s eyes we need to humble ourselves, give credit to God for whatever gifts or talents we have received, and use them to build up the kingdom? Let’s not hide this wisdom under a bushel. Any takers? If you would like information on how to obtain a copy of the *Rule* write to Sister Mary Catherine Shambour at mcshambour@duluthosb.org.



*Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and
whoever humbles himself shall be exalted (Luke 14:11; 18:14).*

Image by +Sister Mary Charles McGough; calligraphy by Meridith Schifsky,
Illustrated Rule of St. Benedict, © St. Scholastica Monastery, Duluth, MN

Sister Beverly Raway Attends Rome Renewal Program

In early April I had the privilege of traveling to Rome with Donna Loomis, legal counsel for the Benedictine Health System, to participate in the Ecclesiology and Spiritual Renewal Program for Health Care Leaders sponsored by the Catholic Health Association (CHA). This trip was a time for pilgrimage to holy sites, to be immersed in the history of Rome and the Church, to learn how the Church currently functions from officials of the curia and to be inspired by the message of mercy radiated with high energy by Pope Francis. There were 44 participants in the program, including nine women religious and 35 laypeople. Our group also included 26 guests and seven staff members from CHA.

On Sunday, Donna and I joined others for a spontaneous, self-guided walking tour where we absorbed the breathtaking beauty of Rome. We stopped at the Trevi Fountain to add our wishes to the water with the toss of a coin and visited several beautiful churches along the way. By lunchtime we arrived at the Piazza Navona where we began our quest to taste a different flavor of gelato every day. On our return we passed by the Coliseum and Roman forum and arrived back at our hotel just in time for the opening session of the first of many excellent conferences.

During the week, the whole group enjoyed a pilgrimage to Assisi, where Father Tom Nairn, OSF, made Saints Francis and Clare come alive for us. Donna and I also chose to join optional tours to the Basilica of San Clemente, the Catacombs of St. Sebastian, the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel. The whole group celebrated Mass in St. Peter's at the chapel dedicated to St. John Paul II.



Donna Loomis (left) and Sister Beverly at the Trevi Fountain

Photo by CHA member Brian Smith



Photo by Sister Beverly Raway

The high point of the week for me occurred on the day we went to St. Peter's for an audience with Pope Francis. We boarded buses early so that we could pass through security, now tightened because of the violence that occurred in Belgium just a few weeks before our trip. There was great enthusiasm in the square on this beautiful sunny day especially when a drum and bugle corps arrived with young people tossing bright blue flags. Our guides helped us to find seats near the lanes where Pope Francis was likely to pass, and we were rewarded for our early morning rising by being blessed not once but twice as Pope Francis passed by us. Each of us carried a lime green scarf with the logo of CHA emblazoned on it which we waved when our group was announced. After the audience we all scrambled

to find lunch, and by chance Donna and I were joined by a trio of Catholic men from Poland. In our interchange in broken English and a bit of German we were able to communicate the excitement of our mutual experience. I happily exchanged my scarf for one offered to me by our new Polish friends.

My impression, voiced by many others that day and after our other shared experiences, was of the overwhelming sense of the history and solidarity of the Catholic Church. The dedication of the health-care leaders who told their stories and shared their ideas helped me come to the conclusion that the Church and Catholic health care are in very good hands indeed. I'm grateful for this opportunity and thank Rocky Chapin and the Benedictine Health System for inviting me to participate.

Happy 90th Birthday to Sister Marie Thérèse Poliquin and Sister Grace Marie Braun

By Sister Therese Carson

Sister Marie Thérèse celebrated her 90th birthday on Sunday, November 22, 2015, at a dinner in the Monastery dining room with friends, family members, and her Community. Mary MacGillivray, one of Sister's "Friends Across Campus" who is in graduate studies at The College of St. Scholastica, played traditional Scottish music on her violin.



90 Years of Blessings!



Sister Grace Marie Braun celebrated her 90th birthday with the Community on March 15, 2016, at a lovely birthday dinner with her Benedictine Community in the Monastery dining room after Evening Prayer.

Photos by Sister Therese Carson

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

April 12, 2016, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery hosted some 40 of the 60 volunteers who have so loyally supported us throughout the past year, donating over 2,000 hours as drivers, musicians, Benet Hall visitors, and information desk and gift shop attendants. Honored especially this year were those who served five, ten, fifteen, and twenty-five years:

Deborah Jackson	5 years	Mary Bridget Lawson	10 years
Debra Waite	5 years	Sharon Rolle	10 years
Therese Campbell	10 years	Jude Collins	15 years
Marianne Connelly	10 years	Scott Junkert	25 years
Chris Ketelsen	10 years	Becky Urbanski	25 years

Patricia English, a long-time volunteer who died in November 2015, was remembered with a lovely tribute written by Sister Annella Wagner. Accepting a rose on Patricia's behalf was Shelley Robbie who spoke of Pat's love for the Sisters during her many years of volunteer service on Benet Hall.

Volunteer Co-coordinators Kathy Noble and Mary Tanner orchestrated arrangements for the dinner, and Sister Barbara Higgins served as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Kirsten Ryden of the Arrowhead Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) thanked the volunteers for their important work. Meridith Schifsky played the harp as we dined. After dinner the Two Harbors Ukulele Group (THUGs) performed, and Sisters and volunteers joined in, singing and dancing. We thank all who made this a wonderful evening and for all the volunteers who so enrich our lives.



Master of Ceremonies Sister Barbara Higgins telling a joke



Therese Campbell, Mary Bridget Lawson, Chris Ketelsen, and Marianne Connelly received ten-year pins from Sister Beverly Raway. Not pictured, Sharon Rolle.



Kirsten Ryden of the Arrowhead RSVP addressed the group.



Volunteer dinner attendees and Sisters



Deborah and Jeff Jackson danced to the THUG music.

Photos by Sister Therese Carson and Andi Therrien



Deborah Jackson received her five-year pin. Not pictured, Debra Waite



Scott Junkert just happened to have his harmonica along and joined in! Wonderful!



Meridith Schifsky played the harp for us.



Jude Collins received her 15-year pin from Sister Beverly Raway.



Sister Jeanne Ann and Sister Barb Higgins chewed up the floor.



Scott Junkert and Becky Urbanski received a gift for their 25 years of volunteer service.



The Two Harbors Ukulele Group (THUG) provided after-dinner entertainment.



Shelly Robbie accepted a tribute to Pat English.

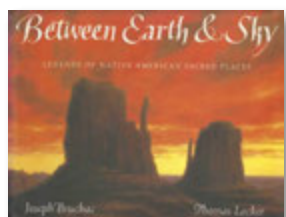
Books for Children and Young Adults

By Sister Sarah Smedman

Summer vacation. Often as children chorused “No more school, no more books,” I, and most of my friends, looked forward to leisurely days when we would go to the library, carry home an armload of books, and spend lazy afternoons on the porch rocker or a blanket on the grass, miles away in our imaginations in the thralls of a good book. We were the fortunate children of the world, of course, but we did need to have a vision of the world larger than our own, and perhaps summer vacations more than textbook learning during the school year helped create that vision in our imaginations. In the words of 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson:

There is no frigate like a book
To take us lands away
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing poetry.

This traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of toll;
How frugal is the chariot
That bears a human soul!



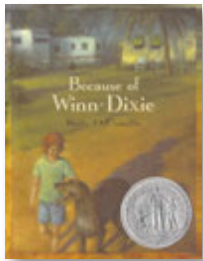
Joseph Bruchac's *Between Earth & Sky: Legends of Native American Sacred Places*, gorgeously illustrated by Thomas Locker, takes readers to sacred places of ten American tribes but only after reminding of us of a fundamental belief of Indian cultures: seven directions are significant to human life: East, South, West, and North; Earth and Sky; and the seventh, “harder to see, the direction within us all, the place that helps us see right and wrong and maintain the balance by choosing to live the good way.” The following books, in their diverse ways, not only offer children good, often funny stories of believable characters, but also in their own ways, without moralizing, take them into worlds larger than their own and help them to see a right way and a wrong and, so, to live the good way.



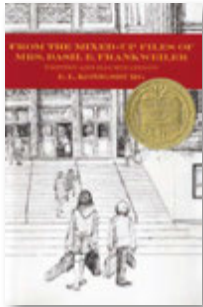
For pre-schoolers, *Madeleine*, the first of seven in a series by Ludwig Bemelmans is the story of “twelve little girls in two straight lines,” obviously loved and cared for by Miss Clavel. They walk everywhere into their city, Paris, France. In the background are sketches of discernible major Paris buildings (with a listing of them for adult story readers who may not recognize them). A delightful, simple story that introduces children's imaginations to one of the world's greatest cities.



Also a picture book, Barbara Cooney's *Miss Rumphius* is the story of the narrator's great-aunt Alice, who as a little girl learns from her grandfather that she, too, wants to grow up to travel to far away places; when she is old, to live by the sea; and, as grandfather admonishes her, to do something that makes the world more beautiful. Alice travels the world, she lives by the sea, and as a little old lady, not only does she make the world more beautiful by planting acres and miles of lupine, but passes on to her great niece the charge that she too—and by implication all children—must do something to make the world more beautiful.



Readers cannot help but love India Opal Buloni and her adopted dog Winn-Dixie, Claudia and Jamie Kincaid, and Maniac Magee—all Newbery winners. In Kate DiCamillo's *Because of Winn-Dixie*, the motherless Opal, lonely in a town where her father is the new preacher, rescues Winn-Dixie from the grocery store, and together they make friends with other lonely eccentrics of all ages. She grows to love her father and to accept the fact that, though her mother will not return, her life can be full.



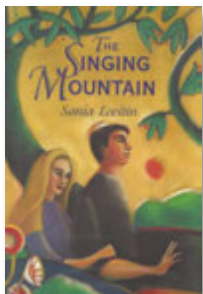
In Elaine Konigsburg's *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil Frankweiler*, “bored with being straight-A Claudia Kincaid” and the monotony of life, she enlists her brother Jamie, who is a “gambler and a miser” to run away with her to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, where they escape detection and live for days, sleeping in old canopied beds, visiting gallery after gallery, learning something new every day, venturing out for inexpensive food, and visiting the New York Public Library in an attempt to solve a mystery about a famous sculpture of an angel. After a week they return home, via the estate of Mrs. Basil Frankweiler, feeling quite “different.”



Jerry Spinelli's title character, *Maniac Magee*, orphaned by a train wreck, runs from the home of his Aunt and Uncle, who never speak to each other, and keeps running to Two Mills, which is divided by race into the East Side and the West Side. The Eastenders call themselves black, though Maniac can find only “gingersnap and light fudge and dark fudge, acorn and butter rum and cinnamon burnt orange. But never licorice.” Though he feels at home there, Maniac is unwelcomed by some because he is white, although he “looked himself over and came up with at least seven different shades and colors right on his own skin, not one of them being what he would call white.” He keeps running. The Westenders Maniac meets, jealous of his legendary prowess, want to war with him. After Maniac runs through a series of friendly and unfriendly encounters, he brings the East and the West together and achieves his primal desire, a permanent address, 728 Sycamore Street on the East side.



Two novels about a teenager's religious quest: In Cynthia Rylant's *A Fine White Dust*, budding eighth-grader Pete, who has been going to church without his parents since fourth grade, is mesmerized that June by an itinerant Preacher Man who invites Pete to move on with him. Ready to leave his parents and home, Pete is brokenhearted when the preacher leaves town with a young girl. Disillusioned, Pete smashes his ceramic cross. However, he has not completely lost his faith. As he gathers the “many pieces and too much dust” in a paper bag, he knows he is just ready for something whole.”



In Sonia Levitin's *The Singing Mountain*, high school graduate Mitch Green, a nominal Jew only, unwillingly goes to Israel with classmates for the summer. There Judaism absorbs him. When his group returns home, Mitch stays to study and to live the faith, much against his family's will. When his mother and cousin Carlie visit to persuade him to return home, Carlie understands that Mitch is on a journey and tells him not to “get off the track.” They go back to California, but Mitch remains in Israel “to take time to bring the vision to life.”

Dr. Sarah Smedman, Professor of Children's and Young Adult Literature, Ret. The University of North Carolina Charlotte and Minnesota State University Moorhead, Former President and Board Member of the International Children's Literature Association

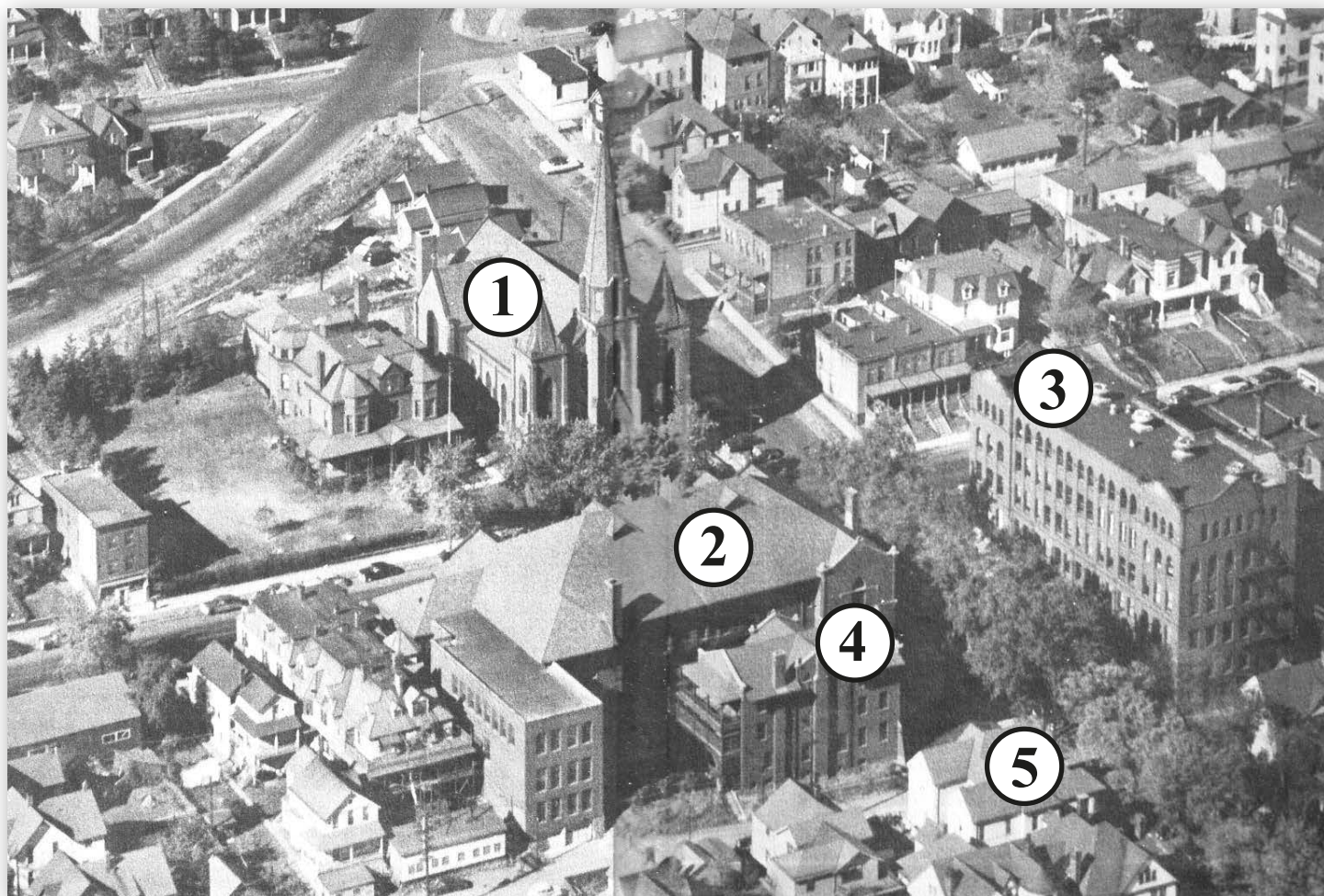
ECHOES FROM THE PAST

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour

If you have ever visited an historical site and tried to imagine what took place there, you would undoubtedly look for clues. If none are available or if they had been destroyed, you would need to consult survivors or eyewitnesses, as long as they are available. One such clueless site exists in Duluth: the miniscule gravel parking lot lining Second Avenue West at its intersection with Fourth Street. Since I once spent nine years of my early professional life there, I would like to relate a part of its history before it is forgotten.

While Duluth is currently grappling with the issue of building a new high school, it might be a surprise to many that on that site once stood for fifty-six years (1907-1963) Cathedral Senior High School, a four-story, private Catholic senior high school with gymnasium, locker rooms, library, offices, and twenty classrooms complete with all accoutrements for providing a comprehensive, top-notch secondary education of the day. In addition, a few blocks to the east stood the thriving Lincoln Junior High School and the iconic brownstone Central High School. (“Where have all the children gone, long time passing?”)

To understand the story one must know something of the important role played by the Catholic community in the cultural history of early Duluth, particularly as clustered around the Sacred Heart Cathedral on Fourth Street, consecrated in 1892. (See below, number 1) As the community grew, it strove to preserve the faith of its children by providing a Catholic education for all. Thus, by 1904, the parish constructed its second and far larger building, Sacred Heart School (number 2) with its impressive 1,200-seat auditorium and classrooms for both its own parish grade school and a Cathedral High School open to students from all parishes. Since the Benedictine Sisters had established themselves in Duluth by 1892, they were called upon to be the educators, and in the school’s sixty-three year history (1904-1967) some 250 Sisters served there.



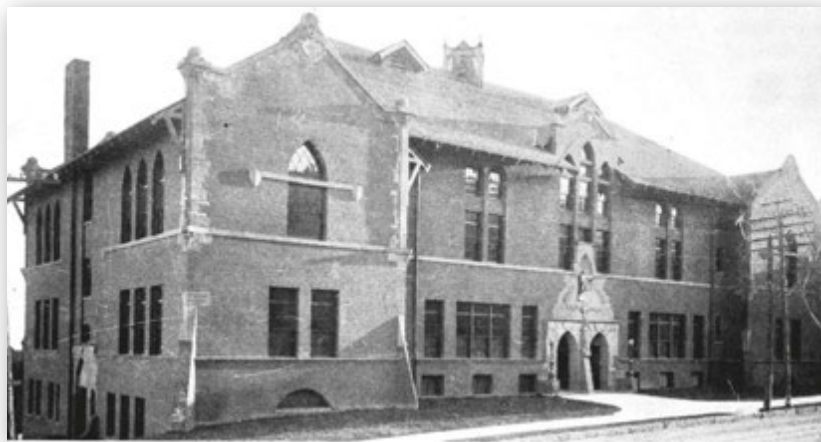
1953 Cathedral High School Beacon

A major development took place in 1907, when four Brothers of the Christian Schools who had been teaching boys in the high school section were invited by the diocese to staff a separate boys' high school built on Fourth Street (number 3) and were provided with new spacious living quarters in the red brick building on 2nd Avenue West, now "Alicia's Place" (number 4) for women in transition. (The Sister teachers all walked to school from their residence near St. Mary's Hospital.) The Christian Brothers Boys School opened in 1910 and continued until 1942 when the Brothers left Duluth and the building became the coed Cathedral Senior High School staffed by a few Diocesan priests, laymen, and, primarily, the Benedictine Sisters, who along with the Sisters teaching in the grade and junior high school then moved into the former Brothers' residence and an additional rented "yellow" house just below it (number 5). Such was the arrangement for the religious faculty when I was assigned to the school in 1954 to serve as librarian and Junior English teacher and did so for the last nine years of the school's existence.

What was school life like for the students and teachers at Cathedral Senior High School in the mid-fifties that made it such a memorable experience? Alumni will tell you it was the very unique school spirit that developed between the faculty and students all confined within one small area. As Gay Cavallero Trachsel and her husband James put it, "We were all one family: priests, Sisters, and students all working together." Valuing a Catholic education, students came from both the poor and the rich sections of town by walking or public transportation. Tuition was minimal so long as priests and Sisters were willing to work for a stipend in lieu of salary – \$50 a month in the 1950s when it was available, and sometimes it was not. To my knowledge no one was turned away for inability to pay. When they became of age, students could earn their tuition through their summer jobs.



Sacred Heart Cathedral's School (c. 1914)



Christian Brothers' School, later the Cathedral Senior High School (c. 1914)

The very building itself may have contributed to our closeness. It stood like a matchbox on edge on top of the sidewalk, with only about two feet separating it from the neighboring apartment building – referred to affectionately by biology instructor Sister Emilene (Ethel) Radtke as "our north campus." There was no place for anyone to hide or to be ignored. Filled to capacity with several hundred students, there was no wiggle room, nor was there a cafeteria. Students brought their bag lunches which were stored in their homeroom desks till lunchtime, presenting quite a temptation to students occupying those desks as classes rotated. One entire wall of the building was filled with windows, all facing west and the blinding afternoon sun. The one entrance led to the wooden staircase leading to all floors. The heating system, already close to fifty years old, provided us with steam heat that in winter would announce its coming through the radiators sounding like the Anvil Chorus which prompted one boy to say, "Joe, I'm so glad you paid your tuition." Heat was sometimes skimpy on the fourth floor where students in art class sometimes wore



Sacred Heart Cathedral (1892)

Continued on page 24

ECHOES FROM THE PAST, continued

mittens. Yet all this was borne with a family spirit of fun and pride in their school. Parents were as supportive as they could be, realizing the school was doing all it could under the circumstances to provide a solid education for their students at an affordable cost.

The academic standards were high, but teachers were always eager to assist. The curriculum included both college preparatory and practical courses such as “commercial” subjects and home economics. Religion classes were required each year and taught by priests on the faculty. Discipline was enforced, sometimes for boys even by paddle in the office of the Principal, Father Michael Hogan, who was both revered and feared. Weekly faculty meetings took place after school hours in the library to discuss overall progress. Though the school scored high, in the 90th and 95th percentiles in all areas of the yearly Iowa Tests of Educational Development, Father Hogan’s decision was to drop the tests saying, “Something is wrong with the tests. We aren’t that good!” (How many schools today would hide their achievements?)

Another source of pride was the accomplishments of the boys’ athletic teams. Without benefit of their own practice fields, football and hockey teams had to rent space, and schools originally shared one, and later two athletic fields. The Hilltoppers were always a team to contend with and won many a competition supported by their cheerleaders and band in their black and gold uniforms and the Sisters cheering them on. Girls had a very active Girls Athletic Association, with Sister advisors whom they loved, and could compete with girls’ basketball and volleyball teams from other schools in their own building. The GAA also helped with fund raising for various needs in the school. Plays and band concerts were held in the junior high’s auditorium and proms off campus. Basketball games were held in the school’s gymnasium as well as “sock hops” during which the spectator balcony above shook with vibrations from the jitterbugging and polka-dancing crowd below. In addition to required religion classes taught by priests on the faculty, students also had a one-day religious retreat each year and opportunities to participate in religious services at the Cathedral. One required activity in Lent was for students to attend the Stations of the Cross on Friday afternoon at the close of the school day. Because some preferred not to do so, Assistant Principal Sister Margaret James Laughlin posted Sisters at the front door and back fire escape to watch for possible stragglers. Imagine the surprise of the boy slithering down the fire escape to find a Sister in black waiting for him. One ingenious lad had devised an escape route that led somehow from the boys’ locker rooms through a tunnel leading to a manhole in the middle of Second Avenue. Brilliant, unless a car should be coming down the hill!

Such were the joys and experiences of the Sisters who taught in the “old” Cathedral High building. Today of their number remain Sister Ramona Ewen who taught “commercial” subjects, Sister Margaret James Laughlin, Assistant Principal, Sister Johnnetta Maher, home economics, Sister Sarah Smedman who taught English for one year, and myself. From the Grade and Junior High School are Sister Agnes Alich and Sister Mary Christa Kroening, the last Sister to remain after the school closed. We often talk and laugh about those days. Sister Jane Casey, Sister Barbara Higgins, and Sister Mary Rae Higgins recall their own student days at the building when the example and dedication of the Sisters inspired them to enter the Community.

Another story to be related someday would tell about the convent life of the many Sisters who taught in the Cathedral schools and lived in the two houses on Second Avenue, trying to balance being faithful to the practices of a vowed religious monastic community of the pre-Vatican II Church while preparing vibrant teenagers to take their places in the rapidly changing post-war world. However, the winds of change were soon to affect both their lives and that of their students, for in 1963 the Diocese sought to provide an expanded, updated modern co-instructional high school on Rice Lake Road and the old Senior High was vacated. Another story for another time.

As we contemplate what is best for high school students today, we might ponder what was the secret that made the “old Cathedral” so effective with so little. A final example of how it was loved might come from some members of its last graduating class. In the summer of 1963, after the building was vacated and stood empty, a truck coming down Second Avenue lost control of its brakes and crashed into a corner of the school’s front entrance knocking out a huge chunk of the building’s brownstone. Tom Specht and a few other graduates rescued the stone and carried it with them to parties that summer, standing around it and singing their school song, “Cheer, Cheer for Cathedral High . . . !”

Benedictine Center of Spirituality

By Sister Pauline Micke, photos by Sister Therese Carson

On December 8, 2015, Pope Francis proclaimed the “Year of Mercy.” We began to hear his theology and spirituality and, through presentations and retreats, to bring these themes to life to help people understand and live them. Pope Francis calls us to live and bring others the love, mercy, compassion, and healing that Jesus brought.

Our Lenten retreat used the Scriptural stories of “The Prodigal Son” and the “Woman Taken in Adultery” to assist people through “Lent: A Journey of Mercy, Forgiveness, and Liberation.” We heard, reflected, and prayed about how Jesus empowers others to change and be transformed by love and forgiveness—not judgment. This is the mission Jesus entrusted to us.



Father Steve Ulrick (left) and participants in the Lenten retreat

Our Spring Retreat used “The Seven First Words of Jesus and the Resurrection Call to Wholeness.” The facilitators had us walk with the Risen Jesus. With each word we looked at key aspects of our lives: What is the grace I seek? In order for connections/relationships to happen, we have to allow ourselves to be seen. What is taking up so much of my concern? What gets in the way of our peace? Above all, we must remind ourselves of our belovedness—God loves us! We learned ways to transform our pain—to unclench our fists and to believe we are worthy of love and belonging.



Beth Pellin Kaiser (left) and Kerry Sopoci (right) lead participants in a walk with the Risen Christ.

Please Pray for the Following Deceased Family and Friends

Margaret Paterson 10/14/2015
Gertrude Finke 1/23/2016
Franna Kahl Pampy 2/19/2016
Sister Mary Luke Kahl's sister
Margaret Likar 3/20/2016

Mary Rayn Seitz 4/17/2016
Joyce Roginski Boman 4/14/2016
Bernis Bergren 4/30/2016
Louise Jodocy Carlson 5/13/2016
Sister Theresa Jodocy's sister

In Loving Memory



Baking bread with students

Photo by Andi Therrien



Photo by Dave Ballard

CSS Homecoming – “Sister Mary Touchdown”

Sister Mary Rochefort, OSB **September 13, 1940 – February 9, 2016**

Sister Mary (Adriette) Rochefort, 75, died February 9, 2016, at St. Scholastica Monastery. She was in the 56th year of her monastic profession. Born on September 13, 1940, the daughter of Amie and Mable (Robare) Rochefort, she was the youngest of fifteen children. Before buying a dairy farm in Fayette, Michigan, her father started out as a commercial fisherman on Lake Michigan, which Mary likened to the work of Jesus; her office had an old fishing net stretched along one wall as a reminder of her roots.

She entered St. Scholastica Monastery as Sister Adriette in September 1958 (later resuming her baptismal name), professed her Perpetual Vows in 1963, and celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2010. She earned a BA in Education from The College of St. Scholastica, an MA in Private School Leadership from St. Thomas University, and a Certificate in Pastoral Studies from Catholic Theological Union. For 35 years she served as teacher and principal in Catholic Elementary Schools in the Duluth Diocese, St. Cloud, and Minneapolis. Mary was an excellent organizer and facilitator, a clear communicator, adaptable and willing to compromise, generous, and friendly. She loved her students and worked well with colleagues, parents, and parish pastors. She understood the aims of the Catholic School system and knew that parents expected their children to receive a sound education that integrated family values and religious beliefs with active participation in the liturgy.

Each winter Sister Mary baked bread with children to prepare them for their first reception of the Body of Christ. She directed the new Sisters in Initial Formation where she brought a mature perspective on monastic life, and served in Mission Integration at The College of St. Scholastica. She organized the Benedictine Friends across Campus, where students and Sisters put into service the Benedictine value of Peace and Justice.

Mary brought Sisters together with homemade pizza and venison dinners. She loved our cabin at Lake Placid where she relaxed, prayed by the water, and fished. Her last trip was a pilgrimage to the Abbey of Monte Cassino in Italy where St. Benedict led his monks with love and humility. Five hundred years later Mary, too, was steadfast in her faith that God is my rock and my strength. At her funeral Mass the presider Father Charles Flynn, who had been pastor when Sister Mary was school principal at St. Leo's in Hibbing, recalled her love of eagles, commenting, “she saw herself rising above life's storms, like eagles fixing their wings – to soar.”

Sister Mary was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters Evelyn Parker, Betty Jean Rochefort, Stella Plante, and Rose Ann Castine, and her brothers Leon, Leslie, Norman, Eli, Stanley, and Ivan. She is survived by her brother Richard; her sisters Ellen McGuire, Lorna Cutler, and Ione Collins; her beloved nephews and nieces; many colleagues, former students, and friends; and her Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.



At the Benedictine Health Center mid 1980s



Sister Armella with newborn and new mother

Sister Armella Oblak, OSB ***October 12, 1927 – March 22, 2016***

Sister Armella Oblak, 88, died peacefully March 22, 2016, at the Benedictine Health Center. She was in her 68th year of Monastic Profession. She was born Dolores Regina in Soudan, Minnesota, the sixth of Frank and Mary Sophie (Erchul) Oblak's nine children. She entered St. Scholastica Monastery on January 6, 1946, made her First Monastic Profession on July 11, 1947, and her Perpetual Monastic Profession on July 11, 1950.

Sister Armella took seriously the call to be a hospitable presence to others. She taught 2nd and 3rd grade children at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Duluth and 5th through 8th grade at St. Thomas in International Falls. Attending college part-time, she graduated with a B.S. in Nursing at The College of St. Scholastica in 1957 and worked in health care until retirement. She began as nurse (later Head Nurse) in Labor and Delivery at St. Mary's Hospital in Duluth, where her devoted care inspired many mothers to name their daughters "Armella." She left to become Director of Nursing at St. Joseph's Hospital in Brainerd, returned home to Duluth to teach Nursing at The College of St. Scholastica, and left again to be Assistant Administrator at Hibbing General Hospital.

In 1978 Sister Armella helped to plan and open the Benedictine Health Center in Duluth and served as its first administrator. She became the first President/CEO of the Benedictine Health System Long-Term Care in the Dakotas and advocated on behalf of the long-term care providers in North Dakota. Her advocacy bore fruit when the North Dakota legislature voted to improve funding for the long-term care providers.

Sister Armella will be remembered for her hospitable personality, which served the Community and guests during her time as Director of Hospitality at the Monastery. Sister Dorene King, her special Sister Friend, remembers her with deep love and gratitude. "She freed my spirit with her song, dance, laughter, and humor, and through her mirroring monastic living to me. Many evenings we walked and danced down the cloister walk and through Tower Hall and stopped to talk with students and lighten their stress. She loved to sing with others, and she taught me Benedictine hospitality: to include all in a conversation, stay aware of others' needs, and advocate on their behalf. She taught me that it does no good to worry for, as she said, 'It puts cross lines on the face and dissipates charm.'"

Sister Armella was preceded in death by her brothers Frank and Cy and her sisters Mimi (Mary Veronica Vizanko), Julia (Vogt), Rosalie Maxine (Aschenbach) and Anna Mae (Twitty). She is survived by her sister Teresa Braatz of Benson, Arizona, and her brother Dennis Oblak of Bracketville, Texas, by nieces, nephews, and many friends, and her Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.

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*There is something hidden
within creation that
longs to be opened,
to just be.*

— Sister Ann Marie Wainright