



# ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY

## E-NEWSLETTER

August 2021



I have been reflecting on the idea of commitment lately, particularly since the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery witnessed the final Oblation of eight new Oblates on June 6. These new Oblates are the first guests to rejoin us in chapel since the start of the pandemic. The ceremony was livestreamed to include as many witnesses to their commitment as possible. The word Oblate has its meaning in the word, "offering" and the signing of their final Oblation document on the altar is similar to that which each vowed monastic Sister makes when she places her document on the altar and signs her promise to seek God in the service of Christ through the Monastic Way.

July 11 is the Feast of St. Benedict and a special day of celebration for us who have professed our lives as a vowed Benedictine. We celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Sisters Benita Gerold and Agnes Trombley. It is amazing to share life with them and all the Sisters. Since both the final Oblation and the jubilee celebrations took place in the Monastery's chapel, I wanted to share with you some information about the chapel windows.

The artist Michael Pilla shares the following. "In looking out the window behind the altar facing the cemetery, the artist reflected on our living community existing through time. Our Benedictine values today continue to be built on the courage of the Sisters who went before us, those resting in that cemetery. The clerestory glass rim reminds us that these Sisters are now among the Communion of Saints."



"An important Benedictine value which is a foundation for us is simplicity. Especially evident in the clerestory, the band of windows around the top of the chapel, simplicity allows natural light to enter the chapel. Each window includes a metal sculpture in a praying (Orans) gesture. The metal is the framework of the human person, and 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. Using metal and glass in the most sparing way, the artist created a form both elegant and meaningful."

When the Monastery re-opens in September you may wish to spend some time in chapel to reflect on the meaning behind the artwork of the glass windows in the chapel. We look forward to seeing you at the Monastery.

May your feet take you where your heart wants to go!

**Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB**





It's 8:30 pm on a Tuesday evening at St. Paul's Monastery. Sister Catherine Schoenecker is making her rounds of the common areas with her holy water. Similar to every other night at the Monastery, she "blesses the house," including the offices, the meeting rooms, and

all the other places people gather during the day. She loves her quiet little walks around the Monastery.

At 91 years old, Sister Catherine is one of the oldest Sisters at St. Paul's Monastery. This does not stop her from being very active inside and outside of the Monastery. She admits that she is "blessed with very good health" and that keeping moving is very important to her. She visits her three sisters at least once a month, traveling to Minneapolis, Apple Valley, and Jordan, MN. Her three sisters – Roselyn, Annella, and Mary Carole – are all very close. Catherine admits that not seeing them during the Coronavirus stay-at-home order was hard. Now, she encourages everyone to find a way to connect with others and find joy in new routines.

Sister Catherine was born and raised in New Prague, MN. She is the middle child of five children. In addition to her sisters, Sister Catherine had an older brother, Clayton, who died several years ago. Her parents, Henry and Hildegard, named her LaVerne at birth. She was baptized Catherine and later took Catherine as her religious name.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord. Worship the LORD with gladness.  
Psalm 100: 1 (NRSVCE)

To read more about Sister Catherine's story, click [here](#).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 9 - Start Ordering**  
Live Life in Full Bloom, Fall Fundraiser

**August 14, 9 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.** Virtual Benedictine Discernment Retreat

**September 26, 2:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.**  
Women as Spiritual, Christ-Centered Friends

**October 9, 10:45 a.m.**  
Fall Paver Blessing. Order your pavers today.

## Reflections on the Benedictine Festival Weekend

by Mission Advancement

We live together as a community, and we stay together through difficult times when our community makes us stronger through our shared connection to each other and God. The result is a stronger, more connected community.

That theme was on full display as the Sisters of St. Benedict from Saint Paul's Monastery welcomed the community to the Monastery's grounds for the Benedictine Festival and a weekend of fun and connection on July 10 and 11.

For many of the Sisters, the staff, volunteers and visitors, this was their first social gathering at the Monastery since the pandemic restrictions hit Minnesota over a year ago.

When asked about the festival, one participant said, "The opportunity to meet family, friends and other guests face to face after the pandemic was the most important thing about the festival." Sister Catherine Nehotte, Prioress, remarked, "it was the highlight of the year for the community."

The festival drew people of all ages and almost everyone took part in at least one part of the festival. The festival included food, a cake walk, games and a raffle. Games included miniature golf, a large connect four game, cornhole toss and a station that allowed players to throw a ball, hit a target and dunk water on the person behind a screen.

And let them first pray together, that so they may associate in peace. (RB, Ch. 53, Verse 4).



Above: a cake walk, miniature golf, and a raffle were just a few of the fun activities from the Benedictine Festival. Right: Artist John Ilg and his wife Mary Elizabeth enjoy the Festival. To see more pictures of the festival, click [here](#).

Inside the Monastery, visitors were allowed access to view John Ilg's "From a Unique Perspective" art exhibit. It was the first time Ilg's work, which focuses on the Stations of the Cross and Christ's last days, was open to the public. At the Festival, John remarked, "It is great to see the exhibit again and to have this all open to the public."



## Reflections on the Benedictine Festival Weekend, *continued*

by Mission Advancement

St. Benedict taught us that everything takes place in the context of community. His teachings tell us that we should remember that, even through difficult times, we are stronger as a community and it is that community that will help us grow closer to each other and to God.

The community feeling continued on July 11, the Feast of St. Benedict. A 70th Jubilee celebration for Sister Benita Gerold, OSB, and Sister Agnes Trombley, OSB, was live streamed. At the Monastery, the two Sisters celebrated with their families and the community starting on Saturday. On Sunday, Sister Agnes Trombley remarked that “it meant a lot to me to have everybody together. There was a strong community feeling.” Sister Benita also celebrated 70 years of vowed religious life with a large family presence that weekend. Having Archbishop Bernard Hebda present for the Solemnity of St. Benedict added reverence and reflection to the day. “It was a special day for everyone” (Sister Agnes).

### 70th Jubilee Celebration



Sister Agnes  
Trombley, OSB



Sister Benita  
Gerald, OSB



The 70th Jubilee on July 11, 2021 of Sister Agnes Trombley and Sister Benita Gerald was held in the chapel at St. Paul's Monastery.

At left, the Sisters pose after the Jubilee. Right: Sister Catherine Nehotte Prioress, witnesses as Sister Agnes renews her commitment to Monastic life.



The monastic community at St. Paul's Monastery gives thanks for the first ever Benedictine Festival weekend. St. Benedict's spirit was with us welcoming all guests as Christ. And, we did it with the valuable support of volunteers, staff, sponsors, and vendors. Thank you to those who donated an item for the raffle and a cake for the cake walk. It was a fun activity for all ages. Your donation made a difference.

Your presence was the greatest gift, and we hope to repeat the festival next year. We welcome feedback from your experience in order to continue to improve the Festival. Please leave any input on our online survey (link is below) or contact us at the [Monastery email](#).

*May God bless you as you have blessed us,  
so that in all things God may be glorified.  
Thank you!*

OUR ONLINE SURVEY



## Women as Spiritual, Christ-Centered Friends

St. Paul's Monastery and the Benedictine Center are re-opening with a Spiritual Retreat for single, Catholic or Christian women, ages 22 and older. We look forward to welcoming you back into the Monastery for this event.

### Join for a time to pray and reflect together to:

- Learn more about the value of real women friends.
- Reflect on your God-given potential to be a friend to other women.
- Discuss the value and skills needed to be a Christ-centered friend.

### During the retreat you will have the opportunity to:

- Pray with the Monastic Community.
- Share your wisdom and reflections with other wise women.
- Connect with Mary and Elizabeth as mentors or role models of friendship.
- Open your heart and mind to the grace of Christ-centered women.




**Date:** Sunday, September 26, 2021

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**Cost:** \$50.00 (\$10 off if you bring a friend!)

**Deadline to enroll:** September 10

[Click Here to Register](#)



This retreat is lead by Sister Paula Hagen, OSB. Sister Paula has over 30 years of experience in retreat development and as a retreat facilitator. In addition to a Master's in Family Systems, Sister Paula trained as a retreat director at the Franciscan Renewal Center. She created and published several *On the Journey* retreats for use in parishes nationwide and created and published the Ministry of Mothers Sharing Journal and materials for parishes.

## Rahab's Invitation

by Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB

The story of Rahab, one of our little known Biblical foremothers, is told in the Book of Joshua. After coming out of slavery in the land of Egypt, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for many years, learning to trust God. It would be difficult to enter the Promised Land and conquer the territory with its fortified cities and powerful inhabitants.

It was a violent era of war and struggle for domination. Joshua, leader of the Israelites, sent two spies to the city of Jericho to learn of its strength. They found lodging in the home of a woman named Rahab. Rahab had already heard many stories of the Hebrew slaves coming out of Egypt, and the wonders that God had done to save them. She had heard of how they had already conquered the Amorites beyond the Jordan River. The stories of God's wonders were enough for Rahab, a pagan, to be open to trusting in a God she did not know.

When the king of Jericho learned that Israelite spies were staying in Rahab's house, he sent messengers to arrest them. She quickly hid the two men and sent the king's messengers away to look for them elsewhere before the city gates were locked for the night. Rahab then told the spies that she knew that "the LORD your God is indeed God in heaven above and earth below" (Joshua 2:11, NRSVCE).

She asked them to show kindness to her, as she was showing kindness to them, so that when they returned to conquer the city they would spare her family. The spies agreed, as long as her family stayed together in the house during the battle. Rahab's home was built in the city walls, so she let the men down from her window by a rope, so that they were able to escape from the city. Rahab left the rope, a scarlet cord, hanging from the window as a sign of their promise.

The city of Jericho was destroyed, and the spies returned and remembered their promise. They brought Rahab, her parents, her sisters and brothers, and all who belonged to them to the Israelite camp. Rahab's family remained with the Israelites, building a new life among them.

The Gospel of Matthew names Rahab in the genealogy of Jesus as a great grandmother of King David, and therefore an ancestor of Jesus. The Letter to the Hebrews lauds Rahab for her faith because she received the spies in peace, offering them hospitality.



*For she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. Joshua 6:25 (NRSVCE)*

This wood-engraved art piece was published in 1886.

## Invitations of Rahab

### Courage

Rahab was a woman of courage. How are you invited to show courage?

### Faith

Rahab was a woman of faith. Her heart was ready to trust in the God of Israel, whom she did not know. How are you invited to trust in God?

### Hospitality

Rahab was a woman of hospitality. How are you invited to show hospitality to others, perhaps someone in need?



*Live Life in Full Bloom*  
**FALL FLOWER FUNDRAISER**

Fall is approaching fast, inspiring many of us look to our gardens, yards, and patios to create and cultivate a blooming and bountiful environment for all to enjoy! Our fundraising campaign, *Live Life in Full Bloom*, features mums and other fall plants from Gerten's Green House that will brighten your space. Online ordering starts August 9 and runs through September 2. ***In addition, your purchase today will help us get a jump on our fall fundraising as 30% of the proceeds of any plant and 15% of any gift card sold will directly benefit St. Paul's Monastery.***

**Details:**

- ◆ Order now through September 2 at [www.gertensfundraising.com](http://www.gertensfundraising.com). Enter store ID code **251** for St. Paul's Monastery.
- ◆ Flowers and plants will be delivered to the Monastery on September 16. We are offering curbside pick-up on September 16 (1:00-3:00 pm) . No reservation required. For alternative delivery options, please contact us at the [Monastery email](#).
- ◆ If you would like to volunteer to be a part of the curbside delivery team, please contact us at the [Monastery email](#).

There are so many plants, flowers, and bulbs available for the fall at Gerten's Garden Center.



These are just a few of the options available in the fall fundraiser at St. Paul's Monastery.

Order August 9-September 2 using store ID 251 at the [fundraising website](#).





## Maple Tree Childcare Updates

by Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



Even rainy days can be fun at Maple Tree Childcare Center! In this picture, preschoolers are learning about boats and sails for their Wind and Water unit. Our little scientists made many discoveries while they played.



## Mission Advancement News

by Mission Advancement



Tim Carey joined the Office of Mission Advancement and St. Paul's Monastery as a communications professional in mid-July. He will primarily serve as the team's writing specialist. Tim has several years of experience in communications, with notable jobs that included serving as a writer, reporter, and editor at St. Paul Pioneer Press, and as a writer for the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, the Minnesota Department of Health, Wells Fargo, and Thomson Reuters. He also currently works weekends in the newsroom at KARE 11 where he provides written web content and assigns reporting teams to cover breaking news.

Tim grew up in Minneapolis and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his dog Rory and his friends. He enjoys attending sporting events with his friends. One of his passions is college football. His two favorite college teams are the University of Minnesota and the University of Notre Dame. Welcome to St. Paul's Monastery, Tim!

## Virtual Benedictine Discernment Retreat

by Mission Advancement

Join us virtually on August 14, 2021, from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. for our Benedictine Discernment Retreat. Learn about discernment for Catholic women and the Benedictine life from the Sisters of St. Mary's Monastery, Rock Island, IL, St. Scholastica Monastery, Duluth, MN, and St. Paul's Monastery, St. Paul, MN. To register, please contact Sister Lisa Maurer, St. Scholastica Monastery, by [email](#).





## employee spotlight

Tod Twist



Sometimes, as St. Paul's Monastery's Tod Twist discovered, we can grow in our spirituality through service to our community. As he realized, it is that service that can lead to more stability, peace, and a deeper bond with God.

Tod is the Monastery's Guest Services Assistant, preparing the Benedictine Center for guests and maintaining the Monastery's grounds. However, Tod is much more. He is on the Spiritual Direction team and recently became Co-director of the Benedictine Center. In his new role, he will help develop the spiritual direction of retreats.

"My role here allows me to move around a lot," he said, "and that, along with the service I provide our community, helps me feel more connected. I'm at peace and I realize that what I do is very important in the grand scheme of things. I've held many roles in the past," he said, "and many of them had big titles. Yet, when I found this position, I realized it was a great opportunity to serve. It provides me the privilege to work for the Sisters and through my work I can honor their work. That connects me to them and God in a good way."

Tod chose to follow a more spiritual life after a series of life-changing moments. He almost died when a blood vessel in his head broke while playing football. There was also a horse-riding accident that killed a friend.

Those experiences caused him to train as a spiritual director. He also studied Hebrew, Semitics, and the Bible in college.

"Tumultuous events in my teen years set me on a path of trying to make sense of what happened to me," he said. "It has been a couple of decades worth of rough roads getting to that sense of calling and meaning."

It also led him to become an Oblate. As an Oblate, he dedicated himself to find paths that allowed him to deepen his service to God. That search brought him to the monastery in 2019.

He chose to become an Oblate because it offered a more stable way of looking at life. His work also allows him to practice centering prayer daily.

"The way I look at my job," he said, "is that I am helping people encounter God here at the Monastery and center. That can help them find ways to meaningfully connect to their community as I did with mine."



Tod finds a brief moment to relax before he sets off to do his next task at the Monastery.

## Around the Monastery

by Mission Advancement



Left: Our own special twins Sisters Andrine and Andriette Schommer smile as they start their day. Often seen together throughout the Monastery they are always helpful and ready with a warm greeting. Today, they are showing off their new haircuts! Looking great, Sisters!

Below: A few of the Sisters got into the games for a little spontaneous fun in the lobby! Celebrating their win in the ring toss game are (left to right): Sisters Mary



White, Lucia Schwickerath, Karen Sames, and Linda Soler. Sister Karen threw the winning toss and was the only one to put her ring around the center post!



Left: Archbishop Hebda loves the gift he

received from the Sisters at the lunch following the morning mass on July 11. Below: The Community gathers with Archbishop Hebda

after mass. The Archbishop presided over Mass celebrating the Solemnity of St. Benedict on July 11. He stayed for a special lunch with the Sisters. This was part of a weekend long observance of the Feast of Saint Benedict.



## Commemorative Pavers Fall 2021

*Honoring Those Who Light Our Way*



Order Deadline September 1  
For Fall 2021 Installation

***Thank You and  
God Bless You!***

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.



4x8 Paver  
Three lines of text, \$130

8x8 Paver  
Six lines of text, \$260

[Click here to pay online](#)  
[or print 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 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](http://www.stpaulsmonastery.org).**

## Community Prayer Ministry

*Here to Serve You in Prayer*

### **We Would Love to Hear From You**

*Let us, in fellowship, "lay (our) petitions before the Lord God with the utmost humility and sincere devotion" (Rule of Benedict, Chap. 20).*

If you would like to send an online prayer request, the Monastery website has two different ways to do so. You can use the "Prayer Requests" link at the top of our home page. Or you can go to the "Ministries" tab and select "Community Prayer Ministry." Prayer requests go to all the Sisters who pray daily for these intentions at Evening Praise, during adoration, and during the Rosary. May God bless you and your loved ones.



COMMUNITY PRAYER MINISTRY

# St. Paul's Monastery



*We, the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery,  
are a community that live Gospel values  
as expressed in the Rule of St. Benedict.*

*Through our Monastic life and wise stewardship,  
we nurture contemplative presence  
in service of Church and society.*

## Mission Statement

St. Paul's Monastery  
2675 Benet Road  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55109  
651-777-8181  
[development@stpaulsmonastery.org](mailto:development@stpaulsmonastery.org)

To connect with or  
support Community  
ministries, visit us at  
[www.stpaulsmonastery.org](http://www.stpaulsmonastery.org)  
[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)