



# Passages

Volume 30/Issue 1 Spring 2019



*Living In Joyful Hope*





## Greetings from the Prioress: *Living In Joyful Hope*

*"Hope can and will come from the least suspected quarters, whether in the secret corners of our own hearts or of others."* —Father Carroll Stuhlmuehler, C.P.

At Baptism we received the three primary virtues of Faith, Charity, Hope. In this issue of *Passages*, we want to reflect with you on Hope.

I believe that hope is the answer to this chaotic, polarized world that models and encourages us to openly express classism, racism, sexism, and other forms of intolerance and hatred to which we are susceptible.

One assumes that in 6th Century Italy, St. Benedict lived in far less enlightened circumstances than we do. However, through meditation on Jesus Christ and His way of life, Benedict forged a path leading to hope, love and acceptance of others that guides us today.

How does one have the *courage* and *perseverance* to be a hopeful person? Once again, hope is a supernatural virtue given to us by God at Baptism. We start, then, by going to God in prayer and asking for the grace to be hopeful.

At one time, I went through a period of discouragement. As I prayed to God to renew my hope, I found a way forward through Spiritual Direction.

I reviewed the influences that caused me to lose hope and then made some practical changes: I evaluated and chose trustworthy authors to read, and I began to cultivate friendships with those on a similar hope journey.

Because I *chose* to cooperate with God's grace, I am a more hopeful person today. I can now see God's grace in so many situations and so much good being done.

God bless you on your spiritual journey, your *Ora et Labora*, in all its challenges and opportunities. As we do this important spiritual work, we toil side by side with one another—and with great hope—for the future of our families, our communities and our world.

United in that Spirit,

*Sister Paula Hagen*

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



*At the 2014 Prioress Installation, outgoing Prioress Sister Lucia Schwickerath helped Sister Paula with her corsage. See p. 10 to read Sister Marie Fujan's article about the 2019 Prioress election.*



### Monastic Leadership Team

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### Cover: "Return to Stillness" by Betty Glynn

Carlson, from the Benedictine Center's 2019 Juried Exhibit of Sacred Art, "Seeing God"



## Hope: *Our Reminder that Darkness is Not the End of the Story*

by Susan J. Stabile

It takes only a few minutes' attention to the news to recognize that we live in a broken world. A

world in which divisions along political, economic, racial, and social lines are rampant. In our world today, the gap between those at the top and those at the bottom is so large, no adjective seems adequate to describe it.

Fundamentally, our world appears to operate according to a system of values deeply at variance from the Gospel values taught by Jesus Christ.

It is so easy in the face of so much brokenness to fall into despair, to feel like there is nothing we can do to make things any better, nothing worth even attempting.

"Everybody Knows," written by late poet-songwriter Leonard Cohen, was a popular song in the late 1980s; some of its dark lyrics include: "Everybody knows the war is over, everybody knows the good guys lost. Everybody knows the fight was fixed: the poor stay poor, the rich get rich," followed by the refrain "That's how it goes. Everybody knows." Though this seems a sadly accurate appraisal of our world, what is lacking in the appraisal is Christian hope—the hope that allows us to look beyond what we can see, to believe in our potential for good, and to know that there is much good of which we are unaware.

A central aspect of Christian discipleship in today's world is our role as beacons of hope in troubled times. Timothy Radcliffe, in his wonderful book *What is the Point of Being Christian*, speaks compellingly on this theme, making the point that hope is the *central gift* we, as Christians, bring to the world. If Christianity makes any difference in how we live, it has to include how we convey hope, how we point to what is not yet present.

Hope does *not* ignore the darkness. It does *not* pretend there is no evil or suffering in the world. What hope does is

remind us that the darkness is not the end of the story. Each year we as Christians celebrate the full story: God in Jesus, becomes human and, in so doing, dies an ignominious death for us. And then, when all hope seems lost, Jesus rises from the dead. The tomb is empty. Through the resurrection, no matter how bad things look to us here and now, victory is assured!

It is our collective Christian narrative that allows us to trust in God's promise—as revealed to 14th Century mystic and theologian Julian of Norwich—that "all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

To be clear, this is not an invitation to sit back and ignore the suffering of our world. We are each called to build God's kingdom, right here and right now. Our hope thus is not passive; rather, it is the fuel we need to do our part. It is the energy we need to avoid being frozen into passivity by how bleak things sometimes look, and to play our part in addressing the suffering of our world.

As you read this, it is my hope that you ask yourself how you can strengthen your own hope so that you can be a beacon of hope for others. For if we can find ways to illuminate, live and share our Christian hope, we will be giving the world something it desperately needs.



Above: "Alleluia! Christ is Risen, An Easter Celebration" by Kathy Fleming. Kathy was one of three judges for the Benedictine Center's 2019 "Seeing God" juried exhibit; more about this year's exhibit on p. 9.

### About the Author

A Distinguished Senior Fellow at the University of St. Thomas School of Law, an adjunct instructor in Theology at St. Catherine's University, Susan Stabile is also a spiritual director and retreat leader trained in the Ignatian tradition and is a Benedictine Center presenter. Read more at <https://susanstabile.com>



## A Benedictine Recipe for Hope

by James (Jim) Wold,  
Ph.D.

Previous issues  
of *Passages* have  
chronicled the

important contribution and positive impact of St. Paul's Monastery. The Monastery's 70-year tradition of modeling Benedictine values has provided the foundation for three generations of outstanding service by the Monastery and, in turn, by those whose lives and hearts they have affected. As we think about the future in an age of disharmony and unrest, what can we draw from this tradition to offer hope for the future? Where can we find hope for our Church, our children, our grandchildren and our American society in the years and decades ahead?

Moreover: What is hope, and what is it that we should hope for?

In *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer*, Brother David Steindl-Rast, OSB, describes hope as “an openness for surprise” and a “passion for the possible...the point where our desires meet our expectations.” Brother David states that we set our transient and fleeting imaginable hopes on something we can imagine – a Vikings’ win, a mild winter, a good career. But “pure hope” is open for outcome—the *what*—we cannot imagine. It is the life-sustaining and inconceivable hope that is rooted in the heart.

Put another way, pure hope is what remains after all our imaginable hopes are gone.

So, how can we attain the “pure hope” which Brother David describes? Our journey is well-guided by the Benedictine educational goal “to transform the human mind and heart.”

Wisdom within the Benedictine educational tradition suggests “Ten Hallmarks of Benedictine Education” (*Education Within the Benedictine Wisdom Tradition*, 2008, Assoc. of Benedictine Colleges and Universities). While each hallmark is a vital underpinning for a life of hope, four Hallmarks in particular enlighten our journey toward “pure

hope” and are dependent on the extent to which we live out Benedictine virtues of education as follows:

1. *Loving Christ and Neighbor*—Do we actively cultivate habits of mind and behavior that are life-giving and contribute to the good of all?
2. *Committing to Community*—Are we committed in our service and the common good in meeting the most critical needs of others, near and far?
3. *Choosing Humility*—Do we recognize our limitations as individuals, institutions and a society without losing hope? Can we accept our gifts without becoming prideful and arrogant? Do we believe there is always room for additional personal growth, and for giving one's self for the good of others?
4. *Living a Life of Prayer*—Are we fundamentally attentive to God's presence in the human mind and heart, and in all creation? Do we take the opportunity to listen to God and keep our heart open for the meaning of life?

What then gives one hope for the future? Our Christian faith and the Benedictine tradition provide a rich path to hope. The successful journey to hope depends on our willingness to persist in the practice of virtue. In the words of C. S. Lewis: “Very often what God first helps us towards is not the virtue itself but just this power of always trying again” (*Mere Christianity*). So in the end, our hope rests within each of our hearts, with our people, with our schools, and with our institutions. Our hope for the future will be measured by our willingness to seek God's grace and nurture a Christian life that promises ultimate hope—to join Our Creator in Heaven.

### *About the Author*

Jim Wold's professional career includes senior leadership roles in higher and public education and private sector roles in sales, marketing, and small business development. Early in his career, Jim taught at Hill-Murray School; more recently, he taught at the University of Minnesota, St. Mary's University and the College of St. Scholastica. Jim's professional interests include program evaluation, data analytics, career coaching, leadership, and organizational development.



## Hope Springs Anew in Our Youth: *Hill-Murray Students Speak with Sister Paula*

We have some regular Hill-Murray School student helpers at the Monastery. These students bring such energy and promise for the future to our Community, I thought it important to share with you their voices and perspectives of hope.

Each student concluded that hope becomes a lifestyle when you are part of a loving, hopeful family. They mentioned the influence of their grandparents and parents, very positive and hopeful people, who make great sacrifices to provide the best for their family.

These students have purposefully learned about our poor and vulnerable. What they've learned makes them appreciate, even more, the love and respect they experience both at home and at school. It has also turned them into justice and peace advocates.

The students said that participating in Hill-Murray School service projects with Sister Linda Soler has been so meaningful: They see that their small outreach ministry efforts are so deeply appreciated and foster hope for the recipients. In return, it gives *them* hope to bring resources, love and the hospitality of Christ to those in need.

At this point in American history, they are particularly saddened by the mistreatment and persecution of immigrants. These are the very people for whom St. Benedict wrote: "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ" (*Rule of St. Benedict*, Chap. 53).

These students said that they are inspired by how the Sisters love and serve each other and their hospitality for all who "present themselves" at the Monastery. They want to be like them as they grow older. They are inspired, even compelled, to share the love and service modeled by their families, the Sisters and at Hill-Murray. They said they learned another value along the way: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). These young adults are a blessing to all who encounter them. They inspire and give our Community hope for the future.



### My Road to Saint Benedict

by Mary Ann Ryan, ObISB

In the 1950's, the Ryan family was growing yearly. From 1946 to 1961, my parents brought nine children into the world. Grandad lived with us, too; needless to say, it was a very busy household.

My father grew up on St. Paul's East Side and went to St. John's Elementary and Cretin High. When it was time for me, the oldest, to start school, it seemed only natural that I would go to St John's. I will always remember my first-grade teacher because her name was Sister Mary Ann. Every couple of years another sibling would join me at St. John's and eventually there were five of us there, and the tuition was free for the fifth. The first four were charged \$50 a year. With nine children, that \$50 added up.

In 1960, it was time for me to go to high school. There was a new Catholic school in Maplewood and

in 1960, I was part of the third class to enter Archbishop Murray Memorial High School (AMMHS).

For my four years of high school, the tuition was \$200 per year. That, along with the elementary school tuition my parents were paying for my younger siblings, I now realize was quite a financial sacrifice for them.

I loved the Benedictine sisters. They were young and so grounded in their spirituality. They taught with energy and compassion. They wanted us to succeed in everything we did and, most memorably, encouraged us to move beyond our comfort zones. An example was my history teacher telling me I would make a good public speaker...me?? Oh, and my history teacher's name: Sister Marianne!

Fast forward to 1992. This was the year my three boys and I joined St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, and I met Sister Mary Lou Dummer, who was Director of Liturgy and Music. Through



Mary Ann's AMMHS graduation photo

*Continued on next page*



Mary Ann and Sister Mary Lou

## My Road to Saint Benedict

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her gentle encouragement, I became a lector at Mass, and my public speaking began.

Sister was always teaching. Because of her influence, I became more in tune to the Mass and learned more about Benedictine values. When I retired in 2009, I decided it was time for me to move deeper into my own spirituality. I began the process for Oblate formation and made my final oblation in 2010.

Today, I serve on several Monastery committees and work one day per week in the Library. I can hardly remember my life without the Benedictine Sisters in it. I feel very connected as I read my daily Psalms, knowing the Sisters are praying at the same time.

When I was at AMMHS, the Sisters taught classes but weren't on campus. Now, the students at Hill-Murray School have the benefit of Sister Linda Soler's ministry, and the entire Community and Benet Road Monastery is just a short walk away. The interaction available to them is priceless, and I have to say I'm both envious and glad for the students and the Sisters.

## Benedictine Associates: *Toiling Side by Side With One Another for the Hope of the World*

*by Patricia (Pat) Swanke, Benedictine Associates Chair*

Service to the Sisters and the St Paul's Monastery Community is a pillar of the Benedictine Associate ministry. We are blessed to have four Associates who each feel called to service with the Community. Associates are essentially a non-vowed extension of the Sisters, performing a mix of responsibilities.

Associates are integral members of the Monastery Community. The areas of involvement are tailored to the gifts of each Associate and to the ministries of the Monastery. Inaugural Associates Mary Lou Kozmik and Linda Anderson are in their 5th year of service.

Nicole Hazzard and Judith Leatherwood are finishing their first year as Associates.

Currently, Judith Leatherwood is developing our outreach to Century Trails Senior Housing. Nicole is heavily involved in our Christmas at the Monastery event, as a lector at our Sunday eucharistic celebrations, and in our health care ministry. In addition, the Associates have studied the Henri Nouwen series, *A Spirituality of Living and Conversing with God Through the Psalms* by Irene Nowell, OSB.

They attend our Community days and serve on various committees and for various events. One Associate chairs the Monastery's Justice and Peace Committee; they take turns as Liturgy of the Hours prayer leaders, read or lecture for our Sunday Eucharistic celebration, and sing and pray with Sisters in the Healthcare Center.

***If you are interested in learning more about the Benedictine Associate ministry, please contact the Monastery main phone line: 651-777-8181. You can speak to an Associate Committee member (below, l-r):***



Sister Agnes Trombley, Sister Karen Sames, Benedictine Associate Linda Anderson, Sue Hamilton, Mary Ann Ryan, or Pat Swanke.



## *In Memoriam*

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

*—Rule of St. Benedict, Chap. 72*

### **Sister Rosella Schommer, OSB**

February 19, 1926–October 11, 2018

Professed July 11, 1949



Sister Rosella Schommer died peacefully on October 11, 2018 at St. Paul's Monastery. She was 92 years of age, having lived her monastic profession for 73 years.

Born on February 19, 1926 in Munich, North Dakota to Henry and Theckla (Haus), Sister Rosella was third in a family of two boys and seven girls.

Her education began in Munich, then Jordan, Minnesota. She entered the Scholasticate at St. Benedict's Convent in 1940. She became a charter member of St. Paul's Priory in 1948. She celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 1996 and her 70th in 2016.

Sister taught at Visitation School in Minneapolis, Assumption in Richfield, Immaculate Heart of Mary in St. Paul, and the Minnesota towns of St. Bonifacius, Montgomery, and Fairfax. She then volunteered to be a missionary, teacher and school principal in Bogota, Colombia for six years. Upon her return, she taught at St. Anne's in Minneapolis and St. Jude's School in Havre, Montana. She also taught summer religion classes in Starkville, Mississippi for three summers. After 39 years as

an educator, Sister Rosella “retired” to the Monastery in 1992. Naturally, she then worked at Maple Tree Childcare Center and loved her 20 years with the infants.

Preceded in death by her parents, and brother Edwin (Lucille), Sister Rosella is survived by her Benedictine Community of Sisters—including her siblings Sisters Andrine and Andriette, OSB—Associates and Oblates; brother Mark (Sherry), sisters Estelle, Beth, Fran (Arvid Sorenson), and Lois (Jim Kohout); and many nieces and nephews.

“The joy of being a Benedictine Sister in the Community is being faithful to my prayer life and the Eucharist, being with all the community members and loved by all.” Sister Rosella now praises and sings to God with the Christ she loved and followed so faithfully with her love, her dove and her beautiful one.



#### ***Linda and Sister Rosella***

*by Pat Swanke*

When the Benedictine Associate ministry was in development, prospective candidates expressed

a yearning for direct interaction with the Sisters as a way to deepen their Benedictine spirituality. Each associate was assigned a Sister spiritual mentor, and as a first-year Associate, Linda Anderson was assigned Sister Rosella Schommer.

They spent many, many hours together praying and visiting. This year, it was heart-warming to see Linda at Sister Rosella's side, helping her walk this final chapter of her earthly journey...toiling side by side with one another!

“She taught me what it means to be a Benedictine. She always had a smile...she listened...gave gentle guidance...had this beautiful presence,” Linda shared. “She was my spiritual mentor, but also a friend!”

*Continued on next page*

## **Sister Mary Courteau, OSB**

January 2, 1940–August 29, 2018

Professed July 11, 1961



Sister Mary Courteau went home to God early on August 29th, upheld by the love and prayers of all her Sisters, with Sister Catherine Schoenecker keeping vigil at Regions Hospital.

### ***Farewell, Sister Mary***

*by Sister Catherine Schoenecker, OSB*

Sister Mary and I have been friends for over 55 years. She was always a very cheerful person, giving herself wholeheartedly into our friendship.

Her feisty humor, straightforward manner and loving presence sustain me now during her absence. Her students liked her



even though she had them outline the next day's lesson right from the textbook. I'll always remember her big smile and laugh, and her curiosity about everyone and everything. She was a big presence to all of us. She was a strong woman enduring and accepting her many health issues. Her favorite prayer was, "O Lord, grant that I may love Thee always and then do with me what Thou wilt."

*Farewell, Mary and may God be with you!*

Sister Mary was born to Jordan and Doris (Zierath) Courteau on January 2, 1940. She grew up in Minneapolis with older sister, Char, and younger brother, Doug. Sister Mary was an active member of Holy Name Parish in Minneapolis and chose to attend St. Anthony High School. Sister Mary credited the Sisters of St. Joseph for helping her discern her vocation to the Benedictines of St. Paul's Priory, then located on Summit Avenue in St. Paul.

Sister Mary celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2011. She was nourished by life with her Benedictine family and said that happiness came by her "*knowing God is there!*"

Much of Sister Mary's ministry was teaching students at St. Bernard's Parish School in St. Paul; Hill-Murray School in Maplewood; St. Croix Catholic School in Stillwater; and St. Odilia's in Shoreview. Most recently, she served as Monastery Treasurer and provided much support to the Prioress and to Monastery Leadership and Administration.

Sister Mary enjoyed life and never let it get her down: "I know that I need to accept what is.... Accepting it with joy!" She liked stories, especially funny ones and appreciated many kinds of music and was part of a community quartet, *3 Sharps & A Flat*. We pray that Sister Mary is singing God's praises and enjoying her place in the Heavenly Choir.

### ***Our Bonnie***

The Sisters and staff are grieving the loss of longtime Monastery employee, Bonnie Fazekas (née Barnum), who died suddenly at age 76 on December 17, 2018. Bonnie started as a front desk receptionist for the Sisters' Larpentour Avenue Monastery in 1988. Her 30 years of service will be remembered with an engraved paver that will be installed in the St. Benedict plaza at a special ceremony this fall.

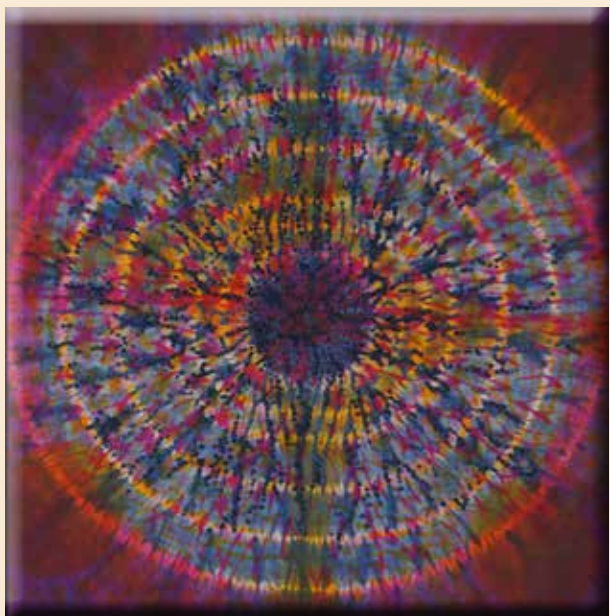
Bonnie was unfailingly professional, competent and kind. She took her responsibilities seriously but never herself, and her sense of humor was a delight. Bonnie loved life, her family and friends with selfless generosity, and to know her was to love her.

Bonnie and husband Arnold raised three daughters in the North St. Paul home where Bonnie grew up. Their children and eight grandchildren were the joy of her life. *Eternal Rest Grant Unto Her, O Lord.*



*Bonnie (left) with Sister Paula at the 2018 Monastery Employee Appreciation event*





Above: "Hitbodedut," Sandra Brick (1st place)

## Seeing God: 2019 Juried Exhibit of Sacred Art

In February, the Benedictine Center hosted "Seeing God," the Monastery's annual juried art exhibit. The exhibit introduction states that: "Artists speak to us in a language that takes us out of the ordinary. It is a dialect that expands how we *image* the mystery of God revealing itself to us each day in the world around (us), in the encounters that come our way."

Pictured here are the 1st-3rd place winners and honorable mention selections from the forty-two beautiful, inspiring submissions.



Above: "Contemplation on an Icon," Lucy Brusic (2nd place)



Below: "Birth/Water Vessel," Ashley Hise (3rd place)



Honorable mentions, clockwise from the top:  
"Gathered in Gratitude" (above), Anne Moriarty

"Hamsa" (below), Julie Deneen

"Keep Me Safe" (lower left), Jean Wright

"Asma Carries Love and Compassion" (upper left), DeAnne Parks



# Every Five Years

by Sister Marie Fujan, OSB

Where will the world be in five years? What about St. Paul's Monastery? Where will we be?

Last December we reflected on the Coming of the Christ, the Lord Jesus, and we celebrated the great Christmas story, *God's Coming in History*.

We also have been thinking about Jesus' coming in *Mystery*, that is, in our daily lives. It can be helpful to look in the mirror and speak to the image that looks back at us; "*You are the Presence of the Lord! Did you know that?*"

And your neighbor? Your neighbors are also the Presence of the Lord Jesus—whether that person is the neighbor next door; the one down the street; the homeless person in St. Paul or San Francisco, or the refugee fleeing from death threats at home and desiring a place of peace to raise a family.



Prioresses (l-r): Sister Carol Rennie, Sister Paula Hagen, Sister Marie Fujan, Sister Lucia Schwickerath (not pictured: Sister Duane Moes and Sister Rosemary Rader)



Above: The Sisters are so grateful to Lynette Black for the donation of her painting of "Triumphant Leadership"—they find great inspiration from it!

Whoever we are, wherever we live, we are in the time of mystery and are truly in the Presence of Christ, the Lord Jesus! We are gifted and called to share what we have received.

St. Paul's Monastery is again in *discernment mode*. We are poised to discover what God has in mind and heart for our Benedictine Community. Specifically, we will gather, with the help of a facilitator and God's grace to elect our next Prioress, our leader, for the next five years. It is a time of deep prayer and great desire to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There is no evidence that God plans to send an angel to assume the position of Prioress. Therefore, we pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten us and that each Sister will be given the grace to enter fully into the discernment process. We pray especially for strength and grace for the Sister who will be called forth.

The election of Prioress is not the only task St. Paul's Monastery will be discerning. We need also to be listening to the Holy Spirit's guidance as to where and with whom we will be called to place our human and material resources at this time.

We are asking you, our families and friends, to hold us in prayer as we elect a Prioress and as we discern our future ministries. Thank you! God is blessing us all!

## ***May 2nd Prioress Dinner:*** Prioress-elect Introduction

At the May 2nd Prioress Dinner, Sister Paula Hagen will introduce the Monastery's Prioress-elect. In addition, funds raised at the Dinner will go toward building and parking lot improvements for the Maple Tree Monastery Childcare Center. See more about the Prioress Dinner at [www.stpaulsmonastery.org](http://www.stpaulsmonastery.org) or on the back cover of this issue.



## Tribute to Past Prioresses: *A Sacred Trust*

by Sister Paula Hagen, OSB

Every five years, as we did this March, our Community completed our discernment to elect a new Prioress. At our May Prioress Installation, I pass to another the sacred role and responsibilities of Prioress of St. Paul's Monastery.

Pictured here are the Prioresses who served before me. In deep gratitude, as I reflect on the sacredness and mystery of being called to lead this Community, I take my place as former Prioress alongside these servants of Benedictine values. History records that each of us brought unique, God-given gifts to address the needs and challenges faced by our Community on our journey to the promised land.

Congratulations to our Prioress-elect who will bring her own gifts and talents to lead us for the next five years.



*Mother Loraine Tracy*  
1948-1954



*Sister Marcelline Jung*  
1954-1966



*Sister Rose Alice Althoff*  
1966-1972



*Sister Cleo Schoenbauer*  
1972-1980



*Sister Duane Moes*  
1980-1984



*Sister Rosemary Rader*  
1984-1992



*Sister Eleanor Wartman*  
1992-1996



*Sister Marie Fujan*  
1996-2004



*Sister Carol Rennie*  
2004-2009



*Sister Lucia Schwickerath*  
2009-2014



## A Decade of Worship

by Sister Mary Lou Dummer, OSB, Subprioress and Oblate Director

In 2018, our St. Paul's Monastery Community celebrated 70 years of service. This April, we look back on another milestone: Ten years ago this April marks the dedication of the Monastery Chapel at which, then Prioress, Sister Carol Rennie shared the remarks below. Prayer and Community are the cornerstones of Benedictine living and, from the beginning, our chapel was designated as the center of our Community life. It is a sacred space that draws the Sisters and all who seek a deeper relationship with God. All are welcome to worship with us in our Community Chapel—to be renewed, to be nourished, to be challenged, to be forgiven, to be attentive to God's Presence, and then return to the world to offer gifts in service to others.

### Dedication of Our Chapel

presentation by Sister Carol Rennie, Prioress

April 19, 2009

The Sisters of this Community join me in thanking you for your presence here, today, as we dedicate our chapel as the center of our common life. We are aware that each of you, in specific ways, has helped bring us to this moment in our history.

We are grateful for your presence, Archbishop Nienstedt, and for the support we have enjoyed from the leadership of this Archdiocese as we have engaged in a variety of ministries to its people.

Abbot John, we treasure our relationship with St. John's Monastic Community. Your monks have been our faithful celebrants at our Sunday and feast-day liturgical celebrations over sixty plus years and we are grateful.

In an era when things are temporary, we are proud to be heirs of a long tradition. We are mindful of this reality in two ways: First, as Benedictines, we grow year after year in a vision of discipleship whose roots stretch back 1500 years. Second, we are blessed to be part of the twelve monasteries that form the Federation of Saint Benedict. Thank you to our Federation president, Sister Michaela Hedican, for joining us today and for your constant support of the discernment and planning that has led up to this moment.

We remember with deep gratitude and affection the Sisters of St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, Minnesota, who founded St. Paul's Monastery. In 1948, 178 courageous

women left that well-established Monastery to begin a mission in this area. We delight in having representatives from St. Benedict's here today, and thank you, Sister Nancy Bauer, Prioress of St. Benedict's, for the gift of these six candles symbolic of our sixty years of furthering the monastic tradition. These candles symbolize our roots and give witness that we are women who share a common bond.



Sister Carol (above, far right) at the 2009 Monastery groundbreaking ceremony

We have intentionally built this monastery adjacent to our monastic cemetery. This is a constant reminder of the valiant women who each in her own way was an example of faithfulness. This building is a living testament to their sacrifice, faithful service, prayer, and vision for our future.

The spirit of Saint Benedict is about bringing people together for the sake of the Gospel. This campus mirrors

our desire to partner with those who share our Benedictine values. Hill-Murray School, the Maple Tree Childcare Center, Ministry of Mothers Sharing, iLLUMINARE, and the Benedictine Center continue to foster the education and formation of women and men.

Our partnerships with CommonBond Communities and Tubman Family Alliance are a sign of the providential new opportunities we have been given to witness our Benedictine values.

Thank you for rejoicing with us as we dedicate our monastic chapel. We depend on your continued wisdom, your friendship, and your prayerful support. Together we trust that God will sustain us as we carry our mission forward.



## *Each New Day at Maple Tree*

by Jennie Schlauch, Program Director

My staff and I feel so privileged to work with our little ones at Maple Tree Monastery Childcare Center. Their enthusiasm, curiosity, and innocence bring a measure of hope into each day. We are amused and touched by their humorous take on life and the love they share with us.

Each day is filled with lesson plans and meeting the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of each child. We love our grounds and spend time outside whenever possible. On those days when the weather prohibits outdoor play, we find ways to expend energy inside.

Recently, the Harnish family donated a toddler-sized bouncy house. As you can see from the picture, the children are making good use of it! We appreciate those who so kindly support us with finances as well as tangible items we can use in the classrooms.



*Bouncy house: The Harnish family donation is a big (bouncy) hit at Maple Tree*

With a mix of joy and sadness, 13 preschoolers in our graduating class will leave us for various kindergarten programs this fall. It has been such a blessing to watch these little ones learn and grow. We feel honored when families choose Maple Tree and together we build a foundation of success for their little ones.

## *Experiencing Hope: A Legacy 35 Years in the Making*

by Samuel Rahberg, ObISB and Benedictine Center Director

As the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery celebrated their 70th anniversary as a community, they simultaneously marked 35 years of outreach through the Benedictine Center. Since 1983, officially, the Sisters have welcomed guests for spiritual direction, personal retreats, and programs that help people learn and practice Benedictine values.

In addition, countless conferences of small groups, parish staffs, and non-profit leaders have come to the Monastery's quiet halls to sharpen their sense of mission in a more prayerful environment. In every form, these services help people experience hope in a world that too often disheartens us.

Last fall's *Food & Faith* series was yet another shining example of the enduring way that the Benedictine Center fosters hope in the world. Over an extended weekend, participants traveled to Fresh Earth farms, where they learned and practiced the value of locally-sourced food; visited Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf to explore ways that healthy food makes its way to those most in need; gathered together at the Monastery for a festive meal in the spirit of a story-rich potluck; reflected with theologian Dr. Norman Wirzba of Duke University; and infused a weekend's worth of fresh bread and delicious meals with hands-on prayer and love.

The *Food & Faith* series, and other events like it, spread Benedictine values into the world—values like hope. As



we face the pressures of climate change, unjust food distribution, and other countless things that distract us from the presence of God in the ordinary, we are called to practice hope. For 35 years, the Benedictine Center has been helping people gather in a spirit of prayer and reflection to find and steel that hope. The Sisters, the staff, and all who have prayed in this place hope you will join with them and share this message of hope in your world.



## Hope Found in the Monastery Library

by Sister Louise Inhofer, Monastery Librarian

*"Hope springs eternal in the human breast."* —Alexander Pope (from *An Essay on Man*, 1734)

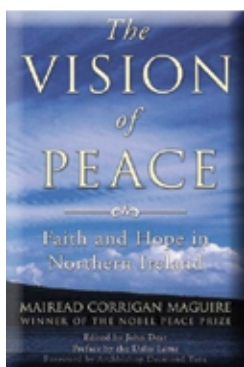
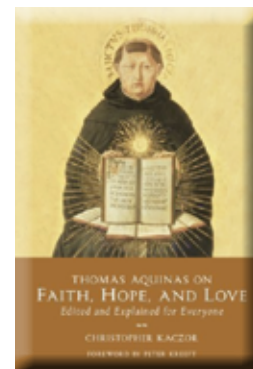
There are, of course, different ways of looking at hope. Along with Faith and Charity, Hope is one of the Theological Virtues. Hope is often tied to an outcome such as "I hope the weather will be warm tomorrow," hope for the future of a country or the church; hope in God's mercy.

We have many books in the Monastic Library about hope; the following are just three examples.

### *A Theological Virtue*

The version of *Thomas Aquinas on Faith, Hope, and Love* edited by Christopher Kaczor makes the Summa a little more understandable. The book is written in question and answer form, and Mr.

Kaczor's version made the text much more accessible to me.

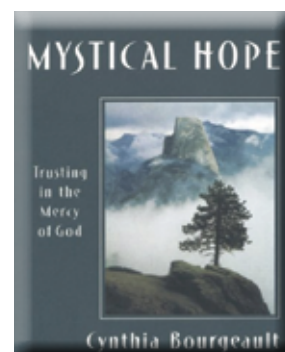


### *Hope as Optimism*

Nobel Peace Prize author Mairead Corrigan Maguire's *The Vision of Peace: Faith and Hope in Northern Ireland* is about the problems in Northern Ireland in the 1990's. Among her correspondence with influential people is an especially beautiful letter to her son, Luke.

### *Hope, A Way to Change One's Life*

*Mystical Hope* by Cynthia Bourgeault is just such a book. She writes how hope is rooted in the mercy of God. There are five meditations beginning with a journey into a study of the mercy of God and ending with a different appreciation of hope. This is not an easy book to read. Read it once and then read it again. It is well worth it.



*St. Scholastica Award celebration: Jaci (at left) with Father Mitchell, family and friends*

## 2019 St. Scholastica Award

by Annette Walker, Mission Advancement Director

On February 9th, the Community celebrated a special Feast of St. Scholastica to honor Oblate Jacqueline (Jaci) Bush as the second St. Scholastica award recipient. Mass with Father John Mitchell was followed by a beautiful lunch prepared by the Monastery kitchen. The ceremony after lunch highlighted Jaci's service to the Monastery Community. Sister Paula said the special feast day "made us all thankful for the grace of being a Benedictine."





## Advancing the Mission 2.0

*by Annette Walker, Mission Advancement Director*

Last fall, St. Paul's Monastery was invited to apply for "Advancing Mission 2.0: Women Religious in the 21st

Century," a GHR (Gerry and Hanky Rauenhorst) and Hilton Foundation grant. The grant helps Catholic women religious build a culture of mission advancement within their communities and beyond.

Compiling and completing the information and attachments for the application was a lesson unto itself—and I learned a lot about the Sisters of St. Benedict and St. Paul's Monastery.

As a result of our efforts, St. Paul's Monastery was selected and will receive grant funding over the next three years. Our participation in this grant will help us create a culture of mission, and we join a cohort of ten congregations of women religious who will learn together and support one another in their development efforts.

In December, Prioress Sister Paula Hagen, Committee Member Carol Heinsch and I met with the other nine community recipients in Indianapolis, Indiana, to begin our training in Advancing the Mission 2.0. We spent four days

learning, growing and sharing knowledge with other participant communities. We are excited to implement our new knowledge to advance the mission of the Sisters of St. Benedict. The first step was the selection of a mission advancement and communications auditor, Andrea Proulx-Buinicki, CFRE, Founder and President of Giving Focus LLC. In February, we began working with Andrea on our three-month mission advancement-communications audit.

The audit will carefully review and inform us of best practices as far as: advancing the vision and mission of the Sisters of St. Benedict. We are very excited about learning how to better express the spiritual mission and vision of the St. Paul's Monastery Community.

We look forward to this three-year journey. With work, prayer and support, we seek to increase the ability of this Benedictine Community to reach out and share their Benedictine mission and heritage.



*Above (l-r): Carol Heinsch, Sister Paula Hagen and Annette Walker attended the four-day grant training in Indianapolis last December*

## *You Are the Gift*

The Community is deeply honored by supporters who have committed to a planned or estate gift. This type of gift allows you to share in the work that the Monastery Community plans for generations to come: Educational apostolate support and service, hospitality ministry, social outreach, spiritual care and direction. An envelope is enclosed for your

convenience or contact **Annette Walker** at:

**651-777-6850** or [awalker@stpaulsmonastery.org](mailto:awalker@stpaulsmonastery.org)





## ***Prayer Requests***

The Benedictine Community of St. Paul's Monastery thanks God daily for you, for your friendship, and for the opportunity to be of service.

The Community's prayer ministry is available to you anytime. You can reach out online as follows: On the *www.stpaulsmonastery.org* home page, scan down to

"REQUEST A PRAYER." You can also drop off or mail your confidential prayer requests to: **St. Paul's Monastery, Sisters of St. Benedict Prayer Ministry, 2675 Benet Road, St. Paul MN 55109**

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. —1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NKJV)*

***the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery***

## **PRIORESS DINNER**

**May 2, 2019**

5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Guardian Angels Catholic Church Social

Join Sister Paula Hagen and  
Benedictine Community of St. Paul's Monastery

2019 Prioress Honorees:

***JIM AND DONNA ORICCHIO***  
***COORDINATED BUSINESS SYSTEMS, LTD.***

Introducing:

***MONASTERY PRIORESS-ELECT***

Register by phone at **651-777-6850** or online at  
<https://tinyurl.com/2019Prioress>

**REGISTER TODAY!**

Benedictine Community of  
***St. Paul's Monastery***



### ***Please Help Us...***

• If you prefer electronic receipt of this newsletter, please send your email address to

Annette at:

**[awalker@stpaulsmonastery.org](mailto:awalker@stpaulsmonastery.org)**

• If your address has changed or is incorrect, please call **651-777-6850**

**Thank you!**

### **Upcoming Dates of Note:**

**May 2:** *Prioress Dinner*

**Nov. 14:** *Give to the Max*

**Dec. 14:** ***Christmas at the Monastery***

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

### **Benedictine Center Highlights:**

**March 24:** *Embracing the Holy Time of Lent*

**April 5-6:** *Seeking the Way of Beauty: A SoulCollage Retreat* with Barbara Sutton

**July 6-13:** *Visions of Nature in Art: A Retreat on the Gunflint Trail* with Rev. Peggy Thompson

For further Benedictine Center event information, call **651-777-7251**