



# PATHWAYS

*Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters Duluth, Minnesota Vol. 26, No. 2 • Advent 2014*



**Published by**  
Sisters of St. Scholastica  
Monastery, Duluth, MN

**Produced by**  
Monastery Development /  
Public Relations Office

**Editorial Board**  
Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress  
Vicky Siders, director  
Sister Ann Marie Wainright  
Sister Linda Wiggins  
Sister Margaret James Laughlin  
Sister Therese Carson  
Andi Therrien

**Contributors**  
Sisters of the Community

**Cover Icon**  
Written by +Sister Mary  
Charles McGough

*Pathways* is published  
quarterly and is distributed  
among friends, relatives,  
associates and benefactors of  
the Sisters of St. Scholastica  
Monastery.

Copyright ©  
St. Scholastica Monastery

St. Scholastica Monastery  
1001 Kenwood Avenue  
Duluth, MN 55811 - 2300

Telephone:  
218.723.6555

Fax  
218.723.5963

Visit our website  
[www.DuluthBenedictines.org](http://www.DuluthBenedictines.org)



## A Letter from the Prioress

Dear Friends of the Monastery,

The Advent/Christmas Season is full of themes that echo in the depths of our human experiences: waiting and longing in hope and joyful anticipation, culminating in the celebration anew of God's birth within us and among us. All these find expression in the rituals and traditions, the sacred texts and songs that inspire and nourish us throughout this beautiful season.



At the heart of all we celebrate in this holy time is the incalculable love that God who is goodness has for us. It is a love utterly and tenderly poured out in God becoming one with us, becoming "a simple crying child, born in a stable, warmed by straw and cattle's breath." As St. Thérèse of Lisieux reflects, "A God who became so small could only be mercy and love."

It is the God of tender mercy and love who longs to be born anew in our hearts and our world. In Christ Jesus, God comes to light our way in the daunting, challenging times of our personal, communal, and global lives. In Christ Jesus, God has come to reconcile us to God, to ourselves, to one another, and to all creation. In Christ, we are given the grace to embrace our own fear and insecurity in the face of the enormous task of transformation. In Christ, filled with the wonder of being God's beloved ones, we are invited to cherish our possibilities and to become vessels of God's boundless grace, to step forward in trust and tenderness to embrace others in their brokenness.

As we give ourselves once again to the darkness of Earth time and move beyond the clamor surrounding us to what lies at the heart of our human experience, may we find ourselves wrapped in the sweetness and tenderness of God's love. In the Holy of Holies within may we give birth to Christ in new and empowering ways. Together may we pour out our lives in love and work to end every kind of injustice and violence. May the Holy Family, depicted in the beautiful icon on this cover of *Pathways*, fill you with the blessings of Christmas and a New Year of peace.

Lovingly yours in Christ Jesus, with prayer  
and deep gratitude for the gift you are,

*Sister Lois Eckes*

Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress



## Advent Reflection

By Sister Jean Maher

Our Community has a tradition of Sisters volunteering to do a reflection on the Sunday Mass readings during the seasons of Advent and Lent. These reflections are given to the Community on Saturdays during our Evening Prayer. One Saturday night in Advent many years ago Sister Timothy Kirby was giving an Advent reflection and talking about the many ways to experience the Light of Christ that are all around us. As I listened to her, I wondered if she had any idea how much she reflected the light of Christ to all of us? She did that in so many ways: sharing her many gifts of creativity through music, public speaking, wisdom, and humor, as well as sharing her passion for issues of peace and justice through her leadership in Pax Christi, her ability to motivate college students and Community members to reach out to the poor and marginalized with compassion and love. Sister Timothy had a very special commitment to “her boys,” who were serving time in prison. She offered Scripture study with them on Wednesday nights and worship services on Sundays. Several years ago Sister Timothy returned to the God she so deeply loved here on earth. Her body left us at death, but her light continues to radiate in our hearts today.



Photo by Sister Jean Maher

Last year I was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester and stopped in their ecumenical chapel to pray. I was surprised and amazed when I discovered in the ceiling a stunning image of light and beauty, of healing and hope. I imagine that many people who enter that chapel bring with them the darkness of pain and the challenge of medical issues. What a surprise to encounter there in the ceiling a symbol of God's healing love. After I photographed this beautiful mandala, I realized you can enter the picture from four different directions by simply rotating it. That spoke to me of God's willingness to meet us wherever we are in our journey through darkness. In God's loving embrace we discover the miracle of hope. The beautiful vibrant colors of this image are visible because of a light in the ceiling above it. Without that light we would only see darkness in that ceiling. We all carry within us the beauty and goodness of our Creator. If we are open to the Light of Christ shining within us, then our beauty and goodness become a source of blessing and strength for ourselves as well as for those whose lives we touch every day.

*“God of hope, come! Be the Morning Star in our midst, the Light that can never go out, the Beacon of Hope, guiding our way to You. Come into our midst and make of our lives a home, where everlasting goodness resonates with assuring love and vigorous hope.” Joyce Rupp*

# WAKE UP THE WORLD!

By Sister Mary Catherine Shambour



This year the First Sunday of Advent, the beginning of a new liturgical year, will have special significance for the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and for tens of thousands of religious men and women around the world since it marks the official opening of the special Year of Consecrated Life as proclaimed by Pope Francis a year ago. The timing of this year serves well its purpose and goals since its opening in November 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of the conciliar constitution *Lumen Gentium: On the Church in the Modern World*, and its conclusion in 2015 marks the anniversary of *Perfectae Caritatis* which adapted religious life in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Fittingly, the first objective for the Year as stated by the Vatican is “to make a grateful remembrance of this recent past,” while embracing “the future with hope.”

A second objective is to have Catholics learn about the vocation to consecrated life, its meaning, its many forms, and its centrality in the life of the Church. Without persons willing to follow Jesus’ invitation to leave all and follow Him, we would have no Church today. In the United States major events are being planned by committees from the United States Catholic Bishops’ Conference—in cooperation with dioceses and the major bodies of women’s and men’s religious communities—for throwing open the doors of abbeys, monasteries, convents, and religious houses for special days of prayer, tours, open houses, receptions, and presentations on the history, life, and ministries of these communities. A larger goal is to have parishes pray insistently for vocations and courageously propose consecrated life to their young people.

Because our Church is a universal church present in nearly every country in the world, it benefits from the diversity of cultural gifts its members bring but also has the task of reconciling cultural differences to church teachings and preserving the unity which Christ desires. Thus there will be a series of international events: a theological symposium on the theme of “Renewal of Consecrated Life in Light of the Council and Future Prospects”; an international exposition on “Consecrated Life, the Gospel in Human History”; a conference on religious formation; a meeting of Catholic consecrated men and women religious with consecrated religious from other Christian traditions; and separate meetings for members of monastic orders and secular institutes. In addition, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, in collaboration with the Congregation for Bishops, is preparing new documents for religious life worldwide. (We trust they will seek input from women religious!)

It is more than coincidence that the Year of Consecrated Life follows on the heels of Pope Francis’s Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, the rallying call for all Christians to “wake up the world with the joy of the Gospel.” To attain this joy, he invites all to a daily renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ which will draw others to God through contagion. Who more than consecrated religious should evidence this joy?

My special hope for the Year of Consecrated Life, in addition to fostering new vocations, is that it serves as a reconciling factor in our divided Church. Jesus Christ is the same “yesterday, today, and forever,” but there remain many well-meaning Catholics who think the Church must never change its practices; that is, those they observed in their growing up: novenas, Latin Mass, Sisters in full religious garb from another century, etc. Some are even sad our Pope doesn’t wear the traditional red slippers. Other well-meaning Catholics, disenchanted with the Church’s slow response to changing needs, want to see more openness, inclusivity, cooperation with other churches, and participation of the laity in decision-making. Religious communities get caught in the middle of the two poles and are sometimes themselves guilty of preserving division. What is needed is a respect for and healthy balance between both interpretations, for Christ’s great plea is for unity.

Does the Church change? Do we still burn heretics at the stake, condone slavery, discourage Bible reading? The Church does and must change to be relevant to the needs of the society in which it finds itself. Pope Francis sees the Church as a field hospital after battle and demonstrates Christ’s love for all by washing a Muslim woman’s feet. Can we accept the fact that some American Catholic women religious of the 21st century, with Rome’s blessing on their constitutions, wear simple attire as they go about their ministries? Yet for some this too remains a source of division. My hope is that the promotional campaign to acquaint women with consecrated life in the United States will include ALL religious communities and houses because all have their special charisms blessed by the Church.

We are proud of our history and hope to see many of you at our celebrations. Please bring your friends.



# BENEDICTINE CENTER OF SPIRITUALITY

By Sister Pauline Micke, Director

The Fall Prayer Retreat on September 27, 2014, was led by Sue Swanson, M.Div. Fourteen participants spent time reflecting on “Our Spiritual Journey.” The labyrinth, an ancient symbol for wholeness, was the focus as the group prayed, reflected, and made finger labyrinths they will use for their daily prayers.



*Photos by Sister Pauline Micke*

## COMING IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY:

### Winter Prayer Retreat: “Coming Home to Healing”

Saturday, January 24, 2015, 9 a.m. to noon

St. Scholastica Monastery

Sue Swanson, M. Div. from the Twin Cities will be the facilitator for this retreat that will teach us how to make our homes sacred spaces that will nourish body, mind, and spirit and offer hospitality and grace to guests. Using ritual and art we will learn ways to create an environment that reflects our true selves and compose a blessing for our homes.

Freewill Offering

### Lenten Retreat: “Living the Covenant of God’s Unconditional Love”

Saturday, February 28, 2015, 9 a.m. to noon

St. Scholastica Monastery

Sister Pauline Micke, OSB, and Fr. Steve Ulrick, Pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Medina, Minnesota, will facilitate this retreat that explores the meaning of a Covenant relationship with our God. With Noah, Moses, exile, liberation, and Jeremiah, we will come to a deeper understanding of how God’s unconditional love is the foundation for our lives as we seek to live this kind of love in all our relationships.

Freewill Offering

To register for either of the above retreats, call 218-723-6555 or email [pauline.m@duluthosb.org](mailto:pauline.m@duluthosb.org).

## Remembering: Waverly House

By Sister Margaret James Laughlin

Waverly House, located at 1907 Waverly Avenue in Duluth, was built in 1893, one of three houses in a row built by the Gibsons in the Hunter's Park section of town. A later addition to the house provided a lovely family room above the two-car garage, with large windows on three sides shaded by now-mature cedar trees on the west side of the house. Waverly House was purchased by the Duluth Benedictines in 1985 from Temple Israel (which had just experienced a change of rabbi) for the purpose of providing living accommodations for a small group of Sisters. On July 1, 1985, eight Sisters moved into the house on Waverly Avenue: Sister Beverly Horn (on leave from the University of Washington), Sister Helen Claire Arts, Sister Margaret Clarke, Sister Margaret James Laughlin, Sister Mary Richard Boo, Sister Monica Laughlin, Sister Maurice Purdy, and Sister Verda Clare Eichner. They also immediately became commuters to their places of employment, St. Mary's Medical Center and The College of St. Scholastica.

The property purchased from Temple Israel (4 lots) is bounded on the east by Waverly Avenue, the south by Arrowhead Road, the west by Columbus Avenue and Tischer Creek, and the north by neighbors whose home was also built by and for the Gibson family. The yard had been well cared for, with a large section devoted to a garden, cement steps at strategic places, berry bushes, and a fenced-in dog house and run. Considerable sums had been spent on trees and shrubs as well as the lawn.

For the ensuing nearly 30 years the Sisters lived happily at Waverly House. It should be noted here that part of "happily" was the contribution made by several much-loved dogs. Over time, Sisters Beverly Horn, +Helen Claire, and +Maurice left the group, and Sister Beverly Raway joined it. Sisters Margaret, Verda Clare, Monica, and Mary Richard are deceased, while Sister Margaret James has returned to the Monastery for health reasons. However, Sister Beverly Horn and Sister Judith Oland joined Sister Beverly Raway at Waverly this fall—and so the Benedictine small-group living continues.



*The three Gibson houses ca. 1896*

*Right: 2002 view of the Sisters' house on Waverly soon after the installation of shutters*



*Photos from Monastery Archives and from personal collections of Waverly Sisters and friends*





*Christmastime: Sister Margaret James, +Sister Monica, +Sister Verda Clare, and the object of our affection*



*+Sister Monica, Miley, and +Sister Verda Clare*



*Front: Sisters Beverly Raway, +Verda Clare, Margaret James  
Back: Sisters +Monica and +Margaret Clarke*



*Sister Sisters Margaret James and +Monica Laughlin*



*Refinishing the woodwork. Above: Kathy Noble and +Sister Verda Clare. Below: Sister Margaret James*



*Sister Beverly Raway, Miley, and +Sister Margaret Clarke*



*Sister Beverly Raway, grower of all things*



*Piano lessons at Waverly*



## Sister Profile: Sister Grace Marie Braun

By Sister Judine Mayerle



When Sister Grace Marie delivered the commencement address to The College of St. Scholastica Class of 1980, she was nearly halfway through her twelve years as Prioress of the Duluth Benedictines. Dr. Bruce Stender, then-president of CSS, introduced her to the graduates and their guests and said, in part, “The times have increasingly demanded a special kind of leadership. . . a gift for standing between two worlds and finding and keeping what is good in each . . . a talent for unifying what might easily become vastly disparate. . . a deep capacity to weigh values so that the significant not be lost in the trivial. . . and that God remain the still point in the turning world. To you, then, Mother Grace Marie Braun, because you have kept your balance in an unbalanced world and have proved yourself a leader in these, ‘the best of times and the worst of times,’ the Faculty and Trustees of The College of St. Scholastica are pleased to confer upon you the degree Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.”

Sister Grace Marie grew up in Kohler, Wisconsin, with her parents, +Anton and +Emma Gehl Braun, her siblings, +Sister Joan, +Bob, +Sister Mary Carol, and Mary.

Her undergraduate studies prepared her to become a professional dietitian, but God had a special way for her to carry out that ministry. After graduating from CSS she entered the Benedictine Community and subsequently completed an MA in Dietetics from St. Louis University. She taught at CSS for 25 years; during that time she also directed the Food Service for the entire campus for seven years (Monastery, College, and High School). In 1964 when Somers Hall, a 300-bed residence hall was being planned, her service on the building committee included designing a separate Food Service and dining room in the new building for the students, followed a few years later by collaboration with her department colleagues in planning the Dietetics and Home Economics Department area for the new Science Center.

She would be the first to tell you that it wasn’t all work, however, because she enjoyed vacations with her family and friends, foreign travel, and cheering for the Green Bay Packers (“once a Packer, always a Packer,” she says with a smile). And whether it was playing tennis with competitive verve, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing, enjoying a picnic on the North Shore of Lake Superior, teaching the Novices to dance the “Josephine,” catching a walleye on Big Sand Lake, reading or knitting, Sister Grace Marie has always enjoyed the gift of the present.

On June 16, 1975, she was elected the ninth Prioress of St. Scholastica Monastery to lead the Community of 325 Sisters. Mother Grace Marie’s visionary leadership saw construction of the Benedictine Health Center which opened in 1980 and creation of the Benedictine Health System in 1985. She led the Community in recognizing the dual need for a barrier-free chapel and expansion of the College library. Major renovation of the chapel/library complex resulted in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel moving into former library space in the lower level of the structure and the library into what became a three-story facility in 1986. She was active in the Federation of St. Benedict, serving on the Council and as Federation vice-president. She has also served on many health-care boards and the Board of Trustees of The College of St. Scholastica on which she holds emeritus status.

After her tenure as Prioress, Sister Grace Marie enjoyed a year’s sabbatical in two spiritual renewal programs, then began the Monastery’s Development Office and guided that ministry for seven years. In 1996 God called her to what she describes as “a most extraordinary ministry” with the National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing (Project Rachel) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

She returned to Duluth in 1999 to serve as the Monastery Director of Human Resources and director of the residential volunteer Benedictine Associate Program. Although no longer in full-time ministry, she is a member of the Space Study Group of the Community’s ongoing strategic planning. Sister Grace Marie exemplifies the Benedictine values of prayer, hospitality, stewardship, respect, and community. A blessing to all who know her, she is a deeply spiritual woman, Proverbs’ “valiant woman,” who has always kept God as “the still point” of her ever-changing world.



*“Where’s Duluth?” Pope John Paul II asked Mother Grace Marie when she met him at Monte Cassino on September 20, 1980. She joined Benedictines from all over the world invited to Rome for a “Symposium on St. Benedict” in celebration of the 1,500th Anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict.*



# REV. JOHN WHITNEY EVANS FUND

Before his death in 2002, Rev. John Whitney Evans planned to create a fund to financially assist men and women who choose to pursue a vocation to either the priesthood or to religious life. As a memorial to Father Evans, the Knights of Columbus, assisted by the Bishop of the Diocese of Duluth and the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, established a memorial fund to support vocation ministries.

Gifts to the fund are given in memory of loved ones, and the contributions are used by the Knights of Columbus, the Sisters, and the Diocese to support vocation expenses.

As you know, young people who believe they may have a vocation find that there are many expenses when they first begin. Initially, when they leave the world of work, they are responsible for their own health care and personal expenses. The Rev. John Whitney Evans Vocation Fund supports these men and women who are discerning their call to a religious vocation.

The memorial board is located at St. Scholastica Monastery, and the Fund is administered by the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery. The names of your loved ones and your name will be engraved on a plaque and installed on a lovely six-foot wooden memorial board located next to the Monastery's vocation ministry offices. Donations are \$100 for each plaque.

If you are interested in supporting this fund, please fill out the form below. Whether or not you are able to participate financially in this project, we ask you to please join us in praying for men and women who are called to religious life or to the priesthood.



## Rev. John Whitney Evans Vocation Fund

Please accept my donation of \$100

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
(As you would like it to appear on the plaque)

Your name(s) and the name(s) of the person(s) remembered  
will be engraved on the plaque unless you instruct otherwise.

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(As you would like it to appear on the plaque)

Donor Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Donor Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to:  
St. Scholastica Monastery  
*Note: Evans Vocation Fund*

Mail to:  
Development Office  
St. Scholastica Monastery  
1001 Kenwood Avenue  
Duluth, MN 55811

## Open House at the Monastery

Sisters hosted an Open House and reception for area family and friends October 5, 2014. On that lovely sunny day 170 people came to the Monastery and joined us as we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the beginning of our Development/Public Relations Office. Sister Grace Marie Braun, its first director, was honored with a bouquet, as was Vicky Siders, the current director. We were pleased that so many of you attended and that we had the opportunity to thank you for your continued prayers and support.

*Photos by Sister Edith Bogue, Sister Kathleen Del Monte, and Sister Therese Carson*









## **“Received as Christ”: The Worth of Human Life in the Rule of St. Benedict**

By Sister Ann Marie Wainright

### ***“In Our Image”: The Incarnation as Proof of the Worth of Human Life***

Scripture tells us that God made human beings “in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26), and that God knows us intimately (Ps. 139:13-16). So sacred is human life that God became a human being through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus’ birth and life witness to divine concern for the lowliest and the poorest. Under Roman rule, taxation often claimed as much as half of what was grown or raised, and slavery was common. As a *tekton* or carpenter like his foster father Joseph, Jesus would have been ranked in one of the lowest socioeconomic classes. His hometown of Nazareth was a small, impoverished village not too far away from the larger city of Sepphoris, where riots, raids, enslavement, and burning by Roman forces resulted in 2000 crucifixions at one point (Johnson 144-158).

It was in such a world that Jesus, the Son of God, lived. By His life Jesus demonstrated how to live in right relationship with God and one another. Jesus broke many social norms of His day when he touched lepers to heal them (Mark 1:40-45), reached out to a Samaritan woman (John 4:4-29), called tax collectors to be His followers and dined with them (Luke 5:27-32; 19:1-10), and allowed a sinful woman to touch Him and bathe His feet (Luke 7:36-50). Because Jesus lived a life of marginalization, poverty, and struggle, He gave worth to the human lives of us all.

### ***“A Shining Lamp”: The Call of St. Benedict to Illuminate the Worth of Human Life***

In St. Benedict’s day, the fifth century, the Roman Empire was in a state of decline. St. Gregory the Great, who wrote about St. Benedict’s life in Book Two of *The Dialogues*, hinted at this state of affairs when he noted that St. Benedict left Rome and his studies because of the cultural vice with which he found himself surrounded (Chapter 1, ¶1).



*Images from the Illustrated Rule of St. Benedict*

St. Benedict initially lived as a hermit for three years. His holiness drew others to him and led to his forming a community and writing a Rule of life that recognized the importance of human relationships in seeking God and the dignity and worth of human life. St. Gregory the Great writes, “Like a shining lamp his example was to be set on a lamp stand to give light to everyone in God’s house” (*The Dialogues, Book II, Chapter 1*).

In time, Benedictine monasteries following the *Rule of St. Benedict* became centers of prayer, spiritual direction, health care, learning, literature, and art. Perhaps their most important contribution, however, was their witness to the worth of human life, which St. Benedict addressed in his *Rule* through particular expressions of compassion and zeal in community life.



## ***“Received as Christ”: The Worth of Human Life in The Rule of St. Benedict***

*Your way of acting should be different than the world’s way; the love of Christ must come before all else. (R.B. 4.20)*

The *Rule of St. Benedict* was very countercultural for its time. In an age where work and manual labor were looked down upon, St. Benedict saw it as humanity’s creative expression and fulfillment of its role as co-creators with God (R.B. 35, 36, 48, 57, 66; Gen. 1:28-31; Gen. 2:18-20).

In the Roman Empire there were classes of people: slaves versus free persons; persons of status and importance versus persons considered worthless because they could not usefully offer something to build up the Empire. In St. Benedict’s community, rank was based on date of entry and nothing else. There was to be no favoritism shown, either because of age, particular talents, born slave or free, or ordained a priest or not (R.B. 2, 3, 62, 63).

Community life demonstrated the worth of human life by showing mutual respect and obedience for one another, and through zealous and affectionate attempts to “be the first to show respect to the other, supporting with the greatest patience one another’s weaknesses of body or behavior.” St. Benedict’s monks were to avoid shows of power and control over younger and weaker members. Indeed, the very people whom the society of St. Benedict’s day deemed worthless—the elderly, the sick, the young, the poor, the wayward sinner and even enemies—were to be “received as Christ,” prayed for, and assisted (R.B. 4, 36, 53, 70, 71, 72).

## ***Our Benedictine Monastic Lives as Witness to the Worth of Human Life***

*You must be the change you want to see in the world. (Mahatma Gandhi)*

As Benedictine women of the 21st century, we too are called to be prophets in our own time, proclaiming with our lives the sacredness and dignity of all human life. When we care for our aged and sick Sisters on our assisted living floor; when we listen carefully and open-heartedly to someone we disagree with; when we pray for offenders scheduled for execution and their victims; when we participate in peace and justice ministries such as founding a safe house for victims of human trafficking; when we donate food and clothing to local shelters for the poor and the homeless; when we do these things, we give witness to the worth of human life—all life—in God’s eyes. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, this prophetic witness changes each individual person while affecting and transforming the larger world community—just as it did in Jesus’ and St. Benedict’s times.

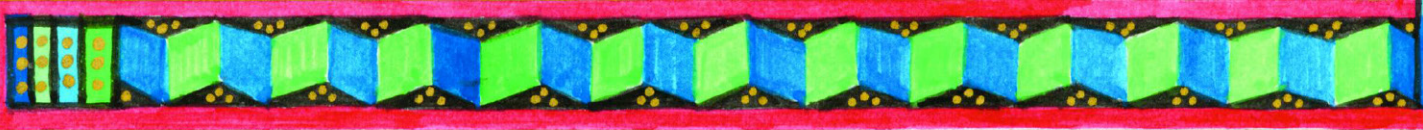
St. Benedict sought to create a way of life that would be the change he dreamed of seeing in society of his day. By doing so, he influenced the Church and the world for the last 1500 years. We hold this value sacred as we live our calling to help all people realize their worth in God’s eyes.

### References:

R.B. 1980: *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*. Fry, Timothy, ed. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982.

*The New American Bible*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004.

*Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*. Johnson, Elizabeth. New York, NY: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006.



# Monastery Development Office Celebrates 25 Years

By Vicky Siders

2014 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Development Office at St. Scholastica Monastery. Begun in 1989 when Prioress Clare Marie Trettel appointed Sister Grace Marie Braun as Director of Development, the office has, throughout the years, both changed greatly and remained the same.

The initial fund-raising goal of the office in 1989 was to raise funds for a residence for the Sisters—the first time in their history that the Sisters would have a residence completely for themselves and certainly the first time they did fund-raising for something for themselves. Sister Grace Marie (Prioress from 1975 to 1987), who had assisted in fund-raising efforts at both The College of St. Scholastica and for the construction of the Benedictine Health Center in 1980, became Director of Development August 22, 1989. Within a month a secretary had been hired, Sisters had submitted names of family members and friends to place on a mailing list, a newsletter board was appointed, and those members planned the first Community newsletter. Within the next month names were entered into a database, the first newsletter was written and sent to the printer, and Sister Grace Marie addressed the Community on the progress of the Development efforts, thanking all Sisters for their input and assistance with mailing lists. Sisters were asked to suggest names for the newsletter, and 55 Sisters submitted 212 possible names. A memo from 1989 says, “The name of the newsletter will be *Pathways*—submitted by Sister Ramona Ewen.”

Photo by Sister Judine Mayerle



*Sister Grace Marie Braun reviewing the first issue (Fall 1989) of Pathways.*

In a 1989 talk to the Community, Sister Grace Marie answered the question “What is development?” “Very simply it is planning, public relations, and fund-raising.” In the early years of the office, she and Sister Clare Marie Trettel and Sister Claudia Riehl attended National Catholic Development Conferences and also took part in a two-year program funded by the Lilly Endowment that helped religious communities learn the basics of effective fund-raising. Sister Grace Marie said in a recent interview, “Before any fund-raising takes place, there must be ‘friend-raising.’” She went on to say that asking for support was initially difficult because Sisters were so used to doing for others. Her task was to help all to see that Community ministries are ministries that others may choose to join and that Sisters should give people the option to support these ministries in addition to other charities.

During the first few years of the Development Office, Sister Grace Marie and lay-secretary Elaine Dacken were full-time.

Sister Claudia Riehl worked part-time in circulation; Sister Pamela Rae Kern was part-time photography and computers. Sister Brenden Madden joined the office part-time as financial liaison with the Business Office and also as grant proposal writer. The first editorial board included Sister Clare Marie, Sister Mary Daniel, Sister Margaret Clarke, Sister Margaret James, Sister Claudia Riehl, Sister Pamela Rae, and Sister Grace Marie. Sister Margaret Clarke kept minutes of the meetings. Though she enjoyed the task, at some point in the 25-year history she began signing the minutes “Sister Margaret Clarke, secretary for life,” and that, in fact, continued until her death in April of this year. Another “lifer” is Sister Margaret James who came to the office in 1991 as Administrative Secretary and who works now (that she is 94) only part-time—our best proofreader and the Queen of Capitalization issues.

Sister Joyce Fournier replaced Sister Claudia as head of *Pathways* circulation in the spring of 1992. She recalls that the mailings of the first years involved many Sisters and tubs and tubs of letters. The Development Office addressed all envelopes and return envelopes, matched those, stuffed the *Pathways* into envelopes, then organized all with colored dots and rubber bands and got the tubs ready to go to the post office. Years later, many volunteers helped to make the stuffing and sealing easier, and instead of a three-day task, the mailings took one day and then, even later, half a day. Changes in bulk mailing codes helped as well to streamline the process.

In addition to an Annual Report, Annual Appeal, and Christmas card, the newsletter *Pathways* was initially published three times each year and consisted of eight pages printed in a duo-tone (two color) process. Gradually through the years we increased to 12 pages and then 16 and now to either 20 or 24 pages per issue in full color. (Sister Margaret James proofreads an issue, shakes her head, and says, “We are a wordy bunch.”) Arrowhead





Typical Pathways mailing in Rockhurst meeting room. Foreground: +Sister Barbara Ann Tushar, +Sister Rita Ann Beaulieu, and Sister Agatha Riehl

Printing took over the stuffing and sealing and mailing duties for us a few years ago as office duties increased and numbers of Sisters and volunteers decreased.

Today Development publishes four 20- or most often 24-page *Pathways*, an Annual Report, an Annual Appeal, a Christmas card, and a calendar (begun in 2000). We prepare acknowledgments for gifts received, and we send out notices of the summer Stanbrook reunion, invitations to the annual Volunteer dinner, invitations to Open Houses, etc. The office has also published three books: *All Her Ways*, a ceremonial *Rule of St. Benedict*, and *Saved by Beauty*. We also manage the website. Andi Therrien as webmaster is responsible for the updating and maintenance of this site, which was begun years ago by Sister Pam Kern and then improved significantly during Rita Rosenberger's years as

Administrative Assistant in the office. But since 2006 Andi has navigated us through two major changes in programming and site hosts.

The Office also receives prayer requests through the website or via remittance envelopes donors send to us. Sometimes people call and ask for the Sisters' prayers. Sister Therese Carson, new to the office as of September 2014, collects all prayer requests and prepares them for the Sisters. Sister Margaret James posts them on the Sisters' prayer board, on Benet Hall, and in the Eucharistic Chapel of Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. We are all pleased to be able to assist in this very special ministry. Indeed, our mornings begin with prayer, a practice initiated by Sister Grace Marie. We gather—Sister Margaret James, Sister Therese, Andi, and I and whomever we find in our office at 8:30 a.m.—and pray for the intentions that have been sent by friends, family, and (through the website) by people as far away as India or the Philippines. Those same intentions are also prayed for daily by the Sisters during their communal and personal prayer times.

Through the office's 25-year history, faces and titles have changed, Sisters have come and gone. I was hired in 1996 as the second Director of Development. Wonderful co-workers, in addition to those mentioned above include Sister Joan Marie Stelman who worked here for three years, improving the office's computer abilities; +Sister Rebecca Burggraff, who was so down-to-earth and witty and willing to take on any task; Sister Estelle Charron who worked here half-days, maintaining scrapbooks of articles and assisting us in keeping the database current by perusing newspaper obituaries; Kathy LaPlante who helped us transition between administrative assistants, and Catherine Wright, who worked with us part-time on photo organization. Benedictine Associates who helped us greatly through the years include Mary Farrell, whose photography also graced a calendar one year; Kate Smith, who transferred the Sister Noemi Weygant photos to a database; Sharon Strand, who did special projects; and Roni Sturk, who helped us archive photos and process gifts this past year.

All of us in the office have learned that the way to obtain the support of family and friends—whether that be prayer support or financial support or just communicating with the public and de-mystifying the Monastery—is simply to continue to thank people. That is what Sister Grace Marie suggested in 1989, and that is what the office does today. We thank you for your support of the Sisters' monastic way of life and their ministries through your love, prayers, and financial gifts. Friend-raising. It remains our goal.

### **Donations to the Monastery have made the following projects, improvements, or programs possible:**

- Construction of Stanbrook West
- Renovation of Stanbrook Hall
- Elevator
- Windows
- Furnace
- Twinning (Sister Monasteries in Chile and Tanzania)
- Renovation of Benet Hall
- Vocation ministry
- Benedictine Center of Spirituality
- McCabe Renewal Center
- Garden Court Renovation
- Benet Hall Beds
- Community Support
- Retirement and Care of Infirm Sisters

## Advent is a Time of Waiting . . .

### *Christmas Tea with Magdalene*

*She waited  
patiently  
for me –  
Christmas cards neatly stacked,  
address book,  
last year's envelopes saved  
for the return address labels,  
a favorite black pen  
whose stroke is  
just right.*

*“This is a grandniece,  
I hear from her every year.”  
She passes a blank card  
and we begin.  
She tells me  
what to write,  
I give her the card  
to sign.*

*One card done,  
another card done,  
a third card done –  
hardly a dent in her  
Christmas card to-do list.  
“Let's stop now.”*

*Magically, a tray arrives  
with tea and Christmas cookies.  
One cup and plate  
for her,  
one cup and plate  
for me.*

*We pass the time  
in pleasant conversation.  
Tea and cookies are gone,  
She is tired.  
“Come again tomorrow...”  
to write a card or two  
and pass the time  
pleasantly  
waiting  
for Christmas.*

Sister Ann Marie Wainright



Photo by Sister Therese Carson





*Photos from Monastery Archives*



# Highlights

## Marywood Opening and Blessing

By Sister Dorene King

The spirit of hospitality warmed all those who attended the Marywood blessing/opening celebration on Tuesday, September 30. The goose bump-producing temperature could have dampened the desire to attend the outside blessing ritual. However, our thoughtful Benedictine Care Community staff provided a multitude of cozy blankets to counter the frigid feeling. The blessing consisted of hymns, prayers, brief greetings and the blessing of Marywood with holy water. Following the blessing, those gathered had the opportunity to tour the new building.

Marywood is designed as a home environment where a cluster of twelve people participate in daily living. Each person has a bedroom which includes a private bathroom/shower and their own flat-screen TV. The twelve have in common a living room with a fireplace, a dining room where a long dining room table provides seating for all, a kitchen where the twelve may assist with meals and share breakfast together at a circular counter, a laundry closet where residents can choose to launder their own clothes, a spa, a visiting room, and a deck.

Marywood is made up of four housing units and therefore is designed for an occupancy of forty-eight people. It is connected to Westwood (senior independent and assisted living) by a skywalk. The staff are universal workers, which means they assist residents with their individual needs, help in meal preparation, and participate in other household tasks.



*Marywood*



*Blessing Ceremony attendees*

*Photos courtesy of Jarod Champeaux and the Benedictine Health Center*

## Hawks On The Horizon

By Sister Dorene King

It is not often that blind equates with an optimal view. Yet on Saturday, September 20, being in a blind increased my awareness of raptors. This awareness came about through a continuing education program called Edventures sponsored by the MN Zoo. This Edventure focused on raptors as viewed from a blind north of Duluth as well as raptors seen from Hawk Ridge.

Look closely at a sharp-shinned hawk (see photo). A young sharp has vertical lines. An elder has horizontal lines. A vertical direction could be interpreted as an upward or downward mobility—an individual striving or falling. The horizontal embraces those around us in a recognition of the importance of community. May the lines of a hawk lead us to reflect on our lives.



*Sister Dorene and friend*



## Highlights, Continued

### Sister Mary Charles McGough Exhibit Ends with Prayer Service

A prayer service concluding the Tweed Museum of Art exhibit “Sister Mary Charles: Engagement and Transcendence” was held Sunday, September 21, 2014, in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel here on the Monastery grounds. That exhibit was featured at the Tweed from June 3 through September 21. During that four-month summer period attendance at the Tweed exceeded 7,800 people, including the 468 who attended the exhibit opening.

Bill Payne, Dean of the School of Fine Arts at UMD, and Ken Bloom, Director and Curator of the Tweed Museum of Art, spoke at the prayer ceremony, as did Peter Spooner, guest curator for the exhibit. All commented on the several ways that Sister Mary Charles’s art was a reflection of her great spirit and a blessing to so many people.

The exhibit featured samples of her commissioned works—icons and woodcuts. John Schifsky, lead author of the book *Saved by Beauty*, that was written in conjunction with the exhibit, and Peter Spooner, who contributed a chapter and helped greatly with the editing and publishing process, spoke of Sister Mary Charles’s sense of reverence for the sacred she found present in all people, all creation, and all of life and how that was expressed in both profound and delightful ways in her work.

Sister Lois Eckes, Prioress, concluded the service by saying that Sister Mary Charles believed passionately in the creative spark that lives in the heart of each person. That Divine Spark grew to a magnificent radiance in Sister’s heart, in her life, and in her many art forms. It was also wonderfully expressed in her personal warmth, compassion, sense of humor, and commitment to the work of social justice. She inspired and guided children and people of all ages to discover the creativity within themselves and to express it in their own beautiful works of art.

Music was provided by Meredith Schifsky, Mary Bridget Lawson, Marianne Connelly, and Sister Gretchen Johnston. Sister Renata Liegey was reader.

A reception followed in Rockhurst Dining Room at the Monastery.



*Left: Sister Lois Eckes. Below left to right—Ken Bloom, Bill Payne, John Schifsky, and Peter Spooner. Above right: Attendees. Below right: musicians left to right—Meredith Schifsky, Sister Gretchen Johnston, Marianne Connelly and Mary Bridget Lawson.*



## Highlights, Continued

### Mary Lowney Retires After 38+ Years at the Monastery

September 25, 2014, marked the retirement of the employee who has served the Monastery the longest in our history of treasured laypeople. Mary Lowney celebrated 38 years and 7 months of service to the Sisters. For all those years Mary was in charge of personal clothing care and the care of Sisters' rooms on Benet Hall, and she is particularly remembered for her compassionate care of the Sisters. The afternoon celebration included relatives, friends, and former colleagues who joined the Sisters in wishing Mary a wonderful and well-earned retirement. Sisters sang a blessing for Mary, Sister Barb Higgins entertained with song and pantomime, and all enjoyed refreshments. In speaking to the assembled crowd, Mary thanked Sister Annella Wagner for her guidance and said she had enjoyed being a part of Benet Hall. She also said she was looking forward to retirement, but that she would miss everyone, especially the Sisters, and that she will be back to visit. Mary was presented with a framed photo of Lake Superior that she had chosen from Sister Joyce Fournier's studio. She also received flowers and many cards.

*Photos by Andi Therrien*



*Mary Lowney (left)  
and Lisa Askelson*



*Sisters sing a blessing for Mary*



*Mary and cake (she shared!)*

### BHS Leadership Conference a Success

By Sister Lisa Maurer; photos courtesy of BHS

The 2014 Benedictine Health System Conference was a wonderful success. Nearly 400 attendees from all BHS Participating Organizations came together to take advantage of the chance to be with colleagues and learn from many gifted presenters. The conference began with an evening of socializing and networking. The Mission and Values of BHS were brought to the forefront during the Benedictine Health System Awards ceremony that recognized those groups and individuals who rise above the ordinary. It also honored the recipient of the Sister Claudia Riehl Living a Legacy award.



*Sister Lois awarding a medal*



*Attendees in a large group session*



*Medal given to all in attendance  
as part of the commissioning ceremony*

One of the highlights of this year's conference was the closing address offered by Sister Lois. She concluded the conference with a message and commissioning ceremony centered around St. Benedict's words "Listen with the ear of your heart."



## Sister Profile: Sister Jean Maher

Photo by Sister Jean Maher



Last year my brother gave me a plane ticket to Naples, Florida, as a Christmas gift. It was an invitation to join him for some vacation days in the sun. What a wonderful opportunity to escape a brutal winter here in the “North Pole”! One of the highlights of that time in Naples occurred when two of my brother’s friends invited us to join them for a boat ride into the Gulf of Mexico at sunset. It was there that I experienced the most spectacular sunset I have ever seen. The sun was saying goodbye to the day and filled the entire sky with color.

Those moments of letting go and surrender were surrounded with spectacular beauty. I knew

that same sun was going to rise in the morning, but I wasn’t ready to think about that yet. I needed to first look at the letting go that I have been called to this past year: the letting go of my ability to stand up straight and walk on my own, letting go of energy I used to take for granted, letting go of my ability to participate fully in Community events, and letting go of independence. I failed to see beauty in any of that until I encountered that remarkable sunset. I felt like God was using that sunset to tell me to be patient, to pay attention, and to remember that the setting sun is not the end of the story.

I also felt like I was being invited to see the beauty that is in my life now. I then remembered my ministry of spiritual direction. When I am companioning others in their search for the presence of God in their lives, I feel like I am on holy ground and witnessing the beauty of God’s love in the lives of others. Some might be dealing with darkness, death, and grieving, while others might be in a space of great joy and gratitude or a time of discernment and transition. I am honored as well as humbled by their sharing and their trust. I am also grateful for the gift of an office that is quiet, safe from outside distractions, and beautiful. It is here that I am able to do the work I love so much.

Another great joy for me is watching the evolution of Hildegard House here in Duluth, a place of safety and shelter for women who are recovering from the pain and trauma of human trafficking. Several years ago I was living in Chicago and finishing a Doctorate of Ministry degree when I was asked to do some volunteer work at Genesis House, a home that was opened to minister to women who had been traumatized by human trafficking. One of my responsibilities was to facilitate a weekly spirituality group for the women who were living in the house. During one of our sessions I asked the women to think of a time in their lives when they felt the presence of God. I was surprised to hear each woman share her attempted suicide story. Every woman in the group said that she believed her suicide attempt did not succeed because God intervened to save her life. I suspect that’s what brought them to a recovery program. Their honesty and courage were truly an inspiration.

One night I was asked to be the overnight volunteer and to be responsible for answering the phone and the doorbell. That was the night that one of the residents returned home with her high school diploma. She had worked hard to complete all the requirements, and that night she had passed the final tests that earned her the title of high school graduate. She walked into the house filled with joy, and the other women were there to welcome her and to celebrate her achievement. As we sat together in the living room, one woman presented her with a card they had all signed while someone else went to get the lemonade and cookies for the victory party. I can still picture her sitting on the couch and telling us that now that she had completed high school she would like to go to college and get a degree in counseling so she could help other women to succeed in life. I just sat there in awe. These women had taught me so much about the power of community, the importance of hospitality, and the courage to trust in God’s protective love. They were like that sunset in the Gulf of Mexico, ready to let go and surrender all that was familiar.

Now I understand what it means when people say, “A picture is worth a thousand words.”

Photo by Sister Joyce Fournier



# *In Loving Memory*



*Sister Margaret James Laughlin, Miley,  
and Sister Monica Laughlin*



## **Sister Monica Laughlin, OSB** ***September 1, 1922—October 22, 2014***

Sister Monica (Donalda) Laughlin, OSB, 92, died October 22, 2014, at St. Scholastica Monastery. She was born the daughter of James and Margaret (Dillon) Laughlin on September 1, 1922, in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Sister Monica was in her sixty-sixth year of Monastic Profession.

Monica's musical abilities were significant by the time she attended Iron Mountain High School, where she played piano, clarinet, and snare drum in the high school band and orchestra. Her father referred to her as "our one-girl band." Following her graduation from high school in 1940, she attended The College of St. Scholastica from 1940–1941. From there she transferred to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education in 1944. She then worked for two years as Director of Music in the public schools of Fowlerville, Michigan.

In 1947 Monica entered the Duluth Benedictine Monastery as a postulant. She professed her triennial vows on July 11, 1948, and her perpetual vows on July 11, 1951. During her time as a postulant, she began teaching in the Music Department of The College of St. Scholastica and continued to do so for the next sixty years, serving as Music Department Chairman from 1954–1975. She also served as Director of Orchestra for Stanbrook Hall High School from 1946 to 1954. During her years of teaching, Sister Monica nourished and inspired music students of all ages. She instilled confidence and developed the unique talents of her students, taking great pride in them and their accomplishments. Sister was Director of St. Scholastica Monastery Schola Cantorum from 1951–1955; 1960–1966; 1994–2006. Her talent as a musical director, composer, and performer, and her love for Gregorian chant, added extraordinary beauty to the liturgies of the Benedictine Sisters for many years.

Sister Monica was a fine scholar as well as a gifted musician. She earned a Master's Degree in Music Education from the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester in 1956, and a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from the University of Southern California in 1967, when she also received the Phi Kappa Phi award for Best Dissertation in Music Education. Other academic honors she received include Mu Phi Epsilon,



Honorary Society for Women Musicians; Pi Kappa Lambda, Honorary Society for Music Educators; and Phi Beta Kappa. In 1987 Sister received the prestigious Max Lavine Award for Teaching Excellence from The College of St. Scholastica.

Sister Monica played principal clarinet in the University of Michigan Concert Band, 1943-1944; the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra, 1943-1944; Interlochen, Michigan, summer Symphony Orchestra, 1944; Eastman Concert Band, assistant–principal clarinet, 1954-1956. She played E Flat Clarinet for many years with the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra and was recorder soloist for the Duluth-Superior Chamber Orchestra, on tour 1972. In addition, she performed in The College of St. Scholastica Center for Early Music Orchestra, principal clarinet, and St. Scholastica Historic Wind Ensemble, founder and principal clarinet. Sister was conductor of the Duluth-Superior Youth Orchestra, 1972-1973, and Director of the Abbey Minstrels and Mod Minstrels, 1972-1978.

Active in both academic and civic affairs, she served as a member of the Duluth-Superior Symphony Association Board of Trustees, Matinee Musicale, the Cecilian Society, and many other local and state music associations. She also served her Benedictine Community as a member of the St. Mary's Medical Center Board for many years, including Chair, 1991-1992. She was a member of the St. Mary's/Duluth Clinic Board, 1997-2007.

Sister Monica had a passion for the world of music. Her eloquent voice, her musical compositions, her teaching career, and many performances with the clarinet and recorder influenced and graced those at St. Scholastica Monastery, The College of St. Scholastica, and the Duluth-Superior communities. In recent years Sister Monica observed: "Benedictine life, full of joy and warmth, continues to be relevant to our times, providing models of peace, generosity, and hospitality." She joyfully celebrated her Silver Jubilee on August 15, 1973, her Golden Jubilee on July 11, 1998, and her Diamond Jubilee on August 3, 2008.

Sister Monica was preceded in death by her parents, James and Margaret, and her brothers William and Thomas. She is survived by her sister, Sister Margaret James Laughlin, the other Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery and by beloved nieces, nephews, and many dear colleagues, relatives, and friends.

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING DECEASED FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Marie Burggraff 8/30/2014  
+Sister Rebecca Burggraff's sister  
Norman B. Camenker 8/30/2014  
Robert Bobich, Sr. 9/6/2014  
Fr. Anselm Thevarkunnel 10/3/2014  
Robert Dobosenski 10/3/2014

Ralph Sandusky 10/31/2014  
+Sister Thea Sandusky's brother  
Alfred Torborg 11/4/2014  
Sister Mary Josephine Torborg's brother  
Eugene Riehl 11/5/2014  
Sister Agatha and Sister Claudia  
Riehl's brother

St. Scholastica Monastery  
Office of Development  
1001 Kenwood Avenue  
Duluth, MN 55811-2300

*Address Service Requested*

Auto  
Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Duluth, MN  
Permit No. 708



**“A God who became so small,  
could only be mercy  
and love.”**

St. Thérèse of Lisieux