

PATHWAYS



Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters, Duluth, Minnesota Vol 32, No. 1 Advent 2020

SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL
FOR GOD

MOTHER
TERESA of
CALCUTTA



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Icon of St. Teresa of Calcutta
by +Sr. Mary Charles McGough

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Dear Friends of the Monastery,

The season of waiting, longing, and expectation is upon us, the season of Advent, the season of hope. In the Northland, as I write this letter, two inches of snow have fallen, and spending more time indoors will increase the risk for exposure to circulating viruses. I ponder what will be the results of the election and quietly hope for change that will bring us together as a nation and community. I look to the psalms, scripture, the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, and contemporary writers for inspiring messages of hope in these troubled times. So, what is hope and what did I learn from my reading?



Hope is not the same as optimism or desire as in, “I hope the winter will be mild or I hope the pandemic will be short lived.” It is desire plus expectation, based on past experiences that tell us God can be trusted to carry us through, even though we cannot see how that will happen. In the words of Joan Chittister, OSB, “Hope reminds us that there is nothing in life we have faced that we did not, through God’s gifts and graces – however unrecognized at the time – survive.” Former Czech President Václav Havel related, “It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.” I ask myself if I can accept those views and be at peace with events that may not turn out as I hope, but then I remember this is not all there is to hope.

Hope does not mean we sit back and wait for what we desire and expect. While eagerly waiting, we also need to be patiently working. Scriptural passages that support this include “...but if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Romans 8:25), and “...remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 1:3). Sister Teresa Maya, former President of LCWR tells us that hope becomes reality in the smallest of everyday details. When we exercise our commitment to the future, we discover the Divine in our daily encounters with others who work beside us to bring about a “future filled with hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

And hope is not alive unless it is accompanied by joy and in communion with others. St. Paul says, “We need to rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, and persevere in prayer” (Romans 12:12). “We hope in God and we hope in each other. We accept it, we nurture it. We need to practice hope, to dare that something deeper is coming” (from a 2017 retreat by Sister Michaela Hedican at St. Scholastica Monastery).

Echoing those thoughts, Joan Chittister says, “The spiritual task of life is to feed hope. Hope is not something to be found outside of us. It lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within.” And we cannot do this without the sustaining presence of God in our lives. In the Holy Rule, the monk prays for that sustaining power when making a final commitment before the whole community, “Sustain me, O Lord, according to your word and I shall live, and do not fail me in my hope” (Ps 118 [119]:116; RB 58:21-22). And in Chapter 4, *Tools for Good Works*, Benedict advises us to “never turn away when someone needs your love” (RB 4:26) and, finally, when we fail, to “never lose hope in God’s mercy” (RB 4:74).

So, what do you hope for? What sustains your hope? What do you dare to believe is coming? And with you we pray: “May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit as we await Christ’s coming. Amen.” (from *Give us This Day*, November 2020, p. 301)

Blessed Advent wishes from all the Sisters,

Sister Beverly

Sister Beverly Raway, OSB

Saying Yes

by Sister Lisa Maurer vocations@duluthosb.org

Advent is a time of quiet joy and anticipation at the coming of Christ. Each year we pause, remember, and enter into that profound mystery of God becoming Man. It is inconceivable to celebrate Advent without considering Mary and her “yes”. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI said that “to celebrate Advent means to become Marian and to enter into that communion with Mary’s yes.” In Mary we have the model of someone who gave herself perfectly to God. Her *fiat* – “may it be done according to your word” (Luke 1:36) – envelopes us this time of year and gives us inspiration.

At the Annunciation, God approached Mary through the Angel Gabriel who asked her to give birth to God’s son. At hearing the greeting, Mary was confused and in a search for understanding asked, “How can this be?” (Luke 1:34). Gabriel assured Mary of God’s faithfulness and she freely accepts God’s will in her life.

The story of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) perfectly describes the origin of a vocation and the process of vocational discernment. Before ever we seek God, He is seeking us and initiates the conversation. We are hesitant and fearful. As we seek to understand, God reminds us that we are loved and that “nothing is impossible for God” (Luke 1:37). In the end, we are free to say yes or no. Let us take a closer look.

God Initiates: Every spiritual journey, every vocation, begins with God’s initiative. All of us have received a vocation from God, a multifaceted calling. It may come to us as a feeling or an urge. We could have a strong sense of God’s call during prayer or when reading Scripture. We might even hear God’s call in the words and actions of others.

Our Hesitation and Fear: Often our first response to God’s call is hesitation and fear. *Who me? There is no way I can do that!* This is a natural response to something that seemingly comes out of nowhere. This initial response is not a bad thing; yet we cannot give in to those feelings.

Struggle to Understand: Discernment is the process of determining God’s desire for our lives. When we struggle to understand an encounter with God, to understand God’s call, we are participating in God’s grace. It is in the struggle that we are shaped, and it is how we move closer to becoming fully who God is calling us to be.

God’s Fidelity: The most wonderful thing about responding to God’s call is being able to trust that God is faithful. When struggling to say yes to God, it is always good practice to remember what has happened in the past when we have submitted to God. Whenever God makes a promise, He keeps it. God will never fail us nor leave us to fail.

Our Freedom: One of the greatest gifts that God has blessed us with is the gift of freedom. Freedom allows us to choose our actions and proves to us that we were not created as pre-programmed robots. We are free to say yes or no to God’s call.

The most beautiful characteristic of Mary is the way she responded to God’s call. Her response was intimate and sincere. Anyone who wishes to live out their own vocation, whether to married life, consecrated life, single life, the diaconate, or priesthood, must also be able to unite himself or herself closely to God and give consent to God’s Will. When we do so, like Mary, we also experience the joy of being God’s servant and with her “proclaim the greatness of the Lord” (Luke 1:46) and make God present to this world.

If you or someone you know believes they are being called to live their life of holiness as a Benedictine (Sister, Oblate, Live-in Associate, Volunteer), call Sister Lisa at 218-723-7011, email vocations@duluthosb.org, or visit www.duluthbenedictines.org/vocations.



Icon of Annunciation by +Sr. Mary Charles McGough

Oblate Meetings go Virtual

by Sister Pauline Micke and Jane Dolter



A few months ago, the decision was made to find new ways to communicate with the members of the Oblate Community, as the Coronavirus made it impossible to meet in person. Letters were sent to all Oblates asking if they wished and were able to connect by Zoom. We had a good response and have had three meetings via Zoom, the last one on November 19. Coming up:

Two Oblates will write reflections to be presented for the Sisters at First Vespers on the Second and Third Sundays of Advent. We are excited about this sign of growth and development for our Oblate Community. We have also had Inquirer sessions with four new Oblate Inquirers for three months.

The next Oblate Meeting will be on December 17, 2020, 1:00 to 3:00 pm. To be part of the Zoom sessions, send your name and e-mail to Sister Pauline at pauline.m@duluthosb.org.

Blessings to all of you and let us keep each other in prayer,

Sister Pauline Micke and Jane Dolter

Please Pray for Our Deceased Family and Friends

Marguerite Lock	2/19/2020	Mae Peterson	7/5/2020
Helen Gildseth	3/20/2020	George W. Harvey	7/11/2020
Margaret Crumley	4/5/2020	Liana Marie Bush-Walczyansk	7/17/2020
Joan Meagher	4/13/20	James H. Manderfeld	7/22/2020
Janice Mae Rohweder	4/24/2020	Delores Cheslak	7/23/2020
Monica Jodocy	4/29/2020	(sister of +Sr. Anne Marie Cheslak)	
Ann Lewis Molinaro	5/4/2020	Mary Hathaway	8/1/2020
(former Sister)		(sister of Sr. Gloria Ess)	
Doreen Hedman	5/9/2020	Patricia J. (Roney) Horvath	8/8/2020
Jeanne Hudson Sampson	5/10/2020	Geraldine Machovec	8/14/2020
(oblate)		Rev. Robert Goblirsch	8/15/2020
Margaret A. Peterson	5/10/2020	(brother of +Sr. Bertille Goblirsch)	
Susan Elizabeth Wolfe	5/13/2020	Dolores M. Feiro	8/20/2020
(oblate)		Sarah Isabel Lemker	8/23/2020
Rev. John Beckfelt	5/18/2020	Gregory Raymond	8/23/2020
Anna Volk Moran	5/24/2020	Richard Walter Louhi	8/28/2020
(former Sister, sister of Sr. Maria Volk)		Ted Eichner	9/4/2020
Leo Giesen	6/4/2020	(nephew of +Sr. Sarah O'Malley)	
(brother of Sr. Helen Giesen)		Robert Edmund Stokes	9/16/2020
Joseph V. Sauve	6/5/2020	Dale James Arola	9/8/2020
Genevieve Mary Dryke	6/10/2020	Jeanne O'Malley Hertzog	9/24/2020
Rev. Roland J. Antus	6/21/2020	(sister of +Sr. Sarah O'Malley)	
Donald F. Kallberg	6/21/2020	Rev. Richard Partika	10/9/2020
Susan Bacharach Meyer	7/1/2020	Irene Williams	10/14/2020
		(sister of Sr. Barbara and +Sr. Mary Rae Higgins)	

“Little children, love one another.”

by Sister Josine Krausnick

*“Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action”
(1 John 3:18).*

Like everyone else, I am tired of all this. I live on Benet Hall, the Community’s assisted living center, and when the pandemic came, we followed the Minnesota Health Department’s guidelines. For eight months, we have eaten three meals a day, alone in our rooms. We miss being present at communal Prayer; watching it on television is better than nothing, but, it’s not enough. We miss feeling a part of the Community.

There are times, when I wake up in the night, that I feel depressed, forgotten, left out. I miss friends who are not able to visit. I miss participating in full Community life. Soon we will be making some important decisions as a Community. Will I be present for the discussions? Will my voice be heard? Will I hear the ideas of others?

I see so many problems: the state of our country’s politics, the deteriorating environment, the growing number of those left behind and struggling. But in the dark night, when I am tempted to give in to despair, God holds me and whispers that I am loved more than I can imagine. “Do not be afraid; this is my world. I am still in charge.”

Then I look into the light and see people taking action, making a difference, becoming the hands and feet of God. I find hope in young people who are not afraid to try new things. There is a young Dutch man, Boylan Slat, who created a solar-powered collection system to remove waste from the ocean. Wade Williams is five years old and wrote a book to help other children handle the stress of the pandemic. His father said, “We’re not sugar-coating, saying that everything is perfect. Everything is not perfect, but it will be okay.” These hard times have brought out the good and the wisdom in many people who care enough for others to wear masks, wash their hands, maintain social distancing, and believe in the future.

I have a new morning prayer: “Lord, let me be a blessing to someone today.” Each day I keep eyes and ears open for God to show me who needs love. I know that if I ask God to help me help, God will listen.

Where does this lead? To hope! In the darkness I dare to believe that a better world is emerging because God is working through us. How can we help it come? Begin with prayer. When we pray, God responds in unpredictable ways. When we put something in God’s hands, we must leave it there, give it time. Be patient and believe that God is working within that problem, even if we can’t yet sense the divine wind blowing through it and the will of God fermenting, bubbling up, spilling over. Watch the signs of the times, find those who have moved from prayer to action, and follow them. Seek the answer yourself in the divine wind, knowing that the answer may be new and different. Be open to change.



The answer lies within us in God’s unshakeable love. We need to love as God loves. God does not pick and choose but loves us all, even when we appear unlovable. That is our biggest challenge, to accept every person as they are without judgement. And if you find yourself on the outside, remember that no one is better than you and you are no better than any other. Don’t let others look down on you and don’t look down on others.

When I am losing hope and can’t feel God’s presence, I picture myself as a little child and God as my loving Father. It reminds me that God loves me, cares for me – especially when I don’t deserve it – and that God has gifted me with infinite love, unlimited mercy, my very existence. It is all a free gift. It is how God loves us. It is how we must love the world.



Sister Beverly Horn: Nurse, Teacher, Leader

by Sister Therese Carson

“Care of the sick must come before all else, so that they may truly be served as Christ.” (RB Ch. 36)



*“What does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, love kindness,
and walk humbly with your God?”*

~ Micah 6:8

Born in Duluth, Sister Beverly knew of St. Mary’s Hospital from an early age. It was the Catholic Hospital where family members went when ill, and she had aunts, uncles, and cousins who worked there as well, so healthcare was important in her life. She attended parochial elementary schools, Stanbrook Hall, and The College of St. Scholastica where all her teachers were Benedictine Sisters. As she developed friendships among the Sisters, she became attracted to the Benedictine spirit that nourished her growing relationship with God. She pursued a major in nursing and entered the religious community after her freshman year.

As a postulant and in the year following the novitiate, she continued her nursing major. Because elementary teachers were needed, she began taking courses in elementary education as well. She was then assigned to teach in Cincinnati for two years. With a change in community administration, it was determined that there

was a need for nurses. She was asked if she would like to complete her major in nursing, and she agreed. To diversify the educational background of persons in the health care field, a number of Sisters were being sent to St. Louis University, a Jesuit University in St. Louis, Missouri, and it was there in 1957 that she completed her baccalaureate degree. St. Louis University required a minor in philosophy, and she was able to take courses in theology as well.

On her return to Duluth, she was assigned as a nurse at St. James Children’s Home. When the need arose for Sister faculty in the Department of Nursing at The College of St. Scholastica, Sister Beverly and two others became instructors in the Department of Nursing. At that time, a master’s in nursing was the terminal degree required for college teaching in nursing, and so Sister Beverly received her master’s degree from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1962. She returned to The College of St. Scholastica and continued teaching in the Department of Nursing. During summers, when there were no nursing classes, she worked at St. Mary’s Hospital in a variety of areas including maternity, pediatrics, and medical-surgical nursing.

There was no Ph.D. in Nursing available in the late 1960s, but major universities were developing doctoral programs in nursing that would lead to a Ph.D. Sister Beverly entered the Nurse-Scientist program at the University of Washington and chose anthropology as a related field. Dr. Madeleine Leininger, a nurse anthropologist and Dean of the School of Nursing, became her mentor and directed her research for her dissertation. In 1975 Sister Beverly completed the requirements for a Ph.D.

She had been taught to build community wherever she was sent, using the Gospel and the Rule of Benedict as guide. In Seattle she found a parish with solid social teaching, a culturally diverse membership, and a thriving outreach program, surrounded by all the ills of a market-based economy: poverty, unequal pay, and homelessness, for many impoverished people came to Seattle for the mild winters.

This was a time when the causes of homelessness were not well understood. Sister Beverly found her life's mission with them. "I built my community within the local underserved population. I lived among them, learned from them, and embraced their culture. You cannot just throw money at a problem; relationships must come first. I let friendships slowly grow into trust. It helped that as nurse I was accepted by almost everyone on the street, but as a college student I also had to let them know they were real for me, that they mattered; that I wasn't here to use them, complete a study, and leave."

Back in Duluth, she served as Chair of the Department of Nursing of The College of St. Scholastica in 1974-76, and again in 1981-83. In 1976 she became a professor in the School of Nursing, Department of Community Health Care Systems, at the University of Washington, Seattle. Her earlier experience in acute care nursing and her further education highlighted the importance of prevention of illness and promotion of health within communities. Her focus of research was the influence of culture on health and health outcomes. She retired from the University of Washington as faculty emerita in 2001 and received the University of Washington Health Services Community Service Award for her research and advocacy for the underserved and minority communities in Seattle. In 2004 she was inducted into the Washington State Nurses Association Hall of Fame for her manifold contributions to nursing education and practice.¹

While at U of W, she joined Dr. Madeleine Leininger and other healthcare professionals to found the Transcultural Nursing Society. Its mission is "to enhance the quality of culturally congruent, competent, and equitable care that results in improved health and wellbeing

for people worldwide."² She has served the Society in many roles, has written and edited scholarly articles for the Journal of Transcultural Nursing, and has served as the Society's Executive Director for 19 years.



After returning to the Monastery in 2004, she became involved in internal ministries. She serves on boards of several of our sponsored health ministries and continues her work with the Transcultural Nursing Society. Then in 2015 she was asked by newly elected prioress Sister Beverly Raway to take on the duties of the subprioress, a daunting role which she has filled with grace, intelligence, and good sense. With the prioress, she shares in the daily administration of the Community. She helps Sisters with health and wellness decisions, oversees Benet Hall, our managed care home, and serves on the monastic council, among many other duties.

"Let some of good character and holy life be chosen from among the brethren and made deans: and let them exercise careful guardianship in all things, in accordance with God's commandments and their abbot's precepts. And let such be chosen as deans upon whom the abbot may safely lay a share of his burdens; and let them not be chosen by seniority, but for meritorious life and soundness of wisdom."

~ Rule of Benedict, Ch. 21

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic late last winter was an affirmation of Sister Beverly's views on disease prevention. We are blessed to have two doctorally-prepared nurses as prioress and subprioress and see in retrospect God's hand guiding our selection of a new prioress in 2015. Sister Beverly Raway and Sister Beverly Horn reviewed recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control, Minnesota Department of Health, and the Duluth Diocese, including the Nursing Director of Benet Hall in the discussion. They conferred with leaders at the Benedictine Living Community and The College of St. Scholastica who share our campus to develop a coordinated response. Lastly, they called on the wisdom at Essentia Health to confirm that the plan was appropriate and effective. We are two separate community groups – the Sisters on Benet Hall in assisted living and the remainder in congregate living – and this requires delicate adjustments to balance both the physical threat and the mental health of the Community. Prioress and subprioress meet daily to review the emerging situation, including the infectivity rate for our county, and determine whether further adjustment is needed.

¹ <https://www.wsna.org/hall-of-fame/2004/beverly-horn>

² <https://tcns.org/>

Asked how she continues to have hope in the future during these difficult times, Sister Beverly Horn responded, “Historically our country has often faced multiple challenges that follow one after another, but we survived them. World War One was a national trauma, but the Spanish influenza followed on its heels and our grandparents went through what we are now, wearing masks and staying isolated and losing family and friends. The stock market crash of 1929 brought the Great Depression, then another world war and the arms race and Cold War that followed, with wars in Korea and Vietnam – these were all seen as insurmountable, but we survived them and are stronger for the experience.

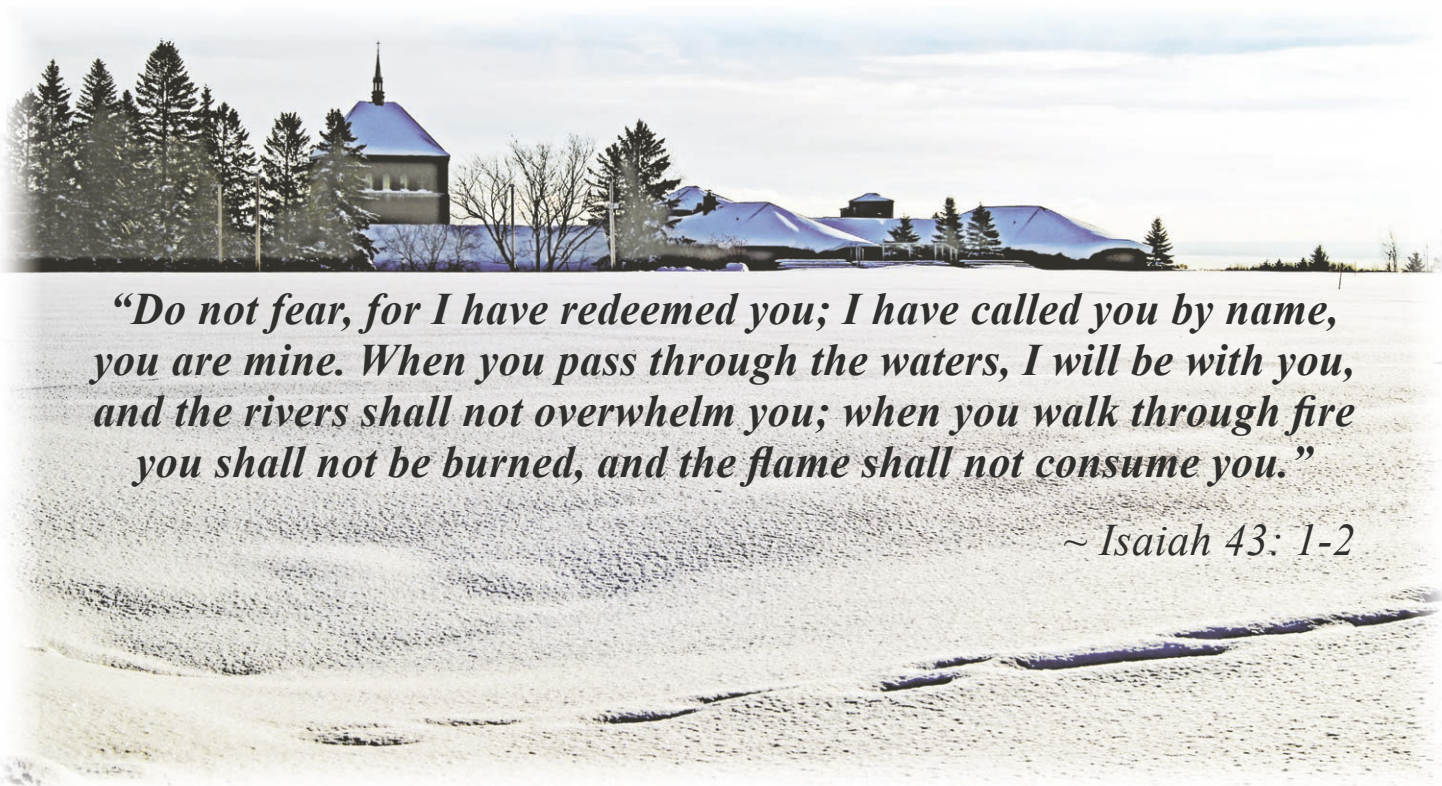
“I see this pandemic as a portal to what we are becoming. The problems we face today are teaching us that we are all connected, that everything we do affects others. We are learning the value of relationship – with each other, with the natural world of which we are part, and the whole world. We are being taught by our merciful God how to work together.

“And this pandemic, because it brought international travel to a halt, has pushed our ability to connect from a distance through video conferencing. We are not able

to meet in person with others within this city, but we are connecting with people from all over the world who otherwise would remain unknown to us. We are becoming an expanded community of God’s people and are learning so much from each other.

“Within the Community, the role of the subprioress changes with the times. At present, with the whole Community I am discerning who we are and where God is calling us to go. We are planning for a future that can only be guessed at, not yet seen clearly. The Benedictine women who came before us also shared that challenge. I keep in mind the quote from the Prophet Isaiah, ‘I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?’ (Isaiah 43:19).”

Asked what she would do if, for one day, there were no responsibilities and no limitations, she replied, “I would read a book just for enjoyment. I would go outside, sit in the sun, relax. I would visit my family whom I haven’t seen since this all began.” To this we all say, Amen!



“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and the rivers shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”

~ Isaiah 43: 1-2

Sisters Theresa Jodocy and Kathleen Doyle Celebrate 90th birthdays

by Theresa Butler, Administrative Assistant, Development Office

Sister Theresa Jodocy celebrated her 90th birthday on September 24, 2020 with a party in the Rockhurst Dining Room with her Community. Sister Theresa is a native of upper Michigan and grew up in a French speaking family, first learning to speak English when she started school. Faith life was central in her family home and she prayed daily to become a Sister. This prayer became a reality when she entered the Duluth Benedictines as a graduate from The College of St. Scholastica. She says that Sister Ann Edward Scanlon was instrumental in her joining the Community in 1954.

In her early ministry, Sister Theresa served as teacher, principal, and Dean of many schools. She then felt called to use her theological training by teaching adults in a parish. For 35 years, Sister Theresa worked in Arizona. Her main ministry was bringing people into the faith through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. She was blessed to work in three different parishes and helped bring between 400 and 500 people into the Catholic Church.

In recent years, she has enjoyed bringing the consolation of the Body of Christ to residents at the Benedictine Living Community in Duluth. Due to COVID-19 restrictions she has not been able to do this ministry over the last eight months but looks forward to bringing the Eucharist again to the residents in the future. Sister Theresa is grateful for her good health and many blessings during her 90 years.



Sister Kathleen (“Katie”) Doyle turned 90 years old on November 3, 2020. She was born and grew up in Iowa where she attended Catholic school and was first introduced to religious Sisters. After graduating from high school, she felt called to religious life and joined the Passionist nuns at age 17. She was then led to enter a semi-cloistered Benedictine Community in Clyde, Missouri, where she made her first profession in 1952. In 1968, God brought her to St. Scholastica Monastery where she transferred her membership and continued as a Benedictine Sister.



Sister Katie served as a physical therapist at several places including the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth, where she helped to design the first physical therapy department. After retiring from her career, she went on to serve as manager of the Monastery Books and Gifts shop where her creativity continued to flourish for many years.

Today, Sister Katie lives with Sister Helen Giesen in a converted carriage house called ‘The Barn’ next to McCabe Renewal Center. She enjoys creative writing and poetry, while finding many blessings in each day. Her eyesight is failing but she gives thanks for the 90 years that God has blessed her, saying, in the words of Job, “Blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21).



Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

St. Scholastica Monastery - McCabe Renewal Center

One Mission, Two Locations

Join us for our **Benedictine Conversations** series, new in 2020 at the Center for Spirituality and Enrichment!

Due to the need to ensure safety for all during the pandemic, we are unable to gather for our usual Benedictine Days series in person at St. Scholastica Monastery. Instead, we invite you to our new, interactive, monthly Zoom gatherings titled **Benedictine Conversations**. Each month will feature a guest who will help us explore the Benedictine legacy in our world today.

December 2020 **Abbot John Klassen, OSB** *Abbot of Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, MN*

January 2021 **Carl Crawford** *Human Rights Officer for the City of Duluth, MN*

Check the Center website for more information at <https://retreatduluth.org/benedictine-conversations/>.
View past Benedictine Conversations by clicking on the link at the bottom of that page.

Join the Feminist Theologies discussion via Zoom as we look at the challenges facing us today. We will examine white privilege, implicit bias and racism, and climate and environmental changes.
Register at <https://retreatduluth.org/programs/program-schedule/>.

Address questions to retreat@duluthosb.org or call Dawn Carrillo at 320-260-8233.

The Blessing of the Geese

by Dawn Carrillo, Director of Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

As for many, morning walks have been my lifeline and place of grounding during the COVID-19 pandemic, bringing me perspective and a sense of peace in the midst of a turbulent world. The natural beauty of the Duluth area offers me a glimpse of God – and, therefore, hope – every time I step out of my door.

Last October, on a particularly spectacular fall morning, I moved along my usual route, reveling in the warm sunshine, the brilliance of Lake Superior below me, and the glory of the oranges, reds, and yellows of the leaves that framed my view in every direction as I quietly walked and meditated.

As I rounded a bend in my journey, my deep reflecting was interrupted by sounds emanating from a pond that was hidden from my view by some thick trees and shrubs. The air was filled with the startlingly loud sounds of geese – a common experience at this time of year, but these geese were clearly agitated, almost shouting. I stepped up my pace, anxious to find out what was happening.



Once my view cleared the trees, I observed about two dozen geese in this pond that were separated into two distinct groups. One group appeared to have not a care in the world, basking in the luscious sun as they floated aimlessly in the deeper area of the pond. I marveled at their calm and felt myself drawn to their beauty and sense of tranquility. The second group of geese had been the ones making all the noise, looking quite overbearing and impatient as they flapped their wings and kept honking at the oblivious group. It was as if I could hear them shouting indignantly at the others...*Come on! We have to get going south! Don't you know what is happening? Winter is almost here!* The objects of their disapproval and chastisement seemed unaffected, unconcerned, content to stay where they were, knowing winter was on its way but intentionally enjoying the last bit of sunshine and beauty in this moment.

I know I am not alone in saying that I dreaded the onset of this winter. Gathering with loved ones and friends in the outdoors will cease for the most part, and indoor gatherings will be fraught with complicated safety protocols – or for those of us who are high risk, maybe not at all. It weighed heavily on my mind as the fall colors intensified, waned, and vanished into the dark of winter. One thing I have been pondering, as I have had to love my family members and dear friends from afar with infrequent, distanced visits, is that I cannot get away from my feelings – of fear, isolation, and even sometimes panic. There is nowhere to run: no blockbuster movie to see at the theater, no plays, no concerts, no crowded Fourth of July excitement on the river in downtown Minneapolis, no large family get-togethers, no attendance for me at a family funeral for a beloved aunt. With none of the usual diversions or meaningful events and the constant reminder that we are safer staying at home, there is only one place to go with my feelings. *Within.*



Stability. The Benedictine value of stability is not one that we hear about a lot, but it has increasingly come to mind for me as we have experienced – and continue to experience – the pandemic, racial unrest, increasing economic insecurity, and escalating climate events, all in less than a year. This value of stability encourages us to cultivate rootedness in our personal and shared lives, to know of *and act upon* our sense of shared mission. Reflecting on this value through the last seven months has helped me to *stay* with my feelings rather than running from them or feeding my anxiety with worry about the future. I have worked hard to sit with my feelings, exploring God's presence and God's movement in all of them – in the pain of my fear, uncertainty, and isolation, as well as in the beauty of Creation and the preciousness of the present moment. The group of loud, panic stricken geese were reacting for good reason, but somehow, I have learned to be more rooted, like the group of geese who were unruffled, captivated by the moment of sun and water and glorious sky, blissfully lost in the now. When I read the news each morning and feel my anxiety rising, I pause and bring to mind the blessing of those geese and the example they are for us all.

May you, too, know the serenity and blessing of the geese.

Selah

by Rev. Gabriel Baltes, OSB

Those who are familiar with the Psalter from the Hebrew Scriptures may have noticed that in certain Psalms there appears an italicized Hebrew word in the margin after a series of verses. The word is *Selah*. Scripture scholars translate *Selah* as a verb meaning ‘to pause,’ ‘to rest,’ or ‘to breathe.’ They suggest that it was a liturgical instruction – a rubric, intended for the choir director who was leading the singers. It indicated the appropriate place to pause and take a breath before the next stanza. Such a practice is helpful to the singers who are thus given a brief respite to refresh themselves with energy and wind. This lets them continue their performance with ease, accuracy, and beauty.

I have always maintained that liturgical rites of any religious tradition are microcosms of a wider culture or faith community. What we do in our ritual gatherings reflects what we do in the concrete circumstances of life. Such is the value of ritual language: it gives us a concentrated glimpse of reality by which we can examine our world and when necessary make fitting adjustments or adaptations to enrich life for the common good.

Pausing to take a breath while singing in liturgical rites reveals the need to pause and take a breath in life, or in what the great theologian Karl Rahner named ‘The Liturgy of the World’. This is the fundamental understanding of the Hebrew Sabbath instituted by God after completing the work of creation. This divine pattern of resting on the 7th day of the week is God’s gift to the whole created world so that it might pause, take a breath, and be renewed. *Selah*.

My need for *Selah* surfaced last fall when, after 12 years of fruitful ministry in the same parish, I discerned the need to pause and take a breath. This was reinforced by trusted confreres and friends, who urged me to retreat to some place that was prayerful and beautiful and where most people liked me. Although finding the latter would be the greatest challenge, the gracious Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery in Duluth opened their doors to me, so that from mid-January until June of 2020 I found *Selah* within this community of exceptionally holy and highly educated women. The Monastery itself, with its exquisite collection of artworks as well as its location overlooking the mighty and mystical Great Lake Superior, provided untold hours of meditation. This lake, which the Ojibwa people referred to as *gitchi-gami* – ‘Big Sea’ or ‘Huge Water’ – possesses a unique and unpredictable personality that can manifest both splendor and fury. Lake Superior is an icon of God who astounds us with glory and mystery and yet compels us to tremble with reverence and fear.

The sabbatical I had planned was to include time for rest, reading, prayer, and travel. However, with the sudden and shocking announcement of the COVID pandemic, it became evident that I would need to forego any travels. Thus, with my Benedictine Sisters, I hunkered down in a spirit of monastic enclosure on that hill in Duluth, where each day at morning, noon, and evening we prayed for the needs of the world, especially those suffering from this worldwide pandemic.

I shall never forget the afternoon in March when the prioress, Sister Beverly Raway, announced the need to close the Monastery buildings to outsiders and to limit all departures from it. A great sadness came over us all, not because we would be unable to come and go as we pleased, but because the wider community could not be served by the Sisters as regularly as before. The students of The College of St. Scholastica returned to their homes. Visitors were not permitted access to the chapel for Eucharist or the Liturgy of the Hours. Individuals could not come for spiritual direction, Oblate meetings, or other formative events sponsored by the Community. Family and friends could not visit the elderly Sisters on Benet Hall. At that point, I believe we all realized that life would be forever changed; we just were not sure how and to what extent. Such uncertainty was painfully foreboding.



Then, on the evening of that same day, we gathered in chapel for Vespers. Like frightened children desperately needing a word of consolation and hope, we turned to God whose maternal arms wrapped us with tender comfort as we sang this hymn:

*As falls the night we come
To shelter where your wings
Stretch out above the world you love
To guard all living things.*

*As prowl our fears we turn
To you in trusting prayer;
Where you abide, your children hide
Within your loving care.*

*As falls the light we seek
The fire no dark can douse.
Your lamp held high, you bid us fly
To harbor in your house.*

*All praise be yours, O God,
The home of all the blest;
Your walls of peace will never cease
To give your household rest.*

(By Sr. Genevieve Glenn, OSB, Benedictine Nuns of the Abbey of St. Walburga, Copyright 2003)

That ‘Vesper Moment’ and the peace it brought nearly made the entire sabbatical worthwhile.

Some of the Sisters and people who know me offered condolences that my sabbatical did not unfold as I had planned. My response has been, “It was certainly not what I had planned, but it was certainly what I needed.” I am grateful for this *Selah* I was given – for the gift of time to read and write, to do some soul searching and personal goal setting. It was a blessing to reclaim the formative rhythms of the Divine Office and rekindle my love for silence which the Sisters observe so naturally. It was an immense privilege to minister to the infirm Sisters who, for their protection, were even more isolated than the rest of us. But perhaps most significantly, this *Selah* time was another reminder of that ongoing need for conversion, of learning to surrender to those realities in life over which we have no control. Such surrender inevitably leads one to trust in God more heartily and to realize that we are only God’s instruments.



I have returned to my parish of St. Joan of Arc in Lisle, required to wear masks, practice social distancing, limit the number of worshippers, and eliminate many of the precious ceremonial features of Catholic Liturgy, like singing. But the lesson of surrender continues to sustain me. I will be forever grateful to the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery who made it possible for me to re-learn this and to reclaim hope as the greatest of mercies. Their generous hospitality was exceptional, and if that were not enough, they were also a great deal of fun. The walls of their Monastery and the walls of their hearts mirror God’s Walls that we sang about in that Vesper hymn: *Your walls of peace will never cease to give your household (and all others who come your way) rest.*

To thank Fr. Gabriel for his ministry to us, Sister Beverly Raway presented to him the preliminary oil sketch of ‘Consummatum Est’ (‘It is finished’), by Sister Constantina Kakonyi of Hungary, who was an artist in residence at the College. The original hangs in our Community Room.

An update from the Monastery's Development Office

by Jan M. Barrett, Director of Development and Public Relations janbarrett@duluthosb.org

While COVID-19 has changed how we live our daily lives, there is a growing demand for the Sisters to continue and broaden their ministry work. We remain committed to not ask donors and friends for donations during these unsettling times. For the second year in a row, we will not have an annual appeal. We feel it is important that you know we are mindful of only asking for what is needed. In 2019, we were blessed by previous gifts so, in 2020, with the effects and uncertainty that the pandemic brings to you and your families, we decided to forego the appeal.

The Sisters share with you the need for cancelling many events this year. We had to forego our annual donor open house and Christmas Bazaar, leaving us lonesome for friends and family. Resourcefully, Sisters Teri Spinler and Pauline Micke got creative 'COVID-style' and, in lieu of selling jams, jellies, beets, and treats at the Christmas Bazaar, they offered their goods outside the Monastery chapel for drive-up shopping. Fortunately, the weather cooperated and so did the shoppers, so that there was little to pack-up at the end of the day. The best part was being able to visit with some volunteers and friends whom they had not seen in a long time.



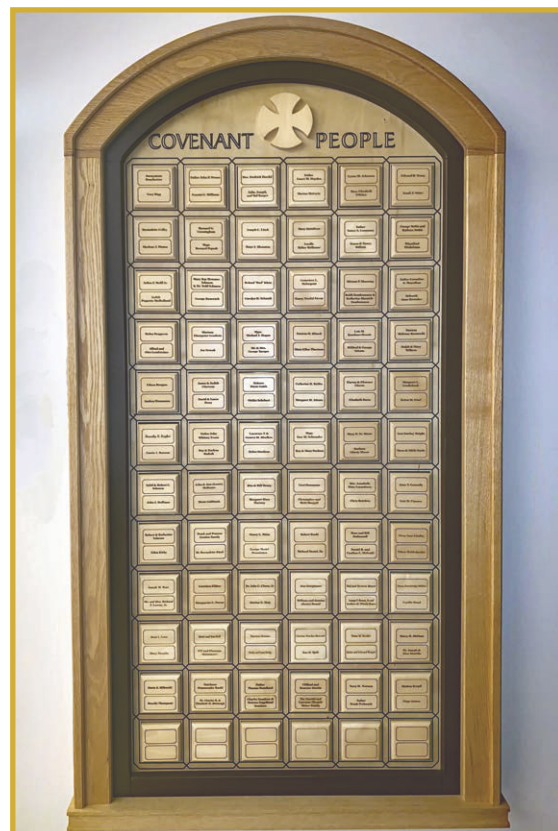
*Sister Pauline Micke, Kathy Noble,
Sister Teri Spinler, and Mary Tanner*

The Chapel and the Center for Spirituality and Enrichment have also been closed to outside guests. The Center has adapted and is offering online Zoom sessions. Please find more information at retreatduluth.org for information on Zoom sessions and planning for 2021. The Sisters continue to offer spiritual direction via phone or Zoom.

As development director, I want to remind and encourage you to consider a donation to the Sisters and their ministry work. You may designate a special purpose for your gift or make a gift in memory of a loved one. Consider naming the Sisters as a beneficiary of an IRA, life insurance policy, charitable gift annuity, gift of property, or in your will or trust. Donors may also contact me at janbarrett@duluthosb.org to talk about these giving opportunities and other tax-wise strategies. Any donor who names the Sisters as a beneficiary or donates \$25,000 or more in their lifetimes becomes a Covenant Donor; their names are listed in Chapel prayers and on the donor wall located at the Monastery entrance. You can also donate online at: <http://www.duluthbenedictines.org/give/>.

And don't forget the Father John Whitney Evans fund that supports men and women who are discerning their calling to a vocation. Email janbarrett@duluthosg.org for more information.

Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and on our website at www.duluthbenedictines.org to keep abreast of updates and changes regarding guests, programming, and other COVID-19 information.



Covenant Donor Board at Monastery entrance.

Highlights

Sisters celebrate the jubilee of their monastic profession



On Saturday, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, we celebrated the jubilees of six Sisters. In the morning, Father Seamus Walsh celebrated Eucharist, where Sisters Grace Marie Braun, Donna Schroeder, and Pauline Micke renewed their vows and sang once more the *Suscipe*, the declaration of complete confidence and trust in the Lord: “Receive me, O Lord, according to your word and I will live, and do not fail me in my hope.”



*Clockwise from upper left: Fr. Seamus Walsh; lighted lamps symbolizing their faithful service to God; Prioress Beverly Raway signs the vow formulas; Sister Pauline Micke (60 years) and Sister Grace Marie Braun (70 years) sing the *Suscipe*; Sister Donna Schroeder (60 years) reads from Revelation.*



Sisters Melanie Gagne (75 years), Gloria Ess (60 years) and Josine Krausnick (60 years)

In the afternoon, Sisters Melanie Gagne, Gloria Ess, and Josine Krausnick renewed their vows on Benet Hall in the presence of the other residents.

Because of the public health crisis, we were not able to celebrate together. We look forward to the day when we can come together with friends and family and share our lives once more.



Sister Jayne Erickson is welcomed into the Novitiate

On Tuesday, September 8, we welcomed Sister Jayne Erickson into the Novitiate. We celebrate and rejoice with her as she continues to add light and strength to our Community.

Sister Jayne grew up in Cloquet, Minnesota, the middle child of five, where her family belonged to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish (now Queen of Peace). As an older teenager, she was active in a Catholic youth group where she became friends with Sister Barbara Higgins. Following high school, she attended college at University of Wisconsin in Superior and The College of St. Scholastica. She took a year off to travel with the group Covenant Heartsong, working with youth and youth leaders in the United States and Canada through music, drama, and puppetry.



Sisters Barbara Higgins, Jayne Erickson, Beverly Raway, and Donna Schroeder

She graduated with a bachelor's degree in youth ministry from CSS and worked in a variety of ministry jobs in Minnesota and Iowa. She then completed a teaching degree and taught for 15 years in Iowa schools. She retired early and came home to Cloquet. She learned of the Benedictine associate program from her friend Marce Wood and became an associate in December 2017. On December 2, 2019, she was welcomed as a postulant in a special service with the Community.

Sister Jayne's ministries include sacristan, eucharistic minister, cantor, lector, working at the information desk, and helping on Benet Hall. One of her passions is writing music. Her original songs are sung at Prayer and Mass, often as a quiet meditation during Communion. Her presence is a blessing to us.

S'mores for Labor Day

It was a dark and chilly day, but the grill came out and the Sisters toasted marshmallows for the traditional S'mores. Even a pandemic can't stop marshmallows from toasting.

College reopens for fall semester

Students returned to The College of St. Scholastica this fall with many adjustments for the rising numbers of COVID-19 cases in northeastern Minnesota. The SaintsRiseUp Safe Return plan follows Health Department guidelines and the Rule of St. Benedict that says, "Community members are not to pursue what they judge better for themselves, but instead what they judge better for someone else." The plan includes wearing masks both indoors and outside, health screenings on entry to buildings, and a hybrid of in-person and online classes. Each student signed a pledge to abide by the plan.



Sisters Teri Spinler, Jayne Erickson, Lois Eckes, and Luella Wegscheid

The Sisters offered words of prayer and blessing to the Faculty and Staff of the College of St. Scholastica at the start of this school year. Because of safety precautions, they pre-recorded their message and a sung blessing. In her address to the Faculty and Staff Institute, Sister Beverly Raway, Prioress shared, “The Sisters pray that creativity and resilience accompany you as you work together to build community in new ways, facing the challenges and opportunities of this year.”

Mike Turner, safety and security manager, added, “I wished we could have been together in person to receive this Sisters’ blessing, but it was still great they could join us in a virtual way. It is important for us to have that connection, especially this year.”



Above: Video of Sisters’ blessing the faculty and staff

Blessings of the College Athletes

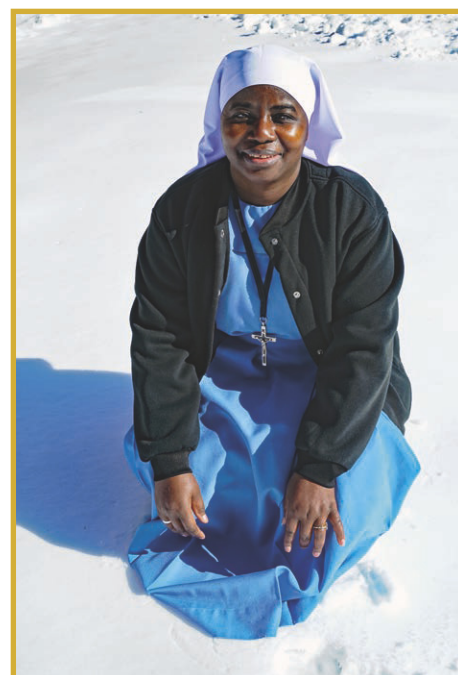
It has become a tradition for Sister Lisa Maurer, OSB to lead prayer services with the student athletes at the start of the school year. Although athletic competitions were postponed, the teams continued to practice, and Sister Lisa continued distributing Benedictine Medals to all of the team members. This year’s prayer reflection focused on living, in these unusual times, the CSS Athletic department mission of pursuing excellence, while fostering a positive experience and sense of community through commitment, integrity, respect, and sportsmanship. Women’s Soccer Coach Dave Reyelts said, “We are thankful to Sister Lisa for another wonderful blessing for our team. Her message of commitment and respect is much needed in these trying times.”

Below: Sr. Lisa Maurer blesses the women’s soccer team



Sister Charity Nkwera begins her studies at The College

Sister Charity joined us in August to attend The College of St. Scholastica. She is a member of St. Gertrude Monastery, our Twinning Community in Imiliwawa, Njombe Region, Tanzania. Sister Charity came to New Jersey in 2015 to attend Assumption College for Sisters, run by the Sisters of Christian Charity. “It was a little frightening,” she said, “coming to a new country before I was proficient in English. But I learned.” She earned an associate degree in Liberal Arts and in 2018 transferred to Holy Family College in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where she majored in Education with a minor in Psychology. “I had seen snow from a distance on Mount Kilimanjaro, but never before felt it.” After Holy Family closed this past August, a financial casualty of the pandemic, she came to Duluth to share our life while finishing her studies. She now majors in Psychology and plans to complete her master’s degree before returning to Imiliwaha. *(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from previous page) Sister Charity keeps in contact with her mother, two brothers, a sister, and many nephews and nieces back home through videoconferencing. It helps keep homesickness at bay. “I have learned to be flexible and take whatever comes. It has been interesting seeing new places and people. I look forward to exploring the areas around Duluth – and it is good to be back in a Benedictine Community. I am very grateful for everyone’s kindness, generosity, and warm welcome.”

Because she came during the pandemic, she has not yet been down to Lake Superior. When the weather moderates and there is a thaw, we will get her down to the waterfront before winter really sets in.

Ongoing Formation classes

Sister Lisa Maurer has offered outstanding, diverse, and insightful opportunities for the Sisters during their isolation. Beginning April 3, she has presented on seventeen topics, some several sessions in length, consisting of recorded video via internet, DVDs, and live ZOOM sessions.

Topics included *Hope in Time of Crisis* by Ilia Delio, *Vatican II: Inside the Council*, *The Chosen* (a movie about Jesus’ life, ministry, and teachings and calling of the disciples), *Humility: Ancients’ View of Love Founded on Christ* by S. Mary Forman, OSB, *Transformative Grief: COVID-19*, *Celibate Life* by Brother John Mark, OSB, *Catholic Social Teaching*, *Black Elk’s Journey to Sainthood*, *Hildegard of Bingen*, *The Power of Vulnerability* by Dr. Brene Brown, *John XXIII: The Pope of Peace* (movie), *Prayer in Times of Suffering* by Fr. Robin Ryan, *Thomas Merton and Black Lives Matter: Spirituality and Racial Justice for Our Time*, *The Book of Revelation — Why Read It?* by Shawn Carruth OSB, and *Celebrating Mercy* by Fr. Ronald Rolheiser.



Another early start to winter



+Sister Sarah O'Malley

Sister Sarah O'Malley, OSB, age 87, was called home August 2, 2020 in her 67th year of consecrated life. She was born November 10, 1932 to Michael and Ida Mary (Roberts) O'Malley in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, the youngest of seven children, and given the name Nancy Elizabeth. She followed two older sisters to The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth and entered the Community in her sophomore year. She made her first monastic profession in 1953 and her perpetual profession in 1956.

Sister Sarah majored in elementary education and taught in Cincinnati, Brainerd, and Cloquet for 23 years, also serving as a principal in Cloquet. Moved by compassion for human suffering, she completed a Clinical Pastoral Education program and was pastoral minister for West End Catholic parishes in Duluth from 1973 to 1984. She began a 'Ministry to the Aging' program for the elderly, sick, and bereaved, helped bring Marriage Encounter to the diocese, and introduced Beginning Experience for the divorced and widowed.

In 1984, she moved to Phoenix, Arizona. For 26 years at two parishes, she organized outreach programs and coordinated a large volunteer force that responded to the needs of the hospitalized, homebound, and bereaved. She passionately believed that God asks us to walk as Christ with the poor and suffering and did this with quiet strength, humility, patience, and love.

Wherever she was, Sister Sarah lived among people and shared life and ministry with them. She invited women religious from other communities into her circle of life for communal sharing, enrichment, and celebration. An avid reader of periodicals and books, she could converse knowledgeably on a wide range of subjects. Early morning prayer nourished her rich and intimate relationship with God. Out of these experiences came a series of contemplative books and articles on the ministry of care and on spirituality, including *Journey of Decision: A Way of the Cross* which is still used by parishes to bring the passion narrative alive during Lent.

In 2014, Sister Sarah returned to Duluth and began the much-loved *Coffee with the Saints* series. She was deeply influenced by theologian Henri Nouwen, who called himself a 'wounded healer' and whom she considered her mentor. She drew on his pastoral writings as well as those of Thomas Merton to inform her own parish retreats, revealing the sense of the Divine that underlies the work of theologians, artists, and composers.

Sister Sarah was always creating, writing, learning; seeking saints and the holy among us to study and share with others. After a full life of service to God, she passed peacefully on August 2 and continues, we hope, to enjoy "coffee with the Saints" and listen to their stories in person.

Sister Sarah was preceded in death by her parents and her siblings Patrick (Gert), Mary Ann (John) O'Melia, Ida Mary (Peter) Pearce, Sally (Edward) Kremer, Sylvia (Tom) Eichner, and Jeanne (Donald) Hertzog. She is survived by her Community members and many beloved nieces and nephews. She also leaves behind friends throughout the country who consider her their sister-in-faith, confidante, and spiritual adviser.

Wake and funeral Mass were held on Wednesday, September 2 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, with Father William Fider presiding. Interment was at Gethsemane Cemetery on a beautiful summer afternoon. Because of public health restrictions, the funeral was private. Dougherty Funeral Home handled the arrangements. A memorial service will take place at a later date.



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As we welcome the birth of Christ into our hearts, we remember St. Teresa of Calcutta, who saw Christ in us all.

“We can only live the changes we wish to see; we cannot think our way to humanity. Every one of us, and every group with which we live and work, must become the model of the era which we desire to create. ... All of us are crippled – some physically, some mentally, some emotionally. We must therefore strive cooperatively to create the new world. There is no time left for destruction, for hatred, and for anger. We must build – in hope, and in joy, and in celebration.”

~ Rev. Ivan Illich, Austrian Catholic priest and philosopher

If you prefer an electronic copy of *Pathways*, please email us at monastery@duluthosb.org.