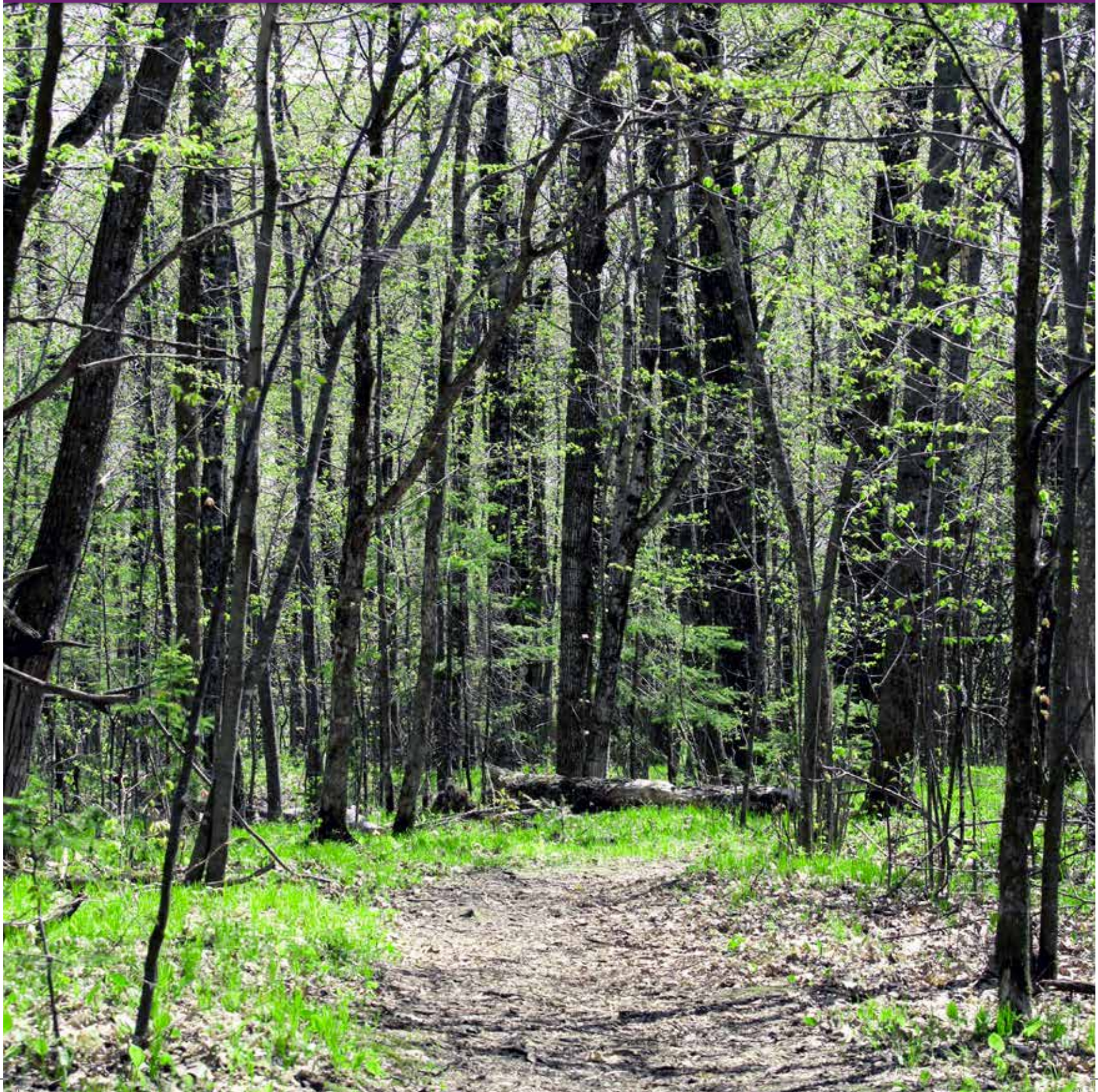


# PATHWAYS



*Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters, Duluth, Minnesota Vol. 30, No. 2 Lent 2019*





# Pathways

## NEWSLETTER

of the Benedictine Sisters

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## Dear Friends of the Monastery,

In Lent this year we read from Cycle C in the Church calendar. The Gospel readings come primarily from Luke with the major narratives of Holy Week from John. Our Lenten journey told through the eyes of these evangelists is one of turning and returning, about putting things right.

On the First Sunday of Lent, in Luke 4:1-13, the invitation on our journey is to turn away from the temptation to see the world as circling around ourselves, to turn away from hunger for the material that deprives us of nourishment from the spiritual. We are called to reject the gods of our own choosing, and the power to control our lives at the expense of others.

On the Second Sunday of Lent, in Luke 9: 28b-36, we go with the disciples to Mount Tabor to turn toward Jesus in his transfiguration. On Tabor our faith comes alive as we hear the words from the cloud: "This is my beloved son, listen to him." We and the disciples are prepared in this encounter to face the trials that are ahead, our own paschal mystery. We need to put away the temptation to stay with mountain top experiences of joy and visions of glory. We come down from the mountain with Jesus and enter into the pain of a world that needs to be seen with the eyes of love.

On the Third Sunday of Lent, in Luke 13:1-9, we are presented with the story of the fig tree and invited to turn away from rash judgment and premature assumptions. The fig tree bears the promise of new life if we allow it to grow another season. We believe in the promise that God's life will grow within us and even in those we would judge as unworthy or outside the boundaries of redemption.

We can relate to the Prodigal Son in all of us as we read the gospel of the Fourth Sunday, Luke 1:1-3, 11-32. In his story we are invited to admit our faults and return to the God who takes us back when we have forgotten our true inheritance: the unconditional love of the Father. Our God lifts us up even before we know the full depth of the ways in which we have failed to honor our heritage.

In the story of the woman taken in adultery on the Fifth Sunday, in John 8:1-11, Jesus invites us to turn from sin, to go our way not worrying about how others judge us, but also writes in the sand to remind us not to throw stones in our judgment of others. Turning from sin we thank God for loving us as we are.

Through Palm Sunday and Holy Week, as we hear Luke 19: 28-40 in the Procession with palms and Luke 22:14-23:56 in the reading of the Passion, we follow Jesus as his followers turn toward and then turn away from him. He is honored with palm branches of peace, as the "king who comes in the name of the Lord," and then rejected and crucified by those who see him as a threat to their power. Those who love him pretend they do not know him when he is condemned. In John 18:36, our Messiah King reminds us "My kingdom is not of this world." Our invitation as his disciples is to turn this world into that kingdom.

We are moved through stages on the journey with Jesus from the desert of doubt and temptation to the mount of transfiguration, to the sorrow of the hill and the Cross, to the astonishment of the empty tomb and the joyful recognition of Jesus on the road to Emmaus. As we journey the paschal mystery with Jesus through Lent, may we allow the stories, the scenes, a word or phrase, to take on new meaning as if we have heard them for the first time. Blessings on your Lenten journey.

Lovingly in Christ,

*Sister Beverly*  
Sister Beverly Raway, OSB



# Lent for Troubled Times

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

*“Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, weeping and mourning; rend your hearts and not your garments and return to the Lord your God” (Joel 2:12).*

On March 6, Christians around the world will gather in faith communities to receive a blessing as we begin six weeks of prayer and penitence in preparation for Easter, to fittingly celebrate Christ’s resurrection and our own. I suspect that many of us are entering this season with a special sense of urgency. I profoundly hope that it will bring about needed changes not only for ourselves but for our families, our nation, and our Church. Some theologians say we are facing our greatest crisis since the Reformation. Will we accept the challenges to reform? It is my hope and prayer that this Lenten season will be a wake-up call for all the Church, particularly our own American Catholic Church, to repent and make a concerted effort to reform, as the citizens of ancient Nineveh did on hearing the prophecy of Jonah, or as our own nation did after being attacked in World War II. Our failure to reform now could be our downfall.

Before we begin our own Lenten journey, we need to look at our circumstances and ask, “Who is responsible for this sad state of affairs, and what can I do about it?” If we are honest, our response might echo that of Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Buddhist pacifist when asked who started the Vietnamese War. “I did,” he responded. Since we welcomed the new dignity given us when the Second Vatican Council proclaimed that we and not just the Church hierarchy are the People of God, we also share in the negligence and permissiveness that brought us disgrace, scandals, and mass defections from the Church. Our leaders come out of us and share our failings.

In a way, we are victims of our own success story: we were a struggling Church of immigrants that, over time, became prosperous, privileged, and respected – and we knew it! Once we accepted the acclaim of a nation, we adapted to its values. Before long, American Catholics, both laity and clergy, began espousing laissez-faire attitudes toward sexual and other mores of the culture. This led to the cover-up crisis we now must deal with. Before casting accusing fingers at others, we need to examine our own values.

Seasoned Catholics like myself might recall an era when Catholics scrupulously observed the Lenten Fast, stores and businesses closed on Good Friday, and crowds filled the church for Stations of the Cross and Confession. We often lived in ghetto communities of our own faith, whereas now our diverse neighborhoods connect us with the whole world. Living in what some call the greatest nation on earth comes with its benefits, but it also brings challenges to our integrity as Christians. Examining our consciences now takes on a whole new dimension. Are we ready for this?



*Who is responsible? We are.*

The saddest reaction we could make is to claim that the situation is too far gone and that nothing can be done to make any difference, and then to sit back and demonize those who are supposedly causing the problems. It is not helpful for us to close our ears to the truth and narrow our focus to our own concerns, to save our own souls while all around our former securities are collapsing. Where are we to turn? The answer lies within us, for the only way to bring about change is to have a change of heart.

While Scripture called the entire assembly to a time of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, the prophets also warned against outer display without inner conversion (Isaiah 58:1-9) and against pursuing a personal asceticism disconnected from social needs. Jesus offered the best way to begin conversion: Go into a

room, shut the door and pray to the “Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you” (Matthew 6:6). Here is something everyone can do. Even busy people can find ten minutes a day for this. Each of us must – and eventually will – connect to that space within us where God dwells and where we come to know ourselves. In a world bombarded with images telling us what we must do for ourselves, it is by openly calling on God, admitting our weaknesses, and begging God’s help that we will truly come to know His love and be able to hear His gentle words speaking to our hearts.



*A Cambodian child scavenges for food scraps in a garbage dump.*

As we each place ourselves before God, especially in a time of crisis, we must assess our own circumstances, determine how we may be contributing to the larger problem, and discern how we can be of assistance. The evening news might serve as our best examination of conscience. Why does America have the highest rate of killings and suicides? Why are we working harder and harder while the number of hungry poor increases? Why are young people abandoning the Church? Why do we, at one-fiftieth of the world’s population, account for one-half of the solid waste? Why do we consume one-fourth of the world’s oil? Why do a tenth of the world’s people face life-threatening hunger while our grocery stores throw away a third of all the food we produce? We discard plastic bags without thinking while the mass of them in the Pacific is now three times the size of Texas and killing sea life. Is God pleased with what we have done with the beautiful gifts of creation? Are we concerned about the devastation caused by climate change or about the three million displaced people seeking a place to live? These might be starting points for reflection, for one day God will



ask us what we did about them. (See Matthew 25:31-46)

Without meaning to preach to the choir – the good people who are concerned and who are striving to make a difference – we can all find ways to do more, to gently invite others to collaborate in bringing about change, to help relieve the waste and suffering in our world. Space does not permit listing all the ways to assist our conversion, but they include

joining together in the Mass and Sacraments and meditating upon the daily Scripture readings for Lent. These provide us with the essence of Christ’s teaching and example and will lead us to a change of heart. In the words of Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr, “Unless Christians rediscover the bigger heart and bigger mind of the mystical and contemplative tradition, the church will be unable to make positive change in the world or reform itself.”

Let us make this Lent the decisive one.



# Initial Religious Formation

by Sister Donna Schroeder, Director of Formation

No one enters community ready for monastic life. We may bring with us narrow mindsets, unconscious biases, and secular values. Initial religious formation is the process that transforms us for consecrated life. Its methods have changed over the centuries.

In the 6th century St. Benedict of Nursia set down a path for new members entering a community. Chapter 58 of his Rule, *On Receiving New Members*, begins: “Do not grant newcomers to the monastic life an easy entry.” Reasoning from Scripture, he would “test the spirits to see if they are from God” (1 John 4:1) and let hopeful applicants wait at the door for a while. “If at the end of four or five days he has been patient in bearing his harsh treatment and difficulty of entry, and has persisted in the request, then he should be allowed to enter and stay in the guest quarters for a few days.” Now the knock is symbolic and the wait brief, especially on cold days.

If the applicant perseveres, the Rule continues, he or she may enter the novitiate. Novices are put into the care of a “senior chosen for a skill in winning souls,” who looks after the novices with careful attention. “The concern must be whether the novice truly seeks God and shows eagerness for the Work of God, for obedience and for trials.” An eagerness for obedience and trials may seem strange, yet they are a common and inescapable part of life wherever we live. What is being tested is resilience: the ability to recover quickly from difficulties.

Benedict also asks for transparency during formation. There were to be no surprises. “The novice should be clearly told all of the hardships and difficulties that lead us to God.” Community life within the monastery is not easy: it is both our greatest blessing

and greatest challenge. We have the support and good example of others, but we must also live with their shortcomings and, most painfully, with our own limitations. Holding on to the pain of being misunderstood, ignored, or given distasteful tasks is a barrier to healthy communal life and an impediment to a loving relationship with God.

Being a director of novices would be an impossible task without the example and wisdom of community

members who live out the Rule in obedience to the prioress. Benedict set down that the whole Rule should be read to the novice three times during the next year. Then if the novice “after due reflection ... promises to observe everything and to obey every command, let her then be received into the community.” Nowadays, part of the Rule or a commentary on it is read aloud each day at Evening Prayer so that the whole Community benefits from being reminded what they have promised.

Over the centuries since Benedict, there were many variations on the length of the novitiate, but in the 16th century the Council of Trent made the length one full year for all consecrated religious. This is called the *canonical novitiate*. Some communities add a second year before the novice is permitted to profess vows. Canon (Church) law prohibits more than a two-year novitiate.

At one time the novitiate was the sole preparation, but in the 19th century Pope Pius IX mandated a period of at least three years after the novitiate before perpetual vows. An initial ‘postulancy’ after entry was later added to prepare for the novitiate. This sequence – postulancy, novitiate, temporary profession, and finally perpetual profession – became the standard for many religious orders, beginning in



*Kathleen Del Monte knocks on the door prior to the Rite of Affiliation.*

the 19th century.

In many ways the lives of monastics in America differed from the norms in Europe. As they came to America, missionaries found the old way of life in European monasteries at odds with the realities of the American frontier. In 1846 Boniface Wimmer led a small group of monks from Bavaria to Pennsylvania, to care for the spiritual needs of German immigrants. Wimmer then asked a convent in Eichstätt, Bavaria, to send Sisters to teach the immigrants' daughters, and promised they would be able to maintain enclosure. In 1852 Benedicta Riepp arrived with two others, the first women Benedictines in America.

Conditions on what was still the frontier must have been a cultural shock, but these hardy women persevered and drew many women to join them. Enclosure proved impossible in the crowded conditions, but rather than looking back with regret they established schools, hospitals, and orphanages, and as the frontier moved westward Sisters followed it. New members were hurried quickly into ministry with little initial monastic formation. Their brief times of prayer sustained them in their heavy labor. It could be said that the Benedictine motto *ora et labora* (prayer and work) had become *ora et labora et labora*.

Individuals who directed newer members during this period had been trained through their own experience of religious life and the example of those with whom they shared their lives. As life became easier, they were able to give more attention to initial and ongoing formation of community members. By the 1950s monastic life had stabilized and it was easy to assume things would always be as they had become. Communities were still growing, though at a slower rate, and their ministries were still expanding.

A woman who entered the monastery at that time put on the uniform of a postulant. She was guided by a postulant mistress, who in turn was prepared through her own life in Community. She was not

to talk to lay people, novices, or professed sisters without permission. There was no radio, television, or personal expense money. With few distractions she quickly grew familiar with the *horarium* or prayer schedule and learned where and when to maintain silence. She rose for prayer early in the morning and paused for prayer throughout the day. She did manual labor, studied, and attended classes at college and monastery. Daily recreation might include softball, ice skating, or conversing while mending clothing.

After six or more months as postulant, if she chose to remain and was accepted by the community, she entered the novitiate. She was given the same religious habit as professed Sisters but with a white veil. As novice she was even more isolated than postulants. She studied religious life in greater depth and took active roles in communal prayer. The novice mistress who oversaw her prayer, work, and study was chosen based largely on a reputation of being a reliable community member.

During these first two years the new monastic learned that her time belonged to God under the direction of the community. Life was a matter of prayer and work, and study was the major form of leisure. Silence provided a context for frequent prayer and a focus on God. She learned decorum which was a challenge for some. Her sense of humor helped her cope with her own lapses and those of others.



*A small selection of the many books that help new members prepare for monastic life.*

At the end of her novitiate, she and the community determined whether she would stay or leave. The next step was to make temporary vows for three years that could be renewed for up to three more years. During the three years she was closely watched to see how she juggled the work of fulltime ministry or study with the obligations of Community life. After three years, if she was

deemed adequately prepared she made her perpetual profession and went into full time ministry, or if not she renewed her temporary profession and continued to prepare for ministry.

As time passed communities began to recognize the

importance of formal training for those directing new members in formation; the mentoring work of other Sisters was no longer considered adequate preparation. Initial formation continued but was brought into line with the ongoing formation expected for the fully professed members of the community. They might have a class in addition to the annual retreat, with spiritual reading and meditation supplementing Community Prayer.

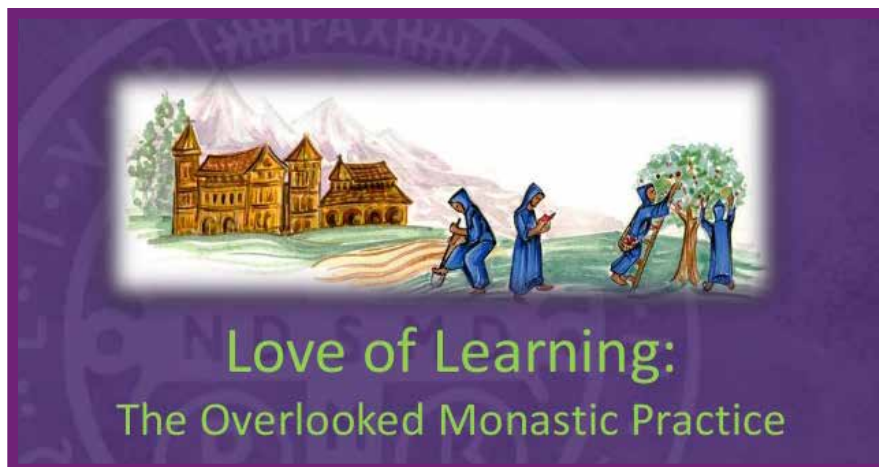
In the early decades of the 20th century there were efforts to raise the standard of formal education of the Sisters. Early American Catholic higher education was mainly for men; classes for Sisters were held only late in the day or in summer. This became an incentive for communities of women to establish their own institutions of higher learning.

There were other possibilities. Our Sister Elodie DeSmedt was sent to study theology at *Lumen Vitae* in Louvain, Belgium, and on her return became the director of Sisters in First Profession. Later on, we were prepared through study at St. John's School of Theology or in other programs, or we had background in counseling or other fields that would be helpful in this work.

At the same time, concern about the preparation of religious women surfaced in various forums. In 1954 a Sisters Formation Conference was launched that morphed into the Religious Formation Conference, a Roman Catholic organization that provides programs and services for those in the ministry of initial and lifelong formation and general congregational membership. *ForMission* is one program that prepares women and men for work in initial formation. Our Sister Lisa Maurer attended it at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago during the academic year 2017 – 2018, where she rubbed shoulders and exchanged stories with fellow students, male and female, from all over the world.

Small communities – and most Benedictine communities are small – are challenged to provide on-depth formation for new members. In 1982 members of the Federation of St. Scholastica held a formation conference, and in 1989 they expanded the conference to include all American Benedictine women. The newly-formed American Benedictine Formation Conference drew on resources from all

Communities to sponsor two important programs. The Novice and Director Institute (NADI) makes it possible for novices to experience both the unity and diversity of Benedictines. The Benedictine Spirituality Workshop and Retreat (BSWR) brings together women in first profession from many communities. Both programs play an important role in formation. With our smaller communities, opportunities for collaboration become more essential. Formation directors from all communities meet every other year in a symposium.



*Our Sister Edith Bogue presented the keynote address on Love of Learning at the T4 Symposium in 2017.*

This collaboration among Benedictine communities led to a new program, *Wisdom Connections: Timeless Tradition* ↔ *Technological Times* (often abbreviated 'T4'). A 2014 grant from the GHR Foundation in Minneapolis, through the generosity of Gerald and Henrietta Rauenhurst, allowed recording and editing of presentations by a variety of learned Benedictine women and men. These are available online to study groups of Sisters in first profession from different communities, who meet through video conferencing under the guidance of a mentor. After the grant ended, the recorded library became available to a limited audience of Benedictine communities of women and men.

The T4 project is helping to bring initial and ongoing formation into the 21st century. The program is invaluable for building relationships among the Sisters as we prepare to carry the Benedictine charism into the future.

*Please contact Sr. Lisa Mauer, Vocations Director at [vocations@duluthosb.org](mailto:vocations@duluthosb.org) for further information on becoming a Benedictine Sister.*



# The Spirituality of Gardening

by Sister Mary Josephine Torborg (mtorborg@css.edu)

The stillness of the dawn, with the dew still hovering on the grass and plants, the sweet-sounding melodies of song birds providing a symphony of music, the dazzling sunlight rising over Lake Superior with every hue and color giving the dawn a spectacular radiance and glory – “*The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God’s handiwork.*” (Psalm 19:1) It is a perfect setting to garden and create Sacred Spaces of beauty, tranquility and peace that bring much joy and excitement to others. The students at The College of St. Scholastica are often searching for Sacred Spaces where they can find solitude and silence to study, reflect, and pray.

Spiritual seekers today are rediscovering that gardening can be a great tool in following a spiritual path. Digging, planting, hoeing, weeding, watering, and pruning provide a great connection to the soul-work that often needs to be done as we journey on the spiritual path. Co-creating with God these Sacred Spaces helps us to become aware of the Presence of God in our daily lives. We learn to listen deeply, “to listen with the ear of the heart,” as St Benedict encourages us in the Prologue of the Holy Rule.

The 14th century mystic Meister Eckhart wrote, “There is nothing so much like God as silence.” The silence is a new awareness, a certain attentiveness to the presence of God who is within us and all around us. Kay Lindahl wrote, “Silence is essentially a surrender to the holiness of the Divine Mystery. A Hebrew sage once wrote, ‘the beginning of wisdom is silence, the second stage is listening.’” (*Practicing the Art of Listening*, 14-16). With the Psalmist we pray, “Teach me Lord, your ways that I may walk in your truth. Lord, you know me when I sit and when I stand: you understand my thoughts from afar.” (Psalm 139)

Reflective meditation on the Word of God is a sort of cyclic process that continues to unfold. One often begins with words, which lead to silence and the silence once again to words.

We have all had moments in our lives when we recognize God’s abiding presence in a most surprising way. We realize, like Elijah, we have



*Magnificat Garden*



*Shrine of St. Scholastica*



encountered God – often in the sheer sound of silence. When I plan to garden in the morning, I try to read the scripture readings for the Eucharist that day before I go out in the morning, or I read them at night before I go to bed. In the quiet of gardening, I flesh out their meaning for my life as I am weeding, watering, and deadheading garden patches.

Immersed in the scent of flowers, together with a gentle, whispering sound of the wind, one's heart is awakened to the presence of Mystery unfolding in our midst, a transformative mystery. With sudden clarity, the scripture passage comes to mind, "Unless the seed fall into the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed, but if it dies it yields a rich harvest." (John 12:24)



The waiting and longing for the seed to burst forth often seems endless. As the Psalmist notes: "For you I wait all the day long." (Psalm 25:5) And, "I wait for You, O God, my soul waits, and in your Word, I hope. My soul awaits the Beloved as one awaits the birth of a child or as one awaits the fulfillment of their destiny." (Psalm 130: 5-7)

This waiting and longing in the spiritual life can lead us to a deep relationship with God. The Psalmist has great words of advice for us. "Commit your life to the Beloved, confident that God will act on your behalf making clear your pathways, bright as the sun at midday. Be still before the Beloved and wait patiently in the silence." (Psalm 37: 5-7)

As we ponder the words of the Psalmist, a sudden intuitive insight gets us in touch with the darkness within our own lives that needs transformation. We allow ourselves the time to experience the suffering, hurt, and pain in our life. We need to grieve and let go and trust in God's providential love and grace. We let go of our old way of living and embark on a new way of life. We, as Christians undergo these paschal deaths many times, sometimes on a daily basis. Ron Rolheiser writes, "The paschal mystery ... is a process of transformation within which we are given both new life and new spirit." (*The Holy Longing*, 147)

It is important that we open our heart to all possibilities at these times. When this happens to us, new things that are far beyond our own imagination and fantasy begin to happen. Henri Nouwen notes, "The spiritual life is a life in which we wait, actively present to the moment, trusting that new things will happen to us, new things that are far beyond our own imagination, fantasy or prediction. That, indeed, is a very radical stance toward life in a world preoccupied with control." (Henri Nouwen, *Seeds of Hope*, 11) When we are open to the surprises of God in our lives, all things are possible.

I glimpse at the radiant splendor of the sky and envision the vastness of the universe created by our loving Creator and the smallness of my Sacred Spaces that I have co-created with God. I am struck with awe and wonder as I ponder the interconnectedness of the universe and all that is. Gardening is a blessing, a gift that truly nurtures my spiritual path.



*The psalms in this article are from the translation by Nan Merrill, Psalms for Praying.*



# Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

St. Scholastica Monastery - McCabe Renewal Center

One Mission, Two Locations

## Schedule for Late Winter-Spring 2019

For more information, visit [retreatduluth.org](http://retreatduluth.org)

To register for an event, schedule an event for your Church or group, or for questions:

**Online:** [retreatduluth.org](http://retreatduluth.org)

**Email:** [retreat@duluthosb.org](mailto:retreat@duluthosb.org)

**Phone:** 218-723-6699.

For events outside the Monastery or McCabe, contact Sr. Pauline Micke, Outreach Coordinator at 218-723-7086.

### Benedictine Days 2019

#### Infusing the world with the Benedictine spirit

Watch the website for more information. You can pre-register now at <http://retreatduluth.org/benedictine-days/>

#### Emily Larson, Mayor of Duluth

April 24, 2019 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

#### Keeping Hope Alive in a Troubled World

With Joyce Rupp, OSM

September 14, 2019 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Free-will offering. Space is limited, so register early.

#### Centering Prayer

1st and 3rd Thursdays January 17 to May 16

10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at St. Scholastica Monastery

Facilitated by Lezlie Oachs.

2nd and 4th Tuesday mornings 10:00-11:30 a.m.

January 8 to May 28 at McCabe Renewal Center.

Facilitated by Lezlie Oachs.

1st and 3rd Monday evenings 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

January 7 to May 20 at McCabe Renewal Center.

Facilitated by Jim Reinke

**Cost:** \$35 for all sessions or \$5.00 per session

#### Centering Prayer and The Gift of Life

Tuesdays: January 15, 29, February 5, March

5, 19, April 2, 16, 30, May 7, 21 10:00 to 11:30

a.m.

McCabe Renewal Center

Fr. Thomas Keating and Fr. Carl Arico in *The Gift of Life: Death & Dying, Life & Living*

Facilitated by Lezlie Oachs, Judy Russell, Pat Winkelman

**Cost:** \$5 per session or \$50 for all sessions.

#### Coffee with the Saints

**March 4** Find Your Own Calcutta: Mother Teresa

**April 1** The Search for Home: Thomas Merton

9:00 to 10:30 a.m. at St. Scholastica Monastery

Facilitated by Sister Sarah O'Malley

**Cost:** freewill offering but please register.

#### The Art of Weaving... Together

**Friday, March 8** 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

Learn about a variety of traditional weaving practices and create a colorful belt.

Facilitated by Marilyn Mayry and Ann Carlander

**Cost:** \$75 (includes materials and lunch)

\$145 for retreat and overnight stay.

**Register early, space is limited.**

#### Renouncing Violence, Embracing Compassion

**Saturday, March 9** 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

McCabe Renewal Center

Become more compassionate toward yourself and others through Jesus' model of non-violence.

Facilitated by Sister Dorene King

**Cost:** \$50 (bring your lunch; we provide snacks and drinks)

\$100 for retreat with overnight stay.



### **Taizé Prayer**

**Mondays: March 11 and May 13** 7:00 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery (Chapel)

*Registration not necessary.*

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### **Desert Day: A Time Away**

**Monday, March 18** 9:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

A day of renewal that begins and ends with group prayer. Quiet prayer, reflection, reading, walking, resting, and spiritual direction, if desired.

**Cost:** freewill offerings for the day are accepted.

Optional lunch with the Sisters is \$10

Optional overnight stay is \$70

**Registration required.**

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### **Prayer with The Saint Johns's Bible:**

#### **Illuminating Your Lenten Journey**

**Friday, March 22,** 9:00 a.m. to March 24, 2:00 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

*Facilitated by Dawn Carrillo, Barbara Sutton, and Meridith Schifsky*

**Cost:** \$210 (includes meals and materials)

\$320 with overnight stay

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### **The Water of Life**

**Saturday, March 30** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

McCabe Renewal Center

Experience water through sacred scriptures, fairy tales, Jungian psychology, journaling, and ritual.

*Facilitated by Rev. Yanchy Laeska*

**Cost:** \$85 (includes lunch)

\$135 with overnight stay

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### **The Universal Christ**

**Mondays, April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29** 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

Featuring recorded presentations by Richard Rohr, John Dominic Crossan, and Jacqui Lewis.

*Facilitated by Sister Mary Catherine Shambour and Marilyn Mayry*

**Cost:** \$5:00 per session or \$20 for all five sessions

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### **“Create in my a clean heart. O God”: Lenten Retreat with the Penitential Psalms**

**Saturday, April 6** 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

Come to a transforming experience featuring the Penitential Psalms in *lectio divina*.

*Facilitated by Pastor Dave Mesner*

**Cost:** \$70 (includes lunch)

\$140 with overnight stay.

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### **The Flying Duthman Children's Opera**

**Monday, April 8 Through Thursday, April 11**

Practice 9:00 a.m. to noon with Thursday

performance McCabe Renewal Center.

**For 4th, 5th, or 6th graders.**

*Facilitated by Sister Dorene King*

**Cost:** \$60 (Scholarships are available)

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### **Walking the Path of Holy Week**

**Thursday, April 18** 10:00 a.m. until Sunday,

April 21 after lunch

St. Scholastica Monastery.

Enter the silence and experience the rich liturgies of the Easter Triduum at the Monastery

*Facilitated by Brian Kapp*

**Cost:** \$230 (includes meals and overnight accommodations)

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### **T'ai Chi Chih**

**Thursdays April 25 to May 30** 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

St. Scholastica Monastery

A progression of 19 simple moves that emphasize self-awareness, well-being and joy. Dress comfortably; wear flat soled shoes; no fragrance or cologne.

*Facilitated by Sister Renata Liegey*

**Cost:** \$60 for all sessions.

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### **The Path to Healing after War**

**Friday, May 3** from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. and

**Saturday, May 4** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

St Scholastica Monastery

Retreat for women who have been touched by the challenge and trauma of war.

*Facilitated by Joan Najbar*

**Cost:** \$90 (includes lunch)

\$160 with retreat and overnight stay.

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# Becoming Prioress

by Sister Therese Carson

***“A prioress who is worthy to be over a monastery should always remember what she is called and live up to the name of Superior. For she is believed to hold the place of Christ in the monastery.”***

*~ from Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 2: Qualities of a Prioress*

On August 15, 2015, Sister Beverly Raway was installed as the fourteenth Prioress of our Community. “Every day since then I have woken with the thought, ‘I am Prioress? How did that happen?’ Then I get up to face the day. No two are ever alike. Every day has its own challenge – usually more than one – but also its surprises and moments of beauty.”

Sister Beverly was born into a large Catholic family, the oldest of nine children; ‘Beverly’ is her baptismal name. They were educated by the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Paul’s Monastery. Her extended family included cousins who were Sisters, and so choosing a religious vocation was considered normal and admirable; her cousin Sister Monica Raway made final monastic profession at St. Paul’s Monastery when Beverly was ten. In fifth grade, when school resumed after Christmas break, her lay teacher created a bulletin board including the word *vocation*; young Beverly raised her hand and said, “Mrs. Judge, you spelled *vacation* wrong.” It turned into a teachable moment about why a person would turn one’s life over to Christ, and the seed was planted.



*Sr. Beverly Raway (right) and Federation President Kerry O'Reilly lead the procession of Sisters and guests after the Rite of Installation*

During her high school years Beverly set aside thoughts of a vocation, but the seed had germinated. Always interested in becoming a teacher, in her senior year she applied for and received an educational scholarship. While the guidance counselor was helping her complete college applications, Beverly suddenly asked, “Would I need to repay my scholarship if I enter a convent?” The question surprised them both. In the end, she chose to major in Biology and Education at The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, planning to teach high school Biology.

In her first year, she found herself drawn to the Benedictine way of life. She especially was inspired by instructors Sister Agnes Alich (Chemistry) and Sister Alice Lamb (Biology), and as her prayer life deepened, she joined the monastic community to pray Compline at day’s end. By a blessed coincidence the vocation director’s office was next door to the biology department. Sister Prudentia Morin began to guide Beverly in her discernment. That spring she approached Mother Athanasius Braegelman, received permission to enter as a postulant, and went home for Easter to break the news to her family. She spoke with them one evening, then spent a sleepless night while her parents discussed it quietly. They gave her their blessing, and she entered the Community on September 8, 1963.

After entry she continued her college education with time off for her novice year. After graduation, she taught Biology at Cathedral High for eleven years, and for a couple of summers was a nurse’s aide at Hibbing General Hospital and St. Mary’s Hospital, Duluth.

In the late 1970s, changes in the post-conciliar Church and in monastic life forced her to confront unresolved issues in her vocation. She took a sabbatical to be part of the Continuing Religious Education Development Opportunities (CREDO) program at Gonzaga University in Spokane. The program included classes and workshops on Scripture and theology, the Second Vatican Council, St. John of the Cross, the letters of St. Paul,



the Book of Revelation, and much more.

A turning point came through spiritual direction and open dialogues with other Sisters on how Scriptural ideas influenced their lives. Nature also played a part in her inner healing. “We hiked up a mountain one night and watched the sun rise. In Idaho we made a pilgrimage to the Cataldo Mission, hiking for two days in the Bitterroot Mountains. We shared long silences, Mass by candlelight, singing, and stories, and experienced a cultural shift with religious from all over the world.” Her time at CREDO changed how she perceived humanity’s place in this world, and she continues to learn with a sense of wonder. “The National Geographic series *One Strange Rock* substantiates for me that the Power that created the Universe is the same one that draws us and all things together in love.”



*Sister Beverly (on left) with CREDO friends*

After her sabbatical year, Sister Beverly returned to try on new ministries. For a time, she was pastoral associate at a Catholic church in Duluth while also teaching biology labs at The College of St. Scholastica. “I coordinated the liturgy committee, developed reconciliation services, visited residents at nursing homes, and taught a faith formation program. All this was satisfying and worthwhile, but I still felt called to return to my first career in Biology in some way.” Remembering her summers as a nurse’s aide, she defined nursing as ‘Biology applied in service to the sick,’ and so returned to the College to study nursing.

*“Before all things and above all things, care must be taken of the sick, so that they will be served as if they were Christ in person.” ~ Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 36, On the Sick*

Graduating in 1983 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Nursing, she worked three years in the Urology unit at St. Mary’s Hospital in Duluth. From Sister Bertrand Reiser she learned to be thorough in her skills and kind and patient with people. For another three years she worked in Neurology and Special Care, and then was asked to return to The College of St. Scholastica to teach. This required earning a higher degree, and so she completed her education at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., earning a master’s degree in Nursing Education in 1989 and a Doctorate in Nursing in 1994. “Research for my Master’s thesis and PhD dissertation focused on the factors related to acute confusion (delirium) and the relationship between pain behaviors and confusion in elderly orthopedic patients. This knowledge was useful both as a nursing instructor and a prioress.”

She began teaching full time in the Fall of 1993, which included classroom lectures on theory and supervising students in their clinical rotations, beginning with care of the newborns. “I loved it, having learned all about babies by helping with my younger brothers and sisters.” The remainder of her 22 years included overseeing clinical rotations on the Orthopedic unit of St. Mary’s, teaching on-line, designing and running simulation experiences for skills labs, and assisting with the development of new curricula.



*Sister Beverly showed the same loving patience with her students and her patients.*

“Do I miss teaching? As prioress there’s no time to miss it, but when I visit the College and meet former colleagues, I do get nostalgic. I miss mentoring the students. When I am at St. Mary’s Medical Center at meetings or visiting a Sister admitted for care, I see how everything has changed – the length of stay, treatments, and care models, and I’m always very proud to meet alumni of the College who are now leaders and experts in nursing care.”

Years before her election, Sister Beverly had an inkling she would be considered. “I had a long time between elections to discern whether God was calling me to be prioress, and there was this stronger and stronger feeling that I would say Yes if the community wanted me to serve in that role.”

As prioress, she does not make decisions in a vacuum but consults her administrative team, the monastic Council, and, for larger decisions, the entire Community in Chapter, where every Sister has an equal voice. Serious issues may be decided by vote. Nevertheless, it is the prioress who is ultimately responsible before God for the life of the Community, and she takes this responsibility seriously.

*“The Prioress should always remember what she is and what she is called, and should know that to whom more is committed, more is required. Let her understand also what a difficult and arduous task she has undertaken.” ~from Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 2: Qualities of a Prioress.*

Sister Beverly uses the skills she learned as a nurse. “Being a prioress means being self-disciplined and organized, handling emergencies, revising priorities on the go, keeping a calm and listening demeanor – all things important in health care and in monastic leadership. Interruptions don’t get in the way of my work; they *are* my work. I deal with the issues and work of the day and try not to look back. Our biggest challenges and changes lie ahead.”

*“The prioress should show the Sisters all that is good and holy by her deeds even more than by her words, expounding the Lord’s commandments in words but also demonstrating the divine precepts by her actions.” ~from Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 2: Qualities of a Prioress.*

“I consider myself a transition prioress. My work is to prepare the Community for change. We are working to grow closer together and develop stronger, more loving relationships with each other. We face a new future, but we can do it without fear because we support each other.”

*“When I thought, ‘My foot is slipping,’ your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.” ~Psalm 94:18-19*

Over the years, Sister Beverly has become interested in genealogy and researching her family’s history. Who we are is shaped by where we are rooted. “I love the concept of inheritance, that family traits and wisdom are passed down to each generation. This monastic Community is my inheritance!” As a biologist, she especially loves the way Psalm One compares the faithful to ‘trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in due season, and their leaves do not wither.’ “We are those trees, rooted in God. Through our growing cooperation with laity, both in our sponsored ministries and in new areas such as sustainability, our Benedictine way of life is spreading its roots and carrying us all into the future.”

*“You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith, and hope.” ~Thomas Merton*

Of the future, she says, “We offer the Church a model of an intentional, faith-based community that reaches out to its neighbors to minister to the sick and lonely, and to lift the poor out of poverty. By living together in poverty, by pooling our resources, skills, and wisdom, and by being good stewards of all we have been given, we are able give back to this Duluth community that has embraced us for 125 years. We are making a difference.”

We enter religious life with ideas of what we will accomplish, and God gently sets aside our plans and says, Watch! As writer Sarah Bessey says, “Set out, pilgrim. Set out into the freedom and the wandering. Find your people. God is much bigger, wilder, more generous, and more wonderful than you imagined.”





## Highlights

### Franciscan Theologian Speaks at St. Scholastica Monastery

by Sister Therese Carson

On November 2 and 3, the renowned theologian Ilia Delio presented Nature is Alive: Ecology and the Quest for Super Intelligence. She offered some startling ideas about the nature of the Trinity as revealed through science. She quoted the French theologian Teilhard de Chardin, saying, “The artificial separation between humans and cosmos is at the root of our contemporary moral confusion.” Because of this separation, many of the faithful have come to believe that what affects the natural world – the cosmos – has no effect on our essence, believing that we stand apart from creation.

The nature of God, she believes, is one of constant flow and change. “We are part of a creative whole of unlimited potential, through which our self and world are constantly drawn into new existence together.” In our very nature we are always becoming something new.



*Sisters and guests joined in table discussion during the presentation.*

### The Saint John's Bible Returns

by Sister Therese Carson

In gratitude for the Sisters' sponsorship, the Benedictine Health System hosted a return visit of the Gospels and Books of Acts from *The Saint John's Bible* to the

Monastery. An international and cross-cultural collaboration by theologians, calligraphers, and artists in America and Wales, the *Bible* was commissioned by the monks of Saint John's Abbey and created by a team of artists under the direction of Donald Jackson in Wales. This is the first hand-written and -illuminated Bible since the development of the printing press in the 15th century. Its artwork was drawn from many cultures and times, both current and prehistoric, and so expresses the diversity of the human condition.



*Fr. Michael Patella shows the arches of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem that appear in many of *The Bible's* illuminations.*

Fr. Michael Patella from St. John's Abbey presented two talks, one on the design process and a second on the *Bible's* relevancy to our world today. They were well-attended and -received. *The Bible* was kept on display for five weeks in our Chapel's Gathering Space and was used as the subject of weekly *Viseo divina* presentations. A prayer service on the Solemnity of the Epiphany marked the end of the *Bible's* stay with us.

## *Highlights, continued*

# Monastery Christmas Bazaar on December 6 a Success

by Jan Barrett

Sisters and volunteers worked tirelessly for months preceding the annual Christmas bazaar to create a fun and entertaining day for our lovely volunteers and customers. One volunteer made cookies for all customers to enjoy while shopping, so there were happy faces everywhere, all day long. The bazaar has become an event where friends from near and far come together to shop and socialize. The Sisters are especially grateful for a day filled with friendship and community in their home.

A heartfelt thank you to the numerous volunteers who donated time, merchandise, homemade gifts, baked items, canned items, etc. All proceeds go toward the needs and priorities of the Sisters.



*Sue Walkoviak and Meg Kearns work at the checkout, totaling prices and bagging the items.  
(Photo by Jeanne Carroll)*



*Ramona Kruchowski is one of our volunteer drivers who also made thousands of truffles.*



*Patti Ahrens and Mary Gallet raffled off special handmade items and gift certificates.*



*Meridith Schifsky shows Sister Barbara Higgins her beautiful cards with calligraphy.*



*Special thanks to our hard-working Christmas Bazaar coordinators: Lisa Roseth, Sister Theresa Spinler, Kathy Noble, and Mary Tanner.  
(Photo by Jeanne Carroll)*



## Highlights, continued

# Annual Employee Christmas Party

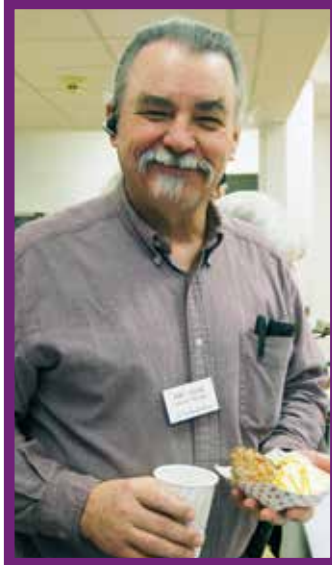
by Sister Therese Carson

Each December we thank our employees with a Christmas party complete with banana splits and punch. They are an invaluable and much-loved part of the monastic family.



*Left to right: Dawn Carrillo, Theresa Butler, and Ruth Jimenez talk with Sister Martha Bechtold.*

*Photo at right: Art Sasse in Facilities keeps our phones in working order.*



*Lisa Askelson, Directory of Monastery Facilities, and Sister Beverly Raway*

## Our New Graduates

by Sister Therese Carson

On Sunday, December 16, we celebrated with two new graduates. Sister Kathleen Del Monte earned a master's degree in Theology from St. Joseph College in Maine, taking most of her classwork online. Sister Kathleen is the Associate Vice President of Mission Integration for The College of St. Scholastica.

Sister Antonia Mtega graduated with a bachelor's degree in Health Care Administration from The College of St. Scholastica, taking classes in what was for her a foreign language. She was here for the past four years from our twinning monastery in Tanzania and returned to her community in late January to begin her work.

During the party in the Community Room, Sister Antonia brought out her laptop and played videos of Tanzanian dancing, and some of the Sisters joined her in an exuberant dance. We will miss her but send our blessings with her.



*Sisters Antonia Mtega, Beverly Raway, and Kathleen Del Monte*



*Sister Dorene King, Jayne Erickson (a volunteer associate), Sister Antonia Mtega, and Sister Gretchen Johnston*

## Highlights, continued

# Students from Duluth's Stella Maris Academy Visit the Monastery

by Sister Dorene King

On Wednesday, December 19, 2018, we welcomed sixth grade students and their teachers from the Stella Maris Academy campuses at St. James' and St. John's parishes in Duluth.

We divided them into three groups that then rotated through activities. Sister Lois Eckes guided them through the illuminations of *The Saint John's Bible*. Sister Dorene King gave them a tour of the Monastery and The College of St. Scholastica. An Academy teacher provided a third activity in the ground floor conference room. Afterwards, the students and teachers joined the Sisters for lunch in the dining room.

Here are a few quotes from the students' Thank You notes: "We loved hearing about the St. John's Bible and the history of the Benedictine Sisters." "Thank you for eating with us and telling us your stories. I had a great time and I hope I can go again." "We had so much fun talking with you! (And a good laugh, too.)"



*Sister Lois Eckes shows students the Nativity illumination from the Gospel of Mark.*

## Sisters Attend CHUM Vigil for the Homeless

by Sister Therese Carson



*Sisters Beverly Raway, Therese Carson, Kathleen Hofer, and Lois Eckes.*

Each Christmas Eve, CHUM (Churches United in Ministry) of Duluth holds a vigil on the steps of City Hall to remember the homeless people and their advocates who died in the past year. We held signs with names, ages, and photos of the 56 people who died last year, putting human faces to the tragedy of homelessness. Most died of the causes and effects of deep poverty, including untreated physical and mental illness, alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, and violence.

CHUM director Lee Stuart spoke of the terrible toll of homelessness that can rob a person of 30 years. At Christmas, we remember the birth of Jesus into deep poverty

in an occupied land, who with his parents fled violence in their homeland to become refugees in Egypt. We are called by our faith to reach out to the poor, marginalized, and unwanted; to respect them as part of our community and help lift them out of poverty and the margins. Many brought warm clothing, tarps, tents, and sleeping bags for those who remain outside in our bitterly cold winters.



*Discarded signs, donated goods: may we work to end homelessness, wherever we live.*



## Highlights, continued

### Visiting Marcia Hales' Christmas Wonderland

by Sister Therese Carson

Marcia Hales' annual Christmas display spills down the hill from her home in Duluth's Park Point neighborhood and onto the Lake Superior beach. On January 3, four Sisters braved icy roads to pay a last visit, as Ms. Hales is retiring the display. They walked through light-covered arches, patted the wish-granting penguin, posed with an angel, and briefly considered a scramble down to the beach. They finished with the bonfire and hot cider.

Thank you, Marcia Hales, for making Christmas a little more special for your fellow Duluthians.



*Sisters Kathleen Del Monte, Kathleen Hofer, Mary Catherine Shambour, and Therese Carson pause in the entry arch.*



*Sisters Kathleen Del Monte and Mary Catherine Shambour with the Praying Angel.*

### Please Pray for Our Deceased Family and Friends

|                                    |            |   |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|---|------------|
| <i>Pauline Kukull</i>              | 6/19/2017  | <i>Father Francis Paquette</i>                                    | 11/23/2018 |
| <i>Lorraine Rawn</i>               | 10/28/2017 | <i>Frank James Michelizzi</i>                                     | 11/25/2018 |
| <i>Donald Roy McInnis</i>          | 9/4/2018   | <i>William Victor Schleppegrell</i>                               | 11/29/2018 |
| <i>James P. Waddick</i>            | 9/6/2018   | <i>Thomas Higgins</i>   | 12/11/2018 |
| <i>John J. McSwiggen</i>           | 9/19/2018  | <i>Great-nephew of Sister Barbara and Sister Mary Rae Higgins</i> |            |
| <i>Edward G. McGillivray</i>       | 10/11/2018 |   |            |
| <i>Robert Scheuer</i>              | 11/3/2018  | <i>Richard Frank Whiteman</i>                                     | 12/16/2018 |
| <i>Colette Ann (Rankin) Pauley</i> | 11/5/2018  | <i>Donald J. Diesen</i>   | 12/22/2018 |
| <i>Mariette Wilson</i>             | 11/8/2018  | <i>Joan Carlson Hughes</i>  | 1/5/2019   |
| <i>William Kimmes Cosgrove</i>     | 11/13/2018 | <i>Helen M. Grahek</i>  | 1/7/2019   |
| <i>Wayne Howard Jarvis, MD</i>     | 11/15/2018 | <i>Jerome D. Leonard</i>  | 1/13/2019  |
| <i>Carole Anne Kendroza</i>        | 11/17/2018 | <i>Sylvia Banal Perell</i>  | 1/18/2019  |
| <i>Rosemary Agnew</i>              | 11/22/2018 |   |            |

St. Scholastica Monastery  
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*“We need to put away the temptation  
to stay with mountain top experiences.  
We come down from the mountain with  
Jesus and enter into the pain of a world  
that needs to be seen with the eyes of  
love.”*

*~ Sister Beverly Raway*

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

