ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY NEW SLETTER

February 2022



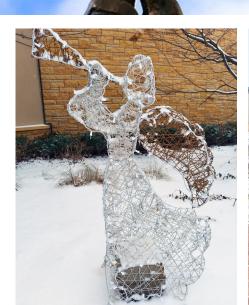






TABLE OF CONTENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS & DATES

February

Black History Month

February 2

Presentation of the Lord

February 10
St. Scholastica

February 14
Happy Valentine's Day

18

Prayer Ministry

03	Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB
04	Sisters' Words of Wisdom: Sister Virginia Matter, OSB
05	Remembering Sister Benita Gerold, OSB Mary Elizabeth Ilg
06	School of Lectio Divinia Benedictine Center of St. Paul's Monastery
06	Maple Tree Childcare Center Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center
07	Oblate News: Becoming An Oblate Travis Salisbury, ObISB
07	Associate News: Renewal Ceremony Sister Karen Sames, OSB
08	Feast of Conversion of St. Paul Sister Paula Hagen, OSB
08	75th Anniversary of St. Paul's Monastery Sister Lucia Schwickerath, OSB
09	Curbside Pickup: Online Winter Marketplace
10	Happy Valentine's Day!
11	Celebrating St. Scholastica
12	St. Scholastica Honoree 2022: Pat Swanke Mary Elizabeth Ilg
13	The Groundhog's Invitation Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB
15	Around the Monastery
16	Employee Spotlight: Monika Westphaln
17	Commemorative Pavers

WELCOME **LETTER**

Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB

We know little about Scholastica. Only one story is handed down to us about the twin sister of Benedict, but that one small story reveals her to be a woman with a strong and expansive heart of love.

The story recounts that both brother and sister looked forward to their yearly visit. Benedict came down the mountain from his monastery at Monte Cassino, and Scholastica met him at a small house on the side of the mountain. Enraptured in talking and visiting all day, they did not notice that the day was growing short and the sun was setting. Scholastica loved her brother dearly, and wanted to continue their holy conversation all through the night. Benedict, however, was scandalized by her suggestion that he stay with her and remain outside his monastery. He would not consider her request.





In response to his refusal, Scholastica folded her hands and bowed her head in heartfelt prayer. Her brother had refused to listen, but perhaps God would listen. Immediately, the skies erupted in violent thunder and a heavy rainstorm. As Scholastica raised her head from prayer her face was wet with tears. It was now impossible for Benedict to climb the mountain in the dark and in the rain, so he was stuck. They did indeed remain together talking all night of the joys of heaven. God had listened to Scholastica's prayer because her love was greater.

Scholastica's story reminds us that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is greater and more powerful than the hardest of human hearts, than the most impossible of situations in which we may find ourselves. The Rule speaks of the transforming power of love: As we progress in this way of life and in faith, we shall run in the path of God's commandments, our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love (Prol. 49). Scholastica had lived her whole life running on that path, loving and allowing her heart to overflow with love. May love overflow within all our hearts so that love transforms our broken world.



SISTERS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Sister Virginia Matter, OSB

Sister Virginia Matter was raised in Walnut Grove, Minnesota by a Lutheran mother and Catholic father in a family with two sisters and one brother. Her mother vowed to raise her family in the Catholic faith, while at the same time attending her own Lutheran church. "My mother was a beautiful woman," Sister Virginia says. She was a spiritual force in their family who encouraged her husband to return to the Church and practice his Catholic faith. While in high school,

Virginia had planned to get married someday, and informed her parish priest, Father Dufresne, of these plans: "Then, he left me alone." Father Dufresne had encouraged young women from Walnut Grove to visit St. Paul's Priory on Summit Avenue during the summers, where Virginia met Sister Eleanor Wartman and others. Virginia began to feel the strong pull of the Holy

Spirit toward a vocation, much to her surprise: "I thought, what is going on here?" Virginia's mother was very supportive when her daughter decided to enter St. Paul's Priory in 1955, "once she knew that her daughter was happy," and wrote to Virginia every day. "The Sisters grew to love my mother and my mother loved them."

Sister Virginia received a nursing degree (LPN) from Miller Hospital in 1960 and began her career in health care working at St. Mary's Hospital and Home in Winstead, MN. She later managed the Monastery's Health Care Center. In 1981, she changed career course and began an intensive year-long spiritual direction training and formation program at the Institute for Religious Formation (IRF) in St. Louis, MO. When she returned, she helped Sister Veronica Novotny and Sister Mary White operate the Benedictine Center, which was founded in 1983.



Pictured here is Sister Virginia as a little girl, in 1940.

Read the rest of Sister Virginia's Words of Wisdom here.





Sister Benita Gerold, OSB

Born: March 26, 1932 Professed: July 11, 1951 Died: January 18, 2022

"May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life."

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 72

"May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life." Rule of Benedict, Chapter 72:12

Sister Benita Gerold entered peacefully into eternal life, fulfilling her baptismal call on January 18, 2022, at St. Paul's Monastery.

Benita Marie was born on March 26, 1932, in Jordan, Minnesota. She was the fourth child born to Egon and Agatha Von Bank Gerold. She had one brother and three sisters. Sister Benita graduated from Visitation Convent School in Minneapolis in 1950 and completed post-secondary work at St. Paul Diocesan Teacher College and the University of St. Thomas. She later attended the University of Minnesota at Crookston, where she earned a degree of Applied Sciences in Dietetics in 1979.

Sister Benita entered St. Paul's Priory on September 6, 1946 and became a novice on June 12, 1950. She made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1951, and her perpetual monastic profession on July 11, 1954. On July 11, 2021, Sister Benita joyfully celebrated her 70th Jubilee with her classmate, Sister Agnes Trombley.

Sister Benita was assigned to St. Joseph's Orphanage in St. Paul where she served as Boys' Prefect 1951-1960. She served as Housemother at the Catholic Boys' Home in Minneapolis 1960-1961 and 1962-1963. She was Superior at St. Joseph's Home in St. Paul 1961-1962.

Read the rest of Sister Benita Gerold's memoriam here.









School of Lectio Divina



The Benedictine Center of St. Paul's Monastery's School of Lectio Divina adapts the ancient monastic riches of sustained lectio divina to contemporary people. According to Dr. Kathleen Cahalan, "sustained lectio divina" is the dialogue with God through the text over time. Through an intensive retreat experience set in the rhythm of life at St. Paul's Monastery, participants receive teaching about lectio, spend time meditating on a sacred text significant for them, have the opportunity for individual spiritual direction, and participate in reflective conversation with other participants.

In addition, the Benedictine Center will provide a variety of on-going support activities and resources after the retreat to help participants make sustained lectio core to individual prayer and spiritual development. Limit 12. Apply online or email <u>benedictinecenter@stpaulsmonastery.org</u>.

Date & Time: Friday, March 18, 2022 - Wednesday, March 23, 2022 Address: St. Paul's Monastery, 2675 Benet Road, St. Paul, MN 55109

Learn more about this event here.

MAPLE TREE CHILDCARE CENTER

Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



It doesn't matter what the time of year, we embrace our beautiful grounds and spend time outside whenever we can. The footprints are from the children exploring near the pine trees. Sometimes, we find tracks of deer and other animals. We are blessed to enjoy such a peaceful and lovely outdoor environment.



OBLATE NEWS: BECOMING AN OBLATE

Travis Salisbury, ObISB

The Department of Mission Advancement welcomes Travis Salisbury, OblSB, as our new Director. Travis brings a wealth of experience to Mission Advancement and a deep reverence for Benedictine Spirituality. He formerly served as Co-Chair of the Oblate Program and assisted Sister Mary Lou Dummer, Oblate Director, in many important ways. For the past two years, he has coordinated Saturday Oblate conversations by Zoom to keep Oblates connected during the pandemic. (Read more about that experience below.) Welcome, Travis!

Travis Salisbury, OblSB In His Own Words

I sought out Oblate formation in 2014. The spark for this journey came through witness. A volunteer of mine at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis went through a conversion that impressed me. It was gentle, calm, anchored. It caught my attention enough for me to ask her what happened to shift her presence so wonderfully.

Read the rest of Oblate News: Becoming an Oblate here.

ASSOCIATES NEWS: RENEWAL CEREMONY

Sister Karen Sames, OSB

We are planning some springtime service projects here at the Monastery. A time to do some deep cleaning in some of the public areas. Be assured we will do the projects with joyful hearts, lots of laughter, and have fun at the same time.



We are looking forward to our annual renewal ceremony for the Benedictine Associates on March 21. The Associates state that they want to renew for another year and tell the Sisters what they have experienced in the last year. It is a very moving ceremony. We are looking forward to welcoming a "new" Associate, though she has been working with Associates for many years serving on the committee and then chairing the committee, Pat Swanke. We welcome interested single Catholic woman to call if they have any questions about the program.

We are looking forward to attending the Community Retreat, hosted by Rebekah Taylor, a Benedictine Associate, on June 12-17, 2022. Fr. Matt Linn, SJ will direct the retreat. The topic is the Beatitudes.

We hold you, our family, friends, and community in prayer.

FEAST OF CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

Sister Paula Hagen, OSB

I love this feast day honoring the Conversion of St. Paul. When I made my first vows in the religious community and received the name Sister Paula from Archbishop Brady, I felt so honored. And I still do today.

The theology at the time, which changed at the Second Vatican Council, was that when a person made their vows to God that person received a second baptism, and all past sins were forgiven. After the Council we were allowed to return to our legal names, however I had already been published as Sister Paula and did not go back to the name of my childhood and youth.

I was born the eldest daughter in a family of seven children. I had an older brother, James, who was born 16 months earlier. We lived on a farm, so Jim was my best friend and playmate for years until he went to country school. We worked at our assigned chores and tasks with great enthusiasm so we could go back to our exciting games and events we planned together.

Read the rest of Feast of Conversion of St. Paul here.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY

Sister Lucia Schwickerath, OSB

"Did You Know....

Along with Saint Paul's Monastery's 75th anniversary celebration in 2023, the Benedictine Center will celebrate 40 years of service? The Center helps people develop a contemplative heart open to the message of the Gospel and of God's presence at the core of their lives. Housed within the monastery, it acts as a bridge between the monastic community and the wider world. Want to learn more about the Center? It will be featured in the upcoming 75th anniversary book out later this year. Watch this space in the coming months for more information."





FEBRUARY 2, 2022 | 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. FEBRUARY 5, 2022 | 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.





"Let all that you do be done in love."

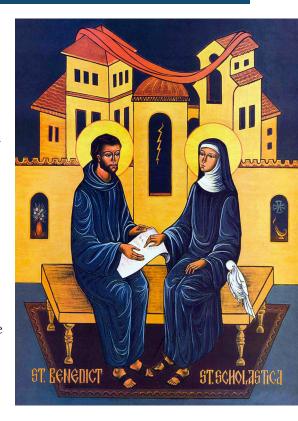
1 Corinthians 16: 14

CELEBRATING ST. SCHOLASTICA

As the Feast of St. Scholastica on February 10 draws near, we have many reasons to celebrate.

St. Scholastica was the twin sister of St. Benedict. Together the two are considered the foundress and founder of the Benedictine Order. In the *Dialogues of St. Gregory*, the story is told of how St. Scholastica cherished meeting with her brother, St. Benedict, so they could talk of spiritual matters. After dining one evening, as their day of prayer and discussion neared its end, St. Scholastica begged her brother to stay the night so they could continue "discoursing of the joys of heaven." St. Benedict refused, as he must not spend a night away from the monastery.

In tears, St. Scholastica lowered her head upon her hands and prayed. A thunderstorm suddenly began, one so fierce it prevented St. Benedict from leaving. Astonished, he asked St. Scholastica what she had done. She replied, "I asked a favor of you, and you refused it. I asked it of God, and God has granted it!" St. Gregory remarks that St. Scholastica's prayer was answered because her love overcame the law of St. Benedict's rule. May we all be inspired to hold love as the first rule of our lives.



St. Scholastica Honoree - 2022



The Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery established the St. Scholastica Honor in 2018, the year of our 70th Anniversary. This honor celebrates the virtues of St. Scholastica and is presented to someone exhibiting the qualities and dedication to the Benedictine way of life in support of St. Paul's Monastery.

We are honored to announce that this year's St. Scholastica Award recipient is Pat Swanke. Pat has volunteered her time and talents at St. Paul's Monastery for 14 years, first assisting Sister Agnes Trombley with the library organization project prior to the move to the new Monastery in 2009.

St. Scholastica Honor 2022 Live Stream

February 10, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Monastery Facebook Page

We invite you to join us on <u>Facebook</u> on February 10 at 4:30 p.m. for the live streaming of the St. Scholastica Honor presentation to Pat Swanke.

A recording of this live stream will also be published on our YouTube page following the presentation.

Thank you, Pat, for your many years of service at St. Paul's Monastery.



Mary Elizabeth Ilg, ObISB

Pat attended Ladysmith High School. Her father managed a sawmill, and her mother was a nurse anesthetist and Head of the Anesthesia Department at the local hospital. Pat's mother, (whom she is named after) converted to Catholicism when she was married. "My mother was Lutheran and brought a strong faith to our family," Pat recalls. Her father had an aunt who was a Franciscan nun.

For college, Pat received an appointment and attended the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado where she graduated with a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Electrical Engineering. She spent the next nine years serving in the United States Air Force at assignments in Ft. Walton Beach, FL; Colorado Springs, CO and Dayton, OH. During that time, she also attended night school and received a dual Master of Arts degree in Management/Space Systems Management from Webster University.

In 1990, Pat left the Air Force and stayed in Ohio to work for the Dayton Power and Light Company, a natural gas and electric utility serving west central Ohio. She spent 17 years working in various positions before retiring as President of their Power Production division. In 2004, her father died unexpectedly. This triggered a big life change where she gave herself a three-year ultimatum to figure things out. She had been attending weekend retreats at St. Walburg Monastery, driving an hour away to spend time in study and prayer. In 2007, Pat left DP&L to pursue a religious vocation with the Benedictine Sisters of St. Walburg Monastery in Covington, Kentucky.

Read the rest of St. Scholastica Honoree: Pat Swanke here.

The Groundhog's Invitation SISTER JACQUELINE LEITER, OSB

Let us get up then, at long last, for the Scriptures rouse us when they say: It is high time for us to arise from sleep. Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God and our ears of the voice from heaven...

RB Prol. 8-9

Groundhogs (Marmota monax), are large rodents native to North America. They are known for creating a complex burrow with multiple entrances, tunnels, and chambers for sleeping, storing food, and caring for their young. Groundhogs often create special winter burrows for hibernation, digging deeper below the frost line for a more stable temperature. They may spend from three to six months in hibernation.

We all know that on February 2, groundhogs everywhere emerge from sleeping in their winter burrows to predict the change of seasons. If it is sunny when they come out, groundhogs see their shadows, become frightened, and return to their burrow and continue hibernation. The beginning of springtime will be delayed for another six weeks. If it is a cloudy day, the groundhogs won't see their shadows and become frightened; thus springtime will come early.

Now, sleep is a good thing. Groundhogs need it, and so do humans. Sleep is necessary for our physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Psalm 4 tells us, I lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety. Psalm 127 also assures us that God provides for us and blesses us, even while we are sleeping!

The Groundhog's First Invitation: Are you getting enough sleep?

Waking up is also a good and necessary thing. For as good as sleep feels, and as wonderful as it is to stay in your warm little underground burrow (if you who are reading this are a groundhog) or linger under warm blankets in a soft bed (if you are a human), we have to wake up. Too much sleep can make us sluggish and complacent. We have to open our eyes and get up.

St. Benedict urges us to open our eyes to the light that comes from God and our ears to the voice from heaven. There must be something really important that God wants us to notice. Look around. Can you see someone who needs compassion and love? Can you see suffering or injustice in our world? Perhaps God wants you to wake up and see and love the world with God's eyes. Perhaps God wants you to make a difference. Can you hear God's voice, calling you to action, calling you to act with love?

The Groundhog's Second Invitation: Wake up! Open your eyes!

The Groundhog's Invitation Continued

SISTER JACQUELINE LEITER, OSB

Now as we know, on a sunny day the groundhog sees its shadow and becomes frightened. This is an all-to-familiar experience for humans, too. We all have shadows, that part of ourselves that we try to hide. We can easily become frightened of our shadow and run away from it. This is what the groundhog does. But even the groundhog will have to face its shadow when it eventually gets up and springtime does arrive.

For us humans, the shadow may seem big and scary. Avoiding the shadow stunts and prevents us from coming to a place of deeper love and healing. Facing the shadow requires us to grow in awareness of our

feelings and listen within. We are often afraid of what the shadow may reveal, yet the shadow is a wise teacher, inviting us out of fear into our true self. It helps to remember that God loves us even in our weakness, even with our shadow. We can abide within God's loving shadow, and know that God wants to bring us into a place of light and wholeness.

The Groundhog's Third Invitation: Don't be afraid of your shadow.



myounghwa

Artwork: "Pika in the Snow"

by Anna Lee



AROUND THE MONASTERY

Front to back: A special portait of Mary was on display at the chapel altar during the Feast of Immaculate Conception of Mary on December 8th; A family from the Church of St. John's of Little Canada provided musical entertainment to the Sisters during their New Year's Eve celebration; The Sisters gathered in Healthcare to celebrate Christmas Eve together; The Mission Advancement Team hosted an Employee Christmas Party on December 20th; The Sisters gathered in the Community Room on Christmas Eve for gift opening after dinner; The Sisters enjoyed reading through the Christmas cards the Monastery received from the community this past season.



In this month's Employee Spotlight, we are featuring our Marking and Communications Coordinator, Monika Westphaln. Monika joined St. Paul's Monastery and the Benedictine Center in June of 2021. Her job entails managing the Monastery and Benedictine Center's social media, newsletter, website, and other marketing items such as e-mails and fliers.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a BFA – Graphic Design, she was drawn to her position at the Monastery due to her love of design and marketing and thought this job would encompass both aspects. She was also drawn to the community the Sisters share, stating that she loves "being surrounded by people that think differently from me – I think it's good to push your mind to think another way than how you usually think." She goes on, saying, "I just love getting to know the Sisters. They are such passionate women and have so much love towards others – it's a blessing to work with them."

Monika was born in Charlotte, NC, but spent most of her life growing up in Green Bay, WI, where some of her family live today. She moved to Minneapolis, MN, with her parents in 2015 and started college at the University of Minnesota in 2017. Her parents are both immigrants, her father born in Ornskjoldsvik, Sweden, and her mother born and raised in Thunder Bay, Canada. She recently married her high school sweetheart, Josh, in October of 2021. They dated for a year and a half in high school before going their separate ways in college, then crashed (quite literally) into each again on Campus at the U of M and were married three years later! Together they reside in Inver Grove Heights, MN with their two cats, Benedict (sadly, not named after the famous Saint Benedict, but after Monika's favorite actor, Benedict Cumberbatch) and Denali (named after the mountain in Alaska where Josh proposed to Monika).

Outside of work, Monika enjoys spending time with her family, especially her two older sisters, Jackie and Mary, who she is very close to. They both reside in Green Bay, WI, and come to visit Minneapolis every few weeks. While they are here, they all like to do fun things like travel to a local spa or see a musical downtown. Monika thinks family is vital and states that she "couldn't imagine going through life without them."

She is happiest when she is snuggling on the couch with her husband and her two cats at home. She also enjoys playing piano and traveling; she is an avid traveler and highlights her trips to Sweden, Alaska, and Italy and looks forward to her future travel plans to California in 2022 and Japan in 2023. Monika also hopes to pursue post-baccalaureate coursework in digital marketing in the future.

We thank you, Monika, for your remarkable talents and skills you bring to St. Paul's Monastery and the Benedictine Center. Your excellent performance and dedication are an inspiration to all. We are truly blessed to have you as a part of our team!

Monika Westphaln





Monika with her husband, Josh, in Florence, Italy.



Monika's cats Benedict (black) and Denali (orange).



Left to right: Jackie, Monika, Mary, Grandma Flo, and Louise.



Monika & Josh were married October 7, 2021.

COMMEMORATIVE PAVERS SPRING 2022

Our Gathering Plaza is blessed with pavers engraved with messages from the Sisters, Oblates, relatives, and friends of St. Paul's Monastery. **Click on the link below** to print the form and create your own paver message to commemorate a special occasion or honor a Sister, your parents, other family members, or friends. The Sisters and those who visit the plaza remember your loved ones in prayer. Thank you and God Bless you!

4x8 Paver 8x8 Paver
Three lines of text, \$130 Six lines of text, \$260

Click here to pay online or print order form

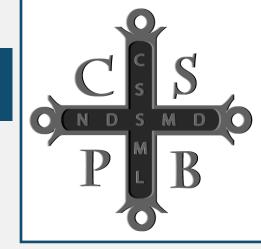


PRAYER SCHEDULE

When our doors are closed, we are grateful that you are praying with us in spirit!

"Nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God."

- Rule of Benedict, Chap. 43



SUNDAY

MORNING PRAYER: 10:00AM

EUCHARIST: 11:00AM

EVENING PRAYER: 5:00PM

MONDAY-SATURDAY

MORNING PRAYER: 8:00AM

MIDDAY PRAYER: 11:30AM

EVENING PRAYER: 5:00PM

For further information, call 651-777-8181 or visit us at <u>www.stpaulsmonastery.org</u>.

Community Prayer Ministry

Here to Serve You in Prayer

We Would Love to Hear From You

Let us, in fellowship, "lay (our) petitions before the Lord God with the utmost humility and sincere devotion" (Rule of Benedict, Chap. 20).

If you would like to send an online prayer request, the Monastery website has two different ways to do so. You can use the "Prayer Requests" link at the top of our home page. Or you can go to the "Ministries" tab and select "Community Prayer Ministry." Prayer requests go to all the Sisters who pray daily for these intentions at Evening Praise, during adoration, and during the Rosary. May God bless you and your loved ones.





We, the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery, are a community that live Gospel values as expressed in the Rule of St. Benedict. Through our Monastic life and wise stewardship, we nurture contemplative presence in service of Church and society.



St. Paul's Monastery
2675 Benet Road
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55109
651-777-8181
development@stpaulsmonastery.org

To connect with or support

Community ministries,

visit us at

stpaulsmonastery.org

Instagram | Facebook | LinkedIn