

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY NEWSLETTER

December 2021



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WELCOME LETTER

Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB

Angels played an important role as messengers in the sacred scriptures. They announced new life to Sarah and Abraham, Elizabeth and Zachariah, Mary and Joseph. In the Magnificat, or Cantic of Mary (Luke 1: 46-49, NRSVCE), we are reminded:

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me.

Ultimately, we are reminded that Jesus is the special message and messenger from God. All that God wishes to do and say to us is done through Him.

When thinking about angels, I am reminded that some might question if our guardian angels feel unemployed because we may give them so little attention. One of the Sisters asked me if I had named my guardian angel, I replied yes, "Harry" or the more formal "Harold", from the song, "Hark the Harold Angels Sing!"

Knowing that angels aren't the sparkly or pretty decorations that we put out at Christmas, we may recall the times when we have served one another as messengers of God. You can probably name several moments of your life when you have been surprised by the much needed support of another at critical moments of your life. Think also of the times that you have served as a special surprise support to others. When we do this, we then realize that angels are in fact, very present to us each day!

A blessed Holy season to you!

Sister Catherine Nehotte, OSB





SISTERS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Sister Marie Fujan, OSB

Sister Marie Fujan was born five days before Christmas and was named Mary Bell as she was deemed the new Fujan family Christmas bell. Sister Marie was the middle child of five, with three brothers and one sister. Growing up on a farm in Walnut Grove, Minnesota, to Bohemian parents, Frank and Marie Fujan, her childhood was robust and filled with chores, chickens, and gardening. One of her favorite childhood memories was playing football with her brothers. She remembers wearing her snow pants even in summer to protect herself from getting tackled in the backyard. Another special family memory was being a junior bridesmaid for her sister, Delores, who was eight years older. Sister Marie was very elated to be selected and adored the honorary blue hooped skirt dress for the special occasion.

Sister Marie was blessed with a best friend who she met in third grade, Sister Virginia Matter. Initially, Sister Marie was signed up to go to the College of St. Benedict but decided to make a surprise course change from small town life and go to St. Paul's Priory which exposed her to the contrasting busy city life. She added, "It was an easy choice when you see both your male and female friends making the journey into a devoted Catholic life. The positive influence made each step and career progression easier."

Sister Marie recalls one day at the Priory as a novice. She was on a walk on Summit Avenue and passed a mother with her child. The child said to the mother "What is that?" The comment was in reference to Sister Marie dressed in a black dress, black stockings, and head covered. At that time, Sister Marie asked herself the same question in self-reflection as she was contemplating making her commitment. Her life journey was just beginning, and many questions came to mind.



Sister Marie was a novice at St. Paul's Priory in 1957. This picture is likely from the early 1960's after she had taken her second vows.

[Read the rest of Sister Marie Fujan's story here.](#)

MAPLE TREE CHILDCARE CENTER

Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



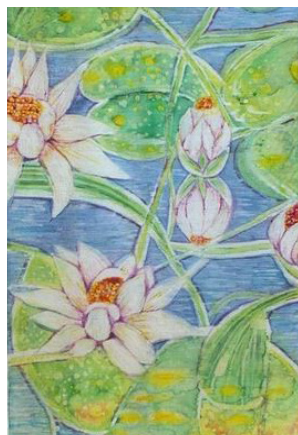
On Friday, October 29, the Maple Tree children donned their costumes and paraded over to the monastery. They met their Sister-friends in the garden area and sang their favorite seasonal songs. It was great to connect and have a bit of time together.



CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

It's never too early to make art for "Our Seeing God Exhibit" held every year at St. Paul's Monastery. We encourage all to enter and join this large group of artists for this exhibit experience. Dates of the exhibit are January 24 through March 25, 2022.

After last year's online exhibit, we are excited to be in our gallery once again for 2022. In addition, because it was so well received last year, we will also have a virtual exhibit online. We will hold an in-person reception the evening of January 26, 2022 for judging results and will also link a video of the judges comments online for those who choose to join us virtually.



"Water Lillies"
Jeanne Aaron

Entry deadline is January 14, 2022. You can find more information on our website at stpaulsmonastery.org/calling-all-artists

We are so excited to see you and your entries again this year. Contact Kathy Fleming at fleming5450@gmail.com with any questions.



"A Forgotten Prayer"
Hend al-Mansour

CHRISTMAS

AT THE MONASTERY

Virtual Gala

Our 14th annual Christmas at the Monastery is an online Virtual Gala this year. Join us for a Social Hour with the Sisters, an online auction and marketplace, and a raffle!

D E C E M B E R 6 - 1 2 , 2 0 2 1

Silent Auction

December 6-12

Online Marketplace

December 6-12

Virtual Social Hour

December 11 | 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Online Raffle

December 11 | 10:00 a.m.



CHRISTMAS

AT THE MONASTERY
Virtual Gala

Virtual Social Hour

Chat live with the Sisters.
Saturday, December 11
3:00-4:30 p.m.

To attend, please email
development@stpaulsmonastery.org
and an email will be sent to you with
a link for the Zoom Social Hour.

Raffle

This year, we are including an online
gift card raffle as a part of the Virtual
Gala. Buy raffle tickets at
bidpal.net/stpaulsmonastery2021
for your chance to win gift cards to
restaurants and major retailers.

A Facebook livestream event will
take place on December 11 at 10:00
a.m. to announce the winners of
the gift cards. You do not need
to be present to win.

Auction & Marketplace

We have a wonderful selection
of themed baskets, gifts, and
experiences for this year's
Silent Auction and Marketplace.

The Silent Auction will open
at 12:00 p.m. on December 6
and close at 12:00 p.m. on
December 12.

Buy or bid on items at
bidpal.net/stpaulsmonastery2021

Curbside Pick Up

Curbside pickup of items will
take place on:

December 15 | 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
December 16 | 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

No registration is required for
Curbside Pickup.



AROUND THE MONASTERY

Front to back: On All Souls' Day, the Monastery stopped to remember those Sisters we have lost in the past two years; Maple Tree Childcare Center hosted a Halloween costume parade and Sister Catherine Schoenecker is pictured here with her grand-niece, Adalyn; Sue Larson (16 years), our Human Resources Manager, and Patrice Pieck (6 years), our Accountant, celebrated their anniversaries at the Employee Apprciation Event; Sister Karen Sames, OSB, is hard at work making ornaments for our Christmas at the Monastery event; Sister Linda Soler, OSB, loves walking her friends dog, Bridie, in the neighborhood.

Invitation of Anna & Simeon

SISTER JACQUELINE LEITER, OSB



The beginning of the winter season in Minnesota coincides with the season of Advent. Both are times when we experience the cold and darkness. Advent and winter are also seasons of waiting and hope.

In ancient Israel, life under the oppression of the Romans was hard and cruel. It was a dark time, with little tangible hope. Still the people waited and hoped for God's promised savior to restore the kingdom to Israel. This was the world into which Jesus was born.

The Gospel of Luke recounts the story of Mary and Joseph coming to the Temple in Jerusalem to present the infant Jesus in the Temple. Because they were poor, they offered a sacrifice of two small birds. In the crowded Temple, a young couple with a baby may have easily gone unnoticed. Yet the Spirit touched the heart of a man named Simeon. He was a devout and righteous man. He was elderly, already having lived a long life waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Holy Spirit had promised him that he would not die before seeing the Messiah. Now the Spirit prompted him to come to the Temple, and Simeon arrived in time to meet the young couple arriving with their baby.

Having waited many years for the Messiah, he recognized Jesus immediately as the long-awaited Savior. Taking the child in his arms, Simeon blessed the young family and praised God: "Master, now you are dismissing your servant peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2: 29-32, NRSV).

A woman named Anna was also at the Temple that day. Anna is described as a prophet. As a young woman, she had been married for seven years before being widowed, and had lived in the Temple since then, praising God, fasting, and praying day and night. Like Simeon, God also moved Anna's heart that day. She immediately recognized the infant Jesus when she saw him. She not only began to praise God, but also went and prophesied, speaking about the child to all who were waiting and hoping for the redemption of Israel.

Invitations of Anna & Simeon

Anna and Simeon had both waited for the Messiah with patient expectation many years. In your own times of darkness, what do you wait for?

Anna and Simeon immediately recognized their hope in the infant Jesus when they saw him. How can you make yourself ready to recognize your hope when you see it?

Anna and Simeon immediately praised God and proclaimed to others. How can you be ready to praise and bless God like Anna and Simeon?

employee spotlight

Mary Elizabeth Ilg

In this month's Employee Spotlight, we are featuring Mary Elizabeth Ilg, Co-Director and Office Manager of the Benedictine Center. Mary started in this role in July of 2021, and she is responsible for coordinating arrangements and hospitality for individual and group retreats for the Benedictine Center. She also assists with the monthly E-newsletter, marketing, and social media for the Benedictine Center and works as the Executive Assistant to the Leadership Team at the Monastery, a position she has held since 2017.

Mary enjoys welcoming guests to the Monastery and giving tours. She also loves to assist the Sisters in any way with her administrative skills and enjoys attending daily prayers with the Sisters, especially Mass. In June 2021, Mary became an Oblate of St. Paul's Monastery. When describing her journey to becoming an Oblate, Mary notes that she has gained "more peace, spiritual awareness, and complete trust in God." She goes on, stating "My spiritual life is even deeper than it was before. I have prayed a lot in the chapel here and I will say, these prayers have been answered. God is really listening. He listens to the Sisters' prayers. God is very good to us."

Mary grew up in Richfield. She received her Bachelor's degree in English and Master's degree in Creative Writing from the University of Minnesota. Mary met her husband, John Ilg, in 1988. John is a professional artist and graphic designer and operates a studio in downtown St. Paul. They currently reside in Woodbury and have two daughters, Ingrid (27) and Isabel (16). They also have a 16-pound cat named Jasper, who is very affectionate and enjoys attention and sitting with Mary.

To balance her career and personal life, Mary spends time on the weekends hiking and biking, writing short stories (of which she hopes to publish a collection!), reading novels and watching movies. She also has started a practice of Centering Prayer via Zoom with a group from Minnesota Contemplative Outreach. She describes this as her "favorite thing of all right now—centering prayer. It is a silver lining for me of the pandemic."

Thank you, Mary, for your many talents and the professionalism you bring to the Benedictine Center. We are blessed and grateful to have you as a part of our community and hope to continue to provide a beacon of light for your spiritual, career, and life journey.

Mary Elizabeth Ilg



Mary Elizabeth Ilg in the Benedictine Center



John Ilg with daughter, Isabel Ilg



Isabel Ilg (left) and Ingrid Ilg (right)



Jasper, Mary Elizabeth's 16-pound cat



WISHING YOU A

MERRY CHRISTMAS

*Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.*

LUKE 2:14, RSVCE



COMMEMORATIVE PAVERS SPRING 2022

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 link below** to print the form and create your own paver message to commemorate a special occasion or honor a Sister, your parents, other family members, or friends. The Sisters and those who visit the plaza remember your loved ones in prayer. Thank you and God Bless you!

4x8 Paver

Three lines of text, \$130

8x8 Paver

Six lines of text, \$260

**Click here to pay online or
print order form**

Commemorative Pavers Spring 2022

Honoring Those Who Light Our Way

**Spring 2022 Installation
Ordering Deadline April 1**



PRAYER SCHEDULE

When our doors are closed, 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: 10:00AM

EUCCHARIST: 11:00AM

EVENING PRAYER: 5:00PM

MONDAY-SATURDAY

MORNING PRAYER: 8:00AM

MIDDAY PRAYER: 11:30AM

EVENING PRAYER: 5:00PM

*For further information, call 651-777-8181
or visit us at 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.





MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Sisters of St. Paul's Monastery, are a community that live Gospel values as expressed in the Rule of St. Benedict. Through our Monastic life and wise stewardship, we nurture contemplative presence in service of Church and society.



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