


the Crookston Benedictine



*May this flame
be found still burning
by the Morning Star:
the one Morning Star
who never sets,
Christ your Son,
who, coming back
from death's domain,
has shed his peaceful light
on humanity,
and lives and reigns
for ever and ever.*

Amen.

--Exsultet, Easter Vigil

from our prioress . . .



Sister Shawn Carruth

Dear Friends,
Here in the north we endure long nights in the winter and enjoy long days in the summer. We express our preference for the long days of light in terms of loss and gain. We never say we gain dark when we move from summer to winter; rather we lose light. And we gain light when we move from winter to summer. Over the years I've learned to befriend

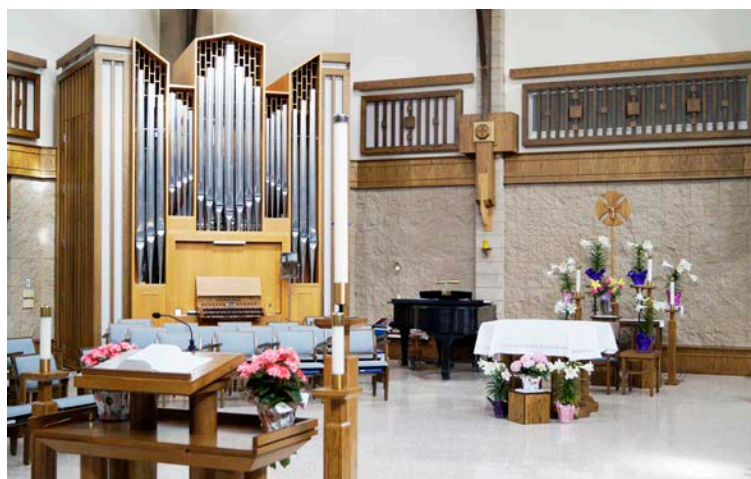
the dark and have come to appreciate its gifts. Yet at this time of the year I find myself very much appreciating the lengthening of the hours of daylight and looking forward to the full light of summer. I especially like the increase in morning light and resent just a bit the March beginning of Daylight Saving Time when we trade an hour's morning light for more in the afternoon. But at last those summer days arrive and my desire is fulfilled. I feel liberated, more light-hearted, and safer.

While we wait for the full summer daylight we also observe the Church's season of Lent and look forward, as Benedict says, "to Holy Easter with the joy of spiritual desire." As we wait for daylight hours to increase to their full summer splendor, we wait, too, for the joyous light of Christ risen. It is with just such joy in Christ the world's true light (John 1:9) that we open the celebration of

the Easter vigil. Out of the darkness of the tomb we bless new fire. The paschal candle is lit and the proclamation "This is the light of Christ" rings out. As the candle processes into the church, the candles of those in the congregation are lit from that one candle.

In John's Gospel Jesus says he has come into the world as light so that those who believe might not walk in darkness. (12:46) In Matthew's Gospel Jesus says, "You are the light of the world" and tells us to let our light shine. (5:16) Elsewhere in this issue you will find the story of the foundation of our community and our early years. This is the story of women with the courage to embrace an unknown future and to let their light shine. The members of our community and you, our friends, are beneficiaries of that courage and that light. May we, too, let our light shine. God's blessings!

Sister Shawn



The Crookston Benedictine articulates the vision, charism and mission of the Sisters of Saint Benedict, Crookston, MN, and helps the monastic community maintain and build relationships with the wider community.

The Crookston Benedictine is published twice a year by the Sisters of Saint Benedict, Mount Saint Benedict Monastery, Sister Denise Schonhardt, editor, and Sisters Anne DeMers, Lorraine Kraft, and Yvonne Shafer, staff.

Color photo of the cross on the cover by Laura Vosika.

Liturgy Schedule

Morning Prayer:	11:20	am Sunday
	8:30	am Monday - Saturday
Noon Prayer	11:50	am Monday - Saturday
Evening Prayer	4:30	pm Sunday
	5:00	pm Monday - Friday
Eucharist	8:00	am Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
	11:15	am Wednesday
	4:30	pm Saturday (Sunday Mass)

Born in Light, consumed by Love

Sister Denise Schonhardt

One of our sisters tells of a vision she has. She stands engulfed in a tornado of light. The light does not come from within but from outside herself. She believes the light is from God. Gradually, the swirling light expands to include others, and eventually the blinding light envelops the entire world. Slowly everyone and everything is becomes light. The vision Sister experiences begins in darkness and suddenly she is surrounded by light as if it is a rushing wind. It swirls and turns and spirals, white light shining with color and slowly spreading from one person to another until it encompass all creation. The whole world shimmers with the light. The world not only radiates light, but it is consumed by Love.

Sister frequently asks herself, "What does this mean? Why me? What is God telling me?" When one has a vision it is both gift and challenge.

These questions beckon us to ponder what God desires for each of us. Are we willing to encounter the God of Light? Are we ready to be consumed by Love?

The book of Genesis says, "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness." (Genesis 1:3-4).

In Psalm 104:2, God is clothed in light. The prophet Ezekiel describes God, "Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him." (Ezekiel 1:2) The prophet Habakkuk stated, "The brightness was like the sun; rays came forth from his hand, where his power lay hidden." (Habakkuk 3:3-4)

Jesus called us children of the light. The Gospel of John (12:35-36) states, "Jesus said to them, 'The light

is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.' After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them."

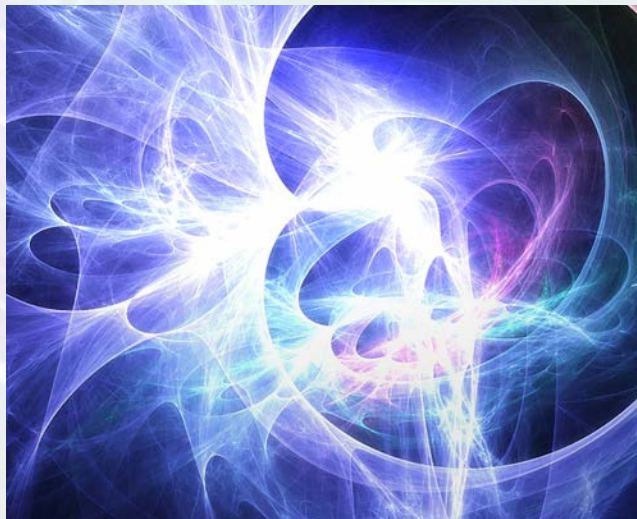
Jesus announced Himself as the Light of the World (John 8:12); in the Letter to the Hebrews, Christ was the refracted ray of the Father's glory, "He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by

his powerful word." (Hebrews 1:3). To James, the Holy One was the Father of all lights; "For all of you are children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to darkness."

(James 1:17) For Paul, "It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one

has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen." (1Timothy 6:16); The Letter of Saint Peter states that we are invited into "His marvelous light" (1Peter 2:9).

God wants us to enter into Himself, to be in an intimate relationship with Him. God has called us out of darkness and He is the source of all light and knowledge. In God there is no darkness at all. God manifests Himself in light, and invites us also to radiate his light to become part of His brilliance. So, then, how are we light – not how do we bring light, but how do we BECOME light? How do we become the very light of God, how do we allow ourselves to be consumed by LOVE?



David Benner

ECA committee puts final touches on new monastery

Sister Anne DeMers

Googling ECA produces many results including the Education Corporation of America. Here at the Mount the ECA is the Environment of Common Areas. In 2016, after the construction and remodeling of our new monastery reached completion, Sister Shawn, our prioress, established a committee to enhance the environment of common (and public) areas of our monastery. The committee, chaired by Sister Anita Whalen, consisted of Sisters Lucille Schafer, Rachel Beitz, and Eileen Mohs. The committee asked Judy Ellingson from Moorhead, MN, who has worked with our sisters in the past, to join the committee and lend her expertise to the project of creating a pleasing, yet simple, environment for our new surroundings. The community is grateful for the skill, time, and energy she contributed to this project.

Goals for this committee were:

- (1) to provide comfortable, appropriate furnishings for those using the spaces;
- (2) to provide for a relatively easy transition between events or functions in a given space;
- (3) to produce an enduring tasteful visual effect that feels right to our Sisters; and
- (4) to stay within the budget or spending arrangements allowed.

As a first priority the ECA Committee chose to enhance the public areas to prepare for our “open house” held on April 24, 2016. The parlors, the reception area, guest bedrooms, the guest dining room and lounge blossomed as the committee plied its creativity. They pondered ease of function, pleasant appearance, and even traffic patterns, as they employed a variety of furnishings, wall art, color, texture, accents, plants, and lighting. The ECA Committee also considered the abilities and comfort of the Sisters and guests who would be using these areas.

The second phase of the project focused on the common areas of the monastery, such as the chapter room, the community room, and hallways. Discussion centered on items dear to the community, especially those that seemed to express the integrity of our monastic life together. Whenever possible the committee used the art work of the Sisters as they strove to express their monastic spirituality through the years.

Nature photographs by Sister Denise Schonhardt enhance our small conference room; her paintings along with those of Sister Norma Jean Edie, Veronica Kavanaugh and other Sister artists may be seen throughout the monastery. Also the committee recruited local talent from the Crookston area. Irene Bertils, designed and painted colorful panels for the long wall leading to and from the chapel; she also

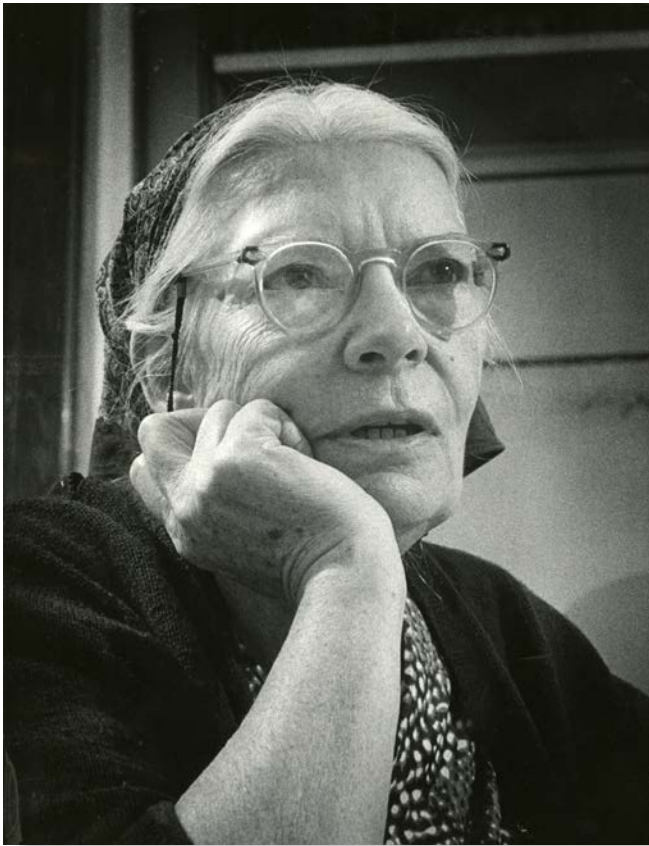


Irene Bertils and Sister Rachel hang one of the panels that decorate the hall leading from the chapel to the dining room.

traced Benedictine crosses on a wall in the chapter room. Tom Amiot, a skilled craftsman, refinished many pieces of furniture for the new environment..

The ECA Committee made an effort to engage the entire community at different stages of the process, by encouraging and actively seeking input, verbally and through written surveys. Funding for this project was included in the original construction budget and supplemented by the Mount Saint Benedict Foundation. The project began February, 2016, and ended December, 2017, with the ECA committee successfully meeting this deadline before disbanding.

The community gratefully enjoys the fruit of their labors on a day to day basis. “I like the simple, creative, and yet tasteful, appearance of what they accomplished,” remarked a sister. “Using our sisters’ art work along with pieces from the past made it all very meaningful for me,” offered another. May the ECA Committee rejoice and be blessed for a job well done.



Jim Forrest <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>

Dorothy Day: love in action

Sister Lorraine Kraft

During the Liturgy of the Word, we Sisters of Saint Benedict have regularly included a prayer for Dorothy Day, Obl. OSB, that she be acclaimed as “blessed” by the Catholic people. There is a special connection we feel for her, because of her attraction to the spirit of Saint Benedict. She had a sense of hospitality outlined by Benedict’s Rule “Let all be received as Christ.” Her consideration for the poor, the sick, the elderly, and children was evident and became a reason that she connected with Saint Procopius Abbey in Lisle,

It is easier to have faith that God will support each House of Hospitality and Farming Commune and supply our needs in the way of food and money to pay bills, than it is to keep a strong, hearty, living faith in each individual around us

– to see Christ in him. --Dorothy Day

Read more at: https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/dorothy_day_316231

Illinois, and was received as a Benedictine Oblate.

Her life was a light for many people because it was alight with dedication to the poor and homeless, and zealous perseverance in the works of charity. Her many writings based on the social encyclicals of the Church served to educate and motivate the public to practice justice and to provide it for the poor. She was a strong advocate of the works of mercy, guiding both spiritual and corporal practices for individuals and communities around the country.

A question for many “Is Dorothy Day a saint?” They have read her autobiography which discusses night-long drinking episodes and friends dying of heroin overdose. There is also the matter of her common-law marriage, her two pregnancies and one abortion. That is only a part of her story. She would make up for what was abhorrent to the Christian conscience, and prove by her conversion and in repentance that she could be faithful to the teachings of the Church.

From evidence of her life and work, has the Church declared her a saint? Timothy Cardinal Dolan of the Archdiocese of New York believes that she should be named “a saint for our times.” The bishops in an assembly of the USCCB (United States Catholic Conference of Bishops) have voted to advance the cause for her beatification, the first step of being acknowledged as a saint of the Church.

According to Rev. James Martin, SJ, Dorothy is

please turn to page 6

We cannot build up the idea of the apostolate of the laity without the foundation of the liturgy. --Dorothy Day



A communion of saints: Dorothy Day and Saint Theresa of Calcutta

dorothydayguild.org

considered a hero by some, and radical by just as many. We know her activities to try to change conditions which kept people in bondage—the bondage of homelessness, the bondage of ignorance, the bondage of unemployment and the bondage of low wages. Pacifism became her enduring legacy, but it was actually her work for the poor, the displaced, and the socially unacceptable, which guided her whole life. A natural result of her orientation in recognizing social injustices, she commanded and influenced many friends and associates to assist in her charitable work.

A person Dorothy met at the time she became Catholic was Peter Maurin, who played a great part in her work, serving as a mentor, giving her “a way of life and instruction.” Together their goal was to see Christ in others, and to encourage this belief in those they helped. Dorothy and Peter co-founded what has become known as the Catholic Worker Movement, with the goal of helping erase and deal with serious living problems of people. Their program of action included round-table discussions, houses

of hospitality, farming communes and *The Catholic Worker*, a periodic newspaper, in many ways of reaching the “man on the street.” A popular slogan at the time was: All you need to meet the needs of the poor during hard times, was a common flophouse and a pot of mulligan stew on the stove! Thus, Catholic Worker houses came into being.

Dorothy Day was tireless in talking to persons in government and social agencies, pointing out

the existence of poverty in the neighborhoods and in the world. She strongly condemned their weak or non-existent response to see the needs of the poor and oppressed who lacked the basic necessities of life. In most cases the deprivations which the poor suffered resulted from the effects of costly wars and in the hoarding of wealth by a few.

Her legacy includes beginning Catholic Worker houses in many American cities which carry on the works of charity, continuing the work begun by Dorothy, even after her death in 1980. We are inspired by the growth of the Catholic Worker Movement and continue to respond as much as possible to the needs of society, especially for the poor by way of private social, educational and spiritual programs. We continue to pray that all people will honor and follow the example of this good woman, Dorothy Day, with their own prayers and good works.

For great reading, try Dorothy Day’s autobiography: *The Long Loneliness* or *Love in Action* by Patrick Jordan.

*That in all things
God may be
glorified!*



A Treasured Legacy

Part 1 of a 4-part series on the history of Mount Saint Benedict Monastery

1919-1944

The seed from which Mount Saint Benedict grew was planted in 530, AD by Benedict when he established his first monastery and wrote his Rule at Monte Casino, Italy. The root from that seed grew and in 896 A.D., Saint Walburga's Abbey sprang up in Eichstatt, Bavaria. The next shoot appeared at Saint Mary's, PA (1873); Saint Joseph MN (1886); Duluth (1892); and in Crookston (1919).



Mother Eustacia Beyenka

On May 4, 1919, the sister council members of Villa Saint Scholastica, Duluth, gave Bishop Timothy Corbett of the Diocese of Crookston (est. 1910) consent to form a Benedictine community in Crookston made up of sisters working in his diocese. Forty-two sisters agreed to pioneer this new

foundation.

That same day, he appointed Mother Eustacia Beyenka to be the first superior. She arrived in Crookston on May 7, and arrived at Saint Vincent's Hospital which would be the first motherhouse. She was immediately faced with the need to build an addition to the hospital in order to accommodate the sisters. Another challenging and formidable task for her was to staff schools in Crookston, Red Lake Falls and Detroit Lakes, as well as



Saint Vincent's Hospital, first monastery in Crookston.



Profession of first and final vows, 1919.

Saint Vincent's Hospital, Crookston and Saint Anthony's Hospital, Bemidji.

During the next year, Mother Eustacia searched for property on which to build a monastery. In 1920, she



Original moastery and academy building, 1923.



Minims who attended school at Mount Saint Benedict

and several sisters visited the E.M. Walsh property and were so impressed that Mother Eustacia planted a medal of Saint Benedict at the gate. The sisters then stormed heaven to obtain this land. On December 3, they purchased the 54 acres, a barn and garage and "the Big White House," later known as the conservatory. The sisters took possession on December 23, came to live in their new home on December 27, and named it Mount Saint Benedict.

Until June 19, 1921, the sisters were dependent for everything they needed from the Villa in Duluth. That day the community became an autonomous, independent Benedictine priory. Bishop Corbett appointed Mother Eustacia first prioress in July, 1919. (She went on to be elected by the community in 1927 and again in 1933.) In 1921, the sisters drew up plans for a new motherhouse. Excavation began on the former Walsh property July 16, 1922, and was completed in 1923.

Under Mother Eustacia's guidance, Mount Saint Benedict Academy opened its doors to boarders and day students in 1924. Sisters staffed new schools in Thief River Falls, Bemidji, Rosen as well as Lefor, ND. They also staffed schools in Moorhead and Barnesville.

In 1921, Mother Eustacia began raising bees, extracting, producing and selling honey. Mother Eustacia spent many long hours in the beeyard. In 1928, candle making and decorating became a craft for the monastery. Bees need flowers, and other plant forms to create honey. From 1925, gardening became a significant part of the sisters' lives at the monastery.

Mother Eustacia was concerned not only about work and the physical well-being of the sisters but also about their prayer life.... In 1926, the Crookston Benedictines put aside "The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin" and began praying the Divine Office. Mother Eustacia left the community a legacy of love for liturgy and common prayer.



Sisters Cuthbert LaCoursiere and Alexia Muggli replace parts of a beehive.

In 1928, the strenuous life of the pioneer founder, her untiring work to build this community for the reign of God began to take its toll. By 1932, Mother Eustacia was diagnosed as having an overstrained heart. The next four years were difficult for her. Work in building a chapel had commenced but had to be stopped due to lack of funds. She would never see it completed (1937). Mother Eustacia was also eager to have the community be canonical under Rome, rather than diocesan under a bishop. She wanted her sisters to be part of a federation for mutual support and aid. Again, she would not see this happen).

On May 29, 1936, Mother Eustacia's overstrained heart stopped as she died at 11:19 a.m., conscious until the end. A Benedictine monastic community had been established and formed. A legacy had been passed on to every sister in this community.

1936-1949

After Mother Eustacia's death, May 19, 1936, her



Mother Monica Forkey

subprioress, Sister Monica Forkey, succeeded her until elections would be held in July, 1936.

Sister Monica was the only one of the founding sisters who had grown up in the Red River Valley of the North. Her parents had been farmers in the East Grand Forks area.

At the time the community in Crookston was established, Sister

Monica was stationed at the Bemidji hospital. She did not hesitate when Bishop Corbett called for sisters to volunteer for the new Benedictine community. This was her native diocese. Also, she had loved and admired the new leader of this community, Sister Eustacia Beyenka, who had been her novice director during her year of novitiate at Duluth.

In 1904, the community was extremely short of nurses at Saint Mary's Hospital in Duluth, so Sister Monica was sent there. After three months of "on-the-job training," she was placed in charge of a ward. She went on to learn the skills of x-ray and lab technicians on the job. Eventually she became a registered nurse.

Sister Monica Forkey served as subprioress under Mother Eustacia, a position she held for thirteen years. During the time of planning the construction of the new monastery building, Mother Eustacia learned that Sister Monica was a woman whose judgment she could trust and someone she could rely on for support.



Sisters stand and bow at the “Glory Be” during the Divine Office in the chapel built in 1937.

Since Sister Monica had grown up in the Red River Valley, she knew and understood the treachery of the Red River and its tributaries such as the Red Lake River. She was persistent about not building on the lowlands, but on the highest elevation of the property. She stuck to her point so adamantly that operations were brought to a halt and plans were changed.

During the 1930s, Mother Eustacia’s health declined. At this time she surrendered many of the burdens of administration to her subprioress. By the time of her death, Sister Monica was well qualified to succeed her, for she was dedicated to continue the work of the founder. On July 15, 1936, the community elected Mother Monica Forkey to serve her first full term as prioress.

She continued to pursue Mother Eustacia’s dream of attaining pontifical jurisdiction which would place the community directly under Rome. This goal would be attained by placing the community in membership with other Benedictine convents in a federation.



Prioresses of the communities that formed the Federation of Saint Gertrude: Mother Mary Benedict of Richardton, ND; Mother Monica of Crookston and Mother Jerome of Yankton, SD.

On April 14, 1937, Mother Eustacia’s dream was fulfilled when the long-awaited Decree of Approbation (approval) arrived from Rome and the Federation of Saint Gertrude the Great was officially established. Mother Monica



First sisters missioned to Asherton, TX

Forkey was elected the first president of the Federation and guided it through its probationary period.

Mother Eustacia had dreamed of building a free-standing chapel. The sisters had been using a large room (which later became the community room) for a chapel. The plans were begun in 1935, but, due to lack of funds, it was to take several years before the chapel would be completed. The community started with a basement chapel in 1937; in 1938 the upper structure was completed; but not until 1941 was the chapel finally finished with the interior decorations.

Bishop John Peschges, in the meantime, approached Mother Monica about providing education for the Mexican-American migrant children whose parents came north to work in the beet fields each summer. In 1944, summer boarding school opened and was staffed by the Mount sisters in Crookston and Moorhead. Prior to this, in 1943, Mother Monica had sent four sisters

to Asherton, TX, where they established Saint Thomas School for Hispanic children. This was the only new teaching mission established by Mother Monica during her term of office.

Understandably, Mother Monica gave the health care apostolate priority. During her terms of office, the community purchased Saint Mary's Hospital in Detroit Lakes and Saint Anthony's Hospital in Mahanomen. During these years she was planning and negotiating to replace Saint Vincent's Hospital in Crookston.

Mother Monica was re-elected prioress in 1943. Back in 1920, she had suffered a severe case of the flu. Her recovery had been very slow and it left her heart damaged. So by the time the next election came around in 1949, her health and strength were in decline. At that time she was happy to turn over the office of prioress to her able successor and subprioress, Sister Blandina Murray.

Mother Monica continued Mother Eustacia's legacy to the community, cherished it and celebrated it, but did not stop there or rest on it. Rather, she continued to challenge the community to move forward and seek out the needs of the people of God in the future.

After the election of Mother Blandina, Mother Monica retired to Saint Mary's Convent in Detroit Lakes. She did return to Crookston to live at Saint Francis Convent and then the Mount where she lived out her retirement. She died on April 7, 1977, at the age of ninety-five.

Mother Monica on one of the terraces of Saint Francis Hospital.



Remembering...

Sister Michelle McGurran



Sister Michelle McGurran

Sister Michelle McGurran, 87, died Thursday, December 7, at Villa Saint Vincent, Crookston. Sister Michelle was born August 6, 1930 in Grand Forks, ND, and was given the name Grace Colleen. Grace, called Colleen, was the second of the fourteen children of William and Grace (Brown) McGurran. Colleen attended Saint

Michael's Grade School and Saint James High School in Grand Forks, ND, where she was taught by Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet. She graduated from high school in Cavalier, ND.

Saint Michael's Church played a large role in her Irish family: school, first communion, confirmation and other church activities.

One of her favorite memories of school was her first grade teacher, whom she described as "very, very old and very kind. She recalled that in school dramatizations, she always had the role of "Sister" – if there was one. She remembered being charmed by her first communion prayer book and trying to follow

the prayers. In the eighth grade Colleen was confirmed at Saint Michael's Church by Cardinal Muench. Colleen attributed the inspiration to follow a religious vocation to her mother's expressed desire that one of her children would become either a priest or a sister.

The first Benedictine sister Colleen met was Sister Clare Duffy who arranged for her to visit the Mount. Colleen entered the Crookston Benedictine community in 1949. She was invested in the Benedictine habit in 1950 and she received the name, Sister Michelle. She made temporary monastic profession in 1951 and final profession in 1954.

Sister Michelle earned a bachelors degree from the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, and masters degrees from the University of North Dakota and Fordham University in New York City.

Sister Michelle taught in parish grade schools in Thief River Falls, Moorhead, Bemidji and Rosen before teaching history, German and social studies while also caring for boarding students at Mount Saint Benedict – which meant being available 24/7. She also taught German and social studies at Sacred Heart High School in East Grand Forks.

Sister Michelle took the opportunities to study or teach in Germany. In 1966, she was one of 50 secondary school teachers who participated in and NDEA Overseas Institute for Advanced Study in Germany. In 1969 –



Sister Michelle proclaims the Word on her 60th Jubilee

1970, she studied for two semesters at the University of Würzburg. Then during the 1974 – 1975 school year, she taught English as a second language in Wuppertal, Germany.

In 1993, she was elected prioress of Mount Saint Benedict when she was confronted immediately with the necessity of demolishing the original monastery building because it was sliding toward the river. In 1996, the sisters moved into new construction which contained a library, archives, chapel, offices and living spaces. During her term of office, the sisters conducted a capital campaign with the goal of raising \$975,000, which they exceeded by \$50,000 through the great generosity of the sisters' many friends. Another accomplishment during her term was the opening of Sunrise Center for Children and Families under the direction of Sister Judy Moen.

Upon the completion of her term, she lived with the sisters in Mahanomen. Sister Michelle then spent six years as pastoral minister in Lucan. She found these years satisfying because she could use what she had learned at Fordham.

If one were asked to describe Sister Michelle's personality, one might use such adjectives as committed, energetic or extroverted. Sister Michelle was passionate about many things, especially Benedictine monastic life, the ministry of women in the Church and Catholic social teachings – especially peace and the dignity of the human person. Bishop Kenneth Povish appointed her with others from the diocese to participate in the first Call to Action gathering, which explored the direction the Church would take in the future. Sister Michelle's passion peace and justice for the poor created a determination to promote public policies which lightened their burden. As a result she was asked by State Senator Roger Moe, majority leader of the Minnesota Senate, to serve as the first woman chaplain of the Senate.

Sister Michelle is preceded in death by her parents William and Grace McGurran and brothers Joseph, Walter, Tim and Patrick. She is survived by sisters Charis Brossart, Marjorie Bergum, Mary Vonasek, Maureen Sylling and Rita Devine, brothers Michael, Dennis and David, many nieces and nephews and the members of her monastic community.

Gifts in memory of Sister Michelle may be given to Mount Saint Benedict Foundation.

*Why do you look for the living among the dead.
He is not here he has risen!*

Sister Yvonne Schafer



Sister Yvonne Schafer

Sister Yvonne Schafer, 84, died Sunday, January 21, 2018 at Villa Saint Vincent in Crookston, MN.

Sister Yvonne was born January 27, 1933 in Red Lake Falls, MN, to George and Rose (Kuld) Schafer, the youngest of four children. She was baptized by Father Henry Pelger and was given the name Doris Mae. For her elementary

education, she attended District 63 country school, located on a corner of their farm. When she was in the fourth grade, her family moved to a different farm and she and her siblings could attend Saint Joseph's School in Red Lake Falls. She attended Mount Saint Benedict Academy for high school. She was involved in Catholic education since fourth grade, first as a student and then as a teacher.

Sister Yvonne first thought about being a sister while in grade school because she admired the sisters who taught her. She said that she was inspired also by her aunt, Sister Ivan from Saint Benedict's Monastery in Saint Joseph, MN. After graduation from high school, she entered Mount Saint Benedict Monastery. Before she entered the monastery, she recalled Sister Pancratius Thomas affirming her vocation when she said "You have chosen wisely." She was invested in the Benedictine habit on July 2, 1950 when she received the name, Sister Yvonne. Sister Yvonne made her final monastic profession on July 11, 1954.

Sister Yvonne received her bachelor's degree from Saint Catherine's University and her master's degree from the University of North Dakota in Elementary Counseling and Guidance. She also attended Saint John's University and received a Certificate in Monastic Studies.

Sister Yvonne was a teacher for more than 50 years, and she served in Lefor, ND, and Osseo, Detroit Lakes, Mahanomen and Moorhead, MN. She was the principal in Moorhead and Mahanomen where she was also Director of Religious Education. Sister Yvonne wrote that that she



Sister Yvonne with a young student from Saint Michael's School in Mahanomen.

was convinced that “the ministry of education is rooted in the Gospel – learning and sharing (that) the Good News is Jesus.”

Sister Yvonne possessed qualities that promoted a happy and healthy school environment: a generous and wholehearted spirit, an innate respect for each student and faculty member and a listening heart. Sister Yvonne was a nature lover, and she enjoyed outdoor activities, picking blueberries, gathering colored or enjoying the Christmas lighting around town.

On one of the trips to pick wild blueberries, Sister Yvonne became separated from the rest of the group, and when it came time to go home she was nowhere to be found. The county sheriff was contacted to help with the search, and eventually a helicopter was called in. After a couple hours, Sister Yvonne was found to the great relief of not only Sister Yvonne but also the rest of the group.

Sister Yvonne loved to see the Christmas lights around town. When it came time to choose the Christmas tree, the sisters with whom she lived wondered how it was that she always chose the coldest day of the year!

And then there was the annual school marathon. Most of the participants were bikers, but not Sister Yvonne! She was one of the hardy walkers who made the eight-mile trek – no shortcuts, no rides for her!

Sister Yvonne was preceded in death by her parents and brothers John and Ray and his wife Marie

She is survived by her sister, Sister Lucille, OSB, sister-in-law Mary Ann, many nieces and nephews and the Sisters of Saint Benedict.

Gifts in memory of Sister Yvonne may be given to Mount Saint Benedict Foundation.

Sister Dolores Norman



Sister Dolores Norman

Sister Dolores Norman, 91, died Monday, January 22, 2018 at Villa Saint Vincent in Crookston, MN.

Dolores Norman, the daughter of Neil and Mary Agnes (Langdon) Norman, was born March 1, 1926, in East Grand Forks. She graduated from Grand Forks Central High School in 1944. She attended the College of Saint

Benedict in Saint Joseph for her freshman year. “This first year in residence at Saint Benedict’s,” she said, “was an unforgettable experience. The liberal arts framework in that freshman year fostered a love for learning that still impacts my life on a daily basis.”

She then entered Mount Saint Benedict Monastery and was given the name Sister Paul when she became a novice. (She later went back to her baptismal name.) Sister Dolores made her first monastic profession on March 16, 1947, and her final profession in 1950.

Teacher preparation began in 1948 when she attended the Saint Paul Archdiocesan Teachers’ College. This was followed by teaching assignments in Rosen, Osseo, and Crookston.

Her formal education continued at the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Catholic University in Washington, D.C. and Saint Louis University, MO. She majored in history and political science, and received BA, MA, and Ph.D. degrees.

While teaching history and French at Mount Saint Benedict Academy, Sister Dolores was selected as a team member of Project Bridge, a program funded by the Ford Foundation and designed to improve race relations in Cleveland, OH. Sister Dolores was part of a team teaching an Urban History course at Saint John’s College. Sister Dolores was involved in the Neighborhood Project, a Saint Louis University Literacy Program. She accepted a position in the history department at Bemidji State University where she taught history in various areas including



Sister Dolores' lap was a favorite place for children of Sunrise Center.

Minnesota and Canadian history. She also taught in the Indian Studies program. Sister Dolores taught reading to adults and Ojibway history to American Indian inmates at the Saint Cloud State Reformatory.

Sister Dolores was involved in various organizations including being a consultant to the Minnesota Historical Society. She received many awards and grants. Among them was the opportunity to study at the University of Paris in France as a Fulbright Scholar. She was listed in the Directory of American Scholars and was honored with an award as Teacher of the Year in the Indian Studies Department. An award dear to her heart was the 1997 Bucky Award designating her as fan of the year in support of the Bemidji State University's Men's Hockey team. In October, 2009, the Northwest Minnesota Women's Fund honored her as an Outstanding Community Builder.

Sister Dolores taught twenty-five years at Bemidji State University and retired in 1993 as Professor of History with emerita status. Sister Dolores had a life-long love of learning and found her many travels to Europe and Canada life-expanding. She especially enjoyed her visits to national libraries in the United States, Canada, France and England.

After her retirement, for ten years she was a volunteer at Sunrise Center for Children and Families. In her words, "I spent all of my life teaching and it has been a memorable experience for me to have taught at all levels: preschool, elementary, high school, university and adult education." In respect to the past sixty years, Sister Dolores said, "Moves in one's life are a road map. In my experience happenings were good ones. . . . There have been few unexpected turns and a constancy of beliefs, few defeats, no intense sufferings, and no big changes except societal or ecclesiastical ones. The progression from convent to convent or from university dorm to university dorm has caused me to take stock. Many times, I've had to decide what to leave and what to take during the search for the sacred." She continued, "The strength and support of the community have meant the most to me."

Sister Dolores is preceded in death by her parents Cornelius and Mary Agnes Norman, brothers: Paul, Gene, Louis and James and sisters: Catherine, Virginia, Madonna, Joan and Helen.

Sister Dolores is survived by many nieces and nephews and the Sisters of Saint Benedict.

"Jesus no longer belongs to the past but lives in the present and is projected toward the future; Jesus is the everlasting "today" of God.

¶ Pope Francis, *The Church of Mercy*

Monastery Tales

Bishop Emeritus Victor Balke's episcopal ordination was 41 years ago. Bishop Balke celebrated Mass for us on his anniversary day, and he appreciated the acknowledgement during the prayers of the faithful. Bishop Balke joined us for the evening meal where there were further acknowledgements.

The weekend of Sept. 16 and 17, 2017 the Oblates were with us for their annual retreat. Father Michael Peterson, OSB from Saint John's Abbey directed the oblate retreat on September 16 – 17. He highlighted the theme: "The Core of the Gospel is Hospitality"

On Sept. 16, 2017 we rejoiced with the Sisters of Saint Benedict in Duluth, MN as they celebrated their 125th Anniversary. Sister Eileen Beutel and Sister Mary Jean Gust represented Mount Saint Benedict at this event. The sisters who founded Mount Saint Benedict came from Saint Scholastica's in Duluth.

The Subiaco hermitage is open again. Sister Kathy Kuchar oversees the use of the hermitage and because of our lengthy construction projects, she had to start a "waiting list" for those who wish to spend time in our hermitage. Sister has begun to notify those who expressed a desire to use the hermitage.

Sunrise Center Children Bring Christmas Cheer

On Tuesday, Dec. 19th the Toddlers and Preschoolers from Sunrise Center entertained the sisters by coming to our Chapter Room at 9:30 a.m. to sing some of their Christmas songs for us. That same day elementary children from Our Saviors Lutheran School sang Christmas carols during our evening meal in the dining room. One of the teachers present is the daughter of Rose Sinks, a housekeeper and receptionist at the Mount.

A singing group known as the "Sweet Adelines" lifted our spirits with some "special" entertainment on Tuesday, January 9 at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapter room. Sister Anne and Sister Anita, two "Sweet Adelines" we know well, were among the group.

Sunday, January 21, the Minnesota Vikings competed against the Philadelphia Eagles for a spot in the Superbowl. Arrangements were made to view the game on the large screen in the Chapter Room this Sunday at 5:40 p.m. Unfortunately, the Vikings lost!

On February 3, 2018 seven students from Mount Saint Benedict Music Studio took part in the Minnesota Music Teachers Association District Piano Contest in Detroit Lakes, Mn. Four of these students were declared winners and will now take part in the State Final Contest at Ferguson Hall, University of Minnesota in Minneapolis on March 10th and 11th. These students are Katherine Geist, Aspen Mendez, Caleb Mendez and Emma Sherman.

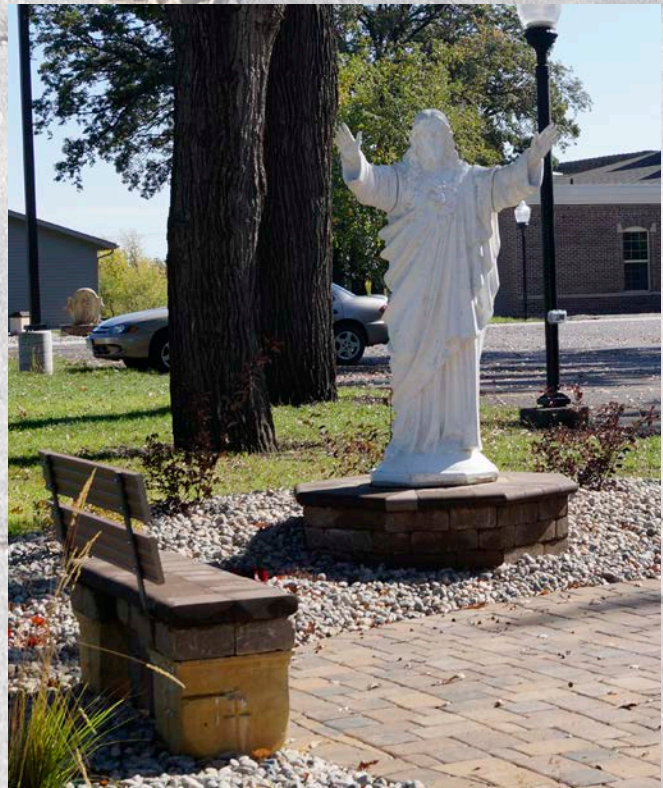
On February 10, 2018 twelve students played in the North Dakota Federation of Music Club Festival at the Hughes Fine Arts Center on the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND.

Students are now preparing for their Annual Spring Recital in April.



Landscaping

With the completion of the new monastery, landscaping was the final project to be completed. The statue of the Sacred Heart was moved to the entrance near the parking lot. A new sign now marks the entrance to Mount Saint Benedict. A medallion of Saint Benedict that once graced the front of the original monastery building is now a focal point of a small garden. Wrought iron gates guard the road to the cemetery. Paving blocks with a Benedictine cross welcome those who wish or a moment of rest to stop and reflect.





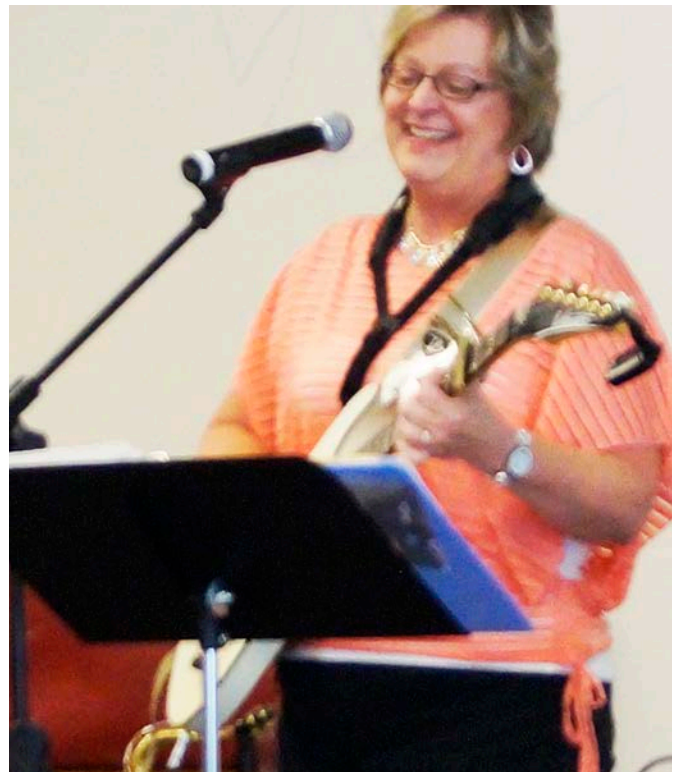
Donna Riendeau, our early morning cook for the past 18 years, retired. We held a party for her on Friday, Sept. 29 in our dining room for all sisters and staff. Donna will be missed for her efficiency and most of all for her quick smile!



The large screen and computer system in the Chapter Room were designed for use during meetings and presentations, but it also works very well for watching Vikings or Twins games -- or the Olympics!



Sunday, October 15, Julie Lee and Hugo Ternes, members of a group known as the "White Rose Band", offered us some entertaining music from 1 - 2 p.m. in our Chapter Room. Julie Lee is a niece of Sister Rachel Beitz.



New Alumni Director appointed

Sister Denise Schonhardt '67 has been appointed the new Alumni Director for Mount Saint Benedict graduates. Sister Denise hopes that the alumni will be willing to share stories of themselves to be included in the Alumni News. Sister Denise commented that everyone on the mailing list will be receiving Easter cards instead of a Lenten appeal letter. Included is a card asking for stories of the sisters as they celebrate 100 years as monastic community in Crookston.

Please share your stories and send them to Mount Saint Benedict.

Also, Sister Denise would like to remind those having reunions that our Foundation office keeps addresses updated. She would also be grateful to receive any addresses that alumni may have so that our files may be improved. Sister Denise would also be grateful to receive reunion booklets, etc. This helps very much in the publication of alumni news.

Dear Sister Denise,

I would like to share the following.

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Graduation year

You may either email the above to Sister Denise or mail via the US Post office. Do the same for photos. Thank you and God bless you.



PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR MAILING LIST CURRENT

- ☐ New Address
 - ☐ Please add my name
 - ☐ Please remove my name
 - ☐ Receiving more than one copy
- (Send all labels indicating which is correct)

Please let us know if you have remembered the Sisters of Saint Benedict in your will and estate planning.

Please contact: Sister Denise Schonhardt,
Mount Saint Benedict Monastery,
620 Summit Ave.,
Crookston, MN 56716-2799
phone: 218-281-3441, email: denise.schonhardt@bhshealth.org

Visit us on the web at www.msb.net

from our foundation director



Sister Denise Schonhardt

This past Sunday, we went on "Daylight Savings Time." I always wondered why it had that name. The sun rises and sets according to the rotation of the earth, no matter what we name the time. What we do is that we agree by legislated decree that we are going to get up an hour earlier in the morning, but our clocks say that we are getting up at the same time.

This is the time of the year when we welcome the light. It is the time of the year when the God found in darkness leads us into the light.

Going into the light has its own perils, because the light brings crucifixion and resurrection. There is no resurrection without the crucifixion.

Many of you have been bringers of the light. You have brought the light of care and compassion to the Sisters of Saint Benedict. You persist in bringing the light to many others through your continued contributions. We Sisters still rely on your generosity to meet many of our expenses, and we are also able to reach out to others who also are in need of the light.

From the beginning of Mount Saint Benedict Foundation, the focus has been on the needs of the retired sisters and on their ministries. As we sisters retired, it became apparent that there were still needs in the ministries where we served: education, healthcare, parish work, etc. So, the Foundation decided to help support those ministries through grants. This decision continues the value of service which our sisters gave from the very beginning of the community. We can no longer be physically present, but we can support ministries which continue the values we have always promoted. Many of you have benefitted from the sisters' service, and you generously help support those values for future generations.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANKYOU!

Due to changes in the software we use to record donations, keep track of addresses, etc, we must alert those who give online of the following: **for safe and secure access to our donation page on our website, please ensure that your operating system and browser are up-to-date.**