

Pathways

Newsletter of the Benedictine Sisters



Summer, 2008

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Reflection

By Sister Josine Krausnick

"We plan, God laughs." These words are sometimes used to express the humor of a situation which changes beyond our control. But when one comes to a circumstance in life, it is so much more than God's humor. When we come face-to-face with our own mortality, when we find in an instant that life is forever changed, we must somehow learn to let go and trust in God's presence and providence.

My long-time ministry of teaching in Phoenix, Arizona, was suddenly interrupted in July, 2007, when I was diagnosed with cancer and spent the past academic year at our beautiful Monastery in Duluth, Minnesota. I have always been fairly flexible in my life, but I was not prepared for this.

During the past Lenten season, I read a book given to me by a good friend while I was dealing with this reality of being diagnosed with cancer in an advanced stage. The book is *Thin Places* by Mary Tracey O'Keefe of St. Paul, Minnesota.

The author describes "thin places" as those times in our lives when we most feel "God's comfort and love"—when our helplessness and vulnerability allow us to feel God's powerful presence and unlimited eternal love. She further describes "thin places" as "moments of grace—gifts freely given to us by a God who loves us all." It can be that threshold "when the veil between this world and the next is very thin." This happens in times of suffering or loss, such as in illness or the death of a loved one.

During my nine-month stay at the Monastery, I was receiving intensive treatments for the cancer and also experiencing a few setbacks which challenged my faith and patience. But I became so aware of many gifts God was giving me daily:

- the awareness and presence of a Community that loves and cares for my well-being;

- the affirmation from a parish/school community that seemed aware of my absence;
- the assurance of prayer and support from many persons from my past with whom I had not had recent contact;
- the grace and comfort of being anointed with the Sacrament of the Sick—more than once.

During this time I frequently repeated a prayer which has been part of my daily prayer since I was a teenager. This "Prayer of Abandonment" by St. Ignatius of Loyola sometimes became difficult to pray with full and complete "abandonment," but it also became more meaningful and real as each stage or crisis was met and dealt with.

Take, Lord, and receive my entire life: my memory, my understanding, my whole being. All that I am and all that I possess you have given me. I surrender it to you to be disposed of according to your will. Give me only your love and your grace. With these I will be rich enough and will desire nothing more.

The "thin places" that we experience during difficult times in our lives are those times when we feel God's presence most keenly, when acceptance becomes trust, and personal loss becomes possession of and by a loving God.

A Letter From The Prioress



Dear Friends,

From mammoth snowbanks to tiny wildflowers carpeting greening lawns and forest floors, from howling winds to melodious birdsongs, from fallow fields to green blades rising, the passage of Earth from winter to spring is an awesome miracle. It is a transformation that aptly mirrors our spiritual journey. It is the miracle of Easter!

As spring arrives and unfolds into summer, we are reminded anew, amidst the brokenness and anguish of our lives and our world, that within us the Christ life grows. Held in the yearning and the promise of God's womb love, the Divine Life unfolds within us like a seed and bursts forth in an abundance of compassion and love, forgiveness, and healing.

In her book *A Mystical Heart* Edwina Gateley writes:

**We are each of us
a bit of God,
a scrap of Divinity.
If we would know it,
Oh! if only
we could know it,
we would walk the earth
in awe,
eyes shining in splendor,
hearts suspended in delight
at the miracle
of the living God
gracing our days
and nights.**

Be full of the courage of the seed as you let new life unfold within you. Be full of hope as you stretch and deepen to let God be God in your life. Be full of gratitude as new life rises up within and all around you from the Well of Eternal Grace.

Lovingly yours in Christ, our Life,
with deep gratitude and prayer,

Sister Lois Ekes

The Miracle Of Easter

My Ministry In The Parish RCIA Process

By Sister Pauline Micke

Working in the Parish RCIA process (in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin) has been a ministry dear to my heart for almost twenty years. To be part of people's faith journey as they seek to grow in their relationship with their God, self, and others is a privilege, and it nurtures my life as well.

You may be asking the question, "What is RCIA?" The letters RCIA stand for the "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults." This is the journey by which a person comes to full membership in the Church through the Sacraments of Initiation, which are part of the total initiation process into the Parish Faith Community. These Sacraments of Initiation are: Baptism (if the person is not already baptized), Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist.

This last year, as one of a three-member RCIA team at St. Michael's Parish, Duluth, I walked this journey of faith with six adults, which culminated in all of them being received into the Church at the celebration of the great Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday, March 22, 2008.

There were several key components of the RCIA process that occurred during the previous five- or six-month period. We began by looking at what we know of the beginnings of our own journey of faith in baptism and how we arrived at this point in our lives. We asked, "What do we know of our baptism? What was the faith experience (or lack of faith experience) lived in our homes when we were children? Who first taught us about God?"

Participants are usually surprised to hear that our Faith Journey is about "Learning to Live With the Questions." If we have answers, we don't need faith. The RCIA teams seek to give people a better understanding of what a faith life, lived in the context of the community, embodies.

Through learning sessions and rituals, participants get a grounding in Hebrew and Christian scriptures. They learn the story of salvation. The journey continues with sessions on the Trinity, on Jesus the Christ, and on the Holy Spirit. We look at what it means for us to be Church, to have an alive experience of our Sacramental life and the Creed. We come to know that a process of conversion is in our life and that it is always ongoing. Prayer is a vital part of this conversion experience.

Learning sessions are also accompanied by ritual experiences. A Rite of Welcome is celebrated with the parish faith community in the context of the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration. Participants take part in the weekly celebrations of the Eucharist and the parish celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. All of this culminates in the celebration of the great Easter Vigil where participants are baptized, make their Profession of Faith, and receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

This entire process of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults was most appropriately summed up by one participant who stated, "This is the greatest day of my life. My heart is just pounding."

May the journey of faith continue.

...our Faith
Journey
is about
"Learning to Live
With the
Questions."
If we have
answers
we don't need
Faith



RCIA group at St. Michael's with spouses, sponsors, and RCIA team members. Sister Pauline Micke at right.

Phoenix Reception

March 30, 2008, some 175 guests joined Sisters who have ministries in the Phoenix area as well as three Sisters who traveled there from Duluth for a reception at the Mt. Claret Center. Four Sisters – Sister Barbara Higgins, Sister Josine Krausnick, Sister Sarah O'Malley, and Sister Theresa Jodocy – have ministries in or near Phoenix. (Sister Josine, recovering from an illness in Duluth, was not able to be present.) Sister Lois Eckes, Sister Claudia Riehl, and Sister Theresa Spinler from Duluth also attended. What a very special day! The sun was out, family and friends came with greetings, and we were very thankful for the warmth of your kindness, especially since we (some of us) returned to a snowstorm in Duluth!



Mary O'Riley, "MJ" Benton, Sister Lois, and Sister Sarah



Dan and Cyndy Malinski, Sister Claudia, Janet and Sam LaBarbera



Jean Miller, Bea Moore, Joann Zack, Louise Prete, Sister Barbara, Donna Manning, and Mary Lach



Sisters sang a blessing over reception attendees.

Left to right: Skip Moyer, Kathy Moyer, Carlene Jenner, Sister Theresa, Agnes Umuligirwa, and Sandy Johnson



Photos by Sister Theresa Spinler and Vicky Siders

Former College President Dan Pilon remembered Sister Margaret James as the “College’s own Radar O’Reilly, with a down-to-earth solution to any impossible problem.”

Sister Profile: Sister Margaret James Laughlin

My hometown is Iron Mountain, Michigan, a mining town of about ten thousand people, given new life in the 1920’s by the construction of a Ford Motor Company plant for manufacturing the wooden parts of Ford station wagons. Until I was seven years old our family consisted of my parents, two older brothers, myself, and one younger sister. At that time my parents became the legal guardians of seven first cousins—four girls and three boys—all except one older than I—who then made their home with us. I have a vivid memory, some time later, of calling out the back door to my mother who was hanging clothes in the back yard to ask, “How many for dinner today?” She thought briefly and then said, “Oh, there are only ten today!” Despite the difficult days of the Depression, ten of the eleven of us were college graduates.

There were no Catholic schools in Iron Mountain at that time, so we all went to the local public schools. I considered band and basketball the most important things in high school, though they played a minor role compared to extracurricular activities today. An insignificant choice, which turned out to be the cornerstone for my professional life, was my selection of shorthand as an elective—chosen not because I thought it was important but because I didn’t like any of the alternative subject choices!

My mother was determined, like her mother before her, that each of us must have at least one year in a Catholic school. I chose St. Scholastica for my year because I had a cousin who attended. I liked it, so at the end of the year decided to continue there. In the middle of my junior year, together with three of my closest friends, I became a postulant to become a Benedictine Sister.

Three years later, as a junior professed Sister, I was sent to teach typing and shorthand at Cathedral Senior High School near downtown Duluth. I stayed for 17 happy years, the last ten as Father Hogan’s assistant. Finances were always at crisis point, but the students were a joy, and life was always interesting. My next assignment was to the girls at Stanbrook Hall, a different world in many respects, but, again, the students were a joy and life was always interesting. My twenty-five years in the College (all in offices, not classrooms) were challenging in many ways. One of the most fearful, I think, was the first time semester grades were prepared by computer. At that time it meant mailing the grade sheets to a center halfway across the country, where the reports were prepared and mailed back—except that we ran into a postal strike. Hard to imagine now! The past fifteen years in the Monastery Development office have required the same kinds of clerical skills but vastly different attitudes.

After Vatican II ended in 1966, the Catholic Church declared a 15-year period of experimentation in addressing old problems in new ways, one of which was “small-group living” to counteract the traditional large convents which could—and did—number in the hundreds. In the fall of 1970 I became a member of one such group. Today, 38 years later, two of the original group are deceased and four of us (plus one Sister who joined us fifteen years ago) are still living happily together.



By Jeff Frey Photography

Highlights

Photo by Sister Jean Maher



"Journey with Christ" retreat participants

March Retreat a Great Success

By Sister Pauline Micke

The first retreat offering of the Benedictine Center of Spirituality was held on Saturday, March 8, 2008. Sister Mary Josephine Torborg and Sister Pauline Micke led the retreat entitled "Journeying with Christ." Eleven participants considered their "Journey with Christ" by looking at the beginnings of their own faith journey and considering how they live out this journey in their daily lives. They attended Morning Prayer with the Sisters, had two key presentations, and spent time in personal reflection and prayer. The evaluations were extremely positive. One participant said, "This was just what I needed." All are looking forward to the next offerings.

Sister Mary Rae Completes Spiritual Guidance Program

By Sister Mary Rae Higgins

In February I completed the study of a two-year program in Spiritual Direction with Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, Inc. The Shalem Spiritual Guidance Program is both contemplative and ecumenical. Parts of my training were to have a spiritual director, to direct two people, and to share with a peer group for supervision. I also read many spiritual books and articles from a long bibliography and wrote summaries to be sent to my contact person. The authors I found most helpful were Thomas Merton, John of the Cross, and Teresa of Avila.

My first residency was in June, 2006, at Holy Trinity Spiritual Center in Pikesville, Maryland,—an intense nine days of prayer, input, and sharing our spiritual direction experiences with 23 others from various places. The second residency was at Emmitsburg, Maryland, at the Seton Retreat Center, in 2008. There were 25 participants there. (I had missed the 2007 residency because of a stroke in May of that year.) I am very grateful for this experience and hope to use my new-honed skills with women who are hurting.

Photo by Sister Patricia Anne Williams



Photo by Andy Therrien



Benedictine Associate Mara Murphy

My name is Mara. I am a student in the Post-baccalaureate Nursing Program at The College of St. Scholastica. I am grateful to be a part of the Benedictine Associate Program because the Sisters share their lives with me as I participate in prayers, meals, and daily living. Each day I learn something new about the Benedictine tradition. The opportunities at the Monastery have helped me grow spiritually, and I am looking forward to becoming a nurse who practices by the Benedictine values. My volunteer experiences include working at the information desk, reading to the Sisters, and helping with the crafts for the annual craft sale. As a result of this program, I am excited to live each day in service to others because of the kindness, love, and peace the Sisters have given to me.

Sister Sarah O'Malley Honored

Each year the Serra Club of Phoenix hosts a "thank you dinner" for the men and women religious of the diocese at which time they honor those who are celebrating various Jubilees. On March 29, 2008, Sister Sarah O'Malley was among those recognized for her 55 years as a Duluth Benedictine.



Highlights

Photo by Sister Patricia Anne Williams



Benedictine Associate Sue Wilkinson Receives Bachelor's Degree

After five decades, my dream of receiving my Bachelor of Arts degree has been realized. Education has changed since the sixties, as have I. After high school I majored in criminology. It took a couple of years of study to realize that I was not interested in this dangerous objective. I can't imagine that I ever considered a job that required wearing a sidearm. Every decade since my graduation in 1960, I have been engaged in new learning. I believe my degree has taken "a little longer" than normal because there is so much to learn in life, and knowledge comes in many forms, often outside of textbooks. About five years ago I studied Spiritual Psychology at the University of Santa Monica (USM). The offerings of this program were exactly what I needed at the time. The desire to be a Benedictine Associate at St. Scholastica Monastery is grounded within the USM philosophy. I have been changed once again, in the last year and a half, as I have finished my degree requirements. Strangely, now that I have received my degree from Goddard College, my feelings are not what I anticipated. Although pleased that this long chapter of my life has culminated, I miss the creative process of writing critical papers and reading hundreds of books. I miss the "fun" and intensity of learning.

Benedictine Friends Complete Another Active Year

By Sister Mary Rochefort

Benedictine Friends is a program that connects Sisters and students on a personal level. The group, sponsored by The College of St. Scholastica Departments of Mission Integration and Campus Ministry, comes together as a total group three times each semester. Activities are planned for these gatherings. This year's activities included an ice cream social, blanket-making for Life House, Advent Vespers, dinner at the Monastery, Easter baskets for UDAC workers, and a culminating brunch on April 13, 2008, at Somers Hall. There are 26 Sisters and 54 students in the program this year. In between the large group gatherings, students and Sisters get together on their own to share on a more personal level.

Begun in the 1990s, this program has been an excellent way to help students become aware of the influence of the Benedictine Sisters within the College and the impact of the Benedictine heritage on their lives as students at CSS.

Photo by Sister Patricia Anne Williams



Students work on Easter baskets with Sister Melanie Gagne and Sister Mary Felten (third and fourth from left).



Stanbrook Hall Reunion July 26!

Stanbrook Hall alumnae are welcome to join us July 26, 2008, from 2 to 4 p.m. for tea and tours. Alumnae from some anniversary years may be planning additional activities, but alumnae from all years are invited to this time of fellowship. The gift shop and Heritage Room will be open, class photos will be taken, and you will be able to tour Stanbrook, Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, and the grounds. We look forward to seeing you! If you have questions, please contact Andy Therrien at 218-723-6536.

Spirituality Conference —Save the Date!

October 24-25, 2008, there will be a Spirituality Conference entitled "Spirituality and Work" with keynote speaker Andre Delbecq at Mitchell Auditorium at The College of St. Scholastica. For more information contact Sister Mary Josephine Torborg at 218-723-6659 or mtorborg@css.edu.

Highlights



Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier

Sister Thea Sandusky: 100 Years!

Sister Thea Sandusky will celebrate her 100th birthday June 4, 2008, at the Monastery. She was born in 1908 to Joanne (Zellman) and Fred Sandusky in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. She graduated from Moore's Business College in Racine, Wisconsin, and did office work for a number of years. She entered St. Scholastica Monastery in 1958 and celebrated her Silver Jubilee August 14, 1983. Sister Thea's ministries included secretarial work and caring for the aged. She worked at the Information Desk and ministered on Benet Hall. She also assisted in the Development Office with mailings.

Sister Thea has been a life-long lover of literature. She likes a good mystery. She also enjoys classical music. Sister Thea does not see her 100 years as unusual or as really any cause for a celebration! Happy Birthday, Sister Thea!



Photo by Andy Therrien

Sister Edith Bogue Earns Tenure

My job title—college professor—evokes standard images: lecturing to rapt (or sleeping) students, grading piles of exams, leading lively (or tedious) discussions, mentoring students in their career and life choices, or browsing in the library stacks. Others think of endless committee meetings and paperwork. There is truth in these images, but not the whole truth.

This was my sixth year at The College of St. Scholastica, the milestone year when faculty apply for tenure—permanent membership in the academic community—and promotion in rank. It produces anxiety: the alternative to tenure is starting somewhere else. As a Benedictine, it asked me to reflect on the particular vocation God has given me. How have I brought the wisdom of *The Rule of Benedict* to my classroom? How do I blend scholarship with faith and prayer so that they enhance each other?

Tenure and promotion decisions use academic standards of teaching ability, scholarly productivity, service, and fit with the College's mission. As I gathered syllabi, publications, and lists of presentations, the integration of Benedictine and academic vocations was evident. Sociology theories shed light on monastic charity in one paper; monastic counsel offered a new perspective on organizational development in another. My teaching style tries to give "the strong something to strive for, and the weak nothing to run from" (RB 64:19).

By awarding me tenure and promotion to associate professor, the Board of Trustees affirmed this vocation as a Benedictine scholar and its contributions to the mission of the College.

Sister Edith teaches Sociology at The College of St. Scholastica and has recently contributed a chapter "Does The Seamless Garment Fit? American Public Opinion" to *Consistently Opposing Killing: From Abortion to Assisted Suicide, the Death Penalty, and War* by Rachel MacNair and Stephan Zunes.

Please Pray for the following deceased Friends or Relatives

Edmund Campbell	2/03/2007
Edward Vukelich	3/01/2007
Josephine Kordish	5/27/2007
Marian E. Haij	2/13/2008
Anthony Jennetta	2/21/2008
Alma Erchul	2/26/2008
Virginia Neihengen	2/29/2008
Edward Poupard	3/14/2008



Sisters sang "... Monastery Volunteer"

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

The annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held May 1, 2008, with 60 guests in attendance. Meredith Schifsky played the harp for our dinner background music, and the Sisters sang a parody of the Major General's Song ("I am the very model of a Monastery Volunteer"). Sister Lois awarded five-year service pins to Margaret Hefflefinger, Ron Hon, and Bob DeRoche; ten-year pins to Liz Askelson, Sue Walkoviak, Bob Senta, and Pat Thompson; and a fifteen-year pin to Mary Reedy. Alba Facciato and Lois Robinson earned twenty-year pins but were not able to attend the dinner. We thank the volunteers for 2,830 hours of service this past year, and we thank Sister Mary Rae Higgins, our Volunteer Coordinator!



Sister Lois (third from left) awarded five-year pins to (L to R) Margaret Hefflefinger, Ron Hon, and Bob DeRoche



Mary Reedy (center) received her 15-year pin. She is joined by Sister Lois (left) and Sister Mary Rae.



Ten-year pins: Liz Askelson, Sister Lois, Sue Walkoviak, Bob Senta, Pat Thompson, and Sister Mary Rae Higgins.



At the end of the evening Sisters sang a blessing over the volunteers.

Photos by Andy Therrien

In loving memory

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Janet (Bernice) Lamirande, OSB

July 10, 1918 – April 28, 2008



Sister Janet (Bernice) Lamirande, OSB, of St. Scholastica Monastery, died Monday, April 28, 2008, on Benet Hall at age 89. She entered the Duluth Benedictine Community September 9, 1935, and professed her monastic vows January 3, 1938. She celebrated her Silver Jubilee in 1962, her Golden Jubilee in 1987, and her Diamond Jubilee in 1997.

Born in Cloquet, Minnesota, July 10, 1918, Sister Janet graduated in 1935 from Stanbrook Hall High School in Duluth and later earned a Bachelor of Science degree from The College of St. Scholastica, where she majored in elementary education. Her mission assignments took her to teach at St. Clement's and St. John's in Duluth, to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Cloquet, St. Rose of Lima, Proctor, St. Francis in Brainerd, St. Thomas in International Falls, and St. Bridget's,

Minneapolis. Sister Janet was one of the founding Sisters who opened Our Lady of Victory School in Minneapolis in 1948. Out of state, she taught at St. Thomas the Apostle School in Phoenix, Arizona.

Sister Janet was blessed with a wonderful sense of humor. She loved teaching and after many years in the ministry (1936 - 1979), she returned to the Monastery to work as an assistant at The College of St. Scholastica's Music Library and at the Monastery information desk.

Sister Janet was preceded in death by her parents, Peter John and Grace (Beaupre) Lamirande; two sisters, Marian Reed and Barbara Cook; and one brother, Jack. She is survived by the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery; three sisters, Loretta Brissett, Joan Smith, and Laura Tangen; one brother, Donald Lamirande; and several nieces and nephews.



Paschal (Agnes Bertha) Pocta, OSB

October 18, 1911 – April 28, 2008



Sister Paschal (Agnes Bertha) Pocta, age 96, of St. Scholastica Monastery, died Monday, April 28, 2008, on Benet Hall at the Monastery. She entered the Duluth Benedictine Community July 31, 1927, and professed her monastic vows July 11, 1929. On August 15, 1954, she celebrated her Silver Jubilee and her Golden on August 15, 1979. These were followed by three Diamond Jubilees, her 60th in 1989, her 70th in 1999, and her 75th in 2004.

Sister Paschal was born October 18, 1911, in Mason City, Iowa, into a family of three boys and five girls. She spent most of her active years in domestic service. She served as a housekeeper at Holy Name Convent in Wayzata, Minnesota, St. Timothy's in Chicago, and St. Gertrude's in Washington, D.C. She was a cook and kitchen supervisor at St. James Home (now Woodland Hills) in Duluth. Sister Paschal also served in food service at Cathedral High Convent and St. Scholastica Monastery in Duluth and at Our Lady of Victory in Minneapolis.

On November 29, 1974, Sister Paschal was honored in a ceremony for her work at Woodland Hills where she served as chief cook and helped with purchasing and in dietary planning for the facility. On October 8, 1990, she was one of the honorees at a celebration of Thanksgiving for Sisters in Domestic Service in the Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis. In the summer of 1994 an appreciation/farewell reception was held for Sister Paschal as she concluded many years of service at Our Lady of Victory. When she retired to the Monastery she assisted with office work and other services.

Sister Paschal was preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Mary (Lukes); three brothers, Frank, Victor, and William; and three sisters, Augustina Vanhorn, Mary Zemek, and Rose Skluzacek. Besides the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, she is survived by her sister, Sister Lea Pocta, a sister-in-law, Florence Pocta, and many nieces and nephews.

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The Idea of a Monastery

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour

“...a monastery is a place where people have one purpose:
to seek God.”

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



Many years ago when I was in college, we were required to read Cardinal Newman's *Idea of a University*. The book left a lasting impression on me in its vision of the purpose of a university. To my surprise, it was not a place where one learned necessary skills to get a good job and earn a lot of money, but rather a place where dedicated students would sit at the feet of scholars, plumb the depths of every branch of knowledge—including theology—in their search for truth. Since truth cannot deny truth, the end result would be people who saw the relationship of everything in the universe to a divine plan and would then act accordingly as truly educated persons. A noble idea.

Today the same questions might be asked within the Church: What is the idea of a monastery? Because of the power contained in a word, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Priory in 1996 voted to change their name to St. Scholastica Monastery. They wanted their name to represent their reason for existing. Mono, meaning one, alone, a monastery is a place where people have one purpose: to seek God. The change also represented a shift in understanding and focus away from being primarily concerned about apostolic works to being primarily concerned about seeking God within the context of community. The name change does have important bearing both for those within the Monastery and those seeking admission to it.

What is so unique about a monastery? Although by our baptism we are all called to holiness of life, and although some persons are called to dedicate their entire lives to serving God in a religious vocation, the monastic vocation has a special charism that serves a particular function with the Church. It is in the additional promise (vow) of fidelity to the monastic life whereby monastics strive daily to become transformed into Christ. This is done by daily prayerful reading of the Scriptures with a listening heart, by the gradual stripping away of the false self and one's self-will, by obedience to the *Rule* and the discipline of monastic living, by practice of the instruments of good works, by passing through the various stages of humility, by silence and self-denial, by faithful, reverent prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours, by daily Eucharist, and by daily work assigned, personal prayer, and spiritual reading.

Though these practices may seem personal and self-centered, the monastery serves as a model to the Church of the Christian community where persons of different cultures, education, backgrounds, and opinions can worship God together, share all things in common, respect and love one another, and serve the needs of the world. Today with a renewed interest in religious life, young people are seeking authenticity in its expression. Living the common life within a monastery is the oldest form of religious life in the Church. Its externals may have changed, but the essential idea of seeking God alone remains.

Pathways