

# PATHWAYS



*Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters, Duluth, Minnesota Vol 32, No. 2 Lent 2021*



# Pathways

NEWSLETTER

of the Benedictine Sisters

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by Sr. Lisa Maurer

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## Dear Friends of the Monastery,

As I write this letter anticipating Lent, I'm reminded of the culmination of that faith journey in the Easter Vigil. In our tradition the Prioress carries the Paschal Candle, lighted by the new fire, in silent darkness down the aisle through the waiting assembly. She stops three times singing, "Light and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord," and the assembly responds, "Thanks be to God!" Small candles are ignited, radiating outward, to build a warm glow that gently illuminates the faces of Sisters and guests.



But that's not how it happened during my first year as Prioress. Anxious to sing the melody perfectly on successively higher pitches, I moved forward quickly, not stopping as practiced, and arrived in pitch darkness at the front of the chapel, with the taper bearers valiantly trying to catch up to me to correct my error. As I remember this event with a smile, I'm sure there is a lesson in this story, and I hope I'm not stretching it too much to tell you what occurs to me, especially as we move ahead into a year that surely started with a lot of darkness in our country.

It is this: remember, you carry the light of Christ within you. Slow down now as we emerge from our darkness and share that light with others. Don't let anxiety or any other fear or concern, that you are not good enough, or that your voice is not perfect, prevent you from passing on the Light of Christ to others. Don't let fear prevent you from responding to the call from within. Don't be so focused on what's happening inside you that you are blind to what is going on around you. Share the Light of Christ with others. We all need the glow that comes from each other, one by one, passing the light on, lighting up our lives with hope, awe, joy. Share the wonder of faces seen once again and rejoice in the small gestures of love for each other and the triumph of things that go well. Look for the good and be grateful.

We carry the lamp of Christ with us daily and we can choose to have that lamp ready, with the oil of compassion for those who have so much less or struggle with isolation and fear, or who just don't recognize their own giftedness. We can be "models of faith" for those who suffer from the effects of the pandemic, racism, and violence. We can educate ourselves and then let our voices be heard, rather than stand silently in the darkness. We can advocate for what is right and just.

As we move through the season of Lent and prepare for the great solemnity of Easter, the center of our Christian faith, I hope some of this reflection resonates with you, but feel free to ponder this story and fashion your own interpretation. Find your voice to sing, "Light and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord...Thanks be to God!"

I close with gratitude for the four women whose obituaries can be read in this issue. They were models of faith for us and I ask you to remember them with love: Sisters Barbara Higgins, Agnes Sitter, Marilyn Micke, and Mary Clare Hall. They carry their lamps now to the doors of heaven where the Light of Christ dwells with them eternally. May they rest in peace.

Blessed Lent and Easter,

*Sister Beverly*

Sister Beverly Raway, OSB



# Do Not Be Afraid

by Sister Lisa Maurer

It is said that the Bible contains 365 references to having no fear. Without doing the math to see if there really are enough “fear not” commands for each day of the year, one can be assured that the Bible contains a plethora of reminders to trust in God. The encouragement to “be not afraid” does not come with the promise that everything will work out to our liking. It does not guarantee any particular outcome. Rather, we are told to stay strong and trust that everything is in God’s good care.



To “not be afraid” is especially meaningful advice when one feels called by God for a particular task, especially a vocation. Fears of making a commitment or living a life of celibacy are common to those considering a vocation. There are fears of being unworthy or unable to live the life. Often, when the idea of being a Sister, Brother, or Priest crosses one’s mind, fear pushes it away.

**Turn Fears into Concerns:** The first thing to remember is that God does not speak through fear. Fear is the tactic of the Enemy to keep you from pursuing God’s will. You may have legitimate concerns about what is involved in a religious vocation, but that is not the same as being afraid. To tame those fears and turn them into concerns, take some time to talk to a Priest, Brother, or Sister about what troubles you. Rather than feeling fear, investigate things objectively, “for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

**Remember That God Is on Your Side:** As scary as considering a religious vocation may seem, God is on your side. God loves you and His plans for you reflect that. If God really has chosen you to be a Priest, Brother, or Sister, He has done so for a reason and He will equip you with what you need to carry it out. Do not be afraid. God will be with you every step of the way, for the Psalmists says, “This I know, God is for me” (Psalm 56:9).

**Step into The Question:** Regretfully, it may be that many people say “no” to a religious vocation before God even has the chance to put the question on their heart. They are not open to the question. They are afraid. But remember, God is not going to force anything on you. He respects your free will. Your little step into the question can open a place for God to work and show you the “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11).

*“If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open wide the doors to Christ – and you will find true life.”*

~ Pope Benedict XVI

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](mailto:vocations@duluthosb.org), or visit [www.duluthbenedictines.org/vocations](http://www.duluthbenedictines.org/vocations).

# Models of Faith

by Sister Dorene King

*Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things.*

*But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.*

~ Philippians 3:17-21 – 4:1

She was one of those people who brought a smile to one's face. I knew that a hug would greet me when Grandma met me at the door. She went along with my playful teasing and fed me with delightful stories. All over her kitchen were clues to her giving spirit – paper scraps that recalled her giving to various organizations. When supper time arrived, I knew Grandma would lead us in prayer. Secretly, I marveled at the way she talked with God. It seemed she was well acquainted with a life of prayer. That is how I remember Grandma.

In St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, we are invited to remember those who have been models of faith for us. Perhaps your models were grandparents, parents, or teachers.

At the time that St. Paul lived, around 40 A.D., it was expected that students would be imitators of their teachers. This expectation placed a high standard upon those who taught. The behavior and lifestyle of the teacher had a profound impact upon the society of that time.

It did not mean that there were no poor role models. There were those within the Philippian congregation who interpreted freedom in Christ as freedom from regulations, as license to indulge. Some rationalized that it did not matter whether one indulged or abstained, because one's true identity was spirit.

In our time, similar interpretations and rationalizations find their way into our hearts and minds. Some rally behind the freedom of "doing my own thing." Some reject responsibility by being uninvolved in economic, political, or social matters. If truth be told, many of us could confess to indulging in these attitudes and perspectives.

St. Paul challenges and encourages us to observe those who are faithful followers of Christ. For Paul, a faithful follower of Christ would live a life focused on the cross of Christ. One could discern that focus by the way a person dismissed worldly gain and fame. A cross-focused follower exhibits resurrection faith in being hope-filled, active, and open to God's transforming power.

Like my grandma with her sharing, giving, and praying, your influence can be far greater than you think. You are called to be an aroma of Christ, a model of faith in your family and in all areas of life. Take up the challenge and be a follower of Christ, a fragrance that unmistakably reminds others of God's presence.



Photo by Levi Clancy via Wikimedia Commons

## Please Pray for Our Deceased Family and Friends

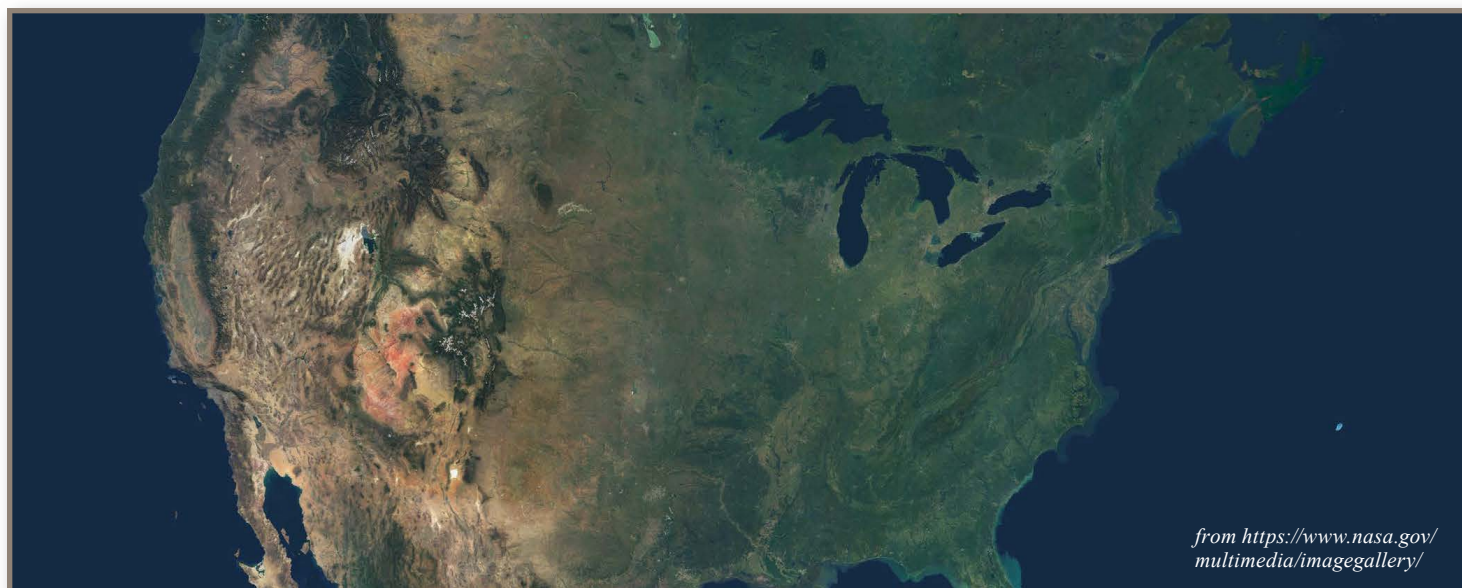
Bruno Seppei	1/25/2020	Donald W. Miller	12/3/2020
Amos Hewitt	7/22/2020	Ralph Buerman	12/3/2020
Tracy Ann Meneses (niece of Sr. Jayne Erickson)	10/3/2020	(brother-in-law of Sr. Mary Josephine Torborg)	
George Sherman	10/30/2020	Dr. Harold J. Hofstrand	12/15/2020
Romana Montour	11/2/2020	Ilse Hertel	12/15/2020
James H. Doyle	11/5/2020	Andrew G. Lisak	12/21/2020
Charles B. McGough	11/6/2020	Linda C. Vukelich	12/28/2020
(brother of +Sr. Mary Charles McGough)		Agnes Mattson	12/31/2020
Michael Zempel	11/12/2020	Gertrude M. Tarnowski	1/2/2021
Frank A. Tarnowski	11/15/2020	Dennis Erchul	1/3/2021
Donna Brauch	11/20/2020	Raymond J. Franckowiak	1/6/2021
Mary Josephine Lowry	11/24/2020	Rober C. Gerlach	1/23/2021
Kenneth R. Williams	11/24/2020	<b>Correction from Advent Pathways</b>	
(father of Sr. Patricia Anne Williams)		Ted Eichner	9/4/2020
Frank Galaski	11/27/2020	(nephew of +Sr. Verda Clare Eichner and +Sr. Sarah O'Malley)	

### ***We ask you to join us wherever you find yourself in this sacred time as we pray:***

Creator God, on the sixth day, you fashioned us from the clay of the earth and breathed into us the breath of life, declaring that all you had made was good. We ask you to remember our loved ones and all who grieve for family and friends gone too soon away from us because of the coronavirus. Hold us and all who have died close to your heart as you welcome them back to your loving embrace. Bless those working to distribute the anti-COVID-19 vaccines so that we can breathe again the breath of life freely and face to face, and know once again that all is good.

We pray that all that is good in our hearts and in our country will rise up to meet the challenges ahead. May we “listen with the ear of our heart” that we may build a more compassionate and just world for future generations. May we work together with humility and courage to make the changes needed for the health of our nations and our planet.

We ask all in your Holy Name and in the power of your lifegiving Spirit. Amen.



# Sisters Arlene Kleemann and Lois Ann Glaudel: Creating Communities in Chicago

by Sister Therese Carson

*In West Rogers Park on the north side of Chicago, two Benedictine Sisters from Duluth share a home and education ministry. In the Benedictine tradition, they have gone beyond this to form a community with people in their parish and, especially, the families of the young children whom they teach. Here is their story.*

**Sister Arlene Kleemann** was born and raised in Chicago with her parents, George and Evelyn Kleemann, and her older brother, George. Their mother would take them to Mass at St. Timothy's Parish while their father, not a Catholic, remained home. "Once his mother died, my father converted and began receiving the sacraments. My mother and I were so happy." Her father worked three jobs to support his family and pay for their Catholic education. At St. Timothy School, little Arlene loved the Benedictine Sisters who came from Duluth to teach, especially Sister Hermina Skule who taught her to read in first grade. In high school she took three years of music with Sister Mary Peter Mathiesen, who went beyond music to stretch her students' minds in deep discussions.

Sister Arlene recalls, "Sister Mary Martin invited my 8th grade class to visit the priory in Duluth during summer vacation. We traveled by train from Chicago and stayed four days with the Sisters in guest quarters. They gave us a warm and friendly welcome. We were a great nuisance, talking during the Great Silence and invading the cloister, but we sure had fun. We were in awe of the place: its beauty, peace, and tranquility." During the summer, Arlene would visit her teachers at their Chicago convent and go on picnics with them, and by her sophomore year she was considering entering the convent. Her father supported her decision and came to Duluth with her and Sister Mary Martin to see the priory and see if this was a fit place for his daughter.

Arlene entered in 1961 with 29 other postulants. When she began her novice year, she was given the name Sister Georgemarie, though she later reverted to Sister Arlene. Her relationship with the Sisters brought her to Duluth, but it was her growing prayer life that made her stay — that, and the formation classes with Sister Elodie DeSmedt. "She would tell us, 'Honeys, all you need is your Bible!' We learned so much from her example and care, and from Sister Cabrini Beauvais, our postulant mistress."

Sister Arlene recalls that one day at Morning Prayer she heard the foghorn down on the Lake. "Sister Ann Edward Scanlon intoned the pitch of the foghorn and, needless to say, we sang very low that day."

Sister Arlene shared in the common work of postulants and novices, washing dishes, cleaning floors, and dusting. She also began taking classes at The College of St. Scholastica and completed a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. "Sister Mary Carol Braun asked which I preferred: to be a teacher or a nurse. Nursing was not for me, so I chose teaching, hoping to give music lessons like Sister Mary Peter. Instead, I was told I would major in Elementary Education."

After her final profession, Sister Arlene spent seven years at Saint James in West Duluth as teacher and Principal. "That was my first mission, and I came to love the children. One day while teaching religion, I read them the scripture passage where Jesus says, 'What God has joined together let no one put asunder' (Matthew 19:6). A little boy sighed and said, 'There is a lot asunder in our house.'

I never expected to be a teacher, and there I was in second grade loving every minute of it — and I still do after 56 years. I'm so glad to have had this opportunity."



*"It is a constant challenge to help students accept their identity for God, make their own special place for God to dwell, and allow God to be the center of their life."*

*~Sister Arlene Kleemann*

**Sister Lois Ann** was born to Lois and Roland Glaudel and given the name Margaret. Her father was an inspector in the Signal Corps and, after a few years moving from place to place, settled in North Minneapolis with Margaret and her younger sisters, Catherine and Mary. Margaret began school at St. Bridget's and then transferred to the new Our Lady of Victory.

Her parents taught their girls from an early age how to care for those in need. She watched the Benedictine teachers and decided she wanted to be like them. When Sister Prudentia Moran came from Duluth to Minneapolis to talk to the children about vocations, she planted a seed. Margaret decided to attend high school at Stanbrook Hall in Duluth. "I loved it there! I sang in the school choir and joined the student Sodality where we prayed together. By the time I graduated I knew God was calling me to be a Sister."

She entered in 1962 as one of a group of 25 postulants and in the novitiate was given the name Lois Ann. She loved being part of a large community that returned home each summer to share stories, laugh, and sing. "I always wanted to be a teacher and was happy to be given that ministry. I studied elementary education at The College of St. Scholastica and was sent to St. Leo's School in Hibbing for my student teaching. It was dear Sister Mary Henry Landsteiner who got me through that always-difficult first year. In Hibbing I lived with four Sisters and loved them and the children at the school. During that time, we switched from the formal long habits to simpler ones, and my mother came to spend a weekend altering our old habits. The first time I wore it

outside, someone wolf-whistled, and a child gasped and said, 'Sister, you've got legs!'"

**Sister Arlene's and Sister Lois Ann's ministry converged when they were both in Chicago teaching.** They taught at St. Timothy's School, part of Sister Arlene's former home parish, until it merged with six other schools in 1994. After a few years in other schools, they began teaching at St. Mary of the Lake School. This is in a much poorer neighborhood just north of Chicago's Loop. "The students are recent immigrants, mostly from Nigeria and five smaller countries near it," Sister Arlene says. "They come speaking any of five or six languages but are bright and learn English quickly. Their families' needs are tremendous. We feed the children breakfast and lunch every day. Parishioners from St. Timothy's bring us school supplies, clothing, and especially warm outerwear for the children and their families. We are making a change in these children's lives and helping them and their families realize they are welcomed and loved. Though mostly non-Catholic, they love saying their prayers with us in the morning, at meals, and when anyone in their families is sick. I love it all, but the last part is so important. Prayer builds community."

Both Sister Arlene and Sister Lois Ann feel close to their students and the families and respect the challenges they face as immigrants. Arlene says, "When there are differences, we sit down and work through them. We keep our eyes and ears open for what is needed. People trust us and know they are safe with us and can turn to us for help. You know, the best thing about this ministry is the love you give and the love you receive from the adults and the children. They light up when they see you and love to tell you they love you. They are sad when you leave or are sick. Together we are Community."

Sister Lois Ann leads St. Timothy's parishioners in praying the Rosary before Mass on Saturday afternoons. She brings Holy Communion to shut-ins. "I have grown close to everyone. We have a bond that endures despite the parish school being closed. Every year, we take part in the Christmas Giving Tree that provides gifts for children in our impoverished Sister Parish. We watch out for a woman who lost her husband and is in a wheelchair. She has no one to help her, so we buy groceries and whatever else she needs. I buy blankets for elderly women whose apartments are too cold. St. Mary of the Lake Parish is also a giving community. Volunteers distribute boxes of food every Sunday afternoon and the Franciscan priests



*"Community, family, friends, and former students have always been important to me. God has blessed me in so many ways."*

*~ Sister Lois Ann Glaudel*

there are wonderful. I love parish life, the variety of people, and the generosity and caring spirit of the parishioners.”

Chicago is a violent place to live. Sister Lois Ann tells of a student who had a fight with his mother. “He left to take the garbage out and disappeared for two nights. Someone found him sleeping in an alley in the cold. He had hypothermia. Another student had a brother shot on his own doorstep. We took up a collection for the funeral. I gave that student a crucifix to hold onto, but his grandmother refused to allow it in her house, so he kept it in his desk at school and would hold it for comfort. Most of the people around us are marvelous, loving, giving. When there was a riot and windows were broken, local people of all colors swept up the glass and nailed plywood over the windows. But people whom we know and love are killed, and we grieve with their families.”

It is a rough area to live and work, but the violence cannot overcome the love in this community of immigrants. “Our auto mechanic, dentist, and fellow parishioners call us during this pandemic,” says Sister Lois Ann, “to ask if there is anything they can get for us. I can’t tell you how good people are.” And there is much joy and laughter. “I remember a snowy day on the playground,” Sister Arlene says. “We were still wearing modified habits with short veils. I slipped and fell, and my veil flipped to the front, hiding my face. One of the older boys came running over and then said, ‘I’ll help you, Sister, if you’ll tell me where I should start.’ The first day I wore the new habit, a little girl stared at me a long time and asked, ‘Did you cut your hair?’ Another boy told me, ‘Sister Arlene, I thought I saw you in a car and I yelled Sister Arlene! and you turned around, but it was only another old lady with brown hair.’ That was when my hair was all brown.”

When the pandemic moved classes online, the Sisters struggled to adapt. “With all the computer work that is demanded, I can’t always do what is expected,” Sister Arlene admits. “I don’t know what the future will bring. But if I had to do it all over, I wouldn’t want to change a thing. God brought me where I needed to be and where he wanted me to be and that is enough.”

Asked about the differences between monastic and parish life, Sister Lois Ann said, “I think that

wherever we go we take the monastery with us; and when we return to Duluth, we bring the parish home with us. When I think back, it is the little things I cherish. I remember in Brainerd that a girl in the first grade was leaving school and fell. She knocked out a tooth that disappeared into the mud and was crying because ‘the tooth fairy won’t believe that I had lost a tooth!’ So, I wrote a note to the tooth fairy to be put under her pillow, and the next day she gave me a note of thanks from her parents. ‘Sister, the tooth fairy wrote you back!’”

She continued, “If I could begin again, there’s only one thing I would do differently. I would stay home in Minneapolis for high school and then enter the Community in Duluth. At age 14, I missed my family so much! As for the rest, I love the people and places I have known and feel very blessed. We pray together and share our lives with each other, our school community, our parish community, and our Benedictine community. It all blends into a whole that is greater than its parts. It is all part of following Jesus Christ and being a Benedictine.”

Sister Arlene agreed and added, “God has gifted us with infinite love, unlimited mercy, our very existence. It is all a free gift. It is how God loves us. It is how we must love the world.



*Sunday Mass at St. Mary of the Lake Church*



# Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

St. Scholastica Monastery - McCabe Renewal Center

One Mission, Two Locations

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

***The Creative Potential of Crisis: A Benedictine Perspective** with Victor Klimoski*

**Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7 pm via Zoom** *Free-will offering. Please register at link below.*

What if we considered the wisdom of the past 1500 years to steel our courage and look at crisis as a crossroads of possibility? This conversation explores how the Benedictine values of listening, community, and conversion of life offer resources to free us from our fear so we can help shape the future.

**Tuesday, March 16 at 7 pm via Zoom**, with Parker Palmer

**Tuesday, April 20 at 7 pm via Zoom**, with Franciscan Sister Michelle L'Allier and Benedictine Sister Teri Spinler

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.

*Register for the following opportunities at [retreatduluth.org](https://retreatduluth.org)* Address questions to [retreat@duluthosb.org](mailto:retreat@duluthosb.org) or call Dawn Carrillo at 320-260-8233.

## ***Feminist Theologies discussion***

**Thursdays, Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 20,  
7:00-8:30 pm via Zoom**

Join us as we focus on transforming ourselves and communities in health and in social and environmental justice. Contemporary issues such as white privilege, implicit bias and racism, and climate and environmental changes will be viewed through the lens of feminist, ecological, and liberation theologies. Selected persons representing these areas will do short presentations followed by group discussion. You may be asked to read one article or other source that will provide background for the evening's discussion.

*No cost, but please register at <https://retreatduluth.org/programs/program-schedule/>*

## ***Visio Divina***

**Thursdays on February 25, March 25, April 29,  
and May 27 at 7 pm via Zoom**

Join us for an evening of contemplative prayer through the use of images, music, and sacred writings. No prior experience is needed. All are welcome to this hour of peace and communal hope.

*Cose: freewill offering. Please register at <https://retreatduluth.org/programs/program-schedule/>*

## Introduction to Soul Collage

**Wednesday, February 24 from 6:30 pm-8:00 pm** via Zoom  
An introduction to SoulCollage® will provide a quick dive into making the cards, the four suits, trusting your intuition, and writing about the many voices that emerge to answer your life questions. You will make your first SoulCollage® card at this introduction and learn the answer to the one big question...what do I do with them?



*Cost: \$10. Register at <https://retreatduluth.org/soul-collage/>*

## Sunday Soul Collage Circle

**First Sunday every month, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm** via Zoom  
The spiritual journey is the process of learning to know oneself and becoming self-aware. We learn to love ourselves as the sacred beings that we are and discover in that love that we are connected to all that exists; thus, we develop compassion and strength. The journey is a process of letting go of old interpretations of self and others that no longer serve us, to make room for the new. Go to <https://retreatduluth.org/soul-collage/> for more information and to sign up.

*Cost: Yearly \$220. Three series a year, each \$80 (beginning January, May, September). Monthly Drop-in \$25/month*

## Lent Retreat: Drawing Close to the Heart

with Gary Boelhower, PhD

**Saturday, February 27 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon** via Zoom

**Cost: \$20**

In this three-hour online Lenten retreat, we will use several prayer forms to draw closer to the heart of ourselves, of others, and of Christ. We know from the great commandments in the Jewish and Christian traditions that love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self are inextricably interconnected. In this retreat, we will experience together the ancient and ever-new Benedictine prayer form of Lectio Divina, exploring a central Jesus story of invitation. We will employ journaling, getting in touch with the Spirit within and our own inner teacher. We will use Centering Prayer, resting in the unconditional loving embrace of God. We will participate in a loving-kindness meditation,



affirming our intention to be compassionate with others. We will pray with our voices and our bodies, bringing attention to the wholeness of who we are in our relationship with self, others, and the Divine. Bring pen or pencil, paper or journal, and an open heart.

**Gary Boelhower** is a Professor Emeritus in Theology and Religious Studies at The College of St. Scholastica. He continues to teach courses in health humanities and living, dying, and grieving. He is a poet and writer and has consulted with a broad range of organizations on values, mission, and respect in the workplace. His recent books include *Step Close In: Poems from the Path*; the children's book *A Common Thirst*; *Naming Rites: Poems*; *Choose Wisely: Practical Insights from Spiritual Traditions*; *Mountain 10: Climbing the Labyrinth Within*; and *Marrow, Muscle, Flight: Poems* which won the Midwest Book Award.

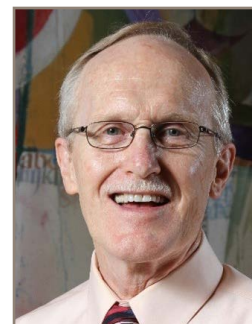
## The Deeper Lessons of the Prodigal Son: A Lenten Writing Exploration

with Victor Klimoski

**Saturday, March 26 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon** via Zoom

**Cost: \$20**

We often write to figure out what we are thinking – to get to the deeper meaning as we put our ideas into words. This retreat uses the Parable of the Prodigal Son as a place to practice exploration. Then we turn our attention to ideas important to participants. The process includes presentation, small group discussion, time for writing, and the opportunity to share what participants write based on their comfort level.



**Victor Klimoski** is a writer, adult educator, and consultant whose poetry practice has evolved over the past 30 years as he explored the meanderings of his mind and heart. After a career in educational administration, Vic has the luxury now to write and to offer support and encouragement to other writers through retreats and workshops. To develop as a writer, he periodically creates collections of poems winnowed from his daily writing. A number of those collections are available on Amazon: *Revisited: A Month in Kilcar and Poems of Other Place*; *Perspective*; *Lamentation for the Written Word*; *Matters of Life and Death*; *Margin Notes*, and *Natural Wonder*. Vic was also contributing editor of a collection produced by his writing group under the title, *Gleanings*, also available on Amazon.

# +Sister Barbara Higgins, OSB

Sister Barbara (Marjorie) Higgins, OSB, died on December 4, 2020 at St. Scholastica Monastery in her 66th year of vowed commitment. She was born June 6, 1935 in Duluth, Minnesota, to Clinton and Genevieve (LeBeau) Higgins, one of a family of twelve children. Her strong Catholic upbringing, her connection with the Benedictine Sisters at St. Clement's and Cathedral schools, and the witness of her sister, Sister Mary Rae, all brought her to the Monastery in 1953. She professed her Perpetual Vows in 1958 and celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2005 and her Diamond Jubilee in 2015. She said, "God is a loving, ever-faithful God, and I thank Him every day for His many gifts to me."

Her love of God and others, combined with gifts of joy, kindness, and humor, permeated her varied ministries, beginning as a primary grade teacher in Brainerd, Duluth, and Cloquet from 1955 to 1972. She recalled that one morning, as she struggled to begin her day, she prayed to God for guidance. "I opened my Bible at random to the Song of Songs and read, 'Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and get up.' So I got up."

From 1972 to 1981 she was a Youth Consultant at the Welch Center, ministering to teens and their parents, directing leadership training, and leading retreat experiences. These were enriching and exciting times for her. Sister Barbara possessed a grateful heart that loved deeply; she could hold others' suffering in her heart while remaining full of joy. From 1981 to 1986 she was the Director of Residential Life at The College of St. Scholastica and is remembered as a kind person who was interested in each person and what they had to say.

In 1987 she earned a Master's in Christian Spirituality at Creighton University. This experience deepened her prayer life and prepared her to accompany others on their faith journeys. In 1987 she became Sub-Prioress of the Community; with her power for listening, she helped free the Sisters to share honestly from their hearts.

Following a sabbatical, she became Director of Initiation and Coordinator of Senior Life at St. Patrick's Parish in Scottsdale, Arizona. One candidate said, "Sister Barbara makes the RCIA process beautiful, warm, humorous, loving, and very special – but then, she herself is all of these things."

In 2014 she returned to the Monastery as Director of Associates and Novice Director. She loved to tell stories and do pantomimes, often with music and dance. She said: "Life taught me to laugh at myself, and this gentle comedy helps others to also take themselves less seriously. We learn to lean on God, accept limitations and see them as blessings, and live life more fully in God's love." She spent her last years on Benet Hall. When the pandemic prevented her from sharing her warm hugs, she would tell us, "Give yourself a hug from me, and make haste slowly through this world." Now she entertains the saints and fills Heaven with joyful laughter.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers "Butchie" (Lawrence Joseph), Don, James, and Roy, and her sisters Susan Krier, Pat (Larry) Marlenga, Sister Mary Rae Higgins, and Irene Williams. Besides the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, she is survived by sisters Nancy (Chuck) Davidson and Bonnie (Mike) Tweedy, brother Wayne (Carol), sister-in-law Evelyn Higgins, and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Wake, Morning Prayer, and funeral Mass were held on Friday, December 11 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, with Father William Fider as Presider. Interment was at Gethsemane Cemetery. Arrangements were by Dougherty Funeral Home.



# +Sister Agnes Sitter, OSB

Sister Agnes (Aniceta) Sitter, OSB, 95, died on Friday, December 11, 2020 at St. Scholastica Monastery. She was born on August 17, 1925, the third child of Frank and Theresa Sitter in Berwick, North Dakota, where her father owned a general store, garage, and gas station. Agnes helped her father in his work and delivered gasoline to the area farmers.

Agnes attended public schools in Berwick and was a gifted student. Her teachers encouraged her to take a teacher's exam as a senior in high school. Passing the exam, she received a teaching certificate and began her career in North Dakota at a one-room schoolhouse. Her father told her, "You have a responsible task. Now go and do it well." Agnes drove her own car, chopped wood and carried coal to keep the fire going, did the janitorial work, and taught multiple grades. When boarding with a family proved unsatisfactory, she lived in the schoolhouse. At the close of that second year, she announced, "I have had my fill!" Before resuming her professional career, Agnes lived for some time with relatives in Detroit, to gain experience in city life.

During this time, she visited her sister, +Sister Victorine Sitter, who was a member of St. Scholastica Monastery and a teacher in Cloquet. Agnes was impressed with the Sisters' dedication to prayer and education, their kindness, and the silence that filled their life. In 1946 she entered the Benedictine Community and became Sister Aniceta. After the Second Vatican Council she resumed her baptismal name, to her father's joy.

After professing vows in 1948, she continued her ministry of teaching. Initially she taught middle-school-aged children in Duluth and Proctor, but for most of her life she taught first or second grade at St. Joseph's in Grand Rapids and at Our Lady of Victory in Minneapolis. A life-long learner, Sister Agnes continued her education while she taught, taking classes on Saturdays, during the summers, and at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

A cousin said of Sister Agnes, "She had a passion for teaching and her eyes would light up when she talked about her students. She had a calm warmth about her that made you fall in love with her instantly. Her humor was also one of her best attributes." She loved and understood little ones. When a quiet, tow-headed chap refused to transfer schools, he told his mother, "No, because I love Sister Agnes' smile." Shy herself, she commiserated with those children who shied away from presenting alone in front of the class. Standing beside them, she emboldened and assured them they could do it. Many of Agnes' former students, now parents and grandparents themselves, would visit her regularly.

In 1988 she returned home to the Monastery, where she worked at the Monastery reception desk and as an assistant on Benet Hall. She showed the same sensitivity to the Sisters and their needs as she had for her students. She was a committed, disciplined, and hard worker, an unpretentious realist with a quiet and quirky sense of humor, who loved others with the same love she gave God.

Sister Agnes was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters, Sister Victorine Sitter and Elizabeth Engebret, and her brother Frank. She is survived by the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and many relatives and friends. Wake, Morning Prayer, and funeral Mass were held on Monday, December 21 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, with Father William Fider as Presider. Interment followed at Gethsemane Cemetery. Arrangements were by Dougherty Funeral Home.



# +Sister Marilyn Micke, OSB

Sister Marilyn (Mary Roseann) Micke, age 102, was called home on December 11, 2020 at St. Scholastica Monastery in her 83rd year of consecrated life. She was born June 11, 1918 in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin to Theodore and Jennie (Verbeten) Micke, the youngest of six children. When she was three, the family moved to Big Sandy Lake, Minnesota to run a summer resort. A visit from her pastor and three Benedictine Sisters planted a seed that, encouraged by her parents, grew into a lifelong vocation. In 1926, the family moved to Cloquet where she was taught by the Benedictines. She came to Duluth to attend high school as boarder and aspirant at Villa Sancta Scholastica and after graduating in 1936 entered the Community. As Sister Marilyn she studied Elementary Education at The College of St. Scholastica, and after first vows in 1938 began her career teaching fifth grade at Assumption School in Hibbing.

Sister Marilyn went on to teach in Brainerd, Duluth, and Proctor while taking summer classes to complete her bachelor's degree in Education. Then in 1959 she was appointed Supervisor of Schools for the Duluth Diocese. She protested that teaching was her field, and that surely others were more qualified. Her Mother Superior listened and simply said, "I think I've gotten a different message." Sister went to Marquette University in Milwaukee during the summers to earn a master's in education with emphasis on Administration and Supervision. In 1969 she was appointed Superintendent of Schools.



Wherever she served, as teacher, principal, superintendent, or educational innovator, she used her faith, vision, creativity, and love of people to empower others to use their gifts. Because she lived the faith she taught, she effectively planted the seeds of faith in her students. She was instrumental in bringing Operation Aware, a prototype of the D.A.R.E program, into Duluth's parochial schools, and in 1982 became its Executive Director until her retirement in 1992. Operation Aware teaches young people to avoid bad choices by cultivating a positive peer culture. In 1991, she was named Woman of Achievement by Delta Kappa Gamma, Beta Chapter.

After retiring from education at age 74, Sister Marilyn worked as the Accounts Payable clerk in the Business Office until well into her 90s. She felt blessed to be able to carry on her ministries for a long time, saying, "I have had the joy and freedom of serving the Lord for so many years. The challenge of life is to learn the art of being all you can be at any age." This she did all her life, so that we can declare, "Let her works praise her in the gates" (Proverbs 31:31). She was perpetually young at heart and filled with joy, with a light laugh that brought smiles to everyone around her. Her pithy one-line observations made everyone laugh, and she was quick to encourage those who felt down. She loved playing bingo and if she was napping always wanted to be awakened for games. Her favorite comment was "Mercy me – mercy, mercy me!"

Sister Marilyn was preceded in death by her parents and five brothers and sisters: Theodore W. (Albena) Micke, Gertrude (Paul) Liesen, Anthony (Thelma) Micke, Germaine (John) Lamers, and Gregory (Angela) Micke. She is survived by her Benedictine Community, including her niece Sister Pauline Micke, and by numerous beloved relatives and friends.

Wake, Morning Prayer, and funeral Mass were held on Monday, December 21 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, with Father William Fider as Presider. Interment followed at Gethsemane Cemetery. Arrangements were by Dougherty Funeral Home.

# +Sister Mary Clare Hall, OSB

Sister Mary Clare (Claree Mae) Hall, OSB, died on December 17, 2020 in her 74th year of vowed commitment. She was born August 24, 1927 in Two Harbors, Minnesota, the third child of six of Edward Hall and Catherine (MacDougall) Hall. Her parents worked on the family farm and the town barbershop. As she grew, Claree Mae observed women working hard to raise their families and labor in the fields. She decided that was not the life for her; instead, she was drawn to the Benedictine Sisters who came from Duluth each week to teach CCD classes. From them she received love, respect, and a listening ear, and this reserved, shy girl blossomed. She helped them teach CCD to the little ones and resolved to enter the Community after high school.

As Sister Mary Clare, she earned a Bachelor's in Elementary Education and, in 1971, a Master's in Education with emphasis on new educational methods. From 1948 to 1975 she taught elementary school in Chicago, Cincinnati, Hibbing, Minneapolis, Aitkin, and Duluth, and in her last seven years of teaching served as principal. She was an outstanding elementary teacher and was especially notable for excellence in teaching first and second grade students. Her former students, now adults, would often ask about her and praised her contributions to their lives.



The driving force of her ministry was to pass on the love she had received, always looking for goodness in the children whom she taught, telling them, "You are very precious to God, and God loves you." She especially loved the ones who struggled to fit in or learn. She once said, "It bothers me when people see only what is wounded, and not what is good, what is healed and whole."

After retirement she worked at internal ministries in the Monastery and volunteered at the Benedictine Living Community-Duluth next door. During this time, she returned home to care for her ailing mother and, later, her sister until their deaths, bringing them the same healing love she shared with her students.

In her last years, she developed Alzheimer's, and for her own safety moved to Safe Harbor in the Benedictine Living Community-Duluth. +Sister Jane Casey visited her every day, and when Sister Mary Clare saw her friend her face would light up with her luminous smile. She and the other residents there struggled with failing memory but knew they were always precious in God's eyes.

One of her nephews remembers her as a selfless person who lived a life of service in the name of Jesus. Every day she lived her faith, a constant beacon of hope, helping others develop self-confidence. She carried another's burdens without wanting praise or gratitude. It was enough to know she made a difference. He said, "May the Lord show her the same attentiveness and compassion that she modeled for others. She will be missed. She will be remembered."

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Hugh Hall, and her sisters Barbara Youngberg, Jacqueline Gow, Bonnie Wilkins, and Kathleen Richardson. She is survived by the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and many beloved nieces and nephews. Wake, Morning Prayer, and funeral Mass were held on January 6, 2021 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, with Father William Fider as Presider. Interment was in Gethsemane Cemetery. Arrangements by Dougherty Funeral Home.

# Highlights

## Sisters welcome new employees

In a year of many challenges there were sparks of light. One was welcoming three lay women into our ministries.



**Theresa Wills**  
*Chief Accountant*



**Deb Castle**  
*Accounts Payable and Payroll  
Manager, Monastery Books and Gifts*



**Amber Terch**  
*Executive Administrative Assistant*

## Lighting a Tradition with the College

Each year, the Sisters join the faculty and students from The College of St. Scholastica for First Vespers for Advent and Lighting a Tradition. At Vespers, the chapel is darkened with only candlelight dispelling the gloom. Prayers and music bring us out of Ordinary Time into a time of waiting. The Prioress offers a benediction, we pray together, and two or three groups of singers draw on traditions from around the world that express humanity's shared belief in the power of God to overcome darkness. As Vespers ends, we troop outside to listen to the College President and other presenters, sing Christmas carols, and count down to zero when a switch is thrown, and Tower Hall and surrounding trees fill the night with light.

This year, unable to gather in person, we watched virtually. Speeches, choral music, prayers, and Lighting were all recorded ahead of time and stitched into a presentation that was made available on the College's Facebook page for viewing. It can be viewed on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com); enter in the search bar "President's Holiday Event, December 1, 2020." The message is timeless and remains relevant in Lent and Passiontide.



*Left: Sisters watch the Holiday Event at the beginning of Advent. Right: The College gave each Sister a tiny string of Christmas lights (shown here with Sister Theresa Jodocy), which we lit when Tower Hall was lit up in the video.  
A light shines in the darkness!*

Decking the Monastic Halls to welcome Christ



*Lisa Askelson, Monastery Facilities Director*



*Christine Etchison,  
Environmental Services manager*



## Sisters create Christmas cards for asylum seekers

We are called through our Paschal walk with Christ and our shared humanity to welcome the stranger in our midst. “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. ... For just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:34-36, 40).

On the day after Thanksgiving, Sisters Beverly Raway, Dorene King, Jayne Erickson, and Therese Carson created Christmas Cards for migrant families. This was the second year we participated in this program, which is sponsored by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. The Hope for the Holidays campaign involved hundreds of partners across the country who help LIRS collect holiday cards and donations for gifts to share hope with children and families affected by immigration detention.



Sister Beverly Raway (left) and Sister Dorene King show some of the cards they created.  
Center, Immigrants approaching New York Harbor, collection of The Library of Congress

*“The interaction of disparate cultures, the vehemence of the ideals that led the immigrants here, the opportunity offered by a new life, all gave America a flavor and a character that make it as unmistakable and as remarkable to people today as it was to Alexis de Tocqueville in the early part of the nineteenth century.... Immigration policy should be generous; it should be fair; it should be flexible. With such a policy we can turn to the world, and to our own past, with clean hands and a clear conscience.” ~ John F. Kennedy, A Nation of Immigrants*

## COVID-19 update; precautions inspire creativity

We join our prayers with the whole world for an end to this pandemic. At this writing, there have been 100 million people sickened by this disease worldwide, of whom over two million have died. Many more have lost loved ones or employment. By the time you read this, these numbers will be much higher. The Sisters who live in Benet Hall, our assisted living center, received their first COVID-19 vaccine in mid-January, and the remaining Sisters a few weeks later, for which we are grateful. In the meantime, we wear our masks, pray, work, and thank God for the little things. We look forward to when we can again welcome guests, family, and friends into the Monastery and to chapel.



Even in these hard times, humans are resilient and find outlets for their creativity. Some Sisters made drying lines for masks in their rooms, using thumbtacks and twine. Sister Joan Marie Stelman used her origami skills to create paper napkin rings for each feast and searched the internet for new ways of folding cloth napkins.

*From left: Origami Owl napkin rings; napkins for the Solemnities of Christmas and Mary, Mother of God.*



## Epiphany House Blessing

Our traditional house blessing, held every year on the afternoon of Epiphany, was modified this year to respect social distancing, holding it immediately after Eucharist in the chapel where we sit six feet apart. Sister Beverly Raway led us in prayer:

“Today we come to ask God’s blessing on our dwelling place, on everyone who is resident at the monastery, and on everyone who passes this way. *(The prioress blesses with holy water all who are gathered).*

May all of our guests be welcomed as Christ.

*(from Rule of Benedict, 53.1)*

— *Saints Benedict and Scholastica, pray for us.*



May great care and concern be shown to poor people and pilgrims.

*(from Rule of Benedict, 53.15)*

– *Saints Benedict and Scholastica, pray for us.*

May all who come here be shown the courtesy of love.

*(from Rule of Benedict, 53.3)*

– *Saints Benedict and Scholastica, pray for us.*

May the peace we extend to each other be granted to all who enter here.

*(from Rule of Benedict, 34.5)*

– *Saints Benedict and Scholastica, pray for us.*

May we all be blessed with the grace of a kind word, the best gift.

*(from Rule of Benedict, 31.13-14)*

– *Saints Benedict and Scholastica, pray for us.*

Magi came from the East to pay homage to Jesus Christ. All from Sheba shall come,

– *bearing gold and frankincense.*



As the Magi journeyed along many pathways, so let us continue our life's journey:

God of the universe, from beyond the stars you have come to us, revealing Jesus, the Anointed One, to all peoples and nations. Guide us with your star of faith, encourage us with your star of hope, and may the morning star of love always rise in our hearts.

The Three Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand twenty one years ago. May Christ bless our dwelling and remain with us in our comings and goings throughout this New Year.

*While the prioress slowly proclaims these words, Sister Theresa Spinler stood on a ladder and wrote this inscription with red chalk above the doorway between the cloister walk and the monastery entrance:*

**20 + C + M + B + 21**



*C, M, B also refer to the Latin words Christus mansionem benedicat, "May Christ bless the house."*

Arise! Shine! Jerusalem, your light has come!

– *Being people of wisdom, we are led by Christ's radiance!*

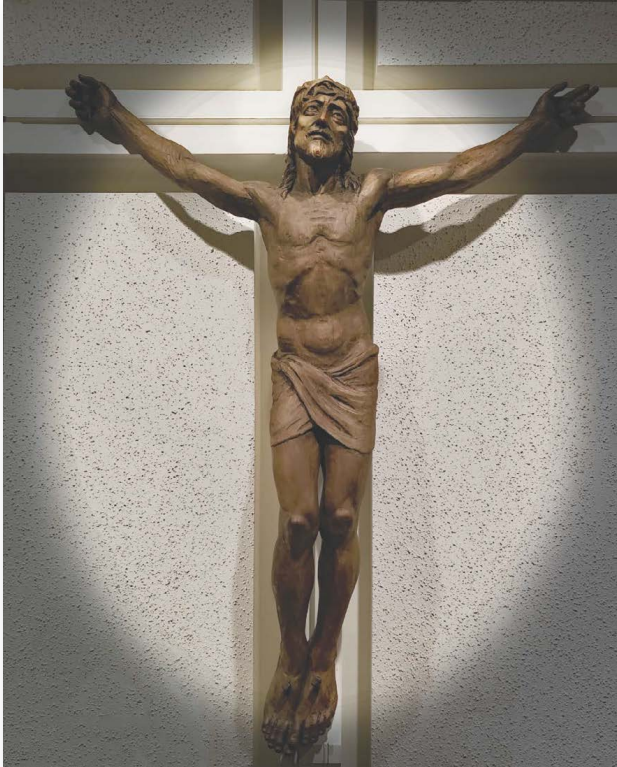
Gracious God, may hospitality dwell among us.

– *Bless us and all who dwell here. May health, goodness, humility, and faith abide among us. May your Word be at home in our hearts. May we praise you with gladness, gratefulness, and joy. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

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*This crucifix, carved in 1938 by Harry Eversfield Donohue for the new Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at the Monastery, now hangs in our Eucharistic Chapel. For the story of its creation, read “The Cross is the Surest Path to God” in the Lent 2016 Pathways, posted under Newsletters on our website.*

**“Remember that you carry the light of Christ within you. Slow down now as we emerge from our darkness and share that light with others. Don’t let anxiety or any other fear or concern tell you are not good enough, or your voice is not perfect. We all need the glow that comes from each other, one by one, passing the light on, lighting up our lives with hope, awe, joy. Rejoice in the small gestures of love for each other and the triumph of things that go well. Look for the good and be grateful.”**

*~ Sister Beverly Raway*

**If you prefer an electronic copy of *Pathways*, please email us at [monastery@duluthosb.org](mailto:monastery@duluthosb.org).**