

PATHWAYS



Newsletter of the Duluth Benedictine Sisters

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Pathways

NEWSLETTER

of the Benedictine Sisters

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Produced by:

Monastery Development/
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Editorial Board:

Sister Beverly Raway, Prioress
Jan M. Barrett, director
Sister Lisa Maurer
Sister Mary Catherine Shambour
Sister Sarah Smedman
Sister Therese Carson
Theresa Butler

Contributors:

Sisters of the Community

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McGough

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St. Scholastica Monastery
1001 Kenwood Avenue
Duluth, MN 55811 - 2300

Telephone: 218.723.6555
Fax: 218.723.5963

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Dear Friends of the Monastery,

As Advent comes around again, a season of waiting and longing, I hear a refrain from the inspiring “Furthering Our Future” sessions conducted by Sister Carol Zinn, SSJ. During these days our community focused on recognizing our current reality and made a commitment to cross a threshold, leading to transformation through deeper relationships with one another. The phrase we sang repeatedly is, “There is a longing in our hearts, O God, for You to reveal Yourself to us.” Perhaps you know the melody and can relate to this message, as we await the hoped-for coming of our Messiah, our “God forever coming” (Sister Mary Catherine), the “God with skin on” (Sister Therese), who came and comes again to restore right relationships.

This Advent longing for God and for right relationships seems even more compelling as we see and hear the chaos around us in the destructive storms and earthquakes, geo-political upsets, scandals in the Church, and violence, especially against women and children. We are tempted to shut out the stories of those who have suffered deeply because they overwhelm our senses and our ability to imagine how we can help. We are a global community and if we continue to listen and walk with those who suffer, it cannot help but give us pain.

At our first Benedictine Days event, Abbot John Klassen and Sister Michaela Hedican spoke of the chaos in our world and of the tools found in the Holy Rule that can help us navigate through times of chaos. Abbot John in his clear clarion voice declared, “Chaos is absolutely essential.” Chaos he said, “moves us to creation,” just as it did when the Spirit of God hovered over the formless void, as light was separated from darkness on the first day of creation (Genesis 1: 1-5), and the Word which was in the beginning became flesh and light for the world (John 1: 1-5).

Our most important tool for navigating the chaos comes from the first word of the Prologue of the Rule... “listen.” Sister Michaela declared that deep listening with the ear of the heart guides the way toward asking the right questions and finding the needed response. Listening to one another and to God in the silence of our open hearts prepares us for communion and the formation of right relationships as we find our way together to God and so, I hear the refrain again... “There is a longing in our hearts, O God, for You to reveal Yourself to us.”

We cannot be complacent in our own safe and secure worlds. Whatever affects others affects us and the whole planet. We are one in this universe. We can say there is little we can do and turn away, but as Sister Joan Chittister recently said, “We must allow ourselves to dream about what life could really be like if enough of us demanded that it were. But to do that means to open for examination all the assumptions that have driven the world to this point. All of them.” When we do that, we can build on the hope growing in small communities across the world and creating the environment, because chaos compels us to live an authentic life, not free from mistakes, not mourning what we are not, but living life fully, with something left to share as we repeat again, “There is a longing in our hearts, O God, for You to reveal Yourself to us.” May we all be open to listening deeply during this Advent season.



Lovingly in Christ,

Sister Beverly
Sister Beverly Raway, OSB

God-With-Us

by Sister Therese Carson (theresecarson@duluthosb.org)

A few years ago on a mostly-cloudy autumn evening, I watched a lunar eclipse from the college soccer field behind the Monastery. Sitting a little apart with my back against a goal post, I let the soft air wash over me and listened to disembodied voices of students who had gathered to watch the shadow of the earth move across the face of the full moon. While we waited for a break in the clouds, I mused how at times life can eclipse our spirits so that we lose sight of the light of God. I thought how the Jewish people waited for a Messiah to restore the kingdom and bring order. In Psalm 10 the poet cries out, “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why hide yourself in times of trouble?” Writing to the Jewish exiles in Babylon, Jeremiah promises, “The Lord says: I will put my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). And, “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart” (Psalm 27:14). The Lord will lighten our darkness.

When the clouds had set in for good and I heard rain coming, I got to my feet and began to walk home. A woman’s voice said, “Look! There’s the moon again. It’s red!” As I turned to see the moon in near totality emerge briefly and then disappear behind the rain, an unhappy male voice came out of the darkness. “I don’t care about the moon. I’m just worried about my friend.”

His voice made me pause and think. Yes, we are incomplete and long for completeness in God, but at times prayer isn’t enough for us; we need human friendship to help us be whole again. We need a “God with skin on,” a flesh and blood person to listen to our problems, put them in perspective, share our grief, worry with us, laugh with us, let us know we are loved.

This is a description of Jesus Christ! Did ‘the Word become flesh’ so we could learn to be more fully human? Each Advent we look for his coming, both in the past and at the end of time, to restore us to a right relationship with God. On Christmas Eve we celebrate the Infant, wrapped against the winter cold and bundled in straw. The angels sing Glory, shepherds look on in wonder, and a brilliant star marks the birth of a different kind of King, one who will “act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8). Different indeed! God, born into poverty to grow up in obscurity. Jesus (‘God saves’) cuts his teeth and learns to walk, follows his

foster-father into carpentry, labors with his hands, grows tired, sore, and at times discouraged. And always he withdraws in solitude to pray, building that relationship with God and slowly realizing its profoundly different nature.

As God-made-human Jesus sees the mass of humanity as individuals, and in his divinity knows each heart with a deep compassion, which means ‘suffering with’. Jesus befriends the lonely, feels their pain, comprehends their struggles, satisfies their hunger to be understood and accepted, and walks their road. He is misunderstood even by his closest friends, and there are times when he, too, needs a ‘God with skin on’ and turns to others for comfort and healing. He treasures the hospitality and friendship offered by Lazarus, Mary, and Martha in Bethany. We all know how his life ended and how, beyond all hope, it continues.

Pope Francis says, “We do not believe in an ethereal God, we believe in a God who became flesh, who has a heart and this heart today speaks to us thus: ‘Come to me, if you are tired, oppressed, and I will give you rest. But the smallest, treat them with compassion, with the same tenderness with which I treat you.’” We now are the Body of Christ. We stand in his place, entrusted with his mission to love, support and encourage each other in mutual compassion as one family in Christ. This means we never need be alone: we have God and we have each other, and together these will complete us.

So, when the clouds roll over your spirit, keep your thoughts on God who is with you always. Know your innate emptiness, your desire to be completed, and reach out to take the hand of another in mutual loving support. That, too, is God: Christ with skin on.



Sisters Barbara Higgins and +Mary Rae Higgins

The Coming of Our God: Advent, 2018

by Sister Mary Catherine Shambour (mcshambour@duluthosb.org)

On December 2 this year, the Church begins a new liturgical year with the First Sunday of Advent. Observant church-goers will again welcome the Advent wreath, and in prayer and song will recall the thousands of years that our forebears in the faith awaited their Messiah with poignant longing. The Scripture readings will help us appreciate the tremendous significance of the Incarnation in human history and in our own lives. They will make us grateful for our own gift of faith and send us home eager to make plans to celebrate the great feast of Christmas, when our God took on our frail humanity. In His great love for us Jesus taught us how to love one another, so that we may become like Him and be with Him forever. That is certainly worth a celebration.

I pray all of us will have the most meaningful Christmas ever by sharing God's love with others, if only by a phone call, a visit, or a few dollars in the Salvation Army's red kettle. God sees what is in our heart.

During Advent we also look to the future, for our God is forever coming. The second purpose of Advent is to prepare us for Christ's return. The Gospels preceding Advent tell us that Christ will come again at the end of time. We may assume that will be in the far-distant future, because He left us and ascended to heaven and thus is gone. Indeed, the Church has focused on that far-off time and the distant Judge, the "cosmic Christ" who will come after He has drawn all of creation to Himself. But we forget that Christ also promised He would not leave us orphans. To be with us now and until the end of time, He sent

us His Spirit. Thus, if Christ is with us now and is also within all of creation, we need to see Him in every person, every situation, and all of creation.

Here is where the Church – and remember that "Church" includes all of us – can help us learn more about the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the world. It doesn't help to be told that the Trinity is a mystery that we can't understand. God's spirit lives within us to draw us ever closer to Himself and to find Him in all that He created. We can all learn more about the richness of our faith and make it more meaningful in our lives. Today we have a far more educated Church with access to excellent sources of information through media of all kinds. We have new movements in the Church, and groups collaborating with other denominations to bring about God's kingdom. We are continually learning more about our God who is forever on the horizon and coming.

My suggestion: take time out to withdraw and be alone. Shut out all distractions and open your heart to God's Spirit dwelling within you. Honor Him, thank Him, pour out your heart to Him with all your cares and concerns. Beg Him to show you how you can make a difference in our world right now.



Begin with a change of heart. Strive to find Christ in every person and situation you encounter daily and respond in love. Listen to the quiet voice within and act upon it, and you will meet the Christ who is with His world now as He promised and at the same time is still to come.

Have a blessed Advent.

Please Pray for Our Deceased Family and Friends

Mary Alice Pearce Brady	2/1/2016	Melchior Volk	7/24/2018
Sister Generose Gervais OSF	10/7/2016	stepbrother of Sister Maria Volk	
Martin P. Bamrick	6/23/2017	Marguerite Atmore Mason	8/2/2018
Beverly J. O'Brien	11/23/2017	Ellen Mirium Bane	8/6/2018
Elizabeth Ann Monckton	12/26/2017	Bernice Paulson	8/14/2018
Peter DeZurik	1/22/2018	Thomas Richard Kroll	8/16/2018
brother-in-law of Sister Lois Ann Glaudel		Andrine Katherine Rozinka	8/24/2018
Paul Jerulle	1/30/2018	Robert Berg Rhode	8/27/2018
Charlott Jones	3/22/2018	Carol Joan Marx	8/30/2018
Helen Verkuilen	3/28/2018	Ralph Joseph Mrak	9/9/2018
Sharon O'Brien Link	4/27/2018	Marianne Tomljanovich Noble	9/15/2018
Elaine Higgins	5/4/2018	Raymond C. Luukkonen	9/28/2018
sister-in-law of Sister Barbara and +Sister Mary Rae Higgins		brother of +Sister Ingrid Luukkonen	
Lowayne Powers Flewell	5/4/2018	Thomas H. Burggraff	9/30/2018
Catherine Eisinger	5/8/2018	nephew of +Sister Rebecca Burggraff	
Muryl Danks	5/16/2018	cousin of Sister Clare Marie Trettel	
Delia Roehl	5/22/2018	Kathryn Mary Meulemans	10/1/2018
James M. Zegan	5/24/2018	Cheryl Winzenberg	10/3/2018
Mary Sylvia Allich Engbretson	5/30/2018	Louis Larry Dallavia	10/4/2018
Constance Dorn	6/14/2018	Donald David Malinowski	10/5/2018
Thomas James Micke	7/9/2018	Mary Jean Shepard Lemon	10/7/2018
brother of Sister Pauline Micke		Alfred Gagne	10/9/2018
Joseph Kolar	7/12/2018	brother of Sister Melanie Gagne	
Fr. Frank Perkovich	7/16/2018	Duane "Dewey" Johnson	10/19/2018
Mavis Kurosky	7/22/2018	brother-in-law of +Sister Judith Oland	
Audrey Ann Bambenek	7/20/2018	Fr. Bernard Kahlhamer	10/17/2018
sister of Sister Mary Christa Kroening			

“Take, Lord, receive ... all I am and call my own”:

the Perpetual Monastic Profession of Sister Therese Carson

by Jan Barrett

On July 7, 2018 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, the Sisters of the St. Scholastica Monastery welcomed Sister Therese Carson, OSB into full membership in the Benedictine Monastic Community.

Therese grew up with her parents and four brothers in the 1950s and '60s in a small house in Lincoln Park, a suburb of Detroit, Michigan. From an early age she felt the call of her vocation; for Halloween once she dressed as her patron saint, St. Thérèse of Lisieux. After college she worked as a Medical Technologist in hospital laboratories, eventually specializing in Microbiology. A faithful and active Catholic, she volunteered as a gardener in her parish, but a chaotic work schedule kept her from doing more. All this time, she wondered, “Is God calling me to become a Sister?”

Her dream of living close to nature became reality when she left Detroit to work in a hospital laboratory on the northeast shore of Lake Michigan. She bought a small home in the country at the edge of a state forest, planted a garden, raised dogs, and walked the hills praying to God. With a more consistent work schedule, she was free to volunteer at her new parish, Holy Childhood of Jesus in Harbor Springs, and sing in the choir.

As her parents grew older, Therese’s friendship with God grew stronger. At the moment of her father’s death, she recalls, “My spirit rang like a struck bell, filled with joy and a nameless presence.” Her parish priest was familiar with this; he explained, “When a person dies, the veil between this world and the next grows so thin we can almost reach through it and touch the face of God.” In contrast, when her beloved mother died ten years later, she experienced a profound grief that separated her emotionally from her settled life. Without family responsibilities, she was released to follow the vocation that called her since childhood. She came to St. Scholastica Monastery and tells of her first visit, “Driving up to the Monastery felt like I was coming home.” Seven months later, she sold her home to a good man who also adopted her special-needs dogs, and in February 2013 on the Feast of St. Scholastica entered the Community as a postulant.

Nearly six years later, on July 7, 2018, Sister Therese stood before her Sisters during her Perpetual Monastic Profession receiving joyful applause after they recited the following: “You are now one with us as a member of Saint Scholastica Monastery, sharing all things in common with us as we journey together into the future.



Part of her large extended family in 2004, including her mother, brothers, sisters-in-law, and some of her nephews and nieces.



At her profession, Sister prostrates herself before the altar as the Community sings the Litany of the Saints.

You are a gift to us, Sister Therese, and we are a gift to you. May Christ bring us all together to everlasting life.”

Sister Therese was also blessed by the presence of her brothers and sisters-in-law, long-time friends from her former parish, and new friends from the Duluth area. The Presider was Father Tom Foster of the Duluth Diocese and Concelebrant was Father Joseph Graff, who was Sister Therese’s home parish priest from Harbor Springs. She gave thanks to her faith family at Holy Childhood of Jesus Parish, and expressed her gratitude to the men and women of the Cursillos in Christianity movement in Michigan, her brothers and sisters in faith, who live their faith with passion and integrity. And, finally, she, was able to express her gratefulness to many friends at St. Scholastica Monastery – Sisters, volunteers, oblates and employees – who by prayer and example helped her through the inner transformation of being Benedictine.



Sister Therese sings the triple Suscipe, the prayer of complete faith in the providence of God, as Fathers Joseph Graff and Tom Foster look on.

A celebratory banquet followed the ritual where Sister Therese exclaimed, “I feel like I’m walking on air.”

For her invitation she chose a photo (taken while camping on the prairies in southwestern Minnesota) of a trail winding up a grassy hill, and paired it with a quote from St. Ignatius Loyola: “Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all I have and call my own. You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me.” Another Sister described this as the Jesuit form of the ancient and succinct Benedictine prayer of renunciation and faith, the Suscipe, which Sister Therese sung three times at her Profession: “Receive me, O Lord, according to your will and I shall live and do not fail me in my hope.”



A get-together that evening in the Community Room (left to right): Sister-in-law Ruth (married to Thomas Carson), Sister Lois Eckes, and Thomas; Sister Lisa Maurer, sister-in-law Denise (married to Jim Carson), and Sister Josine Krausnick; Sister Beverly Raway, Sister Pauline Micke, and David Carson (brother).

Interested in becoming a Sister? Catholic women age 21-50 who sense that God may be calling them to the Benedictine way of life are invited to contact us at vocations@duluthsb.org to further explore their vocation and to journey with us in their discernment.



Center for Spirituality and Enrichment

St. Scholastica Monastery - McCabe Renewal Center

One Mission, Two Locations

by Dawn Carrillo, Director (dcarrillo@duluthosb.org)

This past summer, my son and I went hiking in Congdon Park here in Duluth. I was intent on getting to the end of the trail and crossing it off my list. My son, however, had other ideas. He wanted to investigate every side trail, to play in the rushing waters of Tischer Creek, to find stones that would make the biggest splash, and just sit watching the water. I found myself getting frustrated with him, and finally gave up on finishing the main trail.

And that's when it happened. Slowly, I started to notice the sounds of the moving water,

the smell of wet rock and earth, small flowers dotting the landscape, smiles from people we encountered, and my son's delight in his explorations. When we left the park that day, we had not "hiked the Congdon Park Trail" but we were happy and relaxed. I was filled with a rare peace.

Life is messy, rarely what we expect it to be. And somehow, God is right there in the middle of the messiness, teaching us that life is about being in the messiness. We have a God, not of the nice, clean, easy main trails, but of the side trails, often

difficult, sometimes scary, and usually unexpected. But when we let go of the idea that the main trail is where we should be, we are changed, softened, and refreshed. We start to see more like God sees: the gifts of Creation, the people around us, and a child's delight.

Take time during the coming of winter and the Advent of Christ to do just this: explore the side trails, whether it be in private reflections, or in one of the many programs available at the Center for Spirituality and Enrichment. Embrace the messiness of life, and find God



We held our first Benedictine Days event on September 12, with Abbot John Klassen of Saint John's Abbey and Sister Michaela Hedican of St. Benedict's Monastery. They spoke to 160 Sisters and guests on "Navigating the Chaos: Benedictine Values as a Way of Life."



Our second Benedictine Days event will be: *The Saint John's Bible: Why Does It Matter?* with Michael Patella, OSB, of Saint John's Abbey. Saturday, December 1, 2018 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (lunch included). Registration is required.

As the world took a decisive turn from print to digital communication, Saint John's Abbey and University developed a plan to write the Bible by hand, with ink and quill, on vellum. This decision amounted to a great, counterintuitive move to jump backward over two technological revolutions. It was taken with much thought and reflection and created by calligraphers and illustrators in England. Fr. Michael Patella, the chair of the Committee on Illumination and Texts, will explain the essential questions for this project by using images of the final product.

Schedule for Early Winter 2018

To register for an event, schedule an event for your Church or group, or for questions:

Online: retreatduluth.org

Email: retreat@duluthosb.org

Phone: 218-724-5266.

For presentations outside of Monastery or McCabe, contact Sister Pauline Micke, Outreach Coordinator, at **218-723-7086**.

Lectio Divina with *The Saint John's Bible*

Wednesdays: November 21, 28, December 5, 12 and 19 at 2:30 pm in Chapel

Lectio divina, a Benedictine form of contemplative prayer, is a powerful practice that enables us to open ourselves to God so that we can better recognize and hear God's voice in our lives. We will also use illuminations from *The Saint John's Bible* to encounter the Divine through images (*visio divina*). No prior experience with this form of prayer is required. Come an hour early and take a closer look at the illuminations and calligraphy of *The Bible*. Someone will be on hand to answer questions and help people turn pages.

The Making of *The Saint John's Bible*

Friday, November 30 from 7:00-8:30 pm at St. Scholastica Monastery. **Registration is required.** *Free will offering.*

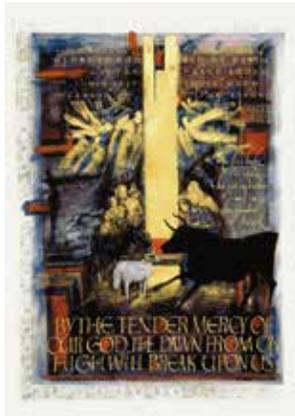
Advent Vespers with the College of St. Scholastica

Tuesday, December 4 at 4:30 p.m. in the Chapel

Weekend retreat: Praying with *The Saint John's Bible: Illuminating Your Advent Gaze*

At St. Scholastica Monastery from Friday, December 7, 9:00 am to Sunday, December 9, 2:00 pm

Ignite your imagination for praying through the Advent season using the illuminations of *The Saint John's Bible*. Retreatants will learn the practice of *visio divina* or "divine seeing" and be introduced to the medieval arts of calligraphy and artistic illumination. Praying with visual images is adapted from the 6th century practice of Bible reading called *lectio divina*, using both the text and art to help the reader encounter the living Word of God. The rhythm ignites the senses to 'hear and see' the Word of God as one listens, meditates, and prays with the sacred text. Join us for this profound three-day retreat that will bring the Season of Advent alive for you!



Birth of Christ, Donald Jackson, Copyright 2002, The Saint John's Bible, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Retreat facilitators:

Dawn Carrillo, Director for the Center for Spirituality and Enrichment at St. Scholastica Monastery.

Barbara Sutton, Director of Field Education and Ministerial Formation at Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary.

Meridith Schifsky, leader in the Centering Prayer community, spiritual director, and contemplative artist.

Cost: \$210, including meals and materials, or \$320 with overnight stay. **Registration is required.**

Taizé Prayer Service with *The Saint John's Bible*
Monday, December 10 at 7:00 p.m. in Chapel

Christmas Caroling at McCabe Renewal Center
Thursday, December 13 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the McCabe Renewal Center, 2125 Abbotsford Avenue, Duluth.

Gather around a fire for Christmas carols in our chapel.

Let us know you're coming:

(218)724-5266 or email retreat@duluthosb.org

Closing Ritual for *The Saint John's Bible*

Sunday, January 6, in Chapel. Time to be determined: see our website retreatduluth.org for more information.

Book Discussion: *An Altar in the World* by Barbara Brown Taylor

Mondays: January 14, 21, 28 and February 4 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at St. Scholastica Monastery

In *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor shares how she learned to find God beyond the church walls by embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life. She shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go and in nearly everything we do as we learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and revere the world we live in.

Facilitators: Dawn Carrillo, Sister Lois Eckes.

Freewill offering; registration is required.

Instructions on procuring the book will be available upon registration or call the Monastery Books and Gifts at 723-6589 to purchase it.

Living the Full Life of a Benedictine: Sister Pauline Micke, OSB

by Sister Therese Carson (thereseccarson@duluthosb.org)



As a Halloween angel in 2017

One cold day sometime in the 1960s, as she walked to the convent for lunch after teaching children at Our Lady of Victory School on Minneapolis' north side, Sister Pauline found a young boy crying, his clothing torn and muddy. He told her he was walking his younger sister home when they were attacked by older boys. He yelled to his sister to run and turned to confront his attackers, who beat him up. Sister took him into the convent, sewed buttons back onto his coat, cleaned him up, and gave him a pair of warm mittens that her grandmother had just knit for her. "He needed them more than I did," she recalled. She sent him off home with a candy bar, and within an hour, the mother called to thank her and asked, "Are you for real?"

Real. That is a good description for Sister Pauline. No pretense, no role-playing. When she is happy, her face shines; when she is angry, you will know it. She can be brutally honest, but

underneath this all flows a deep compassion and empathy for those whom life has left scarred.

Sister Pauline learned from her parents never to turn her back on someone in need, and so from an early age she dreamed of becoming a social worker. Becoming a Benedictine Sister was never part of the dream. "But God will get you where you're supposed to be if you give it a chance," she said with a chuckle. "I followed a friend to Stanbrook High School in Duluth and stayed." She credits the three Braegelman sisters for encouraging her vocation: Sister Benedicta, her first-grade teacher in Cloquet; Sister Bernice, who taught her Scripture at The College of St. Scholastica (where Sister Pauline majored in English and History); and Mother Athanasius who, when Sister was teaching at Our Lady of Victory School, suggested she study Theology in the summer at St. John's University.

After earning a master's in theology, Sister Pauline became the director of Faith Formation at St. Michael's Parish in Duluth's Lakeside neighborhood, where she taught RCIA and worked with the Diocese's first youth minister. "I also delivered Meals on Wheels to a cranky old woman who



Friends Peg Cruikshank and Sister Pauline, who graduated from Stanbrook together in 1958.



A passionate gardener, she grows vegetables and makes preserves. Her zucchini relish always sells quickly at our annual Christmas Bazaar. Each spring she pulls rhubarb for the CHUM Rhubarb Festival fundraiser.

distrusted everyone and would never open the door for them, but she opened it to me.” She left St. Michael’s to teach Theology for ten years at the College. When several senior care facilities in North Dakota were brought into the Benedictine Health System in 1989, she took on the monumental task of transforming their culture to embrace Benedictine values and ideas. As Mission Integration Director, she set up and supported an Ethics Committee in each region and instituted Christian spiritual care, with shared chaplains to meet the residents’ spiritual needs.

She had returned from North Dakota to Minnesota to work in another parish, but then it all fell apart. An addiction became all-absorbing and then all-controlling. She admitted her inability to deal with this on her own and agreed to treatment at a Catholic rehabilitation center. There she faced her own illness, admitted her inability to control it, and began the long climb back to wholeness. It is ironic that a woman who wanted to be a social worker and help the wounded was herself wounded, but that is often the start of self-knowledge and wisdom. God can bring new life into anyone’s journey and make us stronger than before. As C.S. Lewis said, “Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.” As Sister Pauline said, “I perceived my addiction and recovery as one of the greatest blessings in my life.”

Years before this, when Sister Pauline’s mother had a serious heart attack, the doctor had explained that the damaged muscle would form a scar, making it a little stronger than before. The image stuck with her. “I don’t think of us as broken but as scarred – all of us. That gives us all strength and hope.”

Sister Pauline learned first-hand what it means to be helpless and rely completely on God. In her pain she began hearing God’s voice speaking intimately to her through Scripture. Jeremiah, addressing the Israelites exiled in Babylon, also spoke to her: “For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). With the psalmist she could cry out, “The Lord is my light and my salvation; why should I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1) As the immensity of God’s love broke through to envelop her, she thought, “Each time I think of you I pray with joy” (Philippians 1:3-4), for “we are each God’s work of art” (Ephesians 2:10) and “the one who began a good work in you will bring it to completion” (Philippians 1:6).

“If the Scriptures have taught us anything,” Sister Pauline once wrote, “it is that we don’t have to stay in the darkness. We can live the truth and come to the light.” The Gospel of John became her rock, the story of the self-giving love of Christ who befriended all who accepted his love. “When Jesus knelt to wash his disciples’ feet,” she said, “he showed



Sister Pauline collects good business clothing and warm winter wear, and delivers it to CHUM and the Damiano Center, two service organizations in Duluth. Business clothes help people look their best for job interviews and gives them proper attire when they are hired. She also helps supply the Bethany Crisis Center and the Safe Haven women’s shelter, among others.



Every year at the St. Louis County Health and Human Service Conference, she gives a talk on addiction. This year she paired with Fr. Steve Ulrich to present “Addiction to Recovery: Journeying from Powerlessness to Thriving.”



Sister Pauline speaks at Holy Rosary Church in Aurora, Minnesota about the Joy of Discipleship.

we should serve each other, withholding judgement and giving respect, acceptance, and love.” The image of Christ the Servant who shares a meal with the outcasts and listens to their pain transformed her ministry. She was a counselor for nine years at an outpatient treatment facility in Duluth, where she used her own recovery to help others break free and live in recovery. She became a member of a 12-Step Support Group and this fall celebrated twenty years of recovery. As a spiritual director she listens to Fifth Steps, where the recovering share with a trusted confidant the full story of what they have done. This helps them strip away pretense and begins to clear the spiritual wreckage of the past to make room for a healthy life. Sister fully believes in the creative power of the path to recovery. Healthy relationships are essential to transformation. “When we make the choice to thrive, life can be transformed and bring healing, transformation, and empowerment.”

A complete extrovert, Sister Pauline shines when presenting before a crowd. As Outreach Coordinator for the Center for Spirituality and Enrichment, she travels throughout the Duluth and Superior dioceses giving workshops and retreats. “I don’t do Power Points; I’d rather speak directly to their hearts,” she says. “People like to have conversations.” Her knowledge and wit captivate her audiences as she draws them into group discussions on living the Gospel with joy and resilience.

Representing the Monastery, she helped develop Duluth’s Amberwing Center for Youth and Family Well-being, which provides a welcoming, safe setting for troubled youths to work through their problems. It was named after the amberwing dragonfly that, Sister Pauline explained, can fly even when missing one of its wings.

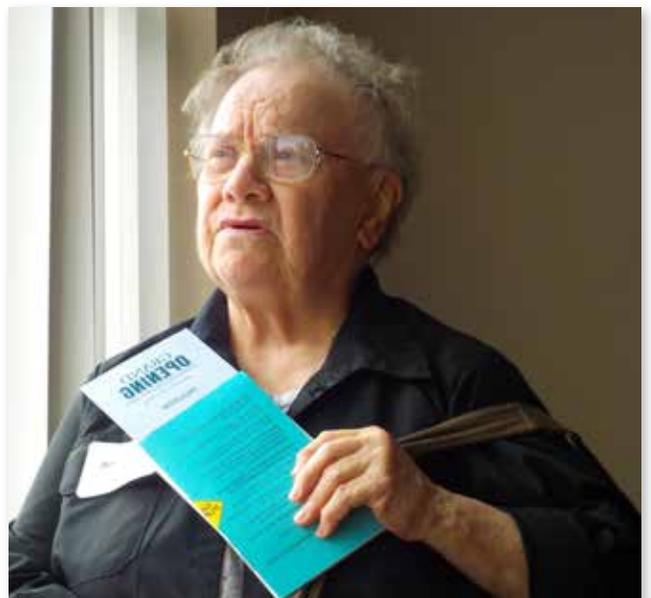
Duluth’s Lutheran Social Services has a special place in Sister Pauline’s heart, particularly their work with homeless teenagers. The social worker in her becomes passionate when she sees the needs of the most vulnerable being neglected. “What makes me the angriest is seeing the indifference and injustice of those in power.” In 2016, LSS fittingly acknowledged her work for peace and justice with the One Hundred Good Neighbors award.

“Like John the Baptist we all are being sent, called beyond our name: called, commissioned, and sent to be who we truly are, with no masks, no pretenses. Like John, we are a Voice making straight the way of the Lord. Let us, like John, be open to ‘the Spirit of the Lord which is upon us.’

“May we grow in our awareness of who we are, what our purpose is, and why we are being called and sent.”



In her office at the Monastery, Sister Pauline listens to 12-Step members' Fifth Steps, and helps others coming for spiritual direction.



At the 2017 grand opening of Lutheran Social Services' Center for Changing Lives

Highlights

Sisters Attend Catholic Health Assembly

by Sister Jeanne Ann Weber

Five Sisters joined nine hundred members for the Catholic Health Assembly in San Diego, California, June 10-12. Leaders from across the country gathered for learning, networking, celebration, worship, and renewal. As a ministry of the Church, Catholic health care continues Jesus' mission of love and healing, rooted in the belief that every person, every life is a sacred gift, and every human being a unity of body, mind, and spirit. Through health care we answer God's call to foster healing, act with compassion, and promote wellness for all persons and communities, with special attention to our neighbors who are poor, underserved, and most vulnerable.



Left to right: Sister Beverly Horn, Sister Joan Marie Stelman, Dr. Dean Fox (Oncology Hospitalist, Essentia Health-Duluth), Sister Beverly Raway, Becky Urbanski (Benedictine Health System (BHS) Senior Vice President, Mission Integration and Marketing), Jerry Carley (BHS president and CEO), Sister Jeanne Ann Weber, and Sister Kathleen Hofer.

The Most Rev. Robert W. McElroy, Bishop of San Diego, presided at the opening liturgy. Martin Sheen, the award-winning actor, social activist, and humanitarian, spoke first, followed by a dialogue with Sister Carol Keehan, CHA president and CEO. Other keynote speakers featured prominent voices from health care, academia, media, public policy, and philanthropy. There were programs and seminars on governance, mission, best practices, wellness, and innovation.

It was an inspirational, challenging gathering with an opportunity to recognize the outstanding people, organizations and services that distinguish Catholic health care. We were especially honored that Kevin J. Tellinghuisen, Operations Administrator, Essentia Health St. Mary's Medical Center in Duluth, was chosen as one of the ten dedicated individuals, age 40 or younger, who were honored for their work in advancing the mission of Catholic health care.

Train Expedition

by Sister Therese Carson

In early August, after a long day of sitting in a Chapter meeting, some of the Community climbed aboard the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad for an excursion up the St. Louis River estuary and through former industrial sites that are being decontaminated and restored to wilderness. The rails are old and the ride rough, but it gives wonderful views of the river and surrounding woodland and of its varied wildlife. It also reminds us that caring for the earth is easier and costs less than restoring it after contamination.



Commissioning Ceremony

by Sister Therese Carson

On the Sunday after our August Chapter we hold the Commissioning rite where we receive our commissions: our ministries for the next year. We receive our copy at the chapel entrance and enter in statio, processing two by two up the aisle, led by candle bearers and the prioress. We pray Evening Prayer, receive our commissions, and bless the prioress.

This year was a little different, in that our common ministry is to prepare ourselves spiritually and mentally for our changing future. Since we do not yet know what that will hold, we asked God for the tools we will need to move into it: mutual support and love, openness to radical possibilities and diversity, the prophetic voice that speaks truth without fear, creative thinking, resilience in times of chaos and messiness, knowing God is always with us, and embracing whatever future to which God is leading us. We ended with a prayer taken from Chapter 72 of the Rule of St. Benedict, “Let us prefer absolutely nothing to Christ and may he lead us all together to everlasting life.”



Sister Jeanne Ann Weber receives the commissioning blessing from Sister Beverly Raway, Prioress, with Sister Beverly Horn, Subprioress, holding the bowl of holy water.

Jayne Erickson Knocks on the Door

by Sister Therese Carson

When a woman experiences the call to religious life, and after prayer and study is considering becoming part of our monastic Community, she visits us several times to experience the rhythm of monastic life. If, after prayerful discernment with the vocation director, both she and the Sisters believe this is a good fit, she becomes an affiliate. She continues to visit the Sisters, and when she is ready will join as a postulant.

On July 8 we had a very special woman ask admittance as an affiliate. Jayne Erickson has lived with us for many months as an associate, a live-in volunteer, joining in our prayer life, helping in our ministries, and getting to know the Sisters, especially the elderly in our infirmary, Benet Hall. Her joining was long expected and very welcome.

The Rule of St. Benedict says, “Do not grant newcomers to the monastic life an easy entry but, as the Apostle says, ‘Test the spirits to see if they are from God’ (1 John 4:1). Therefore, if someone comes and keeps knocking at the door, and if at the end of four or five days she has ... persisted in her request, then she should be allowed to enter” (RB Chapter 58). In this age of telephones and email, a woman arrives at the door already familiar with the Community and the Community with her, so five days of knocking is reduced to a ceremonial three knocks, after which the doors are opened and the Community welcomes the new affiliate who joins them in prayer.

Jayne will continue as associate for six months while all continue to discern her vocation as a Benedictine Sister.



Sisters Attend Federation Chapter Meeting in Bismarck

by Sister Lisa Maurer

Six sisters from the Monastery were part of the Twenty-Sixth Chapter of the Federation of Saint Benedict that was held July 24-29 at Annunciation Monastery in Bismarck, North Dakota. Sisters Beverly Raway, Elizabeth Farias, Luella Wegscheid, Luce Marie Dionne, Edith Bogue, and Lisa Maurer joined forty other Sisters from member monasteries.

The Federation is a group of ten Benedictine communities in the United States, Bahamas, Japan, and Taiwan. Representatives from all communities convene every three years to do the governance work of the body. This includes promoting the unity of the Federation, setting goals, and establishing general polices to safeguard, promote, and tend the Benedictine cenobitic monastic life.

While at Annunciation Monastery, along with attending to the work of the Chapter, the Sisters joined in prayer and Eucharist, enjoyed a picnic, were entertained by the River Rhapsody Chorus, and toured sites in Bismarck.



Representatives from ten communities gather on a hot summer afternoon, grateful for a little shade.

Memorial Boards with Sister Josine Krausnick

by Sister Therese Carson



When a Duluth Sister goes home to God, we remember her with affection, sharing stories about her time with us. A year later, she is memorialized with a display of photos of her life that hangs for a month where we pass every day to retrieve our mail. This used to be the work of +Sister Jane Casey, but when she herself departed for home in 2016, Sister Josine Krausnick took on this work.

Here in her workshop she adds a few last touches to the memory board for Sister Mary Felten, who died August 31, 2017. On the right is Sister Judith Oland's board hanging in the hallway; she died September 11, 2017. The photos lighten our grief and help keep our beloved ones close as we continue without them.



Jubilee celebration

by Sister Therese Carson

Each summer we celebrate those Sisters who observe important anniversaries of their First Monastic Profession: at 25, 50, 60, 70, 75, and 80 years. This year we had three celebrants: Sister Marilyn Micke at 80 years, Sister Johnetta Maher at 75 years, and Sister Agnes Sitter at 70 years. During the rite, each was accompanied by a helper, her 'angel.' Their biographies can be read in our Annual Report.



Sister Marilyn Micke with her 'angel' and niece, Sister Pauline Micke; Sister Johnetta Maher with her 'angel', Sister Mary Josephine Torborg; Sister Agnes Sitter with her 'angel', Sister Clare Marie Trettel.

CSS All Sports Blessings

by Sister Lisa Maurer

This year, the tradition of blessing football players from the College of St. Scholastica was expanded to include all athletes. At the beginning of the school year, members of the CSS athletic teams participated in prayer services in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel. The service was led by Sister Lisa Maurer and involved many Sisters as well as CSS team members from varying sports. The blessings included Scripture readings, reflections on the Benedictine Values, and ended with a special blessing. Every student athlete was given a blessed medal of Saint Benedict.



Benedictine Friends Begins a New Year of Sister-Student Friendships

by Sister Therese Carson



The Benedictine Friends program pairs CSS students and Sisters for friendship and support. We meet to work on service projects, share conversation, talk about our life with God, and just have fun with each other. Some students and Sisters have become life-long friends.

Here, Sister Barbara Higgins talks with some of her "friends across campus."

Annual Donor Open House

by Sister Therese Carson

In autumn, we open our Monastery to donors, volunteers, family, and guests to celebrate our continued relationship with them and thank them for their support. September 22 was a day of sunshine in the middle of grey days. More than 150 people came to the open house and enjoyed conversation and a buffet that was a feast for the eyes. What a joyous day to thank and celebrate our donors and friends.



*Above: Sister Beverly Raway, prioress, and Jan Barret, Director of Development, address guests.
Below, left: Sister Barbara Higgins and Sister Josine Krausnick at the buffet table;
Sister Joan Marie with Judy Blanck
Below, right: Sister Donna Schroeder with Thomas Bersell; Sister Mary Josephine Torborg pours coffee for Bob and John Scheuer.*



Sisters bless the new Benedictine Health System Support Center

by Jan M. Barrett



On August 7, a dozen of our Sisters participated in blessing the new Benedictine Health System (BHS) Support Center in Hermantown, Minnesota. The Benedictine Health System is a mission-based, nonprofit health system sponsored by the Sisters. It was a glorious day to bless the beautifully renovated building for the associates who work at the Hermantown location. Tours of the new offices, a blessing, and refreshments were enjoyed by all. Each guest was gifted with a Norway spruce tree to commemorate the blessing and to improve the environment. Fittingly, the new BHS address is Norway Pines Place and there are Norway pines

covering the new property. Sister Theresa Spinler has planted the trees and the Sisters look forward to their growth over the years as a reminder of the wonderful associates at the Benedictine Health System.

Sisters Help Bless the Chapel Windows of the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth

by Jan M. Barrett

On October 2, 2018 Sisters attended the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth Chapel Donor celebration and blessing of the stained-glass window project. The chapel is enhanced by 11 breathtaking windows that take up 181 square feet of window space and are comprised of 3,600 pieces of glass in 20 different colors and varying textures. Barb and Jim Collette of *Stained Glass by Collette* were the artists for this project driven by the creative and zealous committee including: Patty Ahrens, Rev Christine Sabol, Sister Mary Susan Dewitt, Diane Kettelhut, Sister Renata Liegey, Peggy Osmundson, Cindy Peterson-Wlosinski, Donna Scheer, Fran Stovern, Merry Wallin, Barb Wessberg, and Father Jon Wild. Each window cost \$4,000 to construct and install and was made possible by generous and faithful donors supporting the chapel window project.



Prioress, Sister Beverly Raway blessing the windows.

Benedictine Health System Celebrates the Sisters' 125th Anniversary in Duluth

by Jan M. Barrett

The Benedictine Health System honored and celebrated the Sisters for their 125-year anniversary during their annual leadership conference in Duluth, Minn. on September 25 at the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center. The evening began with a special cocktail reception and a delightful video thanking the Sisters for 125 years of service. Afterwards, the Sisters were given a commemorative outdoor bench made from recycled plastic for their courtyard and a gingerbread house replicating the Monastery. The cake was designed, baked, and constructed by the Benedictine Living Community of Duluth Culinary Services team.



Sister Grace Marie Braun, OSB, is presented the Distinguished Leadership Award from BHS CEO and President Jerry Carley, for her work as board chair, board member, and committee member for helping to advance the BHS Mission and Ministry.



Several cakes were decorated in honor of the Sisters.



Mayor Emily Larson of Duluth declares the day, "Benedictine Sisters Day." Sister Beverly Raway graciously accepts the honor.



Jerry Carley shows the audience a photo of a garden bench presented to the Sisters.



The Culinary Services team from BLC-Duluth wheels in the Monastery "House of Gingerbread" to great applause.

+Sister Agnes Alich, OSB

Sister Agnes Alich (Sr. Mary Andrew), 86, died in Benet Hall on June 15, 2018.

Agnes was born on a farm near Border, Minnesota on June 10, 1932, one of seven children of John and Delvina (St. Lawrence) Alich that included five girls and two boys. For eight summers she attended religion classes taught by the visiting Benedictine Sisters from St. Scholastica Monastery. She graduated from high school as valedictorian in 1950. She recalled that, because the school did not have enough boys for its hockey team, she was allowed to play on the team disguised as a boy.

Intrigued by the beauty of Minnesota's Far North country and the pristine waters of the Rainy River, Agnes wanted to learn more about nature. In 1950, inspired by her chemistry teacher, she enrolled in The College of St. Scholastica to study chemistry. A year later she returned to Duluth to enter the Community as a postulant and continue her studies. In 1953 she made her First Monastic Profession as Sister Mary Andrew, and in 1956 made her Perpetual Profession.

In her early years of religious life, Sister Agnes taught at St. Francis School in Brainerd, Minnesota, Cathedral Junior High in Duluth, and Gerard High School in Phoenix, Arizona. Later, she continued her studies at Marquette University in Milwaukee, receiving a B.S. degree in Inorganic Chemistry in 1960 and an M.S. degree in 1961. From here began her long career of teaching chemistry at The College of St. Scholastica, interrupted by three years at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, to earn her doctoral degree in 1972.

Her years at St. Scholastica were extraordinarily productive. In addition to serving as Chair of the Chemistry Department for 18 years, Sister Agnes continued research and was recipient of many awards and honors. She mentored and procured numerous grants for 80 student research projects, published 29 papers, gave 49 presentations, served on the IRC Consortium



to promote Native American student opportunities, wrote and edited papers for the Environmental Protection Agency, developed college courses in Environmental Chemistry and Global Sustainability, and had many more teaching and professional accomplishments.

She was known for holding her students to high standards while inspiring them to excel. On her retirement in 2009, she was awarded Emeritus status by the College, but continued to help train laboratory assistants in the new Science Center's state-of-the-art chemistry labs.

In addition to her ministry of teaching, Sister Agnes was actively involved with her religious community, serving on many committees and as a board member for three of its hospitals and two facilities of the Benedictine Health System. She sang in the Monastery Schola and in the Duluth Symphony Chorus for 30 years and served on the grounds maintenance committee and the Community's "Twinning" project with Benedictine communities in Tanzania and Chile. In 1985, she inaugurated the first "Re-Membering" gathering at the Monastery for former Sisters who had left the Community but still wished to remain in contact.

Sister Agnes was preceded in death by her parents, her brother George and four sisters: Marianne Christensen, Clara Ley, Sylvia Engbretson, and Margaret Koranda. She is survived by her brother John Alich and sister-in-law Jeanine, nieces and nephews, her Benedictine Sisters, colleagues, and many friends.

A prayer and wake service was held on Wednesday, June 27, 2018 followed by Mass of Christian burial in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel of St. Scholastica Monastery, with Father Brian Schulz presiding. Burial followed in Gethsemane Cemetery of the Monastery. May Sister Agnes Alich rest in God's peace.

+Sister Ramona Ewen, OSB

Sister Ramona Ewen, 98, after a rich and fruitful life, died in Benet Hall at St. Scholastica Monastery on June 17, 2018.

Mary Elizabeth Ewen was born in Nashwauk, Minnesota, the only daughter of John and Mary Melvin Ewen, and had two brothers, John and Joseph. After graduating from Nashwauk High School in 1937, she attended Hibbing Junior College, receiving an Associate degree in business in 1939. In 1940 she entered St. Scholastica Monastery, made her First Profession in 1942, and graduated from The College of St. Scholastica in 1943 with a B.S. degree in business. In 1992, she celebrated her Golden Jubilee of Monastic Profession and in 2017 her 75th Diamond Jubilee.

In 1946 she began her long teaching career at Cathedral Senior High School in Duluth, where she taught bookkeeping, typing, office machines, and English. She also served as the beloved advisor of the Girls Athletic Club. In 1954 she completed her M.S. degree in Education from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and continued teaching at the new Cathedral High School until 1967, when she returned to work in the Monastery's business office until 1970.

From 1970 until 1990, Sister Ramona taught accounting as an assistant professor in the Management Department of The College of St. Scholastica. She also was an advisor to students in the same department at the College's Brainerd campus. She was highly esteemed by her colleagues and students as an excellent teacher who demanded the best from her students while being supportive and friendly. As a tribute, three of her former students have created on-going scholarships in her honor, and the College awarded her with its Inspiration Award citing her "commitment, unselfishness, compassion, and friendliness."

During her long life, Sister Ramona remained a faithful religious, walking long distances to chapel for prayers



and Eucharist, not wishing to be a bother to anyone. She was a trustee of Hibbing General Hospital and St. Joseph's Medical Center in Brainerd. She served on the Foundation Committee of the Benedictine Health System and was a trustee for its facilities in North and South Dakota, Idaho, Duluth, and Rochester, Minnesota.

After retiring, she became the accountant for Monastery Books and Gifts, and spent many hours each year creating about 80 handmade cupboard towels for its sales. She helped in the Monastery's Development Office and volunteered hundreds of hours in the Daisy Shop at Benedictine Living Community in Duluth. Sister Ramona was an avid fan of her high school and college sports teams and followed the Vikings and Minnesota Twins by radio.

Above all, Sister Ramona will be remembered by her many friends for her enthusiasm and love of life. She especially enjoyed traveling with her Sister friends to Ireland, England, Scotland, Quebec, and Hawaii, and to Oceanside, California to visit her cousin Abbot Sharbel of Prince of Peace Abbey. In 2000, she and Sister Sharon O'Neill, who had worked in Antofagasta, Chile years earlier, visited the contemplative Benedictine Sisters in Rautén, Chile, a "Twinning Community" of St. Scholastica.

Sister Ramona was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, John Melvin and Joseph James Ewen. She is survived by nieces and nephews, several cousins, her Benedictine Sisters, colleagues, and many friends.

A wake service and Morning Prayer with visitation was held June 27, 2018 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at St. Scholastica Monastery, followed by the Mass of Christian Burial presided by Father Brian Schulz. Interment was at Gethsemane Cemetery, St. Scholastica Monastery.

+Sister Mary E. Penrose, OSB

Sister Mary E. Penrose, OSB, 93, died on June 22, 2018 at St. Scholastica Monastery, in her 70th year of Monastic Profession.

The older of two children, she was born September 2, 1924 to George and Marjorie (Thierstein) Penrose at the old Miner's Hospital in Crosby, Minnesota. By the time her brother "Buddy" Russell was born two and a half years later, the family had moved to Carlton, Minnesota where both children grew up. Mary was an inveterate tomboy and loved to take long walks with her dog in search of woodchucks.

As part of a small class of 28 students, Mary relished her school years from first grade until her graduation from Carlton High School in 1942. Along with her school studies, she spent many hours in musical activities such as rhythm band, orchestra, marching band, chorus, choir, and sextet. She played Deadeye Dick in the school play *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

Sister recalled an incident which epitomized her mania for reading: "When I was a junior in high school, I was reading in bed when my mother burst into the room saying, 'Young lady, do you know what time it is? It is two in the morning! Put that book away and go to sleep.' After she left, I laughed myself silly thinking, 'There's not another kid in the whole USA who has been scolded for reading Hamlet at two in the morning.'"

Mary entered The College of St. Scholastica and graduated with a degree in Sociology and a minor in Psychology and History. She worked summers at various places: Arden Shore Camp in North Chicago, Herb's Drive Inn in Carlton, and the Wood Conversion Company in Cloquet. By the time she graduated, Mary knew she wished to enter the Monastery. Mother Athanasius suggested that she enter that summer so that she could be a novice in January, and so on July 4, 1946 she became the community "firecracker." She made her First Monastic Profession on February 10, 1948 and her



Perpetual Monastic Profession on July 11, 1951.

Sister had a passion for religious studies and in 1959 completed her MA in Sacred Doctrine: Scripture and Theology at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. Her post-graduate studies were in Process Theology and Christology. During her time with the St. Scholastica Community, she

taught grade school at Our Lady of Victory in Minneapolis, and religion and sociology at Stanbrook Hall in Duluth and Gerard High School in Phoenix, Arizona. She also served as Director of Aspirants and was one of the founders of House of Peace in Winton, Minnesota.

Seeking a more contemplative focus, Sister transferred in 1970 to the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in St. Louis, Missouri. Her ministries there included vocation and formation work. She also served as librarian and editor of their magazine *Spirit & Life* and was Midwest Regional Coordinator and delegate for the National Association of Contemplative Sisters.

In 1995, Sister Mary transferred back to her Duluth community, continued writing, and published two books: *Roots, Deep and Strong* and *Refreshing Water from Ancient Wells*. She was a talented musician and served joyfully as a cantor and schola member. She once summarized her life in one phrase, "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord."

Sister Mary was preceded in death by her parents. She is survived by her brother Russell J. Penrose, her cousins Char Molrine and Virginia Simon, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, and many friends. Her Wake Service/Morning Prayer was held Thursday, July 5, 2018 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, followed by Mass of Christian Burial with Father Brian Schultz presiding. She was interred at Gethsemane Cemetery.

+Sister Victorine Sitter, OSB

Sister Victorine Sitter, 95, died June 28, 2018 at St. Scholastica Monastery, in her 76th year of Monastic Profession.

Sister Victorine (Katherine) was born to Frank and Theresa Sitter on October 6, 1922 in Berwick, North Dakota. The oldest of four children, she grew up in the small town where her father operated a general store. From the tender age of six, she knew she had a vocation to be a Sister. Working in the store and learning to relate to other people, she continued to dream of the day when she would enter a convent. After completing eighth grade she enrolled in Stanbrook Hall High School in Duluth and became an aspirant at St. Scholastica Monastery. She made her first Monastic Profession in 1942 and her Perpetual Monastic Profession in 1946.

Sister Victorine earned a B.S. in Education from The College of St. Scholastica in 1952. A highly talented first grade teacher, she introduced her young students to school life and the joys that lay ahead for them. Through her gentle, patient, and loving ways, she gave confidence even to the shyest. She treated every child as an individual and created a safe environment that nurtured their natural love of learning.

Sister taught for about thirty years and then served as a principal at St. Lawrence School in Duluth for five years. When the public-school system in Towner, North Dakota, was hiring teachers under "Title 1" (which provides financial assistance to schools in low-income areas), she returned to her home state and taught English in the public elementary school. By law she wore secular clothing in classes but donned the habit again to teach CCD classes at St. Cecilia Parish nearby.

After retiring from elementary education, she taught typing at Cathedral High School in Duluth for five years and then worked as a Records Clerk for a year in The College of St. Scholastica's Financial Aid Office. Upon her return to the Monastery, Sister Victorine was



Transportation Coordinator for many years where she organized the Sisters' requests for cars and rides. She also served our Community on Benet Hall, assisted in the Monastery Development Office, and volunteered at Cathedral Elementary School in Superior, Wisconsin, teaching religion to first graders, a ministry she found especially energizing.

One of Sister Victorine's greatest joys in her last years was to serve as a volunteer proctor of exams in the Center for Equal Access at The College of St. Scholastica, with students who required a low-stress and quiet testing environment. She would pray with each person before the test began, and her loving presence helped them do their best. For this ministry she received the College's Inspiration Award. A colleague remarked of Sister Victorine that "she is best known for her heart full of love, an ear ready to listen, and a hand willing to help others. Her ability to put students' minds at ease with her unconditional love and kindness has touched many. She was a true gift to St. Scholastica."

Sister Victorine retired from this position at age 94 to embrace a quiet life of prayer, hugs, and mutual friendship with her dear sister, Sister Agnes, and the other Sisters on Benet Hall.

Sister Victorine was preceded in death by her parents, her sister Elizabeth Engebrit, and her brother Frank. She is survived by her sister, Sister Agnes, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery, and many relatives and friends.

Her Wake Service/Morning Prayer was held Monday, July 9, 2018 in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, followed by Mass of Christian Burial with Father John Pfeifer presiding. She was interred at Gethsemane Cemetery.

St. Scholastica Monastery
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L to R: Sisters Teri Spinler, Kate Casper, Lois Eckes and Therese Carson enjoy the yard furniture purchased with last year's bazaar proceeds.

Please come! The Sisters' Christmas Bazaar is
Thursday, December 6, 2018 from 8a-5p.
Rockhurst Dining Room,
1001 Kenwood Ave., Duluth.

Canned and baked goods, homemade candy, plants,
crafts, home décor, raffles and more.

All proceeds will go toward the needs and priorities of the Sisters.

**Join us for Sunday Eucharist at 11:00 a.m.
in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel**

**Christmas Eve Mass at 8:00 p.m.
Christmas Day Mass at 11:00 a.m.**

