



ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY

E-NEWSLETTER

February 2021



As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of St. Scholastica on Feb 10, I recall how St. Scholastica prayed with tears when she offered her prayer to God – asking God to do something, ANYTHING to allow her to spend more time with her brother Benedict, knowing that it might be the last time she would see him.

The need for prayer at this time in history is so great: for relief from the pandemic, for peace in our country and the world, and for all who are hungry and homeless. At the Monastery, we hold you, our friends in our daily prayers. We also appreciate your prayers for us!

There are many types of prayers and ways to pray. St. Scholastica prayed and God answered her. At the Monastery, we recently learned a hymn as prayer entitled: "Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ" from Frank van Christerson (1900-1996).

Eternal Spirit of the living Christ,
I know not how to ask or what to say;
I only know my need, as deep as life,
and only you can teach me how to pray.

Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day;
Help me to see your purpose and your will.
Where I have failed, what I have done amiss;
Held in forgiving love, let me be still.

Come with the strength I lack, bring vision clear
Of human need; O give me eyes to see
Fulfillment of my life in love out poured.
My life in you, O Christ; your love in me.



Scholastica. Artist: Sadao Watanabe, 1995.

A Novena is also a form of worship consisting of special prayers or services on nine successive days. On page eleven of this newsletter, I offer a St. Scholastica Novena. It focuses on asking for St. Scholastica's intercession that we may grow in the virtue of love. I offer it as another way to strengthen your prayer life as you continue to grow in your faith.

Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB, Prioress



Remembering Sister Joan Utecht, OSB

by Mission Advancement

“May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life.”

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 72

Sister Joan (Evelyn) Utecht was born on October 28, 1934 to Alexander and Mathilda (Barten) in St. Nicholas, Minnesota, the fifth child in a family of seven, four girls and three boys. In 1957, she entered the scholasticate at St. Paul's Priory and chose the name of her patron saint, St. Joan of Arc. She entered the novitiate on June 1, 1958 and made her first Profession of Vows on July 11, 1959. She attended the College of St. Catherine, earning a B.A. in Elementary Education in 1962 and a Master's Degree in Counseling in 1972 from the University of St. Thomas, and a Master's of Science in Administration from the University of Notre Dame in 1989. For nearly 20 years, she taught middle school students at St. Bernard's, St. Paul; Assumption, Richfield; St. Anne's, Minneapolis; St. Charles Borromeo, Minneapolis; St. Boniface, Hastings; Epiphany, Coon Rapids and Presentation, Maplewood. She served as CCD Coordinator at St. Casimir's, St. Paul. From 1984-1997, she served as Treasurer of St. Paul's Monastery and later worked as a library assistant at Hill-Murray School.

Sister Joan was passionate about pro-life and social justice causes. In her retirement years she volunteered at Tubman (located in former monastery). Most recently, Sister Joan served the Monastic Community as a Eucharistic minister. Sister Joan died on January 21, 2021, at the age of 86, having lived as a professed Benedictine for 61 years.

She is survived by her Benedictine Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery, her brother, Gregory and sisters Agnes (Steil) and Elizabeth (Tibbetts), along with many nieces and nephews. We pray that Christ, the Prince of Peace, will lovingly welcome her to her eternal home.



Sister Joan Utecht, OSB

Born: October 28, 1934

Professed: July 11, 1959

Died: January 21, 2021

Service of Christian Burial January 29, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Paul's Monastery. Due to COVID-19, we are not able to accommodate guests. Service of Christian burial will be livestreamed on [Facebook](#) and linked on St. Paul's Monastery's [website](#). Interment is at the Monastery Cemetery.

If you would like to make a donation in memory of Sister Joan to St. Paul's Monastery, please [click here](#).

Celebrating St. Scholastica

by Mission Advancement

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

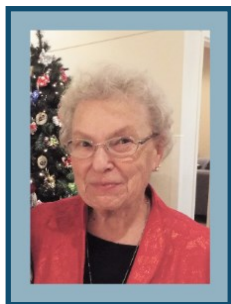
St. Scholastica was the twin sister of St. Benedict. Together the two are considered the foundress and founder of the Benedictine Order. In the *Dialogues* of St. Gregory, the story is told of how St. Scholastica cherished meeting with her brother, St. Benedict, so they could talk of spiritual matters.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

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



St. Scholastica Honoree—2021

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



We are honored to announce that this year’s St. Scholastica Award recipient is Margaret Barrett. For many years, Margaret has volunteered her time and talents at St. Paul’s Monastery, primarily as the Volunteer Coordinator. We are so grateful for her steadfast dedication and love for the Sisters.

St. Scholastica Honor 2021 Live Stream

February 10, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

St. Paul’s Monastery [Facebook Page](#)

We invite you to join us on [Facebook](#) on February 10 at 11:00 a.m. for the live streaming of the St. Scholastica Honor presentation to Margaret Barrett. A recording of this live stream will also be published on our [YouTube page](#) following the presentation.

Thank you, Margaret for your many years of service at St. Paul’s Monastery.

Celebrating St. Scholastica

by Mission Advancement, continued

This year's Feast of St. Scholastica also marks the 12th anniversary of our move from our previous Larpenteur location to our current monastery at 2675 Benet Road. We will be sharing Sisters' memories and reflections on this important anniversary on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and in our upcoming March e-Newsletter.

Since our move 12 years ago, the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery have continued our long-standing ministries of prayer, hospitality, and promotion of Benedictine spirituality—as well as ministered in personal ministries in education, parishes, social justice, and local non-profits.

Right: A poignant moment as onlookers observed the cross being put on top of bell tower in 2008.



Left: After the building was complete, landscaping still needed some work at the new location.



Above: Boy Scout volunteers help to organize the library.

Left: Sister Monica Raway moves into the Monastery on moving day, February 10, 2009.

Below: Photos from early in the construction process, 2007.



Celebrating St. Scholastica

by Mission Advancement, continued

The St. Scholastica Feast day is also the 30th anniversary of first vows for Sister Linda Soler, OSB. First vows are known as Temporary Monastic Profession which is a minimum time of three years and a maximum of six years. Sister Linda writes, “I was honored to experience First Profession on the Feast of St. Scholastica, the twin sister of St. Benedict, on February 10 in the former monastery. The tradition in the community is First Profession was usually on the Feast of St. Benedict, July 11; but I was offered February 10 since I just completed my canonical novitiate in January 1991. But I didn’t forget our Founder, St. Benedict, as I professed my final vows on July 11, 1997.

“At the time of my final vows, my father had special artwork (an icon of St. Scholastica and St. Benedict together) framed and with a special plaque. That holy icon goes wherever I go. I also have a copy of that icon in my Liturgy of the Hours prayer book as a daily reminder of what I professed according to the Rule of St. Benedict, the norms of the Federation of St. Benedict, and the living tradition of St. Paul’s Monastery.

“I give much credit to my parents for my religious vocation. My mother died when I was eight years old, so I give credit for my faith to my deceased father, George. At the age of 59, I look back where I was 30 years ago, and I give thanks to God for all that has been given to me by community life and ministry, so that in all things God may be glorified.”



Pictured here with her father, George Soler, Sister Linda Soler, OSB, gives credit to her father for her faith.



The Monastic Life

Psalm 119 “Sustain me, O God, as you have promised, and I shall live; do not disappoint me in my hope” is adopted in monastic life as the *Suscipe* at the time of monastic profession. Benedictines sing this verse three times, with hands raised in supplication and self-offering, after we have pronounced our vows and signed our vow statement on the altar as a sign of our consecration to God. We put our total trust in God to be formed in the Gospel values, community life living the Rule of Benedict.

As monastics, we profess Stability, Conversion of Life, and Obedience. Through these vows we live the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience modeled by Jesus Christ. St. Benedict places the monastic vows to be unique in our Church today because we profess stability and conversion of life; and it is only in monastic life you would find this formula. St. Benedict expects the monastic to live and follow the Gospel values.

Seeing God: An Exhibit of Sacred Art

by the Benedictine Center

Seeing God: An Exhibit of Sacred Art is going virtual. To continue this important, long-standing exhibit, we are moving it online for 2021. While the Gallery at St. Paul's Monastery is not physically open to hang this exhibit, we still need art, especially now. Artists' work will speak to the following questions: *What challenges and what blessings are you experiencing as you live and make art now? How are you Seeing God during this unprecedented time? Where are you Seeing God?* During this pause in the Benedictine Center programming, this exhibit will provide a much-needed source of inspiration to those who would otherwise come to the monastery. Entries will begin posting on the Benedictine Center website blog in February at [the Benedictine Center](https://www.benedictinecenter.org/).



Preview from the Seeing God 2021 Virtual Exhibit:
Shekinah by Karen Kurka Jensen

Snow Days

by Jenny Schlauch, Maple Tree Child Care

*"When it snows, you have two choices:
shovel or make snow angels."*

Snow may be a nuisance for adults, but the Maple Tree children love it! Recently, teacher Lisa Dock had her preschool group make angels in the snow. Pictured is her son, Frankie, as he enjoys perfecting his angel-making skills.



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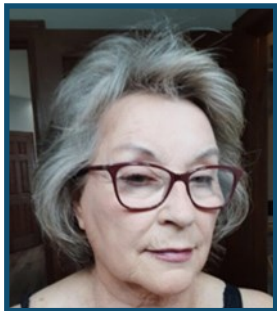
us every quarter. Every little

bit helps, and we are so

grateful for your support!

A Year of Challenges

by Shirley J Reidmann, Oblate Candidate

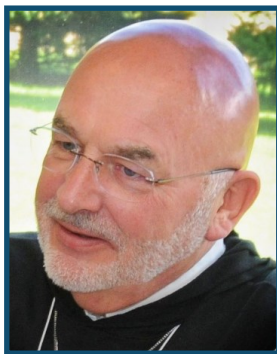


Happy 2021! I was thinking about this past year and all the joy we experienced as Oblate candidates amidst the unprecedented COVID challenges. Personally, I believe it has made us more resolute, persistent, persevering and humble in our journey toward Final Commitment. Each day in silence, prayer and solitude, I experience Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Mother Mary in varying degrees of elation and love. It's like finding a long lost family member or friend. The process of Benedictine Spirituality is defined in such a way as to peel away and find our real selves, and God, among all the distractions of the world. The peace I have come to experience in my everyday life through the Lay Oblate program often brings me to tears as I "listen with the ear of the heart" and am able to discern God's presence in all people and situations. The Sacrament of Reconciliation has become a very powerful tool in my Benedictine journey. Thank you for being God's gift of grace to me. Sending blessings and love your way for a beautiful year to come in our journey and relationship.

Oblates

St. Benedict: Receive Everyone as Christ

by Michael Kassner, Oblate



There's a lot of negative happening right now, but I'm here to report there's a lot of good happening as well. I'm a pastoral minister and an "any way I can help" person for several assisted-care centers near my home parish.

I have provided worship services inside the building, long-distance via Zoom, and standing outside the building in the rain and snow -- to the delight of residents. It all depends on whether there are active COVID cases or not. The constant flux can be frustrating, but I'm a witness to many simple yet

wondrous things that overshadow the negative.

Two aides outside a care center are in a heated argument. Yet, in the very next moment, they both run to help an elderly man stuck in the automated door. Later, these same two aides, without hesitation, agree to work a double shift together. I know an activity director who took over cooking for 70 residents when the entire kitchen staff had to quarantine.

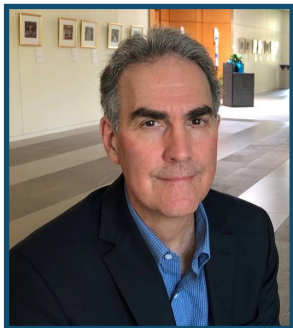
Whether any of these people have heard of St. Benedict or not, I do not know. That matters little, as they are responding to what St. Benedict calls all of us to do:

"Let all guests who arrive be received as Christ, because He will say 'I was a stranger and you took me in.'"

This is something remarkable I've witnessed time and time again. No questions, no discussion, it's just the right thing to do.

Good Zeal

by Jeff Dols, Oblate



This, then, is the good zeal which members must foster with fervent love: “They should each try to be the first to show respect to the other” (Romans 12:10), supporting with the greatest patience one another’s weaknesses of body or behavior, and earnestly competing in obedience to one another. (Rule of St. Benedict, Ch. 72)

In what could be viewed as the ultimate in ironic twists, in January the Oblates of St. Paul’s Monastery began the first of a monthly series of conversations on the Rule of Benedict with Chapter 72 on Good Zeal. Ironic, in that the conversation happened three days after the zealous storming of the U.S. Capitol.

The irony was not lost on anyone involved in the Oblate conversation, as we did our best to try to have a respectful and non-partisan discussion on good zeal while not ignoring the elephant in the room. For the most part, we succeeded, but it required all of us to remember the key connection between good zeal and the Benedictine value of Humility (RB, Ch. 7).

While denouncing the violence was the easy part, we found the much harder task was to have humility to stop standing in judgment of each other. We talked at length of the need, now more than ever, to really respect and listen to each other. As Joan Chittister, OSB, writes in her commentary on this chapter, “Benedictine spirituality is about caring for the people you live with and loving the people you don’t and loving God more than yourself. Just as Benedict insisted in the Prologue to the Rule, he requires at its end: We must learn to listen to what God is saying in our simple, sometimes insane, and always uncertain lives. Good zeal provides the foundation for the spirituality of the long haul.”

For our nation to truly turn the page toward healing and reconciliation, we are realizing that our collective penchant for demonizing the other is clearly getting us nowhere. Good zeal requires us to take a second look (re-spect) and start to see and welcome all as Christ. Only then can we truly “listen with the ear of the heart” to the needs, fears, hopes and dreams of the other.

We don’t need to look far to find examples of people pulling together in good zeal and respect. Shining especially bright are the hearts of all those on the front lines responding to the impact of COVID-19. From healthcare professionals to food shelf volunteers and countless others, radiant hearts have actively engaged in “competing in obedience to one another.” May we all be inspired by their example of good zeal in action.⁸



Around the Monastery: There are many pieces of art and icons of St. Scholastica at the Monastery. This statue is located in the Cloister Walk outside Healthcare. St. Scholastica stands next to the statue of her brother, St. Benedict.

A Historical Look at the Chapel

by Mission Advancement

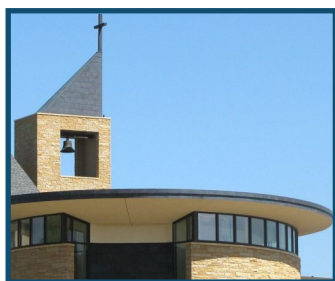
Continuing the historical look at St. Paul's Monastery, the chapel is a big part of life for the Community and for all who visit.

Did You Know?

The band of windows around the top of the chapel, according to artist Michael Pilla, "allows natural light to enter. Each window includes a metal sculpture in a praying (Orans) gesture. The metal is the framework of the human person, the glass depicts the spirit. Each spirit has its own color, its own originality. The color of the glass square defines each person's originality. In the diversity expressed in community, it helps us understand each individual person. The simplicity of the small colored squares means different things to different people. For some, the blue means winter, red fall, green spring, and the yellow summer. Using metal and glass is the most sparing way (to create) a form both elegant and meaningful."

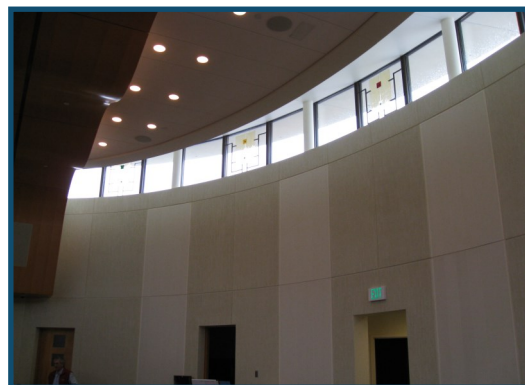
In 2009, then-Prioress Sister Carol Rennie, OSB, wrote that "A team of Sisters and Oblates helped the architect see how (our Chapel) is where the daily rhythm of prayer by the Sisters and our guests would sanctify the entire Monastery and its ministries. What happens in this place enlivens all else that happens. For this place is not a refuge from life or mission, it is a daily reminder to all who pray here that we are a pilgrim people seeking the God who journeys with us."

Sister Mary Lou Dummer, OSB, further adds, "Our Chapel design reflects our cycle of life and faith. From the baptismal font, and baptism marking our birth as Christians, we step in faith through the doors into a welcoming, enfolding space.



Above: An exterior view of the unique chapel design.

Here we pray and worship as a Christ-centered Community. The undulating ceiling and ceiling lights draw us forward to the altar where we are nourished by the Eucharist. As one looks out from the altar, one sees the Monastery cemetery and cross where rest our beloved deceased Sisters."



Above: Historic and present day views of the chapel at St. Paul's Monastery.

Around the Monastery

by Mission Advancement

Right: On January 1, the Monastic Community rang in the New Year and the Solemnity of Mary with a community celebration. After prayer and a Word Communion Service, the Community had a special meal along with a variety of appetizers and desserts.

This year, the leadership team also

had something special set aside for the Sisters. Oblate Mary Dean collaborated on a project on an app called Nextdoor asking if anyone would like to donate a gift for the Sisters by creating a drop-off site at her house. The response was overwhelming, and the Sisters were



blessed with many practical gifts. In fact, the response was so generous that Sister Linda made a trip to the Franciscan Brothers of Peace and CommonBond Senior Housing to spread the cheer. The outcome was “hands down” amazing and it brought happiness to the Sisters who were not able to see their family or friends. The donors are people of all faiths who appreciate the work of the Sisters. This is one example of the generosity given during the pandemic.

Left: Sister Mary White finds time to enjoy a beautiful January day walking around the Monastery grounds. Sister Mary and Sister Paula Hagen now do so with their new trekking poles, generously donated by a friend who wanted to make sure the Sisters can safely pursue their outdoor winter activities. Many of the Sisters often find time to walk outside and enjoy the winter landscape.

St. Scholastica Novena

Continued from page 1.

For each day, begin with this prayer and statement of intentions: "St. Scholastica, God granted your request because of your great love. I ask now that you turn to God with my request out of your great love for God and your great love for me."

State your intentions. Add daily prayer (from below) and then end with the following prayer: "St. Scholastica, you were a great witness to this truth. Help me to believe it more fully and to live it out each day. Amen."

Day 1

Love is patient (1 Cor. 13:4). Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by becoming more patient. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails (1 Cor. 13:7-8).

Day 2

Love is kind. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by becoming more kind. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 3

Love is not jealous. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by becoming more grateful, and by overcoming my disordered desires for the goods or traits of my neighbor. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 4

Love is not pompous or inflated. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by becoming more humble. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 5

Love is not rude. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by becoming more courteous in mind and speech. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 6

Love does not seek its own interests. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by seeking God's will and the interests of others before my own. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 7

Love is not quick-tempered. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by gaining greater control over my emotions. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 8

Love does not brood over injury. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by more readily forgiving those who have hurt me. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Day 9

Love does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Through God's grace, help me to grow in love by honoring the good in others and never celebrating another's shame. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

Commemorative Pavers

Honoring Those Who Light Our Way



Order now for
Fall 2021 Installation

Sizes

4X8 Paver: \$125
Up to three lines of text

8X8 Paver: \$250
Up to eight lines of text

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 button 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!*



[Click Here to Print the
Paver Order Form](#)

Prayer Schedule

*Even though our doors are closed temporarily,
we are grateful that you are praying with us in spirit!*

“Nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God.”

—Rule of St. Benedict, Chap. 43



SUNDAY

Morning Prayer: 10:00 AM

Eucharist: 11:00 AM

Evening Prayer: 5:00 PM

MONDAY–SATURDAY

Morning Prayer: 8:00 AM

Midday Prayer: 11:30 AM

Evening Prayer: 5:00 PM

For further information, call 651-777-8181 or visit us www.stpaulsmonastery.org.



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 St. 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.



St. Paul's Monastery Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery, are a community who 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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