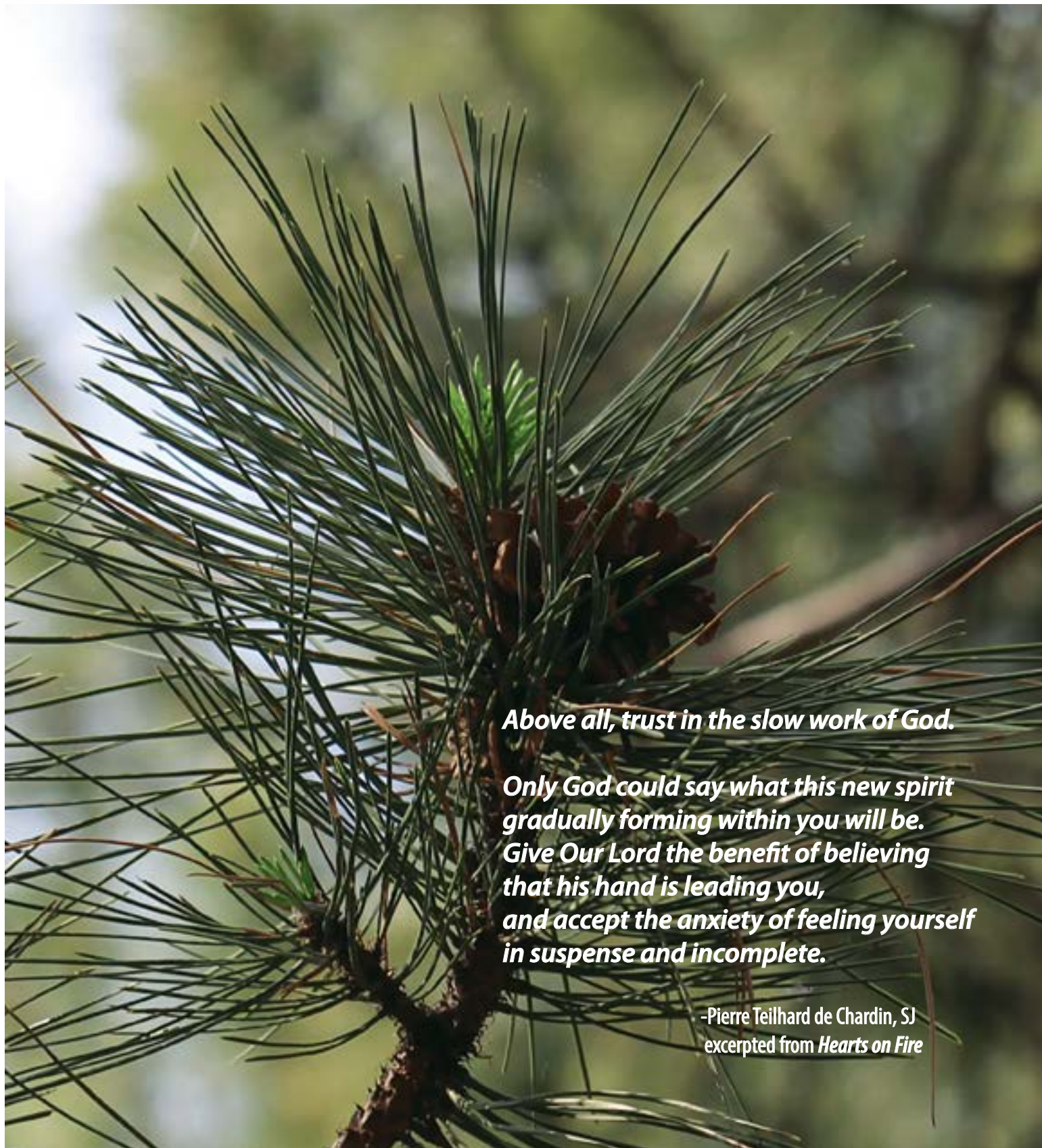


Review

The of Benet Hill Monastery



VOLUME 59, NUMBER 2 / 3190 BENET LANE, COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80921-1509 / Summer 2021



Above all, trust in the slow work of God.

*Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.*

-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ
excerpted from *Hearts on Fire*

Message from the Prioress

By [Sister Clare Carr, OSB, Prioress](#)



"Listen to your heart.. you are becoming more fully and completely who you were created to be. It is a whisper that says you are being called to something new. It is a gentle voice that seems to say, 'Ah, now I have your attention.' It is a voice that has been patiently waiting to speak truth you would be able to hear."

-Dale Hanson Bourke, Second Calling: Passion and Purpose for the Rest of Your Life

Dear Friends,

These past 10 years have been such a blessing. I have had the honor of knowing a number of you.

It feels like that Spirit of God has wrapped me and us in the blessedness of grace. These have been years of stretching my horizons. Our [Sanctuary of Peace](#) project has so delighted my heart. It has expanded "*our tent*" so to speak. We hope to welcome new neighbors at Sanctuary of Peace Residential Community in the next two years.

In 2015 we celebrated our 50th Jubilee as Benet Hill Monastery in Colorado. It was a joyous year of reaching out to all the missions we served and rekindling our relationships with many families, students and friends. It reminded us of the impact we have had in each other's lives.

Two of our sisters began ministries. [Sister Rose Ann Barmann](#) is helping women harmed from human trafficking to recover and heal. [Sister Evangeline Salazar](#) ministered to families on the border. Their ministries challenged us to look at our conveniences, the safety we live with and the support many of us have been given.

Celebrating Lives

By [Sister Ana Cloughly, OSB](#)

Death like birth, is the one experience we all share. During the time of the COVID-19 pandemic three of our sisters died. Thankfully, none died as a result of the pandemic. However, celebrating their lives with their family community and friends has been postponed. Their remains were placed in our small chapel until we were able to celebrate their lives.

How we celebrate a sister's life depends on the sister. Some, like [Sister Charlotte](#) wanted a private service with the community. [Sister Josie](#) wanted her family to celebrate with us. And [Sister Diane](#) wanted her family to really celebrate with musically gifted family members, especially her brother to join in by playing the piano in the celebration after Mass.

Although we are deeply saddened when our beloved sisters die, we also have the knowledge that life is not ended, only changed.



These have also been years of loss. Over my ten years as prioress, we have had to bury twelve of our dear sisters. It is just unimaginable. These were women who have given 50, 60 or 70 years of loving service. They are dearly missed and our hearts break with each loss.

The years have gone by quickly and I want to thank all of you who have made it such a profound experience.

And now I want to introduce you to our new Prioress, [Sister Marie Therese \(MT\) Summers](#). Sister MT is a very gifted woman. These past years she has served as Treasurer for the community. She has a keen mind and a generous heart. Her energy comes from a longing and a vision of being a servant leader. She desires to lead with compassion, gentleness and wisdom. She is to "*Hold the place of Christ.*" (RB 2:3) She is so grateful for her Benedictine heritage.

One awareness that Sister MT speaks of "*The laborers are few and the harvest is great.*" She is attuned to the broader needs of the sisters and the world; she prays for more [oblates](#) and [volunteers](#) to join us here at the monastery. Daily she hangs the Earth Flag on our property reminding her that we are to be inclusive of all those who share this world of ours. There is such a need for hope, healing and reconciliation. She asks for your support and your prayers.

Finally, we continue to trust in the "*slow work of God*" as we discern the monastery's future. I invite you to carefully read pages 6-7 and pray for us. May Christ find home here and in the hearts of all who come here.

Blessings,

In deepest sympathy we remember our dear sisters and their families who have lost loved ones.

Sisters [Kathleen](#) and [Elizabeth](#) Cogan, OSB on the loss of their brother, Joe Cogan.

[Sister Ana Cloughly, OSB](#) on the loss of her aunt, Cheryl Milward.

[Sister Mary Jane Vigil, OSB](#) on the loss of her cousin, Audrey Ortiz and her great nephew, James Belarde, Jr.

[Sister Lucile Hartmann, OSB](#) on the loss of her brother-in-law, Bernard Schreiner.

[Sister Marilyn Carpenter, OSB](#) on the loss of her cousin, Mary Richard and her novice classmates; Sisters Patricia Schneider Sister Ramona Medina.

Sister MT Summers, Prioress Elect



Sister MT Summers, OSB

"I am so grateful God has blessed me with the gift of a BENEDICTINE HEART. St. Benedict begins the Holy Rule with the word: "Listen." The community is called together to LISTEN in the most sacred way in their decision for choosing their prioress. Our community listened, I listened, and together, we heard a call for me to serve as the prioress. Each sister in turn commits to supporting the prioress as we seek God together. I desire to be a servant leader during these challenging times in our world; a pivotal movement that needs another "Benedictine moment" as in St. Benedict's times. It calls for our presence through hospitality, reverence, mutual connectedness and dialogue with the community of Sisters, Oblate-members and our allied friends who share in our values. "We will run and not grow weary for our God will be our strength." (Isaiah 40:31)

- Sister Mare Therese (MT) Summers, OSB



Sister MT Summers, OSB and Sister Clare Carr, OSB after the Community Meeting and Election.

We Remember...Sister Charlotte Redpath, OSB

By Sister Ana Cloughly, OSB

"Be not lax in celebrating, be not lazy in the festive service of God. Be ablaze with enthusiasm. Let us be alive, burning offering before the altar of God!"

- Hildegard of Bingen

Sister Charlotte (Dominic) Redpath, OSB died peacefully April 20, 2021. Her parents, Percy A. Redpath and Lena Horney had nine children-Charlotte was the youngest, born on January 14, 1934 in Minneapolis, MN. She was baptized Charlotte Marlene. Her family was very loving and close. Her father died when she was only three years old and she recalled her mother being a strong woman. Her mother's strength cultivated Charlotte's own strong and adventurous spirit.

Upon graduating from high school, Charlotte made a bike trip across Europe taking photos as she went. This experience helped develop her artistic gifts. After returning home, she entered St. Paul Monastery in St. Paul, MN in 1958 and made her first monastic profession in 1960. In 1967, Charlotte earned a BA in Art from College of St. Catherine St. Paul, MN. She taught art in high schools and colleges in Minnesota.

The 1960s and 70s saw many changes in the lives of religious women. Sister Charlotte took the unique role as the Director of Fine Art Education in Phoenix, AZ for the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1969-1970. By 1981, Sister Charlotte's adventurous heart joined with Sister Katherine Wawersich and three other Benedictine sisters to found The Spirit of Life Monastery in Lakewood, Colorado. They also created The Spirit of Life Center to provide for the spiritual needs of adults. From 1987 to 1999, she served as their community's prioress. Charlotte earned an MA in Counseling and Psychology from the Arizona State University Tempe, AZ in 1984. She realized that combining art into her practice as a counselor and as a spiritual director opened new paths to psychological and spiritual well-being to those she served.

Over the next two decades, Charlotte shared her paintings, weavings and photographs in art shows around the country. She combined many of her exhibition trips with camping and hiking excursions into remote places in the United States and Canada. Charlotte loved being in nature discovering opportunities to take unique photos. She saw the beauty of God in everything.

In 2003, Sister Charlotte, along with Sister Katherine Wawersich, transferred her vow of stability to Benet Hill Monastery. Charlotte continued her ministry of counseling, spiritual direction and creating beautiful cards from her many photographs. She taught



art classes to the women in formation and she would say, "Whenever you are outside, take the time to look up at the sky. It will enliven your creativity."

Sister Charlotte's later years gave her time for her other great love, reading. Her tastes were expansive and she took great pleasure in having her intellect and imagination ignited by a good book and she generously shared her reading list with sisters, oblates and friends.

Sister Charlotte loved her family and community. Her profound appreciation for beauty in all its forms flowed from her deep love for the God of all creation.

A private service (per her request) was held on May 22, 2021 for Sister Charlotte Redpath with her sisters and the oblates of Benet Hill Monastery.

My Experience as a Newly Professed Oblate

By Kathy Bell, ObISB



God's grace will suffice and we must seek God in total trust. This is the shift I have felt during my time of study and preparation. In signing my Profession of Oblation on Holy Scripture, I felt both the import of the moment and a great freedom to move ahead in my walk with Christ.

Everything is the same and nothing is the same. My life has taken on added meaning. Echoing both the newly Professed and the Re-commitment of the professed oblates, *"...in so far as my state in life permits" "...Through my daily prayer and work may I be inspired to live in Christ and to bring [God's] love to the world and [God's] peace to all hearts..."*. Amen!



As I write this, I have been a professed [oblate](#) for less than twenty-four hours. And yet, I have been journeying toward my oblation for a very long time. In yesterday's oblation ceremony, Sister Clare asked whether each of us would dedicate ourselves to the service of God according to the Rule of Benedict followed by this pivotal declaration: *"Since God has given you this grace and you trust in God's help..."*. There it is!



**Newly Professed [Oblates](#)
on July 11, 2021**

L to R: Terri Murphy, Judy Nickerson, Meg Bussell, Pat Bussell, Sister Clare Carr, OSB, Kathy Bell, Aram Haroutunian, Shari Middlemist, Tara Stockman and Sue Cox.

Community Retreat: To Live in God's Glory

By Sister Jan Ginzkey, OSB, Assistant Prioress

The sisters and some oblates attended our annual retreat June 20 – 25. Fr. Xavier Nacke, OSB from Conception Abbey was our delightful director. Fr. Xavier was so enthusiastic and animated that he held our attention during each of the conferences. His sense of humor and humility added to the richness of these days.

The challenge issued to all of us was *"to let God love me."* God's glory is the gift of grace which we can receive or not. If we receive it, we can live in the presence of God. We live in awe of God that we may be given the Spirit of wisdom and evolving knowledge of God in our daily lives. This glory is poured out to purify, transform and vivify.

During our time together, Fr. Nacke introduced us to some previously unknown mystics and authors, including St. Elizabeth of the Trinity and St. Symeon, the New Theologian. We studied scripture passages from the book of Judith, Paul's letters to the Corinthians and the Psalms. Each of these reflected a deep reverence and personal relation with God. Our soul's destiny is to live in the presence of God and *"to let God love me."*

"Letting go activates my faith and allows God to send what is meant for me. Letting go helps me because holding on does not... Letting go sets me free to accept that life is just as it is meant to be. An experience full of open spaces for new outcomes, new opportunities and new possibilities."

-Emmanuella Raphaelle



Federation Pre-Chapter

By Sister Jan Ginzkey, OSB, Assistant Prioress

Federation of St. Scholastica Pre-Chapter: June 16 – 18, 2021

[The Federation of St. Scholastica](#) President, Sister Lynn McKenzie, OSB welcomed the prioresses and delegates of the member monasteries. Sister Lynn's address challenged us to be creative in ways to increase diversity, advocacy, and radical hospitality.

Addie Walker spoke on "Confronting Racism in Community" with poignant personal experiences, stories, and humor. Her two-hour presentation with slides and commentary was informative and increased awareness of the systemic ways racism is perpetuated in our education, housing, healthcare, economic, and political systems.

The history of our Federation was told by four past presidents covering the years from 1971-2021. The women witnessed to their deep love of Benedictinism and the importance of being authentic women of faith. The years between 1998 – 2010 were especially fraught with challenges by the Apostolic Visitation and graced with support and stronger bonds between monasteries and those the sisters serve.

The second panel was composed of newer monastics from different monasteries offering their love of Benedictinism, respect of the wise elders, and their hopes and enthusiasm for the future of monastic life. The positive energy and optimism were refreshing and reassuring. Our future is in good hands.

The breakout groups provided excellent discussions allowing themes and priorities to surface. These were synthesized and reported. During this year, various working committees will create the agenda for the Federation Chapter in June 2022.

Sanctuary of Peace Groundbreaking

By Vincent Crowder, Property & Building Manager

On Saturday June 19, 2021, we officially broke ground on the [Sanctuary of Peace Residential Community](#) at Benet Hill. The sisters hosted a beautiful prayer and blessing on the site followed by lunch for all their guests in the dining room.

Guests included Bishop Emeritus Most Reverend Richard Hanifen who offered a brief prayer and a few words of blessings on the new community. David Gorman, a principal of the Civil Engineering firm MVE Engineers, Inc. who has shepherded us through the four-year construction approval process with the county and the state also attended. Tom Kahn, the founder and CEO of Kahn Construction in Centennial, Colorado along with Kevin Kahn, the COO supplied the golden shovels and the hard hats to make the groundbreaking go smoothly.

Each of the former living prioresses of the monastery joined the current Prioress, Sister Clare Carr, the Prioress Elect, Sister MT Summers and myself for turning over the first few spadefuls of soil on the site that will one day be the common house for the new community. Also present were a number of [oblates](#), family and friends of the monastery, and several excited future residents who have already committed to making the Sanctuary of Peace Residential Community their new home as soon as it is ready for occupancy.



L to R: Tom Kahn, Founder and CEO of Kahn Construction; David Gorman, Principal of MVE Engineering; Vincent Crowder, Property & Building Manager; [Clare Carr, OSB, Prioress](#); Bishop Emeritus Richard Hanifen; [Sister MT Summers, OSB, Prioress Elect](#) and Kevin Kahn, Chief Operating Officer of Kahn Construction

Construction of the infrastructure of the project should take between four to six months. If all goes as planned, we hope to get the first few foundations for homes in place before the snow flies so that we can continue construction through the winter months. We presently anticipate completion and full occupancy of the entire community in about the next two years.



Sisters [Mary John Thomas](#) and [Anne Stedman](#) (former prioresses) read during the blessing.



For more information about the Sanctuary of Peace Residential Community, please contact [Vincent Crowder at the Monastery on his direct line 719-355-1639](#) or by email at vcrowder@benethillmonastery.org or visit the www.benethillmonastery.org website. On the homepage click on the tab for the Sanctuary of Peace.

Elder Blessing

Dr. James Jefferson, a Southern Ute Elder, blessed the Sanctuary of Peace site on Saturday, May 29. He asked permission of the ancestors and the spirits of the forest to allow the building to be blessed.



[Sister Rose Ann Barmann](#) (former prioress) also reads during the blessing.



[Sister Naomi Rosenberger](#) (former prioress) shovels some dirt during the prayer.



"The Slow Work of God"...

By *Ruth Roland, Director of Mission Advancement*

Core Ideology (Our Celestial North star that is everlasting and unchangeable):

Our Charism: We, the Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery, journeying together, are called to seek God in the daily celebration of life. Recognizing our giftedness, we listen and respond through creative prayer and life-giving service.

Our Mission: We exist to be a contemporary Benedictine monastic presence.

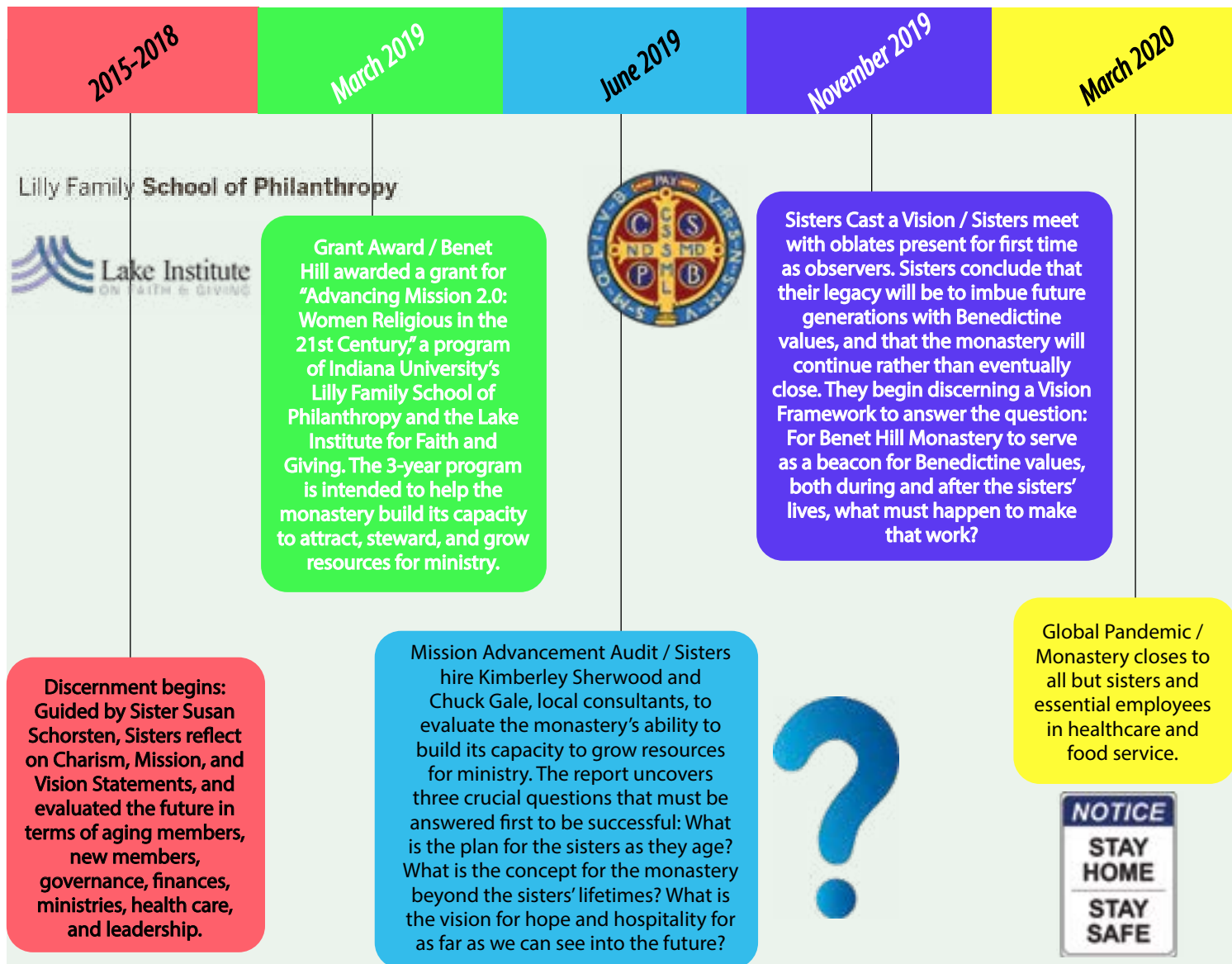
Our Values: We provide sacred space of hospitality to create hope and healing. We revere all creation. We are radical signs of God's love and compassion. We use our resources in service with all God's people.

"I can assure you it was an 'extremely' positive experience. I for one was humbled and honored to be included in this sisters' "family gathering", and, as one pursuing becoming an oblate, it was incredibly illuminating and enriching to see how this process works." -Aram Haroutunian, OBlSB



The sisters held their community meeting in May with the oblates. The Futuring Team was in attendance as observers only. The sisters and oblates voted unanimously to accept the Directional Statements for the next six years.

Timeline...



...The Future of Benet Hill

BENET HILL MONASTERY'S DIRECTIONAL STATEMENTS 2021 - 2027

Technology

We will create a technological infrastructure to enhance our presence into the future bringing our Benedictine values to global outreach and personal and communal transformation.

Inclusivity

We seek to expand our community through intentional inclusivity and the active practice of social and ecological justice.

Leadership

We will explore and implement innovative forms of shared leadership, that encourage mutual participation and active listening to diverse voices.



During the May community meetings, Jesse Brown, ObISB wrote this prose in response to his experience.

By Jesse Brown, osb Oblate

A liminal space

*where God doesn't need to
wrestle us all night to
turn our attention to the Divine.*

A thin place

*where the agitations of our
noisy lives can settle
and we can hear the wind in the pines.*

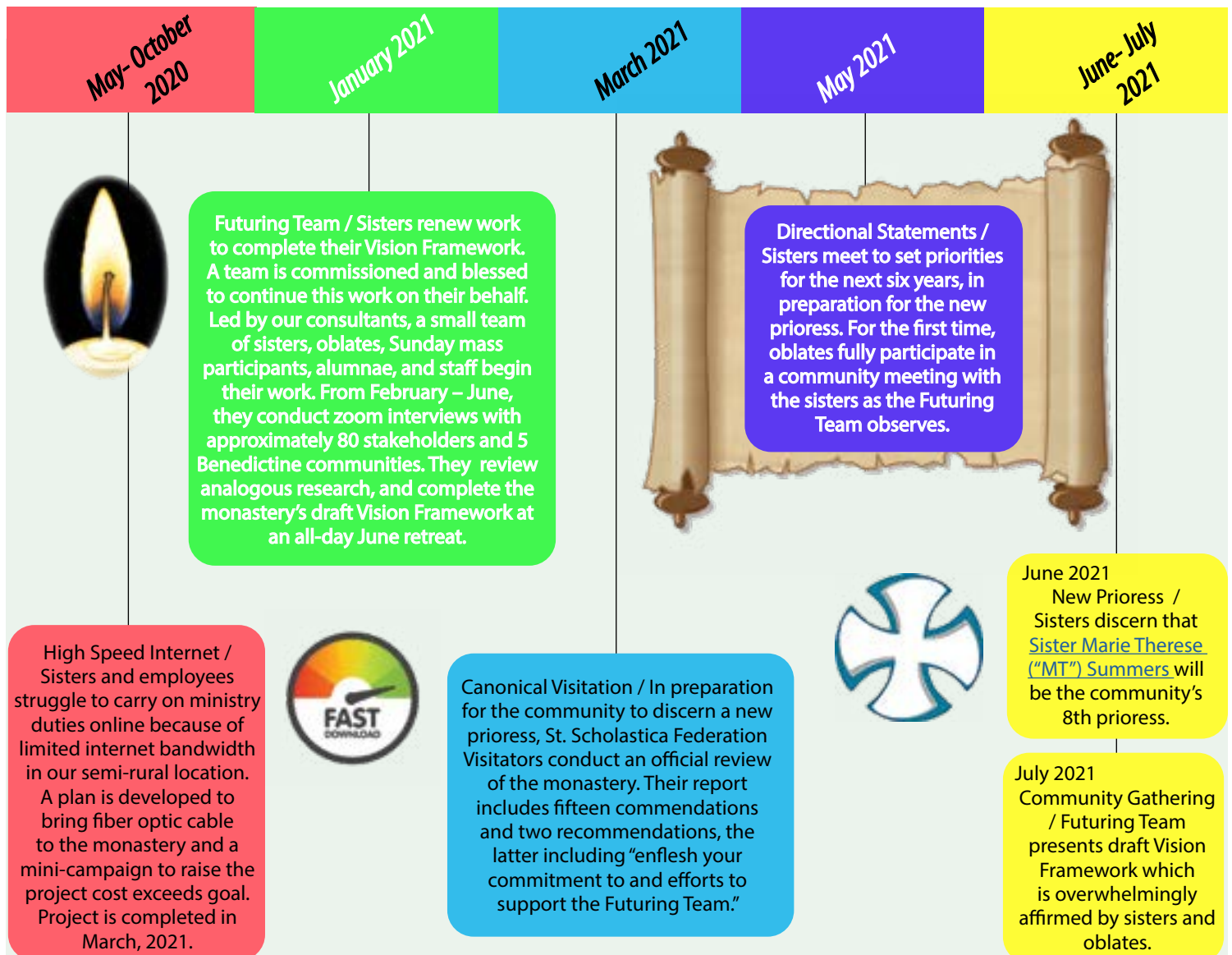
A sanctuary

*where weary pilgrims can rest
and find a table where we
can tell our stories and sing our songs.*

A commissioning

*where we, refreshed, can step out
into the world
without returning to the ways of the world.*

...of Events



Global Online Benedictine Spiritual Direction Program Graduates 2021

By *Sister Mary Colleen Schwarz, OSB, Global Online Coordinator*



*Jean Gasset
Missionary*



*Sister Marie Joseph Boddice
Jamberoo, NSW (Australia)*



*Lou Ann MacIntyre
Nederland, Colorado*



*Sister Magdalen Mather
Jamberoo, NSW (Australia)*



*Louise Quiroz
Atascadero, California*



*Therese Carroll
Revesby, NSW (Australia)*



*Brother Joachim Fabbro
Burnwood, NSW (Australia)*



*Christine Gant
Port Orchard, Washington*



*David Robinson
Canyon Beach, Oregon*



*Don Semi
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico*

The Global Online graduation class of 2021 is a diverse group of people from around the world. They are beloved children of God who have chosen to evolve and transform their lives through a commitment to uncover and awaken to their personal journey of living an authentic life in the world. They have built community and have honored the Christ in each other. They are deeply committed to the unfolding of this new ministry of being a witness and companion to others in spiritual direction. We honor each of them and their unique presence in the world and congratulate them on their completion of the [Benet Hill Spiritual Direction program](#).

-Kathleen Emry, Seattle, WA; Global Team Member Companion

The program has allowed me to see God on my own, without relying on what someone else has said or taught. It has humbled me to realize, for the first time, how loved I am by God for exactly who I am. This program allowed me to understand this. It helped me to be confident in walking with God as he calls me, as the unique and beloved daughter that I am. Being in a community of fellow seekers, who also long for more intimacy with God has been incredible to me. The support I received about who I am in God, has allowed me to grow in ways I didn't realize I needed. The ability to then take what I have learned here and walk with others in their journey through spiritual direction is a gift that I'll be forever grateful for.

-Christine Gant, 2021 Graduate

I became familiar with Benet Hill Monastery after listening to a podcast interview with Sister Mary Colleen about the [spiritual director program](#). Several aspects of this program were inviting to me. I could go through the program online from abroad and the tuition was affordable. Little did I know all the blessings I would receive. [Sister Mary Colleen](#) and Dana Cossey led us with compassion, wisdom and example through a well-rounded program with a thorough curriculum that is experiential, practical, relational, transformative, contemplative and much more.

In addition, I experienced the blessing of walking with a community of peers on this journey toward transformative wholeness. This led me to a deeper relationship with God and myself while enlarging my capacity to listen with compassion and love others well on their own spiritual journey. An embodiment of the greatest commandment to love God and our neighbor.

-Jean Gasset, 2021 Graduate

It is always difficult to put into words any life-changing experience. There is so much one can say and yet feel that not enough has been said that includes the internal work. Ultimately, it is only with time that a fuller picture will emerge on how this program has benefited me personally. After more than fifty years of ministry as a Religious and as a Teacher, I was ready for a program of spiritual self-discovery for a new direction in my ministry.

The [Global Online Benedictine Spiritual Direction Program](#) recommended to me by a Benedictine sister during a retreat at Jamberoo Abbey seemed to tick all the right boxes at the very time I was contemplating retiring from my ministry of teaching. The COVID-19 Pandemic also happened to coincide with the start of the course and gave me a God-sent opportunity to focus on my own spiritual transformation. And this is what has been happening from that time till now. Only now, I realize that this is only the start of a transformation in my own spiritual reawakening.

This reawakening has benefited me and given me new focus on serving others as a companion on our common spiritual pilgrimage. I have begun to see that my life can still be fruitful in its later years. For all this and much more, I am truly grateful to the people running the program, in particular to [Sister Mary Colleen Schwarz, OSB](#) and Dana Cossey, and to all the participants in our group who have shared what is most deep and sacred in themselves. As I complete the program, I truly feel that the Spirit has been leading me in a way I could not have foreseen when I began and has given me courage to continue wherever the path will lead.

-Brother Joachim Fabbro fms, 2021 Graduate

Contact: [Sister Mary Colleen Schwarz, OSB, Global Online Coordinator](#); smarycolleen@benethillmonastery.org; (719) 633-0655 Ext. 134

Global Graduation Continued...

I began my two-year certification training to become a director under the supervision of Sister Mary Colleen with Benet Hill's [Global Online Program](#) in September 2017. After completing Year One in June 2018, I took a two-year leave and reentered the program to complete Year Two in January 2021. I graduate in August 2021 as a certified spiritual director. I became a Benedictine Oblate with Mount Angel Abbey in Oregon in 2006, and have regularly made spiritual retreats to the abbey for over 20 years. My spiritual director is a monk at Mount Angel Abbey. I serve as full-time Lead Pastor of Cannon Beach Community Church in Cannon Beach, Oregon. I am married with three grown married children, and three grandchildren.

I benefited from the Global Online Benedictine Spiritual Direction Program in three key ways. First, I gained heart wisdom by sitting under the wise supervision and training of [Sister Mary Colleen](#) and her fine team of supervisors/instructors. Sister Mary Colleen and her team guided our cohort, gathering us from around the world. We joined via video conferencing from USA, Turkey, Mexico, and Australia, learning spiritual direction by doing spiritual direction with a directee, then reviewing our spiritual direction through peer verbatim supervision. It was very rewarding to learn spiritual direction with others from around the world using this process. Second, I gained deeper God awareness and inner self understanding through the two years of modules. The Modules included: paths of contemplative spirituality, dream tending, learning the Enneagram and Myers Briggs, writing a spiritual autobiography and a rule of life, exploration of the interface of sexuality and spirituality, hospitality and Benedictine spiritual values, trauma and suffering in spiritual direction, co-dependence and addiction, among other practical themes and approaches to spiritual direction. Third, I learned how to listen. I learned how to listen to the soul of another, hearing the heart wisdom behind the words within another person's story. I also learned better to pay attention to the voice and movement of God's Spirit at work within the soul of another. This dual listening, listening to God while listening to neighbor, is one of the most fruitful gifts from this program, and certainly one of the best ways to fulfill the two greatest commandments to love God and love neighbor.

-David Robinson MDiv, DMin OLSB, 2021 Graduate

We traveled together into the mystery and suffering of the global pandemic. This experience unfolded within each student's story the heart wisdom of compassion to love well. The students' paths toward becoming spiritual directors was blessed with the grace of wonderment and self-discovery. Each student embraced the Benedictine values that are the foundation of the global program. The graduates of 2021 are excellent spiritual directors that will provide for the world Christ's light and radiance to each person they serve in this ministry. Congratulations. I am so proud of each of you and the gifts that you bring to the world.

-[Sister Mary Colleen Schwarz, OSB,](#)
[Global Online Coordinator](#)



If you were to ask me to describe the graduates of the Global Online BSDP in one word, it would be "resilient". This group began their journey in January of 2020. Within two months they encountered a global pandemic of colossal proportions. Every student was impacted with lockdowns, isolation, disconnections and disruptions. For some, they had to endure the loss of a family member, friend or loved one—grief and loss became a part of the grip COVID-19 added to their lives.

Without hesitation and interruption, they were determined and persevered through all the difficulties. As a facilitator, I couldn't be more proud of how they overcame the difficulties and brought insights to bear from their life experiences. Spiritual growth and transformation were in abundance. Leadership qualities never before imagined, emerged for some.

Saint Benedict stated in the "Prologue of the Holy Rule" that we are all beginners. I am witness to the initiation, incubation and complete development of the hearts and souls of this group of graduates. Benet Hill Monastery can be proud of the group who will now bring true meaning to the world of the phrase "servant ministers." Congratulations graduates of 2021 [Global Online Spiritual Direction Program](#).

-Dana Cossey, Facilitator

I Will Miss You All!

By Gina Berger, Communications Director

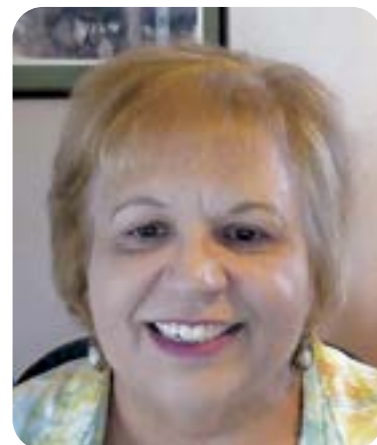
I have come to know many of you over the last fifteen years. It has been a pleasure for me to have served the Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery and you during that time. The chapter in my life of working as Communications Director at the monastery has reached an end for me as I retire.

One of the greatest gifts I have ever received from Benet Hill is participating in the spiritual direction program formally known as BSFP (Benedictine Spiritual Formation Program). I graduated in 2006 and continue in this ministry today. My journey of transformation began long ago, but is marked by a milestone of the inner work done through the two-year spiritual direction program.

I learned that I am "enough", even though I see so many of my own inadequacies. I learned that God can "use" me, if only I listen with my heart and remain open to the Spirit. I never know what each day will bring, but I know that I do not walk alone. I am grateful for this gift.

Working for fifteen years with the sisters has showed me a close-up view and many vulnerabilities. I have seen God work "no matter what". And I believe the greatest gift the sisters bring to the world is their faithfulness in prayer. I can whisper in a sister's ear a request for the needs I have, loved ones who are sick, and difficult situations that require grace; I have no doubt that things will get done in the way they need to be done through prayer.

I am so thankful for all I have learned and my relationship with the sisters and staff. I will miss everyone as I await the next chapter in my life.



Benet Hill Academy Reunion Picnic

Compiled By Gina Berger, Communications Director



Class of '66: Front Row L to R: Ellen Depatie and Dottie Alfonsin Watkins; Back Row L to R: Bonnie Brown Collazo and Alice Bahn Busby.

Fifty years ago, when we were sassy young teens, no one was talking much about the empowerment of women. We were witnessing the dawn of a time when the events around us would shape our young lives, and when glass ceilings would be shattered by the extraordinary talents of women around the world. We were fortunate and blessed to be instructed by the Sisters of [Benet Hill Academy](#), never realizing at the time that their commitment to our education, and indeed to our well being, would be a significant part of what would catapult us into a future full of endless opportunities and prepare us for any difficulties we would encounter along the way. The sisters loved us with their hearts and souls - we knew that, but they also, **"Walked the talk"** for us with their gracious commitment to lives of discipline, service and integrity.

On July 17-18, the weekend marking 50 years since our graduation, many of us were fortunate to come together at beautiful Benet Hill Monastery to celebrate. We spent a casual afternoon catching up with each other, sharing photos and indulging in the recollection of friendships and events. We chatted about how impactful our time at Benet Hill was, even when we were in trouble for rolling up the waist bands of our skirts or spending time in after-school detention for sneaking a cigarette behind the auditorium stage or chewing gum in class. We missed our classmates who couldn't join us. In the years since our graduation, our class of 1971 has scattered in many directions, our lives shaped by challenges to overcome, successes to celebrate and joy to cherish.

On this weekend we spoke of Louisa May Alcott's, **"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship"**. At Benet Hill we learned that there were no limits to what we could accomplish. Thank you Sisters of Benet Hill for teaching us how to sail our ships!

-Mary Gilbert Koch & Nancy Hedemark Ney, Class of 1971



Class of '70: Front Row L to R: Chris Wambach, Jackie Hare and Marilyn Powers Parad; Back Row L to R: Trudie Alfonsin Layton and Agnes O'Donnell Noel



Class of '78: L to R: Shari Middlemist, Kelly Smith Abbott and Karen Roebuck Terbeek.



Class of '80: Front Row L to R: Stacy Hazelett Knight, Anneliese Mann Martin and Robin Hazelette Brion; Back Row L to R: Mary Urig Floerke, Maureen Sheehan Jackson, Christine Gabriel Smith, Monica Hobbs and Eloise Daniels.



Class of '71: Front Row L to R: Donelle Tyma, Carol Hanson Dearden and Nancy Hedemark Ney; Middle Row L to R: Lillian Alderman, Pam Foltz and Beth McMillan; Back Row L to R: Diane Earpelding, Sherri Dingwell, Mary Ellen Gilbert and Bette Layman.



Class of '79: L to R: Maria Carew Meintz, Kathy Hodson Mueller and Melody Landon.



Class of '81: Front Row L to R: Lynne Szczutkowski Neiss and Jules Aquirre Irwin; Back Row L to R: T.J. McGrath, Karen McGrath and Lisa Anderson.



L to R: Peggy Cavey, Class of '74 and Coco Kruse Kinkenberg, Class of '72.

In deepest sympathy we remember our dear alumnae and their families who have lost loved ones.

Brenda Thomas Kurt, Class of '77 and Pamela Kirby June, Class of '82 (deceased) on the loss of their father, Bobby Kirby.

Kelly Green, Class of '79, on the loss of her father, David Green.

Chris Harry, Class of '70 (deceased) on the loss of her mother, Joan Harry.

Coco Kruse Klinkenberg, Class of '72 on the loss of her father, James Kruse.

"My time at Benet Hill Monastery is always spirit filled. The love, grace and peace enter my heart and calms my soul. I am lucky to call this place my spiritual home."

-Maureen Sheehan Jackson, Class of '80

Mission Advancement: Wise Giving

By Ruth Roland, Director of Mission Advancement

In Ancient Greece, the owl was a symbol of wisdom; supposedly, an owl sat on the Goddess Athena's blind side so that she could see the whole truth. The image of an owl came to mind recently, as I was having an email conversation with a longtime friend and supporter of the sisters' mission. This friend has a tax-wise giving strategy that makes a lot of sense for philanthropists of a "certain age." He typically makes an annual Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to all the charitable organizations he loves and supports, including the monastery. This helps to meet his annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from his retirement assets without increasing his taxable income. This type of giving allows him to be more generous, using the retirement assets he has accumulated over his career.

This friend also shared that last year he gave appreciated stock to the sisters because federal COVID relief measures waived the RMD for 2020. He decided to let his retirement assets continue to grow, and instead transferred stock shares from a brokerage account. Once the shares arrived in the monastery's account, Sister MT completed a sale. By gifting the shares to the monastery, rather than selling the shares himself to make a cash gift, he avoided paying capital gains tax on the stock sale. And again, he was able to be more generous than he could by dipping into his checking account to make a gift.

Do you have a tax-wise giving strategy to share? Or would you like to learn more about these methods? Let's talk! [Ruth Roland; 719-355-1633 or roland@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:roland@benethillmonastery.org)



Sister Evangeline's Book Signing in Antonito, CO

By Sister Evangeline Salazar, OSB



Sister Evangeline Salazar, OSB (seated) signs copies of her book, [ON THE BORDER: The Way of the Cross](#) on July 4th weekend in Antonito.

During this year's Fourth of July weekend, I returned to my hometown and I was reminded of my "long ago dream."

The purpose of my visit to Antonito was to advance the sale of a book I had recently written, [ON THE BORDER: The Way of the Cross](#). I was moved to tears as each beautiful person came forward to have me sign a book. My memories danced in my heart as I recalled the love we shared, how we played, studied, prayed, danced, explored, and cried together.

Antonito has always been a small town where people know one another, work together, help each other out, and welcome back the prodigal. I was overwhelmed by the hugs and kisses I received from the young and the old, by persons I remembered and others whom I had long forgotten, by relatives, by classmates and by students. [Sister Rose Ann](#) and I were wined and dined. My niece, Agustina Jansen, her cousins, Wade George and Jose presented us with rooms at the Steam Train Hotel and a concert by the river. Even the mosquitoes were active on that blessed day and night.

It is impossible to put into words my gratitude and thanks to all the beautiful and wonderful people like Mary Alice Trujillo and Cletus Perea for helping with the book sale, and to Janet Dupont and Kathy Salazar for the delicious meal they prepared, and to Father Sergio Robles for helping advertise and providing space at Our Lady of Guadalupe/St. Augustine Parish. It was a great experience, and I was blessed to be among the welcoming citizens of my hometown.

OUR TOWN is a metatheatrical three-act play by Thornton Wilder. It was published in 1939, the year I was born. It tells the story of a fictional small town between 1901 and 1913 through the everyday lives of its citizens. After reading the story as a high school assignment, I fell in love with my hometown of Antonito, Colorado and I promised I would someday write a story about the people I loved.

Memorial Day

By Barbara Lynette, Communications Assistant

This year on Memorial Day, I was able to join the Benet Hill Sisters at [St. Benedict's Cemetery](#) for their annual service of prayers and songs honoring [those who are buried in this holy place](#). Before the service began, I had an opportunity to visit the grave of my friend, and I observed others doing the same at their loved ones' graves. Many of us brought flowering annuals which were planted throughout the grounds at the end of the service. I was grateful to be part of this lovely Memorial Day observance. And I miss many of the sisters I have known throughout the years who rest in this sacred ground.



"New day, new hopes, new life!" -Lailah Gifty Akita

Columbarium Information



In 2019, our community decided to expand St. Benedict Cemetery with a [Columbarium Garden](https://benethillmonastery.org/columbarium/). The first phase of our project is complete. We now have two attractive walls with a capacity of 68 niches. We are taking formal requests from anyone associated with Benet Hill and wanting to be buried on these holy grounds within our sacred forest. If interested, please go to our website and see '[Columbarium](https://benethillmonastery.org/columbarium/)' listed as the first item on our drop down menu under the 'About Us' tab. All the documents are available on this page. <https://benethillmonastery.org/columbarium/>

For more information, call [Sister MT Summers](mailto:info@benethillmonastery.org) at 719-355-1616. Please note that we have more details available upon inquiry.

Much gratitude to all the sisters and staff who contribute photos, articles and proofreading/editing for each edition of [The Review](#).

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Sisters' Thrift & Boutique Celebrates Ninth Anniversary in September

By Shari Middlemist, Senior Manager

Since reopening a year ago in May 2020, we have been thriving here at [Sisters' Thrift & Boutique](#)! Customers have been happy to return shopping and now that vaccinations are plentiful, we have a "new" normal.

The boutique is approaching its ninth anniversary in September, and we continue to be blessed with a wonderful staff and volunteers. Donations are flowing in and customers are becoming weekly and even daily friends of the boutique. We often hear how much everyone appreciates the displays and carefully chosen merchandise. Manger Theresa Maez commented recently, "*It's a wonderful environment here and great that we are helping to recycle items that would otherwise have been thrown away.*" Her husband, Cy helps us twice a week to take the items we cannot use to another recycling facility. It is wonderful to keep a positive flow, help people find quality items they need for a bargain price, help the environment, and provide a friendly, fun shopping experience!



L to R: Theresa Maez, Joyce Wolfert and Rebecca Ann Cornell

Thank you for supporting our [boutique](#)!
We look forward to seeing all of our customers.

Store Hours:

Mon. - Fri.: 10:00 am - 5:30 pm
Saturdays: 10:00am - 4:00 pm



8674 N. Union Blvd.
Next to Safeway

Phone: 719-282-0316



Cy Maez

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The Monastery is situated in the woodland setting of the Black Forest
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