

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY NEWSLETTER

January 2022



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January 1

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WELCOME LETTER

Sister Linda Soler, OSB

Happy New Year to you! At the Monastery, we do not celebrate with loud noisemakers and cheering at midnight to welcome in the New Year, nor do we celebrate New Year's like the Romans by offering sacrifices to Janus (a Roman god), exchanging gifts, attending parties, and decorating with laurel branches. As a monastic community, we do not celebrate in the shadow of the secular world. Instead, we celebrate a Holy Day of Obligation, The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God who is the Author of Life in the mystery of salvation.

A New Year can signify a new beginning. We can all use a new beginning from time to time, especially during a pandemic. Sometimes the faith journey needs a boost of new beginnings, or a time to bring our blessings to God with a heart of thanksgiving.

Most people begin the New Year with a New Year's Resolution. This statistically leads to 80% for failure. So instead of a New Year's Resolution, have a New Year's solution to your spiritual life by making haste each day to see the gift of God in you and those around you. Sometimes resolutions can be broken, but the spiritual renewal is between you and God and that cannot be broken unless you give up on God, because God does not give up on you.

At St. Paul's Monastery, we are grateful for your amazing generosity of support this past Christmas and for our virtual Christmas at the Monastery. It is you who helps form our mission to co-create a future filled with God's mystery and love. The Benedictine way of life is a response to God's love, and it is through that love we need each other on the journey, so that in all things God may be glorified!

Sister Linda Soler, OSB





SISTERS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Sister Carol Rennie, OSB

Sister Carol Rennie, OSB is originally from St. Cloud, Minnesota and came from a family of eight. Sister Carol fondly remembers her siblings: Richard, John, Catherine, Mary Jane, and David. Sister Carol was “lucky number five” and the youngest girl.

Sister Carol’s favorite memory from her childhood is captured in a photograph of when she was four years old holding the family cat. Since St. Paul’s Monastery no longer has a house cat, Sister Carol has the next best thing! Sister Carol has a stationary roommate: it’s a lifelike cat, named Sugar, that purrs when it detects motion in the room. It’s just enough purrrrrrr to startle the new health care workers if they don’t expect the lifelike roommate sitting in the corner which brings an added “smile” to Sister Carol’s eyes when you mention her roommate.

Sister Carol remembers family fun with her siblings. She enjoyed bowling and driving a car in her youth. Today, Sister Carol still enjoys watching football and baseball. When she sits down to watch the local games on TV, she always requests a beer to make it a true sporting event. Sister Carol’s favorite pastime is enjoying the beautiful flowers in the Monastery courtyard and sitting in the sunshine on warmer days in spring and summer. Sister Carol mentions that her favorite color is orange- the brightness and positive feelings it evokes makes her smile.



Here is a photograph from 1929 of Sister Carol at four years-old. She is holding a beloved cat she had growing up. Sister Carol has always been a lifelong lover of cats!

[Read the rest of Sister Carol’s story here.](#)



Sister Agnes Trombley, OSB

Born: April 6, 1929

Professed: July 11, 1951

Died: December 18, 2021

"May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life."

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter 72

**"May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life."
Rule of Benedict, Chapter 72:12**

Sister Agnes Trombley entered peacefully into eternal life, fulfilling her baptismal call on December 18, 2021, at St. Paul's Monastery.

Agnes (Celeste Therese) was born on April 6, 1929, in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She was the fifth of six children born to George and Agnes Germain Trombley. She had two brothers and three sisters, one of whom was also a vowed religious at Saint Benedict's Monastery in Saint Joseph, MN. Sister Agnes graduated from Saint Anthony High School in Minneapolis in 1947 and attended the College of Saint Catherine, where she earned a B.A. degree in History and Education in 1959. She later received a M.A. in Sacred Studies from Saint John's University.

Sister Agnes entered St. Paul's Priory on September 15, 1949 and became a novice on June 12, 1950. She made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1951, and her perpetual monastic profession on July 11, 1954. On July 11, 2021, she joyfully celebrated her 70th Jubilee with her classmate Sister Benita Gerold.

[Read the rest of Sister Agnes Trombley's memoriam here.](#)



MAPLE TREE CHILDCARE CENTER

Jennie Schlauch, Maple Tree Childcare Center



“We love the snow!”

Harry and Frankie, preschoolers at Maple Tree Childcare Center, are seen here playing in the snow. They love winter sledding!



BENEDICTINE ASSOCIATES NEWS

Sister Karen Sames, OSB

This upcoming year, we are looking forward to our future plans with the Benedictine Associates. Rebekah Taylor, a Benedictine Associate, is working with Sister Jacqueline Leiter, OSB, on our winter formation experience. Soon, Rebekah will let us know what her plans will be for us.

The Benedictine Associates continue to meet and discuss needs of the group. During the first year of the pandemic, we met via Zoom every Saturday. We gradually decreased the number of times that we met. After recent discussions, we will resume Zoom gatherings every two weeks just to stay in touch until the pandemic allows for in-person gatherings.

We are accepting applications for those interested in becoming Benedictine Associates. The applications are due soon, so if you are interested, give call us at 651-777-8181 and ask for Sister Karen Sames, OSB.

We wish you all a very blessed and holy holiday season. We especially remember Sister Agnes Trombley, OSB, founding member of the Committee for Benedictine Associates. She was the community liaison from the start. We will truly miss our guiding force. Peace to you, Sister Agnes.

May your gatherings be safe and full of love, laughter, and life. Peace to all.

ST. PAUL'S MONASTERY 75TH ANNIVERSARY

We are pleased to announce that 2023 will mark the 75th anniversary of St. Paul's Monastery. Our exciting news is the production of a book highlighting the past 25 years along with a look to the future.

Do you have the time, talent or resources to assist with this project? If so, send an email to SrLucia@stpaulsmonastery.com. Be sure to watch for more information in upcoming months. We hope you'll join us in this festive celebration!



VISUAL PRAYER THE INTERFAITH ARTIST CIRCLE

THE INTERFAITH ARTIST CIRCLE

View their work at interfaithartistcircle.com



Our current art exhibit is VISUAL PRAYER. Visual prayer is the creative exploration and expression of prayer through images. Although this is a contemporary concept, there is a long history of using art in worship – including illuminated religious books.

We are excited and honored to host the work of The Interfaith Artists Circle of the Twin Cities for this exhibit. They are a group of visual artists who pursue art as a spiritual journey. Originally founded in 2005 as the Jewish Women Artists' Circle, the group has become an intersection of multiple faiths, with exhibitions in galleries, universities, and alternative venues in the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota.

[Learn more about this exhibit.](#)

[Calling all artists! Learn more about participating in our next art exhibit here. Submissions are due January 14.](#)



HAPPY
2022
NEW YEAR

The Eternal Stability of the Benedictine Tradition

TERI ROSE, OBLSB



Transitions are remarkable spiritual practices. They lure us away from what is familiar to stand, with toes dangerously dangling over, uncomfortable edges. But it's right here at this growth edge that beauty, faith, and hope emerge. If we let them.

The Benedictine Tradition is beginning its next transition. As the number of worldwide oblates grow and the number of vowed religious decline, what could this mean for our future? How will we navigate the upcoming uncertainty? So many what-ifs to lure us onto that dangerous edge.

Despite all that has happened over the past 1500 years of human history (and not just my small what-ifs but known tragedies like war, famine, genocides, and other heartbreaking inhumanities) the Rule and the Benedictine Tradition have moved with, through, and on. The beautiful and natural aging of monks or shifts in their numbers wasn't paused during these viciously uncertain times. And yet, as hoped, the Rule is still here. I, 1500 years later, am still able to rely on it in my spiritual formation. It is still here to encourage me to go through the "narrow gate" and point me to my relationship with God.

I could allow my thinking to go down the line of what-ifs, or I can choose to glance back to the very Rule I'm nervous about losing for the answers. I can practice my beloved Benedictine value of Stability of Heart. To me, this means staying committed to just this moment. The only moment there is. It is here that God creates through us, where he meets us, talks to us, and directs us. When we are tethered to this moment, here with our God who is always holding us, ensuring that we have the resources we need, ensuring that "the words will come when needed", and ensuring that our "foundation is made of stone", I am able to feel the assurance that the Rule and our beloved Benedictine Tradition will continue to move with, through, and on.

There is a gifted fruit of the Holy Spirit that most influences my success at this Stability of Heart. It is patience. Benedict sets expectations right in the prologue that patience will not be optional or comfortable. He states "we share through patience in the sufferings of Christ." Nothing can stress the stability of the heart more than

the emptiness patience demands we stand in. This void between what we knew - what is taken away through loss and grief or what is different from what we had hoped - this void, between what we knew and what is being created, feels dark and isolating- uncomfortable. Our hearts feel restless and nervous in this new space UNTIL we remember that it isn't emptiness, it is openness and space, the space needed for us to welcome and recognize God in this moment. And in this moment of recognition, as the beauty feels bigger than what we can bear, we can hear him say, "Don't be afraid".



Invitation of Magi

SISTER JACQUELINE LEITER, OSB



January 6 is the day we celebrate Epiphany, the revelation of God Incarnate in Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the journey of the Magi seeking a newborn king and worshipping a humble baby in Bethlehem. Who were the Magi?

We know little about the Magi. The Gospel makes it clear that they came from the east, which may have referred to Persia, Syria, or perhaps Arabia. What is clear is that they were from a foreign land, not belonging to the Jewish people. Wherever they came from, it is likely their journey was a long and difficult one.

Sometimes the Magi are referred to as kings, and though it is unlikely they were rulers, we usually think of them as distinguished and powerful. We also often refer to them as wise men, and think of them as learned. The Magi may have belonged to a priestly caste known for interpreting dreams and the motion of the stars and planets. They were seekers of wisdom, whether from studying nature, holy reading, or visions.

Matthew begins the story of the Magi with their arrival in Jerusalem, where they ask everyone they meet where they can find the child who was born King of the Jews. The Magi explained that they had seen a star rising, and had come to pay homage to the child. With all their learning, they knew that they did not have all the answers. Having seen the star, they knew enough to connect its appearance with a prophecy they had heard about the Jewish people, which is why they went to Jerusalem.

[Read the rest of Sister Jacqueline's article here.](#)



Thank you for all who attended Christmas at the Monastery, and helped support the Sisters of St. Benedict of St. Paul's Monastery! We appreciate your love and support for this event. See you next year!



AROUND THE MONASTERY

Front to back: A Christmas pie social was hosted at the Monastery by donors Bethman and Lisa Kupcho for the Sisters and Monastery employees; Various artists from the new exhibit “Visual Prayer” paid a visit to see their artwork displayed throughout the Monastery; The Schommer twins, Sisters Andriette and Andrine Schommer, OSB, opened cards and gifts to celebrate their 92nd birthday; The Sisters in Healthcare enjoyed a purple theme this Advent season with a purple Christmas tree and decor; Sister Jacqueline Leiter poses in front of the large Nativity Scene she arranged in the Monastery.



employee spotlight

Rose Quast

In this month's Employee Spotlight, we are featuring Rose Quast, the Accounting Manager for St. Paul's Monastery. She has been employed with the Monastery since November of 2017. Her duties include the preparation and reporting of monthly and annual financial results, including the Monastery's annual budget and annual audit.

By way of background, Rose grew up on a dairy farm near Brandon, Minnesota as part of a family of nine kids, with four brothers and four sisters. She attended St. Cloud State University and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting. She also holds certifications as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), of which she passed the exam on her first attempt, and as a Certified Management Accounts (CMA), of which she passed the exam on her second attempt. Both exams for these certifications are well-known to be quite difficult and require a lot of studying and preparation.

Rose currently resides in Blaine, Minnesota. She lives in a townhouse and is grateful to not have to mow the lawn or shovel the driveway where she lives. Rose has one son, Ryan, who will turn 30 in June. Ryan was married five years ago to his wife, Kelsey, and they have a dog named Rey, who is named after the Star Wars character. Her son and daughter-in-law are big Star Wars and Harry Potter fans.

Prior to working for the Monastery, she held accounting positions in the corporate world. She was originally drawn to this position because of the chance to work more regular hours, while doing work that she enjoys and feeling blessed to contribute to the overall mission of the Monastery. When reflecting on what she loves most about her job, she states, "I like that I am able to apply my skills in an atmosphere where my efforts are appreciated, where I am treated with respect, and where there is an expectation that I have a personal life. After coming from the corporate world where long hours and stress was the norm, this is much appreciated."

In her free time, Rose enjoys reading, listening to music, and scrapbooking. Her favorite book is *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Her favorite movie is also *Pride and Prejudice*, the 2005 version starring Keira Knightley. Some of her fondest memories in life include a trip to the Holy Land in Israel that she took with one of her sisters, Aggie, in 2019 and her son's wedding in 2016. Rose is happiest when she is listening to music with family or friends, or reading a book and her favorite quote is, "Home is where your story begins" (Anne Danielson).

Rose, we thank you for your hard work and dedication to the Monastery over the years and we hope you will continue to gift us with your talents and skills for many years to come!

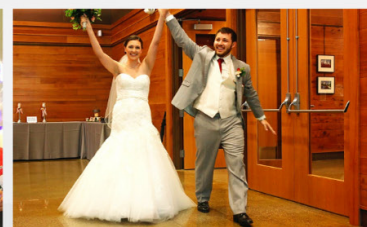
Rose Quast



Rose at the Israel airport in 2019 on her way to the Holy Land.



Rose's sister, Aggie, also at the Israel airport in 2019.



Rose's son, Ryan, and daughter-in-law, Kelsey, at their wedding dance in 2016.

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

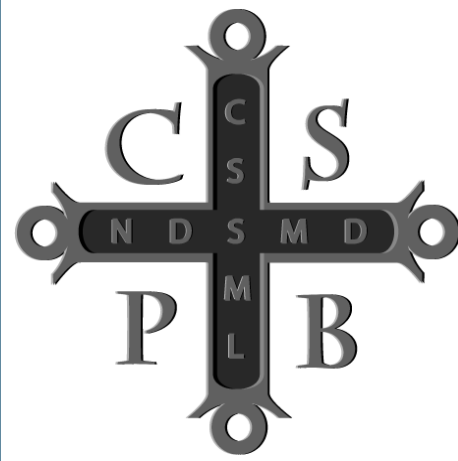
Spring 2022 Installation
Ordering Deadline April 1



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
EUCHARIST: 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
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[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)