

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY NEWSLETTER

August 2023



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This year, the monthly newsletter features themes from Benedictine values. This issue highlights the theme of *Generativity* and reflects on the Benedictine Center which celebrates 40 years on August 15.

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WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

*Excerpts from With Grateful Hearts The Past We Own
written by Sister Carole Sweely, OSB.*

Summer at 301 Summit

Summer Classes

In 1951, the summer classes were World Literature by Sister Jeroma Johnson and Sacred Scripture by Sister Luanne Meagher. The College of St. Catherine gave college credits for these classes as well as for the classes offered during the school year in order to keep the postulants home, give the novices one course for credit, and keep the juniors home the first semester after triennial vows (page 37).



Sister Carole Sweely, OSB

The Back Porch

The back porch of the main building was a favorite gathering place of senior professed during the summer and fall days. It was not a spacious area but convenient enough to hear the phone and front doorbell in case guests arrived. In the winter this porch served as a storage area for excess kneelers, and they were mighty cold if one had to use them in the event of guests. The kneelers would be set up in the front hall to serve as an extension of chapel. Because of summer guests, these were often used to allow for more space for recreations spent on the porch (page 34).

Summer at the Orphanage

The writer [Sister Carole Sweely] had the privilege of spending a portion of a summer at the orphanage on Randolph as a young junior Sister. She was assigned to help in the boys' section with Sister Agnetta Legatt at the helm.

But prior to this assignment, the writer, during previous Christmas vacation, had gone with a group of Sisters ice skating on the orphanage grounds. On that day while skating on the rink, a small boy had singled out the writer, grabbed her hand to skate with her. The writer, not having held hands

with anyone for some time, looked down to see who this small creature was and was told, "Jamie." After a few laps around the rink and spurts of conversation, the lad looked up and said to the owner of the hand he was holding, "I love you." These words were somewhat foreign to her coiffed and veiled ears so, in order to be sure she heard what she thought she heard, she said, "Pardon me, what did you say?" Again, this orphaned soul said to her, "I love you." Well, imagine the melting of the writer's heart on that cold winter afternoon. The writer perhaps shared this delightful tale with a friend who was instrumental in having her sent to the orphanage to work the following summer (page 66).



St. Joseph's Home Orphanage



WELCOME LETTER

Mary Ilg, ObISB, Co-Director Benedictine Center

As we consider the momentous occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Benedictine Center on August 15, 2023, we are grateful for the many gatherings and retreats that have occurred in this sacred space over the last four decades. These retreat experiences have changed lives—whether it is a parish group that comes together for a weekend to listen to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit speaking through their priest, minister or one another, or a dazzling classroom program such as the School of Lectio Divina or the School of Discernment.

It was in the School of Lectio Divina where we learned to read the Scriptures in a new way, “and the Scriptures read you.” God speaks to us individually through this ancient practice of holy reading. In the School of Discernment, we learned to sort our thoughts, according to what is from God and not from God, discarding afflictive thoughts that are no longer useful. We pause, pray and meditate, listening always with the ear of our heart. “Come, Holy Spirit, Come,” we pleaded, and were led through many tough situations and heavy decisions. The decision-making process became lighter, less burdensome. God always comes through for us and leads us out of the brambles and thorns of the twisted path. What a miracle it is to finally see the clear blue horizon.

My own life has been changed by attending Benedictine Center retreats—one in the spring of 2000 at the former Monastery at 2675 Larpenteur, when the Cathedral of St. Paul RCIA class spent a day with our beloved pastor to learn more about the faith and the amazing joy we would come to know as newly confirmed Catholics. We were also invited then to seek spiritual direction at the Monastery—which I did and met Sister Carol Rennie. Another crucial event was a Centering Prayer retreat in November 2019 with Carol Quest, Jody Reis Johnson, and Sister Virginia Matter, where I was introduced to Centering



Prayer meditation which I now practice regularly, with healing benefits of peace I never imagined were possible. Many of you could share similar stories. Transformation also occurs regularly with individual retreatants, who arrive for a day, an overnight, or a weekend, rolling their suitcase down the hall, looking for some relief from the world and some silence. The silence here is a special kind. The air is rarified. These twelve rooms have known so many guests who come to pray and read and rest in God. The walls are imbued with their prayers. (Father Thomas Keating himself stayed in Room 112.) It is our

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hope that these rooms in this quiet corridor—in whatever new assignments the future may hold—will always be a retreat center.

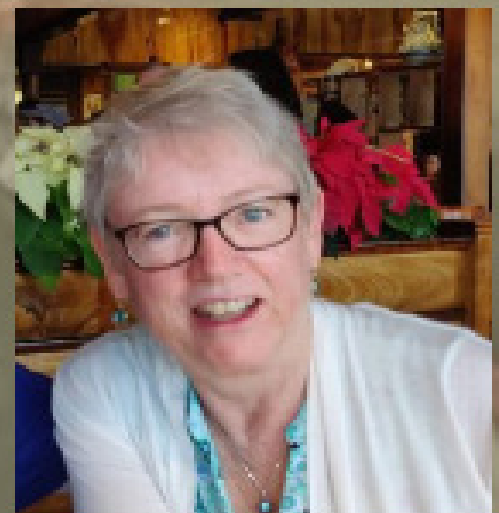
We are grateful for our many guests and supporters, especially those individuals and groups who return monthly, quarterly, and year after year. They know of the riches that can be found here. Faithfully, they return, and we are here to greet them, striving to welcome all guests as Christ.

May God bless you as you seek to know Him and live lives of peace, continuing on this always surprising spiritual journey, following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit awaits you in this sacred place.

September 29-30, 2023

Sand, Symbol, and Source Developing your Inner Knowing

With Rev. Sheryl Lyndes Stowman, M. Div



[Click here for more information and to register.](#)

In this retreat you may bring a question or challenge, an exploration of your life purpose or a significant transition. Or you may bring your curiosity and openness to discovering who and what you are.



NEW OBLATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Jeff Dols, ObISB, Co-Director of Oblates

In her July newsletter column, Sister Mary Lou announced she is “passing the torch to the Oblates to fulfill leadership roles for our Oblate community”. Appropriately, she chose the headline “Something New is Happening”. And indeed, it is!

As we thank Sister Mary Lou for her eleven stellar years as Oblate Director, we also accept the passing of this torch to a new Oblate leadership team to begin anew at serving the needs of our Oblate community. For the first time in the history of the Monastery, the Oblate Director(s) will be Oblates and not a Sister. It seems somehow appropriate that this significant shift is occurring in this 75th anniversary year. Truly, “Something New is Happening”.

As we discerned this next stage of Oblate leadership, we looked to examples from other Benedictine monastic communities that were in similar places in their evolution from Sister to Oblate leadership. Based on those examples, another significant shift is that we will now have a three-person leadership team, rather than one Oblate Director, with each co-director taking on the roles and responsibilities that best fit each person’s gifts and calling.



Sister Mary Lou Dummer speaks during the 2019 Oblate Retreat

The three new co-directors are Oblates **Jeff Dols, Kami Pohl, and Ann Siverling** (see below for a brief introduction of each). Together, Jeff, Kami and Ann will handle the general organizational leadership duties, while each will take the lead on specific responsibilities in serving the Oblate community.

Ann will take the lead in cultivating relationships and serving the pastoral needs of the Oblates. In the future, Ann will also work with the Benedictine Center to coordinate Ongoing Oblate Formation programs. Kami will continue to lead the Oblate Initial Formation program. Jeff will continue to be responsible for Oblate communications, record keeping and other administrative functions. As such, Jeff (jdols@stpaulsmonastery.org) will be the contact person for general questions or requests, while Kami (kpohl@stpaulsmonastery.org) will remain the contact for inquires related to Initial Formation.

As you might imagine Jeff, Kami, and Ann are energized to begin their new roles, while

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recognizing they are standing on the shoulders of Sister Mary Lou and all the previous Oblate directors at St. Paul's Monastery who have guided and nurtured us so well over so many years!



Jeff Dols

While I have only been an Oblate since 2019, I have been pleased to have been associated with the Monastery for several years before that, serving in several volunteer roles, including advisory committees for the Benedictine Center, Monastic Leadership, and the Oblates. But my Benedictine journey goes back much further, beginning with my elementary school education from the Sisters of St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, MN. This journey continues today in my family, with my wife of 40 years, Maria, and my daughters, Rachel and Angela—all graduates

of the College of St. Benedict. From these connections, I continue to be drawn to the core Benedictine charism—to seek communion with God through the practice of contemplative prayer and shared community—to be and see the radiant presence of Christ in everything and everyone. I am blessed to be here!



Kami Pohl

I made my Final Oblation in 2021 and have been assisting S. Mary Lou with Initial Oblate Formation for the past two years. This time of being closely mentored by S. Mary Lou has been a blessing. I have been associated with the Monastery for the past ten years. My Benedictine journey began with the School of Lectio Divina at the Monastery in 2013, continued with S. Carol Rennie as my advisor during my Spiritual Direction training, a member of the Benedictine Center Spiritual Direction team since 2017,

and serving on the Benedictine Center Advisory Committee for the past few years. My past work includes teaching and adult faith formation in a church, so it is my honor to continue that great love of accompanying people as they go deeper in their faith here at St. Paul's Monastery. The values of Benedictine Spirituality, studying the Rule of Benedict and practicing Contemplative Prayer practices in community with other Oblates has deepened my faith and helps me notice God everywhere. I consider it a grace to be on this journey with each of you.



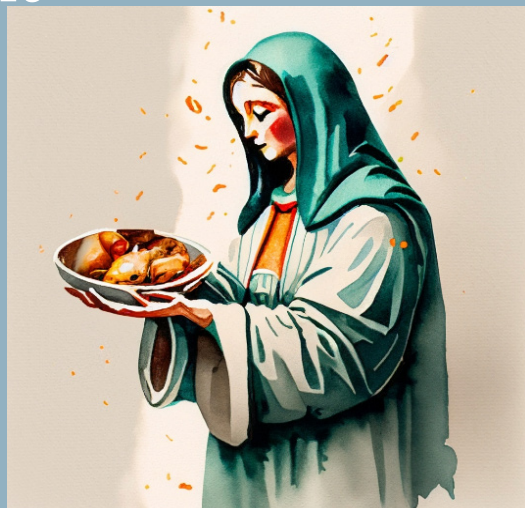
Ann Siverling

I did my final oblation on Pentecost Eve in June of 2014. Since then, my life has been blessed by continuing relationships with Sisters and Oblates alike. My very first introduction to St. Paul's Monastery was so long ago that I don't remember the date, but it was still in the old Monastery, and it was when I attended a workshop on Centering Prayer led by Thomas Keating. Around 2010, as an exhausted pastor,

I began looking for a place, a community, for me to develop and experience my own personal spirituality. About this time, I was introduced to Benedictine Spirituality when I went on retreat at the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Mary Monastery in Rock Island, IL, and then another retreat at St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN. The very first time I walked into the new St. Paul's Monastery, I was welcomed with such heartfelt hospitality that I felt that I had come home. And the rest is history! My own spirituality has been deepened, but I have also been blessed by being, in small part, part of the Benedictine Community at St. Paul's Monastery. I treasure the Benedictine Rule, the Benedictine Values, and the Benedictine way of life. I strive to let my life glorify Christ. I am thrilled to join Jeff and Kami to assist with the leadership of the Oblates, and humbly and prayerfully, and resting on the promises of God, I look forward to seeing Christ in all of you and serving all the oblates.

New Volunteer Opportunities in Mission Advancement

St. Benedict encourages us to be wise with our acts of labor so that in all things God may be glorified. Mission Advancement invites you to share in our work as a volunteer! You will receive training and support. Your efforts will significantly impact the mission and ministries of our Sisters. New volunteers are onboarded through Jason Wittak and then connected to the Ministry Coordinator for further training.



Sponsorships Task Force

Volunteers creatively strategize to engage existing and new sponsors for events and ministries at the Monastery and Benedictine Center. This task force has a limited timeline (six months). Volunteers will work with Travis (Director of Mission Advancement) to reinvigorate the Monastery's efforts with sponsorship opportunities.

Grant Seeking / Grant Writing Task Force

Volunteers will have a lot of fun researching grant opportunities, connecting with funders, writing grant proposals, and reporting to our funders about the great work being accomplished with their investment. This, too, is a limited timeline (one year). Volunteers will work with Travis to fund our Benedictine service and ministry.

Database Assistance

Mission Advancement recently transitioned to a new database and there is need for behind-the-scenes work to ensure integrity of data and assist with special projects. All volunteers will receive training and can work remotely. Volunteers will work with Danika (Data Analyst) on all projects.

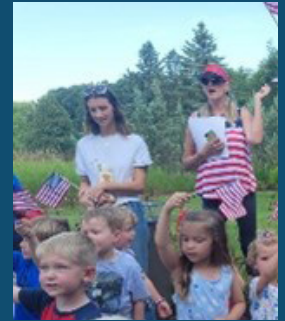
MAPLE TREE CHILDCARE CENTER

Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



Maple Tree
Childcare Center

The Maple Tree children enjoyed visiting the Sisters on Friday, June 30. We met in the monastery garden and had a lively time singing patriotic songs and waving flags to celebrate our county's birthday.



Thanks to the Sisters and monastery staff members who were able to join us.

Jennie Schlauch
Program Director








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Blessing of the **ANIMALS**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1
1:00PM**

All (well-mannered and leashed) animals are welcome at the Monastery for an ecumenical blessing. Join the Sisters for a fun afternoon as we celebrate the love God shows through our pets.





BENEDICTINE CARE LEARNING DIRECTLY FROM BENEDICTINE SUPER MODELS

For 75 years, the Twin Cities have been gifted with the presence of the most remarkable and dynamic supermodels. Women who have courageously modeled humility, hospitality, community, and the search for God as the way to strengthen one's being in a global culture that would rather prioritize individuality and separation.

Notably, these Benedictine supermodels, our Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery, have also gifted us with the invitation to come learn these values directly from them, or as they'd be more comfortable saying, learning in the "school for God's service" with them. And the primary way they learn is through the experience of prayer; and the practice of prayer.

Sharing the experience of prayer with the Sisters is one of the most valuable spiritual apprenticeships available in the Benedictine Tradition. It is an apprenticeship that teaches us how to live the values of the gospels and into relationship with the divine—all in the ordinariness of daily life. And our Sisters are our best available mentors.

Though most Sisters are now retired from external ministry, they are available every day to share the experience of prayer—this mentoring—with us. All are invited to daily prayer with the Sisters at the Monastery and to participate in the prayer-based ministries of our Benedictine Center.

Our ongoing Benedictine CARE Wellness Program formed through the commitment of the Sisters to explore creative ways to continue to bring forward their healing ministries, this experiential learning of divine relationship through prayer. Benedictine CARE integrates Sister Virginia Matter's long history of teaching Biospiritual Focusing, an embodied method of prayer that listens to the wisdom held within the physical body, as well as Centering Prayer, a contemplative practice Sisters Virginia and Mary White embraced and helped introduce to the Twin Cities community.



Benedictine CARE isn't as much a "new" program as it is the "next" program, the "next" form of creative Benedictine ministry, being brought forward into the community through the mentorship of our Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery.

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As Sister Catherine Nehotte, Prioress, said when introducing CARE, "Benedictine Spirituality will always be there to meet seekers where they are and to companion them in their search for Christ. We, the Sisters of St Paul's Monastery, are grateful for our role in wise counsel and leadership as the Benedictine Tradition becomes co-stewarded by our Oblate community and laity. Benedictine CARE has the potential to be an example of how this can come together in both healing and growth."

For more information about CARE contact: Teri Rose, OblSB, trose@perfectlyproduce.com, or visit www.perfectlyproduce.com



**BENEDICTINE
CENTER** OF ST. PAUL'S
MONASTERY

AUGUST 15, 2023, 5:00-7:30PM

**40TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

Tickets \$30. Register at www.stpaulsmonastery.org
or by calling 651-777-8181, ext. 403.



THE BENEDICTINE CENTER CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

Jeff Dols, ObISB, Chair of the Benedictine Center Advisory Comm.

Over the next several e-Newsletters we will look back and look forward honoring the 40-year history of the Benedictine Center.

Excerpts from the archives and personal experiences and perspectives provided by several voices of the past, as well as my own, will open up the rich history and evolving future of the Benedictine Center.

From the Archives: The Beginning

The Benedictine Center was officially established on August 15, 1983, with Sister Veronica Novotny as director. She and her staff (Sisters Virginia Matter and Mary White) along with an Advisory Board ministered under the following mission statement...

Nurtured by the Gospel in the spirit of St. Benedict, the Staff of Benedictine Center and Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery invite persons to a time away in a monastic environment to discover the presence of God in themselves, in other persons, and in the world around them. Each person is encouraged to seek personal harmony through prayer in solitude, inner healing, openness to God in nature and worship with the community in daily Eucharist and Liturgy of the Hours.

They offered hospitality, spiritual direction, psychotherapy, individual and group retreats. Programs were introduced expanding services related to women, family life, single parenting, and other aspects of spiritual growth.

Sister Veronica Novotny served as director until 1988. During the following five years, several directors, John Howard, Sister Mary White, and Sister Rose Alice Althoff furthered the mission statement and its objectives.

Voices: Sister Veronica Novotny – Director 1983-1988

To get a sense of Sister Veronica's prophetic call to begin this retreat center ministry, we draw upon this excerpt from a February 1980 letter she wrote to the Monastic Council...



Sister Veronica Novotny, founder of the Benedictine Center

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THE BENEDICTINE CENTER CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

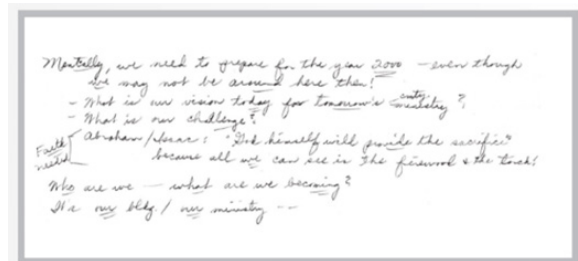
Jeff Dols, ObISB, Chair of the Benedictine Center Advisory Comm.

Voices: Sister Veronica Novotny – Director 1983–1988 (continued from page 12)

I am writing to the Monastic Council because I feel called to continue working in the field of spiritual direction and retreats, but under more Benedictine auspices. I am writing to propose that St. Paul's Priory explore the possibility of developing a spirituality center that would share the spirit of our monastic community. Through the centuries, people have recognized Benedictines for their relevance during each era of history because of their deep rootedness in God and Christian ideals.

I believe that, nurtured by the Gospel and the spirit of St. Benedict, the Sisters of St. Paul's Priory could invite persons to spend time in the monastic environment where they would discover the presence of God in themselves, in other persons, and the world around them.

In 1978, I wrote to the Council encouraging the Sisters to seek out spiritual direction and to be trained themselves as spiritual directors because I believe that spiritual renewal is important for monastics and non-monastics alike. My work as a teacher, a director of religious education, and a spiritual director has convinced me that people need to experience what is core to our monastic life: prayer, reflective reading, and discerning apostolic work. Opening the monastic environment to guests would be a service to our Church and a strong testimony to Benedict's instruction: "Let all guests who arrive be received as Christ."



Excerpt of notes from Sr. Veronica Novotny

I realized we need to listen carefully to all persons involved – the individual Sisters, the whole community, the needs of the people, and my own personal needs and call. Already, I have a list of Sisters who are interested in offering services for a spirituality center, and that suggests there is openness in the community to this possibility.

I propose that the Monastic Council ask the Chapter to commission a feasibility committee. Between now and 1983, that committee would begin studying the idea, slowly experimenting with pilot programs and welcoming guests. The resulting recommendation would be submitted to the Chapter for approval.

Thank you for your consideration and may God bless our discernment.

Sister Veronica Novotny, OSB



MISSION ADVANCEMENT NEWS & EVENTS

Travis Salisbury, OblSB, Director

August is a high-energy month! There is a general sense to “get it all in” before Labor Day: end of summer road trips and cabin days, preparations to return to the school year, those first days of college life for our Hill-Murray graduates, the State Fair... August can be an exhausting—but really fun—month.

Here at the Monastery, we mark our summer days much as we do throughout the year: the Sisters gather for prayer with their guests and retreatants three times a day, they celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays and Feast Days, share meals together, and enjoy the beauty of our Monastery grounds.

As we hold August as a gift of time from God, we look forward with great joy to autumn! Mission Advancement is planning and supporting much activity here at the Monastery.

- Our Oblates return to the Monastery for a day of renewal and retreat on September 23. Father Dan Ward leads our Oblates in reflection on the Cosmic Christ. Please pray for our Oblates!
- Blessing of the Animals returns on October 1 at 1:00pm! This ecumenical celebration welcomes our neighbors and peoples of all Christian denominations. Well-mannered (leashed/caged) pet companions are welcome for this brief liturgy of blessing and time of community
- All Souls Day is always a sacred day here at the Monastery but especially this year. On November 2, we gather for evening praise and then will bless all new commemorative pavers around the statue of St. Benedict. All gathered then will process to the cemetery where we bless the cloud of witnesses who rest here. A reception follows.
- And, it wouldn't be December without Christmas at the Monastery! Please see our article in this newsletter not only for the full list of events but ways you can support this vital fundraiser for the mission and ministries of our Sisters.

In addition, Mission Advancement invites your participation in empowering and supporting the mission of our Sisters.

- Become a monthly donor through our Sisters Circle giving society. You've heard the pitch before: “For the cost of a cup of coffee ...” and it's true! Monthly gifts of all sizes ensure the Monastery's ability to welcome all as Christ.
- Sponsor an event! Sponsorship gifts of all sizes reduce the cost of events and ensure these events are not only effective fundraisers for the Monastery but more importantly FRIEND-raisers.

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- Give to the Max Day is coming up on November 18! Mission Advancement is seeking donors who can assist with matching gifts to encourage and welcome in new donors.
- And, at the end of the year, please consider the Sisters and the Benedictine Center with gifts of stock, disbursements from your IRA, or a gift from your donor advised fund.

Every dollar gifted here advances the Benedictine way of life. The Sisters hear every day how much peace people find here at the Monastery. Your support allows the Sisters to widen that welcome and be sure that the wisdom of St. Benedict finds new home in the hearts of all seekers.

Thank you for being a partner in this mission!

St. Benedict and St. Scholastica: pray for us!

Make a significant impact on the mission and ministries of the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery with a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA or director a gift from your Donor Advised Fund or family foundation to the Monastery.

Contact Travis Salisbury,
651-777-8181, ext. 403 or
tsalisbury@stpaulsmonastery,
for more information.

**empower the
Benedictine
way of life**



CHRISTMAS AT THE MONASTERY NEWS & EVENTS

Silent Auction | December 2-9, 2023

The online auction returns! Get excited now to bid on exciting experience, items, and baskets. Have something to donate? Contact the Mission Advancement office today at 651-777-8181, ext 409 or jwittak@stpaulsmonastery.org

Advent Retreat with Sister Michaela Hedican, OSB | Saturday, December 2, 9:00-11:00am

Registration required; \$10 per person (or \$100 for online to a parish community)

Sponsored by the Oblates of St. Paul's Monastery, this retreat with Sister Michaela helps us live into the Benedictine practice of patience and silence as we embrace the weeks of Advent. This retreat will be offered both in-person at the Monastery (space is limited) and online. All fees benefit the Benedictine Center.

Wine Education Evening with Jack Farrell | Tuesday, December 5, 6:30-8:00pm

Registration required; \$25 per person

Great friend of the Monastery Jack Farrell of Haskell's brings his wonderful style, expertise, and passion for wine to the Monastery. Get ready for an exceptionally fun and educational evening. Space is limited. This is in-person only and will not be livestreamed.

St. Nicholas Day Fundraiser | Wednesday, December 6

Online, Direct-mail, or In-person donations (stop at the front desk within the Monastery)

This all-day fundraiser will raise \$10,000 for the mission and ministries of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery. Saint Nicholas is patron saint of children—a ministry of focus for our Sisters through the Maple Tree Childcare Center and throughout the over 75 years of ministry in parishes and schools.

Concluding Celebration | Saturday, December 9, 5:30-8:00pm

Registration required; \$50 per person

All good things must come to an end, and on December 9 the Sisters are excited to raise a glass with you to celebrate a fun week of raising money to support the Benedictine way of life and ministry here in our local church. This wine and cheese event features not only great food but good music, fellowship, and a final chance to bid on the silent auction line up.

In addition to these events, the Sisters will livestream Mass on Sunday, December 3 at 11:00am for the first Sunday of Advent and on Friday, December 8 for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

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Want to join us? You are invited to sponsor specific events or to help us create a match (of any size!) to challenge and encourage new donors to support the Sisters. Contact Travis Salisbury, Mission Advancement Director at 612-777-8181 ext 403.

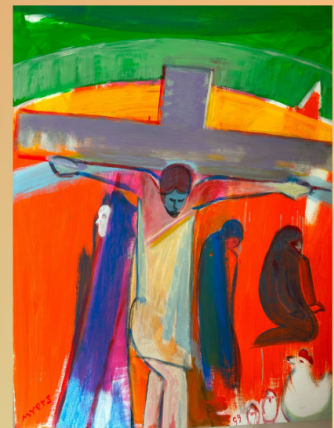
Volunteers are essential to the success of Christmas at the Monastery! Please contact Jason Wittak in the Mission Advancement office (651-777-8181 ext 409) if you are able to assist in the planning or daily tasks for all these events.

Open now for viewing! Call 651-777-8181 to arrange a visit.

WALKING MONASTERY WAY: Celebrating 75 Years of St. Paul's Monastery



The Benedictine Center of St. Paul's Monastery



*An art exhibit
featuring works
from 15 invited
artists*



HUMILITY

THE 5TH STEP

Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB

The fifth step of humility is that you do not conceal . . . any sinful thoughts entering your heart, or any wrongs committed in secret, but rather confess them humbly.

In the early Christian tradition, confession was not so much about sinful actions as it was about thoughts. Early Christian monastics in the desert found themselves disturbed and distracted by thoughts running around in their minds without stop. They wanted to seek God, but when they tried to pray, thoughts of food, sex, things, anger, dejection, acedia, vainglory, and pride troubled them. When this happened, they sought out a wise elder and confessed the thoughts that upset them and interfered with their prayer or work. The elder listened, counseled, and gave a word to help free the person from the thoughts.

Thoughts can interfere with our work, our human relationships, our health, and our ability to pray. In step 5 of humility, Benedict encourages us to have a trusting relationship with a compassionate and wise person who can listen.

Confessing our thoughts to a person who knows us well helps us face and realize our own weaknesses and helps us open our hearts to our loving God. This is a sharing of the self that we may hide; the self that we are only just now discovering. Confession may help us grow in self-awareness so that we can understand and name our suffering. We may reflect on how God is calling us to conversion and wholeness. We can choose a path that supports us in our life's journey, our relationships, our work, and prayer. May God bless us and give us the courage and humility for confession.

MyBenedictine Legacy Society

**Remember the
Sisters in your will
and estate plans.**

Legacy gifts are a critical financial resource that empowers the Benedictine way of life for generations to come.

Contact Travis in the Mission Advancement office for more information.





REFLECTION

WHAT IS GENERATIVITY?

Sister Karen Sames OSB, Director of Benedictine Associates

Generativity is a concern for people besides self and family that usually develops during middle age. It is also a need to nurture and guide younger people and contribute to the next generation.

10 propositions about the psychology of generativity:

- 1) Generativity is the concern for and commitment to the well-being of future generations.
- 2) Generativity is a developmental challenge for the middle-adult years.
- 3) Generativity may spring from desires that are both selfless and selfish.
- 4) Generativity is shaped by culture.
- 5) The strength of generativity differs across individuals.
- 6) Individual differences in generativity are related to quality of parenting.
- 7) Individual differences in generativity predict a range of social involvements.
- 8) Generativity promotes psychological well-being.
- 9) Generativity is expressed in the stories people construct to make sense of their lives.
- 10) The life stories of highly generative adults affirm the power of human redemption and renewal.

Some examples of generativity that come to mind are: passing on family recipes to the next generation, a child on taking on the family business, or aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. passing down and sharing family stories.

Some generativity seems to be deeper, like *The Rule of St. Benedict (The Rule)*. It has served as a “guide for beginners” for generations upon generations. St. Benedict and St. Scholastica had a profound understanding of the physical, psychological, and spiritual aspects of human nature. In the prologue it states, “Let us arise, then, at last, for the Scripture stirs us up, saying, ‘Now is the hour for us to rise from sleep’ (Rom. 13:11)”. We are not just to listen with the ear of our hearts but we are to take action on what we heard.

“Run while you have the light of life, lest the darkness of death overtake you” (John 12:35). Run while we hear the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. Here Benedict is telling us to act on what we heard. Like in the gospel of the sower of seed, the seed that falls on sallow soil withers before it can grow. If we do not act on what we heard we could forget what we heard. We could ignore the Spirit’s guidance. Apathy could become our response to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. So, we reflect on *The Rule* and the gospel to hear, to listen to what they are saying to us

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here and now. What are we being called forth to do?

“And the Lord, seeking his laborer in the multitude to whom He thus cries out, says again, ‘Who is the one who will have life, and desires to see good days’ (Ps. 34:13) And if, hearing Him, you answer, ‘I am the one,’ God says to you, ‘If you will have true and everlasting life, keep your tongue from evil and your lips that they speak no guile. Turn away from evil and do good; seek after peace and pursue it (Ps. 34:14-15)’. (*The Rule* gives us guidelines on how to be in relationship with God, others and ourselves.) And when you have done these things, My eyes shall be upon you and My ears open to your prayers; and before you call upon Me, I will say to you, ‘Behold, here I am’ (Ps. 34:16; Is. 65:24; 58:9)”.

So, as we live out our lives following the Rule, let us strive for perfection even though we will never be perfect. For Christ alone is perfect.

References:

[Generativity Definition & Meaning | Merriam-Webster Medical](#)

McAdams, D. P., & Logan, R. L. (2004). What is generativity? In E. de St. Aubin, D. P. McAdams, & T.-C. Kim (Eds.), *The generative society: Caring for future generations* (pp. 15–31). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10622-002> (Abstract).

Spirit.



Christmas at the Monastery
Silent Auction

<https://tinyurl.com/SPMauctionwishlist>

Help support the Sisters at St Paul's Monastery through a gift using our Amazon Christmas at the Monastery Wish List!

We have selected several items that you can purchase via Amazon that will added to our Silent Auction Baskets for Christmas at the Monastery. From gift cards to tech, outdoor items to personal care, you can support at different price points.

Visit the list here: <https://tinyurl.com/SPMauctionwishlist>

Add any of the items to your cart and ship it directly to the Monastery – St. Paul's Monastery, Attn: Mission Advancement, 2675 Benet Road, St Paul, MN 55109

Under gift options, please include your name so your gift can properly be recorded and acknowledged.

For questions, contact Jason at jwittak@stpaulsmonastery.org



REFLECTION

Generativity

Karen Fleming

Part 1:

Generativity is not a word we usually use in conversation. However, it is one that is worthwhile to know as it signifies wisdom. A quick glance at Wikipedia tells us:

“The term generativity was coined by the psychoanalyst, Erik Erikson in 1950 to denote a concern for establishing and guiding the next generation.”

“Wow!” That could be quite an undertaking. Our children stand to inherit great environmental and social problems.

We live in a world where even a simple dandelion creates strife. We all know the concern everyone has for their green lawn, but this can only be through chemical intervention which is unsafe to breathe. The animals who eat from these treated areas and the insects who lay their eggs here dwindle as a result and the next generation will suffer if we continue these practices.

To speak out against such things now evokes controversy. One feels freedom of speech is only allowed under rare circumstances and certainly never when it comes to quiet acceptance. I'd like to be able to disagree and gather with others in a setting where I can say what I want without others wanting to tape my mouth shut or giving me a disgusted look.

Part 2:

Children are our Creator's most wonderful gift. Are they being taught at school about Generativity? Maybe. However, this is a big word and its use should really start at infancy. Erik Erikson writes on the 8 stages of childhood development in a book entitled *Childhood and Society*. From him we learn that these stages occur according to age and virtue of the individual. Generativity can fall within this growth process when the accumulated knowledge of how to make the world a better place is best understood and (hopefully) passed down. The strongest development here occurs during middle age (40-64).

Often we think about personal growth on our own terms and what it brings to us. What about changing that attitude toward positive world growth? That does take insight and effort, even in the final 8th stage of development (age 65 plus). This is the time we slow

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down and contemplate all we have seen of life. This can lead to the opposite of generativity—stagnation. What can the last stage do to influence and guide the next generation? Erik Erikson provides ideas like volunteering or posing questions which aid in the discernment of good or bad actions. In this way, we can spread the word on how to make this a better world.

Part 3:

I can point to one specific example from my own life. Years ago, one of my many grandsons, who was 10 years old at the time, was given what I would call Generativity as a class project. The students had to dig holes outside the school and plant trees. I helped and came away with dust and mud on my shoes and hands. Now, 27 years later, I am hoping that all I say to my grandchildren and great grandchildren is good, productive, and caring. Though, I may not be around to see how this influences their generativity. I know with God's help I will give my best and receive His approval.

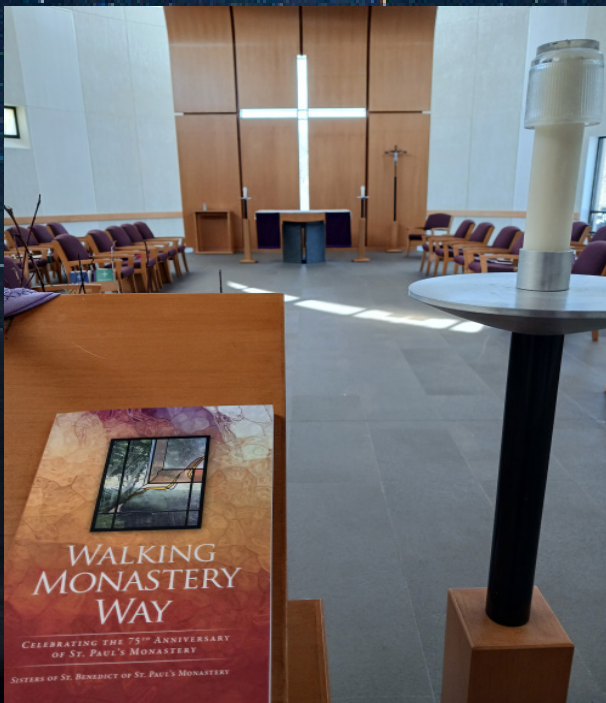
“Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities”. (Matthew 25:23).

References:

Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and Society*. W. W. Norton & Co.

75th Anniversary of St. Paul's Monastery

Sister Lucia Schwickerath, OSB



Walking Monastery Way

Anniversary book Celebrating 75 years
of St. Paul's Monastery by the Sister's of St.
Paul's Monastery

Celebrate Benedictine monastic life in St. Paul through this "memoir of many voices," which features historical photos. The book can be purchased on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). You can also contact S. Lucia Schwickerath, OSB at 651-777-8181.

FLOURISHING AND BEARING FRUIT

Psalm 92

Stephen Kasperick-Postellon, Director of Liturgy & Music



God ever-living and true, you have no need of our praise, yet our desire to thank you is itself your gift. Our songs of thanksgiving add nothing to your greatness, but they make us grow in your grace. Help us to make music to your name morning and night. Make us flourish like a beautiful palm tree, like a strong cedar. Keep us full of sap and green, so that we may bear fruit and proclaim your goodness, now and in all the seasons of our life. Through Christ our Lord.

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your faithful love in the morning,
and your truth in the watches of the night,
on the ten-stringed lute and the harp,
with the sound of song on the lyre.

You have gladdened me, O LORD, by your deeds;
for the work of your hands I shout with joy.
O LORD, how great are your works!
How deep are your designs!
The senseless cannot know this,
and the fool cannot understand.

Though the wicked spring up like grass,
and all who do evil thrive,
they are doomed to be eternally destroyed.
But you, O LORD, are eternally on high.

See, your enemies, O LORD,
see, your enemies will perish;
all who do evil will be scattered.

You give me the strength of a wild ox;
you have poured out on me purest oil.
My eyes looked in triumph on my foes;
my ears have heard of their fall.

The righteous will flourish like the palm tree,
and grow like a Lebanon cedar.

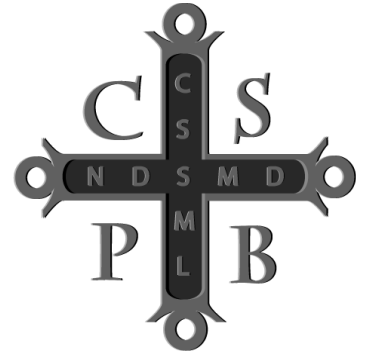
Planted in the house of the LORD,
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the LORD is upright.
In God, my rock, there is no wrong.



PRAYER SCHEDULE

All are welcome to join the Sisters for prayer.
Contact the front desk to arrange your visit.

“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 www.stpaulsmonastery.org.*



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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