ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY REWSLETTER



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WELCOME LETTER

Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB

November is the time that we offer thanks for all the blessings of life.

I happened upon this blessing when I was in college studying for final tests at around 1:00am. It was in a little prayer booklet that I received from my mother. Jesus obviously

had worse things to deal with than finals and it was truly a moment of grace for me to discover this.

The final line is a line of thanksgiving: Thank you, Jesus! A blessed Thanksgiving to everyone!

To Be Human

Jesus, I'm glad that you know what it is like to be human.

I'm glad that you came as a helpless infant and grew just as we do.

I'm glad Jesus, that you didn't skip anything.

You knew the full range of human emotions.

You knew the joy of love, comradeship and the close

communion of very special friends.

You knew tears of bereavement.

You knew physical pain and mental anguish.

Yes Jesus, I'm glad that you chose not to skip anything.

It makes it easier to really know you.

Help me to remember when the shadows of my own Gethsemane close in

And the cross is just ahead, that you are only a heartbeat away and that you care...

Because you know what it's like to be truly human.

Thank you, Jesus!

Amen.





SISTERS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB









Interviewed & Written by Gwen Odney, ObISB

"Weren't you thinking of Oblate formation this fall?" It was Sister Jacqueline who quietly reminded me in late summer, 2015, that I had mentioned to her my interest in becoming an Oblate. Formation was starting soon, and I welcomed the gentle push. She and I had become collegial friends, both being teachers in Saint Paul Schools, when I came for retreats at the Monastery. I often marveled at her dedication to both her career as a teacher as well as to life as a Benedictine Sister.

Sister Jackie's childhood was lived mostly right here in Maplewood, sharing it with a twin sister Stacy and brother Doug, and her mother and father. She remembers being drawn to God at an early age. Although she attended a public elementary school, during recess she would go behind a tree on the playground and pray, sing, and make up her own songs. Family camp during those years was very powerful for her. She also fondly remembers attending YMCA Camp Du Nord in Ely, Minnesota, and participating in activities, especially singing religious music from the camp songbook.

The Bible became an important book for her and her siblings as kids. Their version was more a "graphic novel" comic book version of the Bible in six kid-pleasing volumes which they read voraciously until the pages tattered. That made Bible classes at Hill-Murray School a snap for them! Jacqueline went on to St. Olaf for undergraduate work in Spanish and Hispanic Studies with a double major in Religion. The religious groups, Bible study, and Taizé prayer on campus enriched her already fertile faith life.

Her first job was as an ESL (English as Second Language) teacher in small Howard Lake/Waverly schools. Her voice softened as she spoke of a Mexican farm worker family with three girls in her ESL class, and how out of place they felt. "I know I made a difference in their lives," she said, "helping them to adjust." The family moved back to Mexico after a year and Jackie moved on to Immaculate Conception School in Columbia Heights. A parent in the school invited Jackie to Oblate Sunday at St. Paul's Monastery. Jackie, the granddaughter of Oblates, was happy to attend, assuming the parent would be there to greet her. Instead, it was Sister Carol Rennie from the Monastery, and her becoming an Oblate was another step on her way to formation as a Benedictine Sister. "I wanted to seek God with others in Community," she said, as well as still making a difference for the children she lovingly teaches, currently in a virtual first grade.

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



MISSION ADVANCEMENT NEWS & UPDATES

Travis Salisbury, Director of Mission Advancement

Henri Nouwen's writing has long been a spiritual companion to me. He once said "From beginning to end, fundraising as ministry is grounded in prayer and undertaken in gratitude. Prayer is the radical starting point of fundraising because in prayer we slowly experience a reorientation of all our thoughts and feelings about ourselves and others."

I find myself now in my tenth month as your Director of Mission Advancement serving the mission and ministries of the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery in partnership with all our benefactors and supporters. There has been quite a lot to learn and put into place, but in all of it I find myself returning several times a day in prayers of gratitude for each of you. Together, so much good happens here at the Monastery and the Benedictine Center. Thank you for journeying with our Sisters and empowering their mission.

How *are* you doing? Truly. How is your faith and your relationship with God? How is your relationship to this sacred place and our Sisters?

Each day we're faced with another news story that holds more desolation than consolation. Anxiety about the future seems to be the rule rather than the exception. How are we, followers of the Benedictine way of life, to be in this world? How are we to respond?

Prayer truly is the radical starting point. St. Benedict instructs us that nothing is to be preferred to Christ, and Benedict shows us so clearly how to live this radical way of Christ through his holy Rule, most especially with the very first word: Obsculta. Listen. Listen with the ear of your heart to the Master's instruction.

The Monastery and the Benedictine Center exist to provide a contemplative presence in service to the Church and to the world, to help us (as Nouwen reflects) to "slowly experience a reorientation of all our thoughts and feelings about ourselves and others."

I hope you'll join us in our commitment to providing a place of prayer, quiet, reflection, and discernment. The Sisters pray three times each day for you and for the needs of our world. Join your voice to the song of our Sisters in our chapel (call 651-777-8181 to arrange your visit). The Benedictine Center is here for you. Contact the office (651-777-7251) to make a stay of a day or set of days. Gift yourself time to sit with God and listen for God's will in your life.

And, please let the Sisters pray for your intentions. Our prayer ministry can be reached either through front desk at 651-777-8181 or on our website at www.stpaulsmonastery.org/ministries/prayer-requests.

May the God of all consolation be with you today! St. Benedict and St Scholastica: pray for us!



A Day of Remembrance ALL SOULS' DAY

On All Souls' Day, St. Paul's Monastery commemorates those Sisters we have lost in the past year. Please remember the Sisters of St. Benedict in your prayers.

In the past year, we have said goodbye to the following Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery.



Sister Agnes Trombley

December 18, 2021



Sister Benita Gerold

January 18, 2022



Sister Rosemary Rader

June 29, 2022



Sister Mary Claire Inhofer

September 22, 2022

Your loved ones, too, are remembered in the Monastery's daily prayer this November: may perpetual light shine upon all our deceased loved ones.

We are grateful for your generous support and friendship as we continue to extend our ministry.



"That in all things God may be glorified."

THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT, CH. 57

ONLINE SILENT AUCTION December 3-11

We have a wonderful selection of themed baskets, gifts, and experiences for this year's Silent Auction!

The Auction goes live online December 3!

MASS & EVENING PRAYER

Sunday, December 4
Second Sunday of Advent

Livestreamed Mass at 11:00am and Evening Prayer at 5:00pm at St. Paul's Monastery. Watch this on our Facebook Live page here:

VIRTUAL ADVENT RETREAT WITH FATHER MICHAEL JONCAS

Saturday, December 3, at 9:00am

Holy Desires: Advent Insights into Pope Francis' Desiderio Desideravi

ST. NICHOLAS DAY

Tuesday, December 6
4:30pm Livestream of a visit by
St. Nicholas to the Sisters

Help us "fill the shoes" of our Sisters with a donation on this Giving Tuesday fundraising event.

MASS & EVENING PRAYER

Sunday, December 8 Immaculate Conception

Livestreamed Mass at 11:00am and Evening Prayer at 5:00pm at St. Paul's Monastery. Watch this on our Facebook Live page here:

"CELEBRATE THE SEASON" EVENT

Saturday, December 10, 6:00-7:30pm

Join the Sisters for a festive wine and cheese fundraiser at the Monastery.

Individual Tickets: \$50

MAPLETREE CHILDCARE CENTER

Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center





On Thursday, October 6, we had special guests for our Community Helpers Week. Maplewood police officers and firefighters came to visit the children.

The officers allowed the children to get into the police car, beep the horn, and experience sitting



in the backseat. The children were shown various types of gear that is

used in protecting our community. Our guests left each child with a police badge, a fire hat, and a Pop-It bracelet. We thank them for their time and their kindness to our little ones!

BENEDICTINE CENTER SCHOOL OF DISCERNMENT

Friday, November 11 at 1:00pm - Sunday, November 13 at 1:00pm

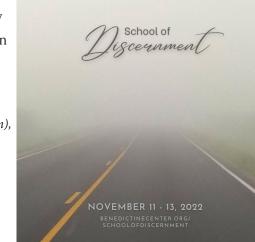
With Kathleen Cahalan and members of the Benedictine Center Spiritual Direction Team

The School of Discernment is an opportunity to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit under the guidance of skilled teachers and listeners and with the benefit of wisdom from the monastic tradition—now offered in hybrid format: both in-person and online simultaneously. The framework includes a daily rhythm of prayer with the monastic community, sessions on the practice of discernment, reflection questions for quiet time, and one-on-one meetings. No one will be obligated to share publicly about the particulars of their own

stories, but each will have the opportunity to do so as they choose. Spiritual directors will be available to assist with the process of discernment and any questions and insights as they arise. This event will take place in real time in hybrid format, both in-person and via Zoom.

Prices: Single in-person – \$250.00; Online via Zoom – \$100.00 In-person costs are per person and include meals. If you will be arriving early for lunch (12:00pm), please select "Friday Lunch" from the Optional Items during registration.

Register by phone at 651-777-7251 or online at www.benedictinecenter.org.





A REFLECTION FROM THE ANNUAL OBLATE RETREAT: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Gwen Odney, ObISB

Thank you, Jessie Bazan, for assuring us that we were not meant to multitask, among other stress relievers! Jessie, an Oblate from St. Ben's, was the leader of our annual Oblate Retreat on Saturday, September 24. She not only

gave us permission to slow down and breathe more often but gave us reasons why this would be good for us AND ideas (Benedictine!) to help us do it!

Referencing an intriguing book by Johann Hari, Stolen Focus, she highlighted our lack of focus (just 65 seconds at a time-max!) which is not just a personal issue, but one embedded in our systemic life as well. Our response? Take a walk, move somewhere and do some "mind wandering" for 15 minutes. Seek "monastic" silence. We were gifted with fifteen minutes to do as we wished—in silence. I took a walk, without a dog, which really made it my walk, my silence, my mind wandering. It was lovely.

She then continued with other issues stealing our focus: physical and mental exhaustion; speed and switching (the input of media, interruptions, the amount of screen time our brains are absorbing—3 hours, 15 minutes a day); and the lack of sleep negating bodily repair and refreshment, putting our body in "emergency mode." We are not wired to multi-task, even though we think we are and pride ourselves on it. We are not able to process too much information coming in at one time! She quoted, "Slowness nurtures attention, speed shatters it." Slow down to a monastic pace (Benedictine) when you are able, she said, and counter the speed. A good reminder to keep life in (Benedictine) balance: pray, work, study, with rest figured in to facilitate them. Of course, it is pretty much built into our culture of "capitalism" that we are made to accomplish. But it is in community where we find our grounding and priorities. As we finished our retreat, I felt very connected to our community and determined yet again to find the balance in my life that facilitates spiritual growth AND personal accomplishment.

Easier said than done, of course. I have realized that during the pandemic and even for part of this past summer, things did slow down, and I did too. I became a little lethargic with too much time on my hands. So as summer ended and fall loomed, I picked up the pace quite a bit, in all areas of life, and pretty soon I was feeling stretched, overwhelmed, and not excited about what I was doing!

Read the rest of Gwen Odney's article here.



THANKSGIVING **TRADITIONS**

Karen Fleming, ObISB

The first Harvest in the New World, also called Thanksgiving, was in October of 1621. It was attended by 90 Wampanoag people and 53 Pilgrims and lasted three days. The Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic Ocean to seek religious freedom in the New World. The arrival of the Pilgrims

was actually one year before but due to the 66-day, cross-Atlantic trip, they were weak, starving and many were ill.

For several years after the Pilgrims arrived, their Wampanoag neighbors taught them how to hunt local game, gather shellfish, and grow corn, beans, and squash. There are only two first-hand written accounts of the feast, so very little is actually known.

My family used to go to New Prague, Minnesota, each October for the celebration of Harvest, what the Czechs there call "Dozinky." We set up our chairs very early to guarantee a good spot to watch the Parade. The streets are lined with vendors selling brats, kolaches, and lovely items like jewelry and dolls imported from the Czech Republic.

Read more of Karen Fleming's article here.

OVETOTHE MAX DAY: NOVEMBER 17, 2022



Donate to St. Paul's Monastery this November, the month of GiveMN. GiveMN ignites generosity and grows giving. Using creative ideas and innovative technology, GiveMN connects more people with more causes than ever before. GiveMN envisions an unparalleled state of giving—a Minnesota where innovative technology and creative ideas help each person's generosity soar to its full potential.

Give to the Max donations to the Monastery this year benefit a renovation of the Healthcare Kitchen. Thank you for your support and devotion to St. Paul's Monastery!

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY'S ART GALLERY: AT THE EDGES OF WILDERNESS

St. Paul's Monastery's Art Gallery is soon featuring art by Peg Carlson-Hoffman and Chuck Hoffman—artists, peacemakers, and community builders. This art exhibit will be installed on **November 7.** Learn more about these artists on their website.

Nature is a sacred text. The cycles of the seasons offer deep wisdom, and we honor the earth as our original sacred space. We live in what we might call an age of forgetting. We have forgotten who we are in relation to everything else: the creatures, the plants, the mountains, the forests, the oceans, one another, and even ourselves. In this series of paintings, we explore boundary as the edge or margin where things connect and find new beginnings. While our paintings are a study of edges, boundaries, and contrasts coming together, our continuing narrative inspiration is about bearing tension. The boundaries and edges are not divisions but the places that hold tension and allow something new to rise from the struggle. For us, tension is a place where we sense the breath of Spirit moving and creating within and through each of us. As our paintings progressed, we realized that part of what we were painting was the aftermath of the forest fire we experienced in 2015. The edges of the Wolverine fire contained immense destructive power, but also set the table for the rebirthing of the forest and the beauty that followed. Living on this wilderness boundary, and in that tension, we have borne witness to the earth's resurrection.

Click here to be directed to our Art Gallery page.

75th Anniversary of St. Paul's Monastery

Sister Lucia Schwickerath, OSB



A Perfect Holiday Gift

The holidays are quickly approaching! Need a great gift idea for friends and family? Walking Monastery Way, Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of St. Paul's Monastery, would be a thoughtful gift and a great addition to anyone's library. Available now on Amazon.com, the book is filled with stories and photos from the past 25 years, along with wonderful memories and hopeful insights into the future. A variety of contributors provide a glimpse into the prayerful peace and grace that is found at the monastery. Be sure to put this gift idea on your list for those you love.

BENEDICTINE CARE WELLNESS PROGRAM



In <u>Benedictine CARE</u>, the focus is on what we can add to our plates for health vs focusing on restriction. The upcoming holiday season provides a wonderful time to practice this gentle approach.

Focus on nourishing foods to ADD and enjoy alongside traditional favorites like:

- In-season fruits like pomegranate, clementines, apples and pears
- Frozen fruits, like berries and sweet cherries, slightly warmed, and drizzled with cream
- High-fiber flax crackers, bean dips and hummus, popcorn, and roasted chickpeas
- Big batches of veggie soups for quick meals or sides

Here's the remarkable thing that happens when you shift your energy to things to add to your plate versus take away: you start to naturally displace those very things you want to reduce.

When you add fiber and water-rich leafy and tender veggies to your plate, their very purpose is to help add lots of volume to your stomach, naturally helping you to fill up faster. When you add lean proteins and healthy fats, you provide the nutrients needed to release chemicals in your body that tell your brain you've had enough to eat, naturally helping you eat less processed carbohydrates and sugar.

This is where long-term change happens. In the small, consistent, daily shifts we make in our daily, weekly, and monthly choices. There really is no other place change can happen. And the holidays are the perfect time to start practicing.

Sign up for the CARE Newsletter to receive more holiday tips, recipes, and wellness reflections.

SIGN UP FOR CARE NEWSLETTER



THE PSALMIST'S INVITATION: GIVE THANKS

Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB

The psalms are poems and songs used in liturgical and personal prayer in ancient Israel and today. They were written by a variety of people; some are attributed to specific authors such as David or Moses, and others are by unknown psalmists. The psalms form the heart of the Liturgy of the Hours and Benedictine prayer life. They teach us about who God is and help us to praise, lament, offer our repentance, and give thanks to God.

Psalm 136 is a particularly special and beautiful psalm which helps us to remember God's goodness and steadfast love and give thanks. The unnamed psalmist reflects back on God's goodness, reaching back to the creation of the world and God's presence and action in the history of Israel. The psalmist not only looks back at God helping our ancestors, but also at God's steadfast love today in our lives, remembering God helping us and rescuing us. The psalm repeats the refrain "God's steadfast love endures forever" 26 times, after each time in which the psalmist recalled something God has done and is doing in the world, in our history, and in our lives. Four times the psalmist calls on us to "Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good." Even when not explicitly stated, it is safe to assume that thankfulness is intended in all 26 verses, every time in which we remember God's steadfast love!

The Psalmist's invitation: Write your personal psalm of gratitude

Each of us can use the psalm as a model for our own prayer of gratitude as we reflect on and remember events in our past and in the present. In anticipation of celebrating our 75th Anniversary, at the Monastery we have been reflecting on our founding in 1948 and on our shared life in community these past years, and on God's steadfast love in guiding us in the present and into the future.

Reflect back on your life. You may wish to think about and remember events from your childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and your life today, or even your family history before you were born. Consider how God was present in these events. Try using Psalm 136 as a model. Begin and end your psalm giving thanks, and after each that event you name, repeat the refrain about God's steadfast love enduring forever:

Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good, God's steadfast love endures forever:

Who . . . (tell what God did here!)
God's steadfast love endures forever.



Movember * Birthdays



SISTER LUCIA SCHWICKERATH November 6



SISTERS
ANDRINE & ANDRIETTE
SCHOMMER

November 29







This month's Employee Spotlight article features our new Liturgist, Stephen Kasperick-Postellon, or Steve, who joined St. Paul's Monastery in August 2022, where he started working remotely and part-time from Michigan, until he arrived in-person in Minnesota towards the end of September 2022. Steve's role as a liturgist entails helping all who worship at St. Paul's Monastery to grow as disciples of Christ through sung and musical prayer. Most visibly, this means accompanying for the Liturgy of the Hours and for the Eucharist, but also includes behind-the-scenes work such as preparing worship aids, ordering liturgical supplies, and becoming ever more familiar with the Community's traditions and patterns of prayer.

Steve grew up going to Catholic grade and high school in the Detroit, Michigan area and gained his undergraduate in Mathematics from Oberlin College in Oberlin, OH. While retrieving his undergraduate degree, Steve discovered his true passion for liturgical musical performance as part of the small campus Newman community and the parish in town. He recently became the inaugural graduate of the Master of Arts in Music and Liturgy from Alverno College in Milwaukee, WI. Alverno was founded by the School Sisters of St. Francis, a community with a rich history of involvement in liturgical music.

Steve grew up as the oldest of two children, and his sister currently lives with her husband in suburban Chicago area. He has been married to his spouse, Teresa, for 22 years and they are parents to Nathaniel, who is currently in his second semester to Lake Superior State University located in the upper peninsula region of Michigan. His father passed away in 2020, just days after he and Steve's mother celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary and became lay Associates of the Grand Rapids Dominican Sisters. Steve and his spouse, Teresa, have been Oblates of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie since 2003, but they have yet to be able to live near them or any other Benedictine community. He states, "I consider it a tremendous gift from God to be able to pray with and serve this family of Monastic women; to have it also be my job is beyond what I could have asked or imagined."

In his free time, Steve loves to spend his time learning, whether it is an entirely new topic or deepening his knowledge of something he already knows. He is an avid bicyclist and enjoys baking, especially a good loaf of bread. A fun fact about Steve is that he once spent a summer in college as the copy editor for a calculus textbook! His mother and grandmother both worked professionally as editors, so making texts look good and easy to follow is in his blood!

We will end this article with one of Steve's favorite Bible verses: "In the beginning was the Word" (John 1:1). Not the lush organ accompaniment, the rich harmonies of the choir, or the driving percussive strum of the guitar. Liturgical music exists to make the Word of God more intelligible, memorable, and beautiful, and must always serve this goal first.



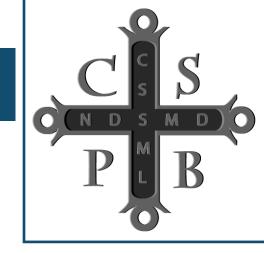
AROUND THE MONASTERY

Top from left to right: Apple orchard-themed Autumn decorations are on display in the Health Care Unit for this Fall season; Associate Mary Lou Kozmik volunteers at the front desk as Receptionist; Workers in the Health Care Unit provided apple pie, ice cream, and hot apple cider for the Sisters and employees.

Bottom from left to right: A breathtaking snapshot taken right outside the Monastery entrance; Mission Advancement staff admiring the new Northstar Watermedia Society exhibit featured in the Monastery's art gallery until November 3; The Monastery's first Pet Blessing Ceremony was held on October 2 outside on the Monastery grounds in front of the statue of St. Francis.

PRAYER SCHEDULE

All are welcome to join the Sisters for daily prayer. Contact the Monastery to arrange your visit. To keep our Sisters safe masks and proof of vaccination are required.



"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 and to arrange your visit, 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.



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To connect with or support

Community ministries, visit us at

www.stpaulsmonastery.org

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