

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY NEWSLETTER

March 2022



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WELCOME LETTER

Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB

We, as Benedictines, look forward to the month of March for it gives us the opportunity to celebrate one of the two feast days set aside to remember St. Benedict. On March 21, Benedictines around the world celebrate the “transitus” of St. Benedict, the day Benedict entered eternity. “Transitus” in Latin means passing from one state to the next— death is not the end of life, but the transition into eternity with God. It is one of two days that St. Benedict is recognized on the Benedictine calendar. Since this feast day is always during Lent, another commemoration date was set when Pope Paul VI declared St. Benedict the Patron of Europe at the rededication of the Church at Monte Cassino on July 11, 1964. July 11 is the Feast of St. Benedict for the Universal Church. Only Mary, the mother of Jesus and John the Baptist are remembered with both their birthdays and their day of entry into heaven.



St. Gregory the Great writes about St. Benedict’s last days:

“Six days before he died, he gave orders for his tomb to be opened. Almost immediately, he was seized with a violent fever that rapidly wasted his remaining energy. Each day his condition grew worse until finally, on the sixth day, he had his disciples carry him into the chapel where he received the Body and Blood of our Lord to gain strength for his approaching end. Then, supporting his weakened body on the arms of his brethren, he stood with his hands raised to heaven and, as he prayed, breathed his last.” (St. Gregory the Great, Book Two of Dialogues, Chapter 37).

Those who have lost loved ones commemorate those they love on the anniversary of their passing by calling to mind memories of the beloved person. That is what we at St. Paul’s Monastery do along with all the other Benedictines around the world on March 21st. We remember the great wisdom of St. Benedict. Also, as a testament to how St. Benedict is still calling women to vowed religious life and lay ministry, we will return to an in-person committal prayer service for our Benedictine Associates. Benedictine Associates are single Catholic women who commit themselves each year to a deeper relationship of volunteer service at the Monastery. The spirit of Benedict continues to influence many men, women and youth in encouraging them to “Listen with the ear of their heart” in our seeking and finding God. A blessed feast day!



SISTERS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Sister Mary White, OSB

Sister Mary (Kathleen) White was born in Farmington, MN. She grew up in Lakeville in a household with two sisters and three brothers. Her family has owned and operated White Funeral Homes for over 100 years, which continues to this day with five locations in the Twin Cities southern metro area. Mary attended boarding school at Our Lady of Good Counsel Academy in Mankato for ninth and tenth grades and returned to Lakeville for her junior and senior years in high school.

Mary began to realize she might have a call to the religious life when she was in ninth grade at Good Counsel Academy. Her younger sister, Pat, also attended Catholic school in Lakeville and brought together a committee of girls who were exploring this idea. “They would be in a circle praying to Mary that they could become nuns.” (Pat later married and had six children.) “We were taught in our Catechism classes as kids that God calls you,” Mary said. “We were always asked to raise our hands if we thought God was calling us to the religious life. But I didn’t tell anyone when I was younger.”

When she was in the 11th grade, at the Easter Vigil, Mary felt a very strong call. “I knew I needed to do something about that,” Mary continued. “But I still wasn’t ready. So I went to St. Kate’s.”

These feelings continued while she was attending college in the early 1960’s. “Every year, at the beginning of the school year, I felt this call but I didn’t want to do it until after I graduated. But I knew that after I had a degree, I would be more independent and it would be harder for me to become a nun.” Sister Mary graduated from the College of Saint Catherine with a degree in Sociology in 1964. She then attended the University of Chicago where she received a Master’s degree in social work.



Pictured here is Sister Mary as a baby with her sister, Catherine, and father in 1942.

[Read the rest of Sister Mary’s Words of Wisdom here.](#)

13TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MOVE TO BENET ROAD

February 10, 2022, marked the 13th Feast of St. Scholastica that the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery celebrated in their Benet Road monastery home. In 1992, long before our 2009 moving day, our Community began the discernment process.

Sister Mary White shared, "As a Monastic Community we continually discern our real needs. This led us to years of discernment, which then led to the sale of much of our land and our Larpenteur Avenue Monastery." Sister Catherine Nehotte adds, "When I think back on the planning required, I am aware of the time that we took to discern the best ideas for a new Monastery from each Sister. If a Sister was not directly involved with the planning, she was asked to serve as a praying Sister. These ideas came together to create the Monastery that we have called 'home' for the past twelve years."



Many Sisters agree with these two remarks. The Monastery has become home over the past thirteen years. Sister Sharon Schiller recalls, "Our discernment went on for years. I remember so many different meetings and Community gatherings. We even met at the Maplewood City Hall. We looked at the practicalities—what was possible according to experts—and what we

dreamed of and prayed for. It resulted in our wonderful home on Benet Road." Sister Karen Sames called the discernment process "one of the best community builders we could have done."

The actual move on February 10, 2009, was a rainy day. Sister Linda Soler recalls, "The biggest challenge, of course, was moving our artwork in the rain." Another challenge was coordinating all the Sisters and who moved when. Then Prioress, Sister Carol Rennie, stayed at the Larpenteur Monastery to coordinate the move while then Sub-prioress, Catherine Schoenecker, welcomed the Sisters and coordinated the movers at the Benet Road Monastery. Sister Catherine adds, "It went smoothly but took a bit longer than expected."

13TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR MOVE TO BENET ROAD

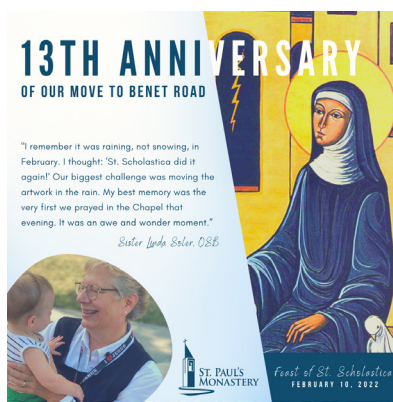
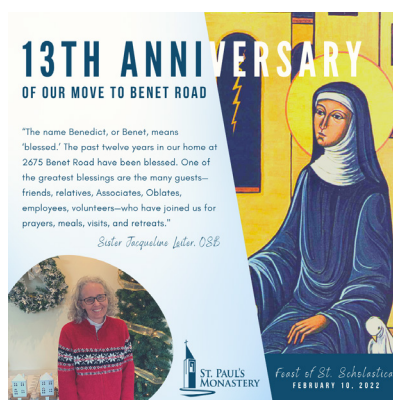
The Sisters shared many happy memories from the past thirteen years. One common theme was the chapel. “We asked our architect Mark Mednikov and artist Michael Pilla to incorporate feminine spirituality in the design of our chapel,” Sister Mary Lou Dummer explained. “Moreover, our Chapel design reflects our cycle of life and faith. From the baptismal font, we step in faith through the doors into a welcoming, enfolding space.” As they are able, the Healthcare Sisters also attend Community prayer times in the Chapel. Sister Lois Hauwiler adds, “It is so nice to be with all my Sisters in this beautiful place, that is also so homey.” In the Chapel, “We can we feel more of a Community during prayers.”



Sister Jacqueline Leiter added her thoughts on the past thirteen years: “The name Benedict, or Benet, means ‘blessed.’ The past twelve years in our home at 2675 Benet Road have been blessed. One of the greatest blessings are the many guests—friends, relatives, Associates, Oblates, volunteers—who have joined us for prayers, meals, and retreats. We have greatly missed your

presence in the past year. Know that even at a distance, you are a blessing to us, and we long for the day when you may again be with us in person” in our beautiful home on Benet Road.

[Click here to donate to St. Scholastica and our 13th Anniversary of our move to Benet Road.](#)
Thank you, and God bless!



ST. SCHOLASTICA HONOREE: PAT SWANKE

February 10 was the Feast Day of St. Scholastica. It is also the day that St. Paul's Monastery honors its St. Scholastica honoree. This year's honor was awarded to Pat Swanke. Pat came to the Monastery on the Feast Day and in a socially distanced, live-streamed ceremony spoke about her time as a volunteer 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.



*Top left: Pat Swanke receives the framed icon of St. Scholastica from Prioress Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB
Top Middle: The framed icon of St. Scholastica by a donated bouquet of flowers
Top Right: The evening of St. Scholastica Feast Day was sprinkled with winter snow
Bottom: The Community gathered from a distance to thank 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. In addition, since 2012, Pat has served as Chair of the Benedictine Associates Program, where single Catholic women receive formation classes in Benedictine spirituality and make a formal commitment to support the Monastery in various ways, such as prayer, hospitality, serving as lector or sacristan in the chapel, and visiting Sisters in the Health Care Center.

ST. SCHOLASTICA HONOREE: PAT SWANKE SPEECH



Pat Swanke was our St. Scholastica Honoree for 2022. In regard to this award, Pat Swanke said, “I accept this award in honor of all of you, all the Sisters of St. Paul’s Monastery, past and present, who have not only made a life-changing impact on my life, but literally thousands of lives that you have touched in almost over 75 years you have been in the Twin Cities.”

She went on saying, “I’m incredibly grateful for the opportunities that have been presented to me to walk with you and grow in my Benedictine Spirituality through your teaching and your witness.”

Congratulations, Pat, and thank you for your incredible love and devotion to the Sisters of St. Benedict!

[Watch the Sisters of St. Benedict and Pat Swanke on St. Scholastica Feast Day here.](#)

CATHOLIC SISTERS WEEK: MARCH 8-14



CATHOLIC
SISTERS WEEK

Celebrating Traditions Changing the World

Catholic
Sisters
Week

March 8-14, 2022



On the week of March 8-14, we acknowledge Catholic Sisters Week. This is a celebration of the lives and legacies of Catholic Sisters that occurs every year from March 8-14 as part of National Women’s History Month. To celebrate this year, we will be sharing quotes daily from the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul’s Monastery about life as a woman religious—and the challenges and joys they have experienced in the past year.

Stay tuned on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for these posts!



CATHOLIC
SISTERS WEEK



CWR | COMMUNICATORS
FOR WOMEN RELIGIOUS
Advancing the Mission of Catholic Sisters

MAPLE TREE CHILDCARE CENTER

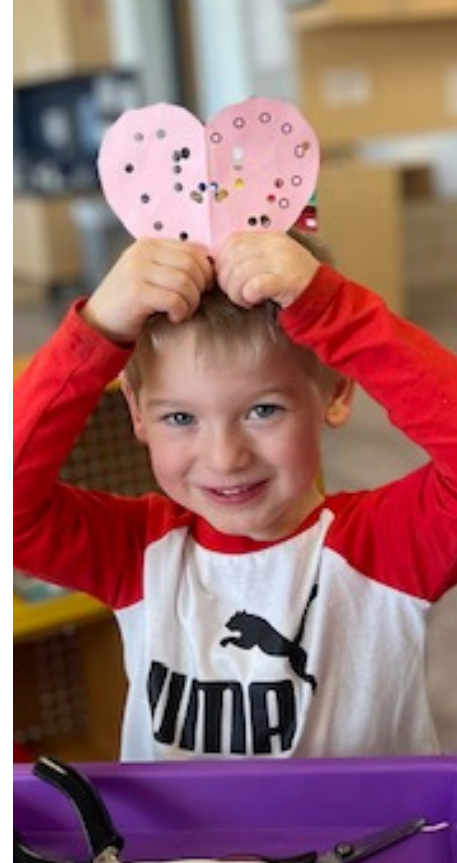
Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



**Maple Tree
Childcare Center**

We are feeling the love at Maple Tree this February!

Our curriculum was filled with fun art projects and activities promoting friendship, love, and cooperation. In this picture, Will displays a special Valentine heart that he created.



Oblates

MY PANDEMIC PSALM

Anne Rodenberg, ObISB

Anne Rodenberg, Oblate to St. Paul's Monastery, shares with us a personal prayer she wrote called "My Pandemic Psalm":

Oh God, you give me what I need when I need it.

Though I may wonder and get

angry

scared

indignant

confused and

frustrated,

Your good plan eventually reveals itself.

In these times, You give so many unexpected gifts.

New, renewed, and deepened friendships.

Financial security, at last.

Chickens to raise and love, bringing mindful meditation each time I feed them and clean the coop. Just watching them reminds me of the sacredness of all life and my deep maternal gifts of love and compassion.

[Read more of Anne Rodenberg's prayer here.](#)



MARY'S HOPE OUR HOPE

Travis Salisbury, ObISB



Every year, on March 25—exactly nine months to the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus—the Christian Tradition joyously celebrates Mary’s faith, trust, and hope through the Solemnity of the Annunciation. As the feast approaches, we pause to reflect on our own faith, trust, and hope at the Monastery through the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

I’ve often pictured Mary at the Annunciation during *lectio divina*. Interrupted in her prayers, this reflective young woman quietly spoke to the Angel and pledged her absolute trust in God and utters some of the most beautiful—and revolutionary—words of Scripture.

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant (Luke 1:46-47).*

How would I have responded to the Lord had I found myself in her place? How do I embrace hope? Growing up, my family would shut off the television for Lent. We would observe the Friday discipline of abstaining from meat and participate in Stations of the Cross. I have fond memories of Lent, not necessarily as a time deprived of things but as a dedicated time to focus on the things that matter, the moments that cultivate hope. The ancient disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are strong guideposts on our Lenten journey.

How can the Monastery cultivate moments of hope for you? As these winter days melt into the beauty of Spring, consider arranging time to come home to the Monastery. Join the Sisters for prayer and experience the beauty of our new prayer books, stay an afternoon or overnight at the Benedictine Center, come walk the grounds, and make time for yourself with a spiritual director.

Lent, like the Christmas season, creates space for us to be mindful of our stewardship and the causes we support financially. We hope that the Monastery is a priority in your almsgiving this Lent.

[Read more of Travis Salisbury’s article here.](#)



“Virgin Mary” standing on the grounds of St. Paul’s Monastery. Picture taken December 2021.

LENT IS AROUND THE CORNER

Karin Barrett, Liturgy Director



Lent calls us to repent or turn from all that obscures God's life within us, and to believe in and turn toward the Good News of the Gospel. Lent calls us to life, to become more in touch with God's plan for us and for the wider community through practices which are meant to focus our attention on God's presence. Lenten fasting, prayer, and almsgiving provide a sustained opportunity during Lent for us to grow closer to God, to allow God to work in us, and to recognize our own need for connection to each other.

Fasting is not simply "giving up" something, but is a practical way of renunciation. Underlying fasting is a desire to reject something that has been or is perceived to be unhealthy or counter-productive... Example: Renounce watching TV because it does not promote health or relationship or is getting in the way of creativity. *What would you renounce this Lent?*

Prayer should always help us to focus on God and create an opening for God's creative work in us. During Lent, our communal Eucharistic prayer feels different, simpler, more austere and mirrors our fasting. To emphasize the prayerful quality of this season, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal calls for music at Eucharist to be used "with moderation that is consistent with the season's character"

and during Lent to be used judiciously to "support the singing" of the assembly (GIRM par. #313). Silence is especially valued during Lent, especially at liturgy, as that connection to God where an exchange between us and God happens, thus we will use silence intentionally during our Eucharistic celebrations. On Sundays of Lent, we will forego preludes, closing songs and postludes. Prayer leaders at Liturgy of the Hours are invited to extend the silent prayer between psalms. Excerpts from the Rule of Benedict will be read by the reader at close of evening prayer each day. Readers and leaders are invited to ponder what precedes and follows the reading, allowing space for silence. As we do our *statio* bows for Vigils during Lent...let us focus on the quietness of heart during this reverent and intentional prayer.



Our Father
Jen Norton (2014)

[Read more of Karin Barrett's article here.](#)

75TH ANNIVERSARY: LISTENING WITH THE EAR OF THE HEART

Sister Lucia Schwickerath, OSB



Do you know what it means to be a Benedictine Oblate? Oblates are men and women with a desire for greater spiritual growth according to the Christian ideals and values set forth in the Rule of Benedict. They value and support one another in community while bringing Christ and the spirit of monasticism into their families, places of work, and in civic and social activities. The Benedictine oblate program has grown and flourished during the past 25 years, continuing to welcome new members.

Want to learn more about how to thrive spiritually through a lay response to Benedictine values? Be inspired as you read more in the upcoming 75th anniversary book available later this year.

ASSOCIATES NEWS: THE FEAST OF ST. BENEDICT

Sister Karen Sames, OSB

We are looking forward to March 21, 2022, The Feast of St. Benedict, when the Benedictine Associates will have their initial and renewal commitment ceremony at Evening Prayer. We hope to have it in person, but we are ready just in case it may have to be virtual. (That's like saying in Minnesota, "I'll be there, weather permitting!")

We have four women who wish to participate in the ceremony: Linda Anderson, Mary Lou Kozmik, Rebekah Taylor, and Pat Swanke. Linda, Mary Lou, and Rebekah will be renewing their commitment, while Pat will make her initial commitment. It is a simple and meaningful ritual that takes place during Evening Prayer. Each Associate will make a statement about what it means to them to be a Benedictine Associate and how it has affected them during the last year. We have started our winter formation experience, led by Rebekah Taylor. Rebekah will be teaching on the connections between Benedictine Spirituality and major figures in the Old Testament. Topics will include Moses and Desert Spirituality; Samuel, Elijah and Solitude; Hannah, Miriam and Communal Praise; Joseph and the Tools for Good Works.

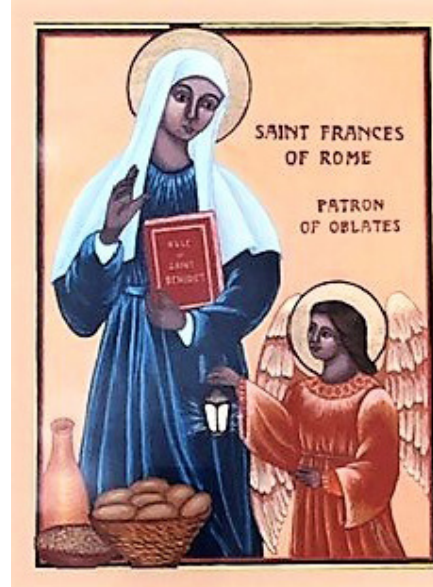
If you are interested in the Benedictine Associate Program, please contact Sister Karen Sames at 651-777-8181 or Pat Swanke at 651-777-8181.



INVITATION OF FRANCES OF ROME

Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB

Frances was born to a noble family in Rome in 1384. She was quiet and devoted to God, and she also had a strong will. From an early age, she wanted to become a nun, but her parents arranged a marriage for her to the son of another wealthy family. At first, Frances resisted, but she eventually realized that God was indeed calling her to be a wife and mother. Her husband, Lorenzo, was a good man and they loved and cared for each other.



Frances found a soul friend in her sister-in-law, Vannoza. Vannoza was joyful and devoted to God, and she too wanted a life of prayer and service. The two women began praying and going to mass together and venturing out onto the streets of Rome to help the poor, serve in hospitals, and visit prisons. This was improper behavior for young noblewomen, and led to gossip in the town and criticism from their mother-in-law. In spite of the pressure, Frances and Vannoza continued their service to the poor. Lorenzo supported his wife's efforts.

It was a troubled time of war, famine, and plague in Rome. For a time, Lorenzo was exiled and the family lost much of their wealth. They lost two of their three children to plague. Frances opened their home as a hospital and used everything she had to provide for the needs of the poor, and then she went out begging, door to door.

God granted Frances a special grace to see and be aware of the presence of her guardian angel with her at all times. The angel accompanied her, carrying a lantern to light the way and protect her.

In 1425, Frances and nine other women made oblation with the Olivetan Benedictine Monastery of Santa Maria Nova. As Oblates, the women did not make formal vows, but offered themselves to God in prayer and service to the poor while they continued living with and caring for their families. In 1433, Frances founded a monastery for Oblates who wished to live common life and more easily support each other in prayer and their work of service. Frances herself continued living in her home and caring for her husband until his death in 1436, when she joined the Oblates at the monastery.

Nearly four hundred years later, St. Frances's Oblates continue to serve God through a life of prayer and service. Over time, their ministries have changed. They have cared for the sick, educated girls, and worked to support the needs of missions. After World War I, they helped prisoners of war contact and reunite with their families. Today, Frances's service to the poor continues through the Oblates as they show hospitality by providing a home to university students and preparing children for first Eucharist. St. Frances of Rome is recognized as the patron saint of Benedictine Oblates.

Invitations of Frances of Rome

Frances found support for her work in her husband, Lorenzo, and her sister-in-law, Vannoza. Reflect on and remember your soul friends, the people who help you on your journey.

Frances listened to God's call and served God in her family relationships and also by reaching out in service to the poor. Reflect on the ways in which God calls you to serve.

Frances was aware of the presence of her guardian angel guiding and protecting her. Unlike Frances, Most of us can't see a guardian angel with lantern for us to light our way. Even so, we may have experienced unseen guidance and protection. We can always pray and ask God for guidance and protection, and remember that just because we can't see something with our eyes, it doesn't mean that it's not there!



*Happy
St. Patrick's Day!*

May the luck of the Irish be with you
all year long.

SEEING GOD VIRTUAL EXHIBIT 2022

Barb Bent

Lisa Biere

Julie Deneen

Ron Duffy

John Ilg

Cyndi Kaye Meier

Ilene Mojsilov

Lynette Black

Mark Cosimini

Gail Diez

Cynthia Fleury

Mimi Goodwin

Suzanne Runte

Susan Stein

David Beddow

Ivy Cavegn

Rita Corrigan

Robert Fleming

Sheila Klein

Sister Jacqueline Leiter

Mary Walchuk

Patricia Cochran

Ron Felt

Theresa Michels

Marge Moody

Ilze Strobela

Leanne Hanson

Susan Hensel

Michels Warren

Casey Murano

Keith Spaulding

Welcome to St. Paul's Monastery Art Gallery and our annual Seeing God Exhibit! In this short video, we will walk you through the exhibit and announce this year's juried exhibition winners and honorable mentions. Congratulations to everyone, and thank you for participating!

[Watch the video here.](#)

Juried Exhibition Winners:

1st Place: Barb Bent | Seed Pod

2nd Place: Susan Hensel | Visionary Threshold

3rd Place: Marjorie Moodie | Prayer

Honorable Mentions (Alphabetical)

David Beddow

Mark Cosimini

Ron Duffy

Sister Jacqueline Leiter

Cyndi Kaye Meier

Ilene Mojsilov

WE'RE HIRING! PART-TIME COOK

St. Paul's Monastery is looking for a part-time cook to prepare a wide variety of entrees, sides, soups, and treats from scratch. We don't open enormous bags of institutional food or anything from giant cans here. We pride ourselves in home style cooking with fresh, uncomplicated ingredients. Weekends included.

If you are interested in this position, send your cover letter and resume to our Human Resources Manager at humanresources@stpaulsmonastery.org.

[Learn more about this position here.](#)



ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY 2021 CHRISTMAS VIDEO

St. Paul's Monastery wishes you light, hope, memory, and laughter with the culmination of this extended Christmas season with a video of our beloved Sisters. Enjoy!

[Watch the video here.](#)



CHRISTMAS AT THE MONASTERY ONLINE SURVEY

**HELP US
IMPROVE!**



Thank you to all who participated in our 14th annual Christmas at the Monastery fundraiser event! This event is our Community's largest event, and we are so grateful for your support over the years.

We would love to hear your opinions in this short survey of this event that took place from December 6-12, 2021. Your responses will inform St. Paul's Monastery's ongoing work to serve the community. Thank you for taking part in our survey!

[Take the survey here.](#)



AROUND THE MONASTERY

From top to bottom: Sister Paula Hagen, OSB, standing proudly in front of the Chapel floral display; A peek at the Valentine's Day themed dining room centerpieces by Sister Louise Inhofer, OSB; Sister Linda Soler, OSB, and Archbishop Bernard Hebda at the Miriam Dinner on February 1; Sister Karen Sames, OSB, looking beautiful after a lovely haircut; Welcoming our new Mission Advancement Director, Travis Salisbury, who works remotely from Seattle, WA; Pat Swanke, the 2022 Saint Scholastica Awardee, with Prioress Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB, holding the Scholastica Icon awarded to her on on February 10th.

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

Three lines of text, \$130

8x8 Paver

Six lines of text, \$260

[Click here to pay online or
print order form](#)

Commemorative Pavers Spring 2022

Honoring Those Who Light Our Way

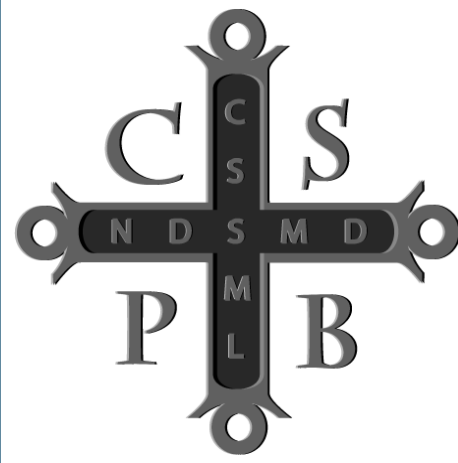
Spring 2022 Installation
Ordering Deadline April 1



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

EUCCHARIST: 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 www.stpaulsmonastery.org.*

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.





MISSION STATEMENT

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.



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development@stpaulsmonastery.org

To connect with or support
Community ministries,
visit us at
stpaulsmonastery.org
[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#)