



ST. PAUL'S  
MONASTERY

2675 Benet Road  
St. Paul, MN 55109-4808

# Passages

Volume 26/Issue 1 Spring 2015



## *Living Benedictine Values*



*Special Insert: 2013-14 Stewardship Report*



## Greetings From the Prioress

*"Look at the past with gratitude, live in the present with passion, and embrace the future with hope"* Pope Francis

I am deeply grateful to my Benedictine Community for the confidence they have placed in me when they elected me Prioress. It has been a very life-giving experience to live in the present with passion and with hope for the future of each Sister in this Community. Pope Francis inspires me daily with renewed hope.

We are participating fully in the Pope's challenge to *Wake up the World* with renewed faith, hope in God's unconditional love and mercy during this Year of Consecrated Life. Sister Mary Lou Dummer, Sub-prioress, and Sister Marie Fujan, Vocation Director, have gotten us fully involved in the events. Sisters are attending the diocesan-sponsored events. We are scheduling an open house to honor all who share our Baptismal Call and support us in our unique way of living the consecrated life as Benedictines. Our summer jubilees' Profession of Vows and celebrations will highlight to *Wake up the World* joyfully.

I personally invite you to join us for one of our Sunday liturgies and brunch – please let us know that you can come – for a personal retreat or quiet time. Come and get a taste of Benedictine Spirituality in one of the offerings of the Benedictine Center. Come and celebrate with us the "Joy of the Gospel" lived at St. Paul's Monastery. In this issue of *Passages*, you are invited to read about the different ways in which Benedictine values are lived daily by Sisters, Oblates and Benedictine Associates.

I look forward to renewing our friendship or meeting you as a new friend of the Monastery. Until then know that you are remembered daily here at prayer. "If today you hear God's voice, harden not your heart" (The Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue).

*Sister Paula Hagen*

Sister Paula Hagen, OSB  
Prioress, St. Paul's Monastery

P.s. Inserted in this issue is the Stewardship Report to our Donors for our Fiscal Year 2013-2014. Reading the report fills me with great gratitude and I thank you for supporting us and our ministries. You have helped us write the great stories of the past. Now, we are inspiring each other to write the story of the present "Joy of the Gospel" and be filled with passionate hope for the future.



## The Essence of Benedictine Spirituality

by Sister Mary Lou Dummer, OSB

The Benedictine goal is to seek God. Those who follow the Rule of St. Benedict are rooted in Scripture and prayer and an effort to seek and find God in each person or experience in daily life. Life is to be lived in moderation with a healthy balance between work and prayer. Benedictine Spirituality includes being obedient to the will of God as they discern it in their prayer, *lectio*, and life events. They live the Rule and the Christian life in community with other God-committed individuals and continue their efforts at conversion of heart. The Benedictine Monastic and Oblate tries to live in the present in prayerful and loving connection to God and family, as well as to his or her religious and civic community.

### Keystones of Benedictine Spirituality

Reverence

Listening

Benedictine Vows: Stability, Conversion, Obedience

Humility

Silence

Hospitality

Moderation and Balance

Community and Relationships

Stewardship

Prayer, Work, Study

Finding God in the Ordinary

Value of Work

Solitude

Christian Exercise of Authority

Peace and Joy



Photo: John Doman



# Living Benedictine Values in a Parish

foreword by Sister Mary Lou Dummer, OSB

Pope Francis declared Sunday, November 30, 2014 the beginning of a year dedicated to recognizing and



celebrating Consecrated Life. The Year of Consecrated Life will end on February 2, 2016, Consecrated Life Sunday. Our Pope intends

this to be a special, yearlong focus asking the Church's Religious Sisters, Brothers, and Priests to *Wake Up The World!* with their testimony of "Faith, Holiness and Hope." Pope Francis is calling Religious to renew their commitment to be prophetic, to proclaim the reign of God through their daily fidelity, and to be present to those at the margins of society. He is asking Religious to celebrate their "past with gratitude", to "live the present passionately," and to "embrace the future with hope."

The Archdiocesan Task Force on the Year of Consecrated Life is planning various ways of communication and celebration that will present the whole picture of Religious Life as a call to live out one's baptism. Members of the Task Force from our Community, including myself and Sister Marie Fujan, want to convey the message: "All Religious are united in their diverse ways of living the consecrated life."

When Oblate David Fried, a parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in St. Paul (now Church of the Blessed Sacrament), was asked the following question: "How has a person living the Consecrated Life impacted your parish life?" he gave this response.



## ***Consecrated Life and My Parish***

by David Fried, Obl. OSB

My experience of consecrated members of our faith started in elementary school with the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Sisters provided me with a first-class, elementary education. I also learned

from their example living the Professed Life. Later, I was schooled at Cretin High School by the Christian Brothers, and learned of their dedication to service. My sister Jeanine entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Paul, and my brother Frank went on to become ordained as a diocesan priest. When I think of consecrated life, I recognize that the Professed embody and reflect the sacramental graces. A visit with a professed person offers a chance to see an issue from the eyes of Jesus Christ.

The Professed in our midst act as a bedrock of Christian faith and values. They offer a sure compass for values and relationships. In essence, they offer reflections – daily mini-retreats – to individuals and groups, to lean forward in life, to see life in a new way, to reduce or deal with apprehensions and concerns, and to act as a sounding board for problems and issues in life. When seeking their guidance, one is getting much more than the advice of a single person. One is actually getting the benefit of the knowledge and compassion honed within their communities for hundreds of years. Thus they become the Christ in our lives, and each of the Professed can take on the role of a trusted counselor or elder when a member of the parish or organization needs condolence or support.

For the last 23 years, my Parish has enjoyed a close kinship with our Liturgy Minister, Sister Mary Lou Dummer, a member of the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery. There is a consistent theme in the lives of Benedictines; they are professed to the Rule of St. Benedict which teaches and guides the way of life of the monastic community. Their lives foster obedience to the Rule and a simplicity of life that is completely contrary to a self- and consumer-focused lifestyle.

The charism of hospitality with unconditional love, to welcome each person as Christ, is a yardstick for the Benedictines to measure their life decisions. They seek to develop friendships and relationships based on the teachings of Jesus and St. Benedict. Their example acts as a guide for all of us who associate with them.

At my Parish, Sister Mary Lou was a daily example of a Consecrated Life. She has touched the lives of all our parishioners — our youth, the Elders, and each Parish group. As Liturgy Minister, she has taught us the importance of the liturgical seasons. Just a few months ago, she guided us through the traditional practices of Advent. She illustrated why each practice is important to the Church, the Parish, and to each individual. As we

*Continued on next page*



## CONSECRATED LIFE AND MY PARISH

*continued from page 3*

moved through the Advent season, we became aware of the importance of our preparation, particularly through participation in the Sacraments. While preparing us for a particular ceremony, Sister Mary Lou paused the rehearsal to explain how something might be done and why. She demonstrated how a piece of music supports the readings of the day, the flow of Advent, and the anticipation of the coming of Jesus Christ.

Just as she does with her worldwide Benedictine Community, Sister Mary Lou taught us the daily practice of praying the Liturgy of the Hours, with its seasonal changes. Many of the Parish members have carried the example from the practice of hospitality and unconditional love, provided by Sister Mary Lou, to their homes and other environments. Sister Mary Lou's example has motivated me and eight other members of my Parish to become Oblates of St. Paul's Monastery.

Our lives have been enriched by the Sisters of St. Benedict, who have consecrated their lives to God and in the service of others. They keep us in line in our faith. They instruct us daily by their example. They love unconditionally, teach others to do the same, rebuke us gently when we err, and strengthen us in our weakness. They are meek and pure of heart. They are Christ among us.



If you are able, we invite you to support the Sisters and their ministries with a donation.

An envelope is enclosed for your convenience; or contact Thekla at [trura-polley@stpaulsmonastery.org](mailto:trura-polley@stpaulsmonastery.org) or 651-777-6850.

*Thank you and God bless you.*

# JOIN US!

## HILL-MURRAY PIONEER PREMIER AUCTION

**SATURDAY, MAY 2ND, 2015  
HILL-MURRAY VARSITY GYM**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT [HILL-MURRAY.ORG](http://HILL-MURRAY.ORG)**

### Reflections on Gratitude

*by Sister Lois Hauwiller*

I Chronicles: Give thanks to God; God is good. God's kindness endures forever. God has been good.

Many generous benefactors are part of life at the Monastery.

God's unfailing love is around us, God is faithful. God's love is forever. Throughout the Psalms, we are extolled to give thanks to God. God's faithfulness is to every generation. Psalm 34 tells us: Those who trust God, do not lack anything good. Take refuge in God, and you will have all you need.

So why not trust the loving God.

Prophet Isaiah said: God comes to save you: Do not fear: I will help you. Trust God for your needs.



# Living Benedictine Values as a Vocation

by John Doman

Adjacent to the Sisters' home of St. Paul's Monastery, CommonBond Communities offers affordable housing and a way of life that extends the Sisters' mission: To provide for those in need, especially for women and families. The phrase denotes the needs of all people to be at one with each other. A goal to which all aspire.



Sister LaVerne Hudalla brings the Sisters' ministry of hospitality to the residents of the 48 town home units. Sister LaVerne is a welcoming presence to the youth of the CommonBond Communities. She works especially closely with the K-5th graders enrolled in the after-

school Camp Fire Minnesota program. She is one of the Camp Fire Program volunteers dedicated to helping youth thrive. Camp Fire participants receive schoolwork tutoring, opportunities (and empowerment) to engage in community service, and additional education related to health, wellness and care of the earth.

Although now retired from full-time teaching, the vigorous, yet quietly-spoken 82 year old is still dedicated to teaching and learning after a full career on the front lines of education. In her sixth year as a CommonBond volunteer, she maintains that she gets as much as she gives: "My biggest joy working with the kids has always been that moment when you see the 'light go on.' I help them with their homework, and they teach me the new math and keep me aware of the intricacies of modern pop culture."

The kids, on the other hand, appreciate her efforts and enthusiasm, giving her credit for "looking pretty good for a lady her age."

The Camp Fire kids are both invigorated and invigorating. Modern life is complicated for today's families, and especially for pre-teen children. "Many of the kids come from one-parent households," said Sister LaVerne, "and the parent is often working two jobs; but they strive to provide the best environment for their children and are determined to see their kids get an education."

The kids at CommonBond are city kids. They're streetwise, with a need to recognize and evaluate other cultures. The call of the street cannot be the only clarion call they receive.

Camp Fire, and volunteers like Sister LaVerne give youth a knowledge of our shared culture, natural environment and how to preserve it—social and computer literacy, and, it must allow them "to hear something good about themselves." Self worth is important to these youngsters who often have been witness to some very difficult situations.

The relationship between Sister LaVerne and CommonBond Communities is strictly secular.

Religion is never talked about. Nonetheless, the Camp Fire group is very interested in what goes on at the Monastery next door. Especially: "What's all the bell ringing for?"

The Camp Fire kids have visited the building upon occasion. They got to walk the grounds and the labyrinth, ate cookies and viewed the artwork. Camp Fire members "seemed to like the green roof and the dining room best," reported Sister LaVerne. As do all Monastery visitors, they were given a chance to feel the peace and love of the place.

Camp Fire also offers its members informal learning and new experiences in the summertime. Sister LaVerne is there, helping and teaching and serving as a loving, respectful mentor. The kids put on talent shows for their parents, build visions of their future through visits to local college campuses – they even get a chance to be a country kid – finding reward in planting and reaping the harvest of their own small crops.

There is also Camp Tanadoona in Minnetonka, since 1924 an idyllic summertime escape for Camp Fire kids. The camp provides a natural classroom and a chance for city youth to gain a natural camp experience. Near to the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota River, it provides five natural landscapes and a unique outdoor classroom. Their week at camp is an annual highlight for CommonBond Camp Fire kids.

"Being with the kids is a joy," said Sister LaVerne, "and I think it's important for our Community to be a part of something we helped to establish."

The kids appreciate Sister LaVerne's efforts and enthusiasm, giving her credit for "looking pretty good for a lady her age."





# Living Benedictine Values at Work

by Mary Del Vecchio, PsyD, Obl. OSB

As an Oblate I am often asked, "What is an Oblate?" In 1999 when I made my final Oblation, I would have answered the question very differently from what I share with people today. Back then I participated in the Oblate Formation at St. Paul's Monastery as a personal journey



of spiritual growth while I was working professionally with persons with disabilities and mental illness.

I was inspired by St. Benedict who says, "Welcome all as Christ." I had discovered many people with whom I worked had a

strong spiritual core and wanted to talk about their faith. They represented numerous faith traditions from around the world. Being an Oblate was an opening up of myself to others, a deepening of my faith and a searching for God's purpose in my life.

Today being an Oblate is a part of me that is integrated into all aspects of my life. OBLATE to me means:

O – Opening oneself to God's call; Other centered; working Outside the Monastery

B – Blessed: I am Blessed when I can give to those with whom I work and help

L – Love

A – All are welcomed as Christ

T – Giving of my Time and Talents to others

E – Every day I seek to carry my commitment of being an Oblate into the world

Currently I find myself called to work as a therapist at Catholic Charities – Opportunity Center in Minneapolis. Working at Catholic Charities with the homeless is an opportunity for me to use my education, skills and gifts. It is the most challenging work I have done in my 35 year career. However, it offers me blessings in equal measure. Living an Oblate life in the world is about serving others; walking as Jesus did with the sick, lepers, and rejected. As an Oblate I attempt to "be and do" all that is held within those six letters: O-B-L-A-T-E.

## Who is An Oblate?

by Sister Mary Lou Dummer, OSB

Oblates of St. Paul's Monastery are Christian women and men who associate themselves with the Monastery in order to share in the spiritual work of the Benedictine Community. Through this association with the Benedictine Community, Oblates receive help and guidance in living a full Christian life. This is accomplished through scheduled meetings at the Monastery, correspondence and mutual prayerful support. The expression of Benedictine Spirituality, as spelled out in the Rule of Benedict, is so flexible that it can be adapted to the life of anyone who is genuinely seeking God and desiring to live out the Gospel message. Oblates have the



opportunity to view the world from a different perspective as they meet the challenges and demands of their everyday life. They are an extension of the spirit of the Monastic Community into their family circle, their place of work, and in their civic and social activities. In response to the question: "What do you do in your everyday life to support your Oblate commitment," one Oblate wrote:

"I try to center my life around the Rule of St. Benedict, letting it be a compass of sorts as I live in a world filled with so many distractions. Each day, I make every effort to do morning prayer and read a passage of the Rule, go to Mass, then off to my work life, and finally to end the day with evening prayer. Sometimes I cannot do all in any one day, but I try at the very least to read the daily readings and the Rule to make every effort to avoid the temptations of the secular world."

Christians who choose to become Oblates are attracted to Benedictine Values (as described on page 2). Oblates love the Monastery and are an extension of it to a needy world. They are advocates for its values and spiritual life. They are bonded together as they pray for the Monastic Community and the Monastic Community prays for them.

## Oblates

The Monastery's new Oblate class will be forming soon. For more information, e-mail or call Oblate Director, Sister Mary Lou at: [mldummer@stpaulsmonastery.org](mailto:mldummer@stpaulsmonastery.org) or 651-777-8181.



# Living Benedictine Values at Home

by Kelly Czajka, MTS

“Read it again Mommy, please.” “Just one more time!” *Lectio divina* happens nightly in our house. Not with scripture, but with *Rattletrap Car*, our three-year-old’s favorite book. Over and over my daughters ask to hear the same story read again, each time delighting in something new, or asking what a word means.

My children lead me to gain a greater appreciation for *lectio divina*. They continue to call me to a deeper understanding

of God’s presence in all things, including children’s stories about broken cars and kids that want to get to the beach on a hot day.

The words on the page are much more than a simple story to my children.



They are a drawing close to one another as we sit together and share in a common experience. My children often quote lines from their favorite stories, and the words have taken on greater meaning in the life of our home. Those little moments bring us together and remind us that we are here to assist each other in growing to be the best people we can be, rooted in a sense of joy.

Family life, when lived with a sincere desire to grow in holiness, is steeped in Benedictine values. As a family, we are called to build intentional community, practice radical hospitality, and show unceasing compassion towards one another.

A profound commitment to stability unites us. My husband and I, in our wedding vows, committed to one another through the good and the bad. Through this union, we also welcomed children to join our little community.

Our children came as mysteries to us, unfolding daily and teaching us how to welcome others no matter who they are and who they are becoming. The invitation to hospitality is a daily reality as we encounter one another with grace and love. We recognize Christ among us even in tantrums of over-tired toddlers and juggling a myriad of commitments at home and to the outside world.

All of these values are tempered by living in moderation, and being good stewards of our resources. We listen to God’s call in our lives as we discern how to live fully for God amidst the joys and the struggles of family life. We

continually try our best to model for our children how to live with intention and to be responsible with all we have been given.

Sometimes this means finding the space to steal away for a few minutes of precious silence, even when our “to do” list feels a mile long. There God is in the middle of our lives, reminding

us to look with gratitude on these

moments of family life, knowing that our children are helping us to grow closer to the divine as we learn what both joy and sacrifice are on a much deeper level. They strengthen us and teach us the patience and kindness required to live as Christ in the world.

Perhaps Scholastica understood just how important family life was to her faith journey as she asked her brother Benedict to remain with her for the evening. Our family helps us to discover new aspects of ourselves all the time.

Each night as we follow the rhythm of getting our daughters ready for bed, I am reminded that no matter how much we have a routine, the little moments in that pattern can open our hearts even more. God’s presence comes through the sweet voice of a little girl as she tells you your bedtime kiss is “stuck on tight with chocolate marshmallow fudge delight!”

*Lectio divina* happens nightly in our house. Not with scripture, but with *Rattletrap Car*.

## Ministries’ Corner

### Benedictine Associates

Linda Anderson and Mary Lou Kozmik became the first Benedictine Associates at St. Paul’s Monastery on the Feast of St. Benedict (March 21) in 2014.

When asked about their first year as Benedictine Associates, they enthusiastically responded.

Mary Lou said that “this year of becoming a Benedictine Associate has brought great blessings and fulfillment. It is a joy to participate

#### Worldwide Community

As part of the Global Sisterhood Initiative, St. Paul’s Monastery often welcomes Sisters from around the world. Recently, Sister Isaac Bae visited from Missionary



Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing’s Daegu Priory, South Korea. Pictured (l-r) are Mary Lou Kozmik, Sister Isaac, and Linda Anderson.

Host communities value these visits as much as the guests. The Sisters here are renewed by the enthusiastic stories of vibrant communities in Asia and Africa and the guests appreciate the open arms and hearts that welcome them.



## MINISTRIES' CORNER continued from page 7

frequently with the Sisters in community: The sharing of Scripture, singing the Psalms that praise God, feeding the soul in Liturgy of the Hours, the liturgical ministries performed at Eucharist, pausing for centering prayer, and the monthly treat of Taizé Prayer. My prayerful wish to become involved as a participant has been fulfilled. By the way, when the Sisters say they are holding us in prayer, believe it!"

Linda Anderson added, "This new way of association has deepened my whole life in seeking God and living Gospel values. The process of Benedictine Associate formation and lived experience has enriched my life and work. I've been able to formulate a personal understanding of the Benedictine values as they apply to daily life and our interactions with others, always being called to love and place the needs of others before my own. This Community of Sisters, through their wisdom and sharing, has helped me to see, reflect, and share with others how this little Rule can bring you closer to God and to carry Christ's message of love. The year included increased liturgical ministry and committee involvement, deeper fellowship with the Sisters' Community, study and reflection of writings, small group sharing, and a deep growing love for God and this inspirational Community."

"Yes," continued Mary Lou, "becoming a participant was enhanced when Linda and I were approved as the Community's representatives for the Monastic Institute. Four days in July were spent among monastics from all over the country, sharing their concerns and outlook for the future of monasticism in the United States. It was a heartwarming experience and we came away feeling optimistic from evidence that monastics, as "counter-cultural" persons, are part of the conversation about the need to adapt to our present changing times."

### Benedictine Center

#### *Pilgrimage in the Bold Footsteps of Benedictine Women*



On June 5-6, trace the bold footsteps of the Benedictine women we have come to admire, journeying between St. Paul's Monastery and other important sites in the Sisters' history, including an overnight at St. Benedict's Monastery. Pilgrims will be joined by expert storytellers who will help us see how the past

continues to shape the present and future of St. Paul's Monastery. Details and registration at [www.stpaulsmonastery.org](http://www.stpaulsmonastery.org) or 651.777.7251.

## Maple Tree Monastery Childcare Center

The children of Maple Tree Monastery Childcare Center thoroughly enjoy the beautiful grounds they share with the Sisters. "Not many childcare facilities have such a large



and inviting recreation area," said Maple Tree Director Jennie Schlauch. "We're so thankful that the Sisters allow the children access to the property." The Sisters, in turn, are delighted to see their Maple Tree visitors! The new berms have created perfect sledding hills; pictured at left are Ben and Laine enjoying a speedy trip on their sleds. For

further information about Maple Tree Childcare Center, please call Jennie at 651-770-0766.



### Development

We had a blessed time at Christmas at the Monastery, and we thank all of you who attended and who support the Sisters!

*The Sisters provide such a nourishing spiritual environment year round, it's a privilege to volunteer for the festivities of Christmas at the Monastery in support of their ministries and liturgies. And it's fun!*  
—Mary Lou Kozmik



*At this time of Christmas, we receive from the Sisters a gift of music, sharing, and the exchange of gifts, in the anticipation of the birth of Christ. Thus the Sisters play the role of shepherd, inn keeper, and prophets of old, in their witnessing and celebrating the presence of the Christ Child among us.*  
—David Fried and Nancy Burns

*It was an honor for all of us from the St. Bernard's Alumni Association to donate our time, talents and treasures to the 2014 Christmas at the Monastery. It was a wonderful evening celebrating the Christmas Season with the Sisters and their many friends, and an opportunity to give back to the Sisters for all the years of outreach service they have provided. As the Benedictine Values say: "That in All Things God May be Glorified."* —Michelle Ponsolle



*Christmas at the Monastery is a great time to revisit the wonderful memories we have of the Sisters. It also gives us a chance to give back and say "thanks."* —Jane Wold Wagemaker



## In Memoriam

“May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life.” Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 72

### Sister Jeron Osterfeld, OSB

Born: May 3, 1922

Professed: July 11, 1943

Died: October 9, 2014



S. Jeron (Elizabeth) Osterfeld, 92, was born the fifth child in a family of six, four girls and two boys, to Henry and Elizabeth (DeVile) Osterfeld in Minneapolis.

S. Jeron received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation at St. Clement's Church. She graduated from St.

Anthony of Padua High School in 1940,

and entered the Scholasticate at St. Benedict's Convent in St. Joseph, Minnesota. S. Jeron was a charter member when 178 Benedictines from St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, MN established St. Paul's Priory at 301 Summit Avenue in St. Paul, MN, on June 22, 1948. She graduated from the College of St. Benedict in 1954, and received an M.A. from the University of St. Thomas in 1967 and a teaching certificate from the St. Paul Diocesan Teachers' College.

S. Jeron began her ministry as an educator at St. Mary's Cathedral School in St. Cloud in 1943, continued at St. Bernard's in St. Paul, St. Anne's in Minneapolis, Most Holy Trinity in St. Louis Park, Maternity of Mary in St. Paul, Sacred Heart in Robbinsdale, St. Boniface in Hastings, Visitation in Minneapolis and St. Victoria in Victoria, Minnesota. She was also assigned to teach CCD classes (vacation school) from 1949 to 1973 in several small parishes in Minnesota. In 1970 Sister Rose Alice Althoff appointed her Director of the Community Renewal Process to carry out the directives and implementation of Second Vatican Council. During her semi-retirement years she gave liturgical lectures in various Twin City parishes and continued to conduct scripture studies and reflections until a few months before her death.

S. Jeron was an avid reader, a lifelong learner, and teacher in the areas of liturgy and reading. She received many awards for her commitment to education. She received the “John J. O'Neill Teacher of the Year” award two times.

She is preceded in death by parents, brothers, Harold and Marvin, sisters, Madlyn and Geraldine. She is survived by her sister, Donna, her Benedictine Sisters, Benedictine Associates and Oblates, and many devoted nieces and nephews. We rejoice with her as Christ welcomes her into Eternal Life where love does not fail, and goodness reigns.

### Sister Leanne Maerz, OSB

Born: July 17, 1924

Professed: July 11, 1945

Died: January 25, 2015



S. Leanne (Lucille) Maerz was born to Anthony and Theresa Maerz in Long Prairie, Minnesota, the third of five children.

S. Leanne entered the community in 1939, made her first profession to the monastic way of life on July 11, 1945 and final profession on July 11, 1948.

S. Leanne earned a B.A. from the College of St. Catherine in 1956 and M.A. from Regis College in 1984. S. Leanne lived her calling to service as teacher and principal at Most Holy Trinity, St. Louis Park; St. Bernard's, St. Paul; St. Philip's, Litchfield; St. Hubert's, Chanhassen; St. Mary's (St. Croix Catholic), Stillwater; St. Leo's, Hibbing. She was Sacramental coordinator, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults instructor, and enjoyed other roles supporting God's people in their faith journey. She was awarded many honors for her commitment to education on all levels.

Within the monastic community of St. Paul's Monastery, S. Leanne was appreciated as a woman of great warmth as she shared her presence and always a hearty welcome to all who crossed our threshold.

S. Leanne embraced each of her ministries and the role of the Holy Spirit in her life with utmost sincerity. She knew deep joy and never hesitated to acknowledge, with gratitude, all who became a part of the fabric of her life.

In the Song of Ruth, we are reminded that “when the time of our particular sunset comes, our things, our accomplishments, can't really matter a great deal. However, the clarity and care with which we have loved others will speak with vitality of the great gift of life we have been privileged to receive and offer to others.”

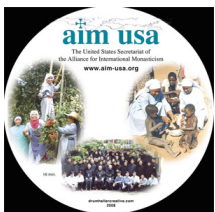
S. Leanne is preceded in death by her parents and sisters Josephine and Bernice; she is survived by her sisters, Betty (Bob) and Sister Merle, OSB residing at St. Scholastica Convent in St. Cloud, her Benedictine Sisters, Associates and Oblates, nieces and nephews, and many friends. May S. Leanne's presence, energy, love, and care live in us. While we will miss her joyful presence, we know she is praising God with the Christ she loved and served joyfully.



## Sisters' Corner

### Monasteries Helping Monasteries

by Sister Mary White, OSB



AIM (Alliance for International Monasticism) USA is an organization composed of 140 monasteries of men and women in the United States and Canada and over 450 English-speaking monasteries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. AIM USA provides

spiritual, educational, formation and building assistance to monasteries in these countries to enable them to be centers of life for others. In turn, these monasteries bring to older monasteries global vision, fresh insights into monastic life, cultural diversity and Gospel witness. Through this complementarity, we form warm, mutual connections through prayer and dedication to our Benedictine way of life. It's my privilege to serve as Vice President of the Board of the USA connection office with Abbot John Klassen of St. John's Abbey as President.

### When I was Hungry, You Fed Me

Sister Linda Soler, along with other Hill-Murray staff and students, attended a Homeless Memorial March on Thursday, December 18. The event acknowledged the children, women and men who have died as a result of their homelessness. After the memorial

service, Sister Linda was blessed to share a meal, some winter clothing and other gifts with a homeless woman.



### Gratitude for Christmas at the Monastery

from Sister Marie Fujan, OSB

Christmas at the Monastery always gathers family and friends of our Sisters, both as individuals and as a community. People are eager to respond to women who have given their lives to serving in the Church.

Pictured with me are **Jane Wold Wagemaker** (left) and **Biz O'Mara** (center), alumnae of Archbishop Murray Memorial High School, where I was on the faculty when it became Hill-Murray School. To



paraphrase Psalm 133: How good it is when friendships are forged with and among students and co-workers!

## Benedictine Friends Forever

by Janie O'Connor, Obl. OSB

Holding a beating heart (as a surgical tech) or delivering cupcakes, raising butterflies or returning to college at age 61, traveling the world or welcoming a first grandchild are just some of the adventures our Oblate group, "Benedictine Friends Forever," has experienced. Since 2000, the four of us have shared a love of books, St. Benedict, discussion, and the camaraderie of good friendships.

Cheri Connor, Helen Sadee and I made our oblation in 2000 and Janet Humphrey in 1999. Over the years others have participated, but we four are the charter members. Initially we gathered in one of our homes and while snacking on crackers and cheese, discuss a book chapter with a question guide prepared by one of our members.

Over the years our meetings evolved into sit down dinners with no book – just life stories since the last meeting. However, you could almost always hear one of us say "What would Ben say?" Since we often discussed his point of view and were frequent visitors at St. Paul's Monastery, we felt that St. Benedict was our friend.

We started each meeting with a prayer we created (see page 11). My uncle was a Trappist Monk for 50+ years, and we often turned the prayer cards over to see different photos of "Uncle Paul," and a lively discussion usually followed.

Together we have experienced death, job changes, family and health challenges, celebrations, a shared love of nature and, especially, the Rule and its meaning for whatever we have encountered over the years.



Above (l-r): Cheri Connor, Janet Humphrey, Helen Sadee, Janie O'Connor



## Benedictine Friends Forever Group Prayer and Book List

### “Living the Rule” Prayer

Source of all being,  
Eternal and Holy Spirit.  
We ask for your guidance,  
As we gather to discuss,  
The Rule of St. Benedict,  
And its application to us  
In our daily lives.  
It is our intention,  
To dedicate ourselves  
To the service of God,  
And God’s people,  
Insofar as our state in life permits.  
Amen.

Esther de Waal: *A Life Giving Way; Lost in Wonder; Seeking God*

Norvene Vest: *Desiring Life; Friend of the Soul*

Kathleen Norris: *The Cloister Walk*

Mary Margaret Funk: *Thoughts Matter*

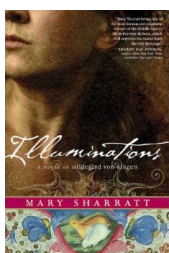
Joan Chittister: *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*

## Exploring the Monastic Library

by Sister Louise Inhofer, OSB

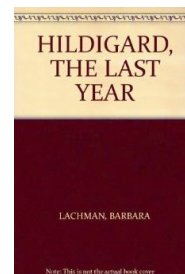
St. Scholastica was probably the first Benedictine woman to live a consecrated life. Since then many more have joined her ranks. Let me tell you about one of my favorites who lived in the 12th Century.

Born in a wealthy family in 1098, St. Hildegard of Bingen became, at the age of 7, handmaid to Jutta, an anchoress. Hildegard was a visionary, prophet and blessed with many gifts that she fostered during her long life; she died, a Benedictine Abbess, at age 81. Hildegard was very knowledgeable in music, the arts, gardening, medicine, and theology and wrote books on these subjects. She also wrote music and morality plays which are still in existence.

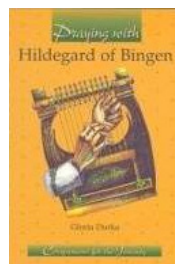


One introduction to St. Hildegard’s life is *Illuminations* by Mary Sharrott. This book was a joy to read. It is well-researched, and the author used imagined conversations to bring Hildegard to life and to weave a fascinating story about a strong woman who risked everything for what she believed.

*Hildegard: The Last Year* by Barbara Lachman is written as a journal with historical facts interwoven with great imagination (and an alternate spelling of St. Hildegard’s name). The author has recounted some of Hildegard’s most dramatic events in her last year and has her writing in her journal with such realism that one would think Hildegard herself really wrote it.



An earlier book by Ms. Lachman is *The Journal of Hildegard of Bingen*. In it are excerpts from 1 December 1151 to 6 January 1153. Along with Hildegard’s journaling, the author includes interesting historical information.



*Praying with Hildegard* by Gloria Durka is another book worth reading – but it is not just a book to read: It is a book with which to pray. From the series *Companions for the Journey*, it allows us to journey with Hildegard through fifteen meditations. Each one has a theme with an opening prayer, a story about Hildegard, her words, a reflection, and God’s word. Even though she lived in the 12th Century, she is still a wonderful companion for us as we navigate our earthly journeys.

## St. Paul’s Monastery Staff News



**Erika Friesen** joins the Monastery kitchen staff after a career as a florist – a florist who has also cooked in many restaurants and private homes since her youth here in North America and abroad. Erika truly loves creating nourishing meals and the opportunity to do so in such a great community is a blessing she cherishes!

**Victoria FritzKapps**, on the Monastery kitchen staff since November 2013, is now the Dietary Manager.

*When we are present  
in each moment, the  
past gently rolls up  
behind us and the  
future slowly unravels  
before us.*

—Rev. Richard Levy,  
Minister and Teacher

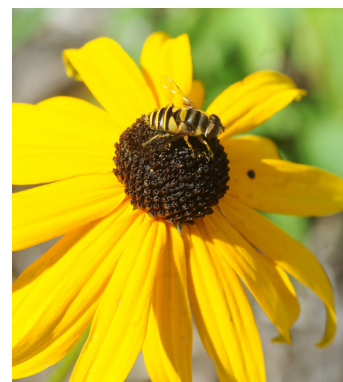


Photo: John Doman





## Prioress Dinner 2015

**April 23, 2015 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

Lake Elmo Inn Event Center

3712 Layton Ave N, Lake Elmo, MN 55042

Highlighting the Fruits of 67 years of Service  
Honoring Special Persons who live Benedictine Values  
Delighting in the Gourmet Banquet and Inspirational Stories  
Renewing Friendships and meeting New Companions  
Raising Funds for the Future of Benedictine Spirituality

**Tickets** are \$60 per guest or \$600 per table of 10

**Register** at <http://tinyurl.com/Prioress2015>—Registration or  
by phone at 651-777-6850

# Save the Date

St. Paul's Monastery  
2675 Benet Road  
St. Paul, MN 55109-4808  
651-777-8181

### Monastic Leadership Team

Sister Paula Hagen, Prioress  
Sister Mary Lou Dummer, Subprioress  
Sister Mary Courteau, Treasurer  
Sister Susan Bourauel  
Sister Catherine Schoenecker

### Editors

Thekla Rura-Polley      Ann Bechtell

### Proofreaders

Sister LaVerne Hudalla      Sister Louise Inhofer  
Sister Jacqueline Leiter      Sister Sarah Voss

**Cover photos:** John Doman

### Upcoming Dates of Note for 2015:

**March 21:** Feast of St. Benedict

**April 23:** Prioress Dinner

**May 2:** Monastic Wisdom for the Planet

**June 5-6:** Pilgrimage in the Bold Footsteps of  
Benedictine Women

**July 11:** Feast of St. Benedict

**Nov. 12:** Give to the Max Day

**Dec. 12:** Christmas at the Monastery

**For additional prayer times and events,  
visit [www.stpaulsmonastery.org](http://www.stpaulsmonastery.org)**

*Please Help Us...* keep our records up to date.  
If your address has changed or is incorrect,  
please call **651-777-8181** to inform us.  
Thank you!