

2021

Gratitude Report



Letter from the Prioress

2021: Hope through challenges and gratitude **Treasurer** Report

Dear Friends,

For many of us, 2021 changed everything. On January 6th we watched in horror as our democracy was tested, streamed live on TV and on social media. Later, we witnessed with relief the peaceful transfer of power at the inauguration of our 46th President where an inspiring, truth-telling Amanda Gorman reminded us of our resilience: "We will not be turned around or interrupted by intimidation because we know our inaction and inertia will be the inheritance of the next generation. Our blunders become their burdens. But one thing is certain: If we merge mercy with might, and might with right, then love becomes our legacy and change our children's birthright." With these words, the terrifying challenge to democracy began to feel more like hope.

Covid vaccinations became widely available, giving hope after millions of deaths worldwide. We rejoiced when restrictions to our usual routines were lifted, and we were able to welcome the public back to worship beginning on Pentecost Sunday. We reopened our doors wide with Benedictine hospitality. We also said good-by to Sister Charlotte Redpath, OSB who died on April 20, 2021.

Life changed for the sisters as we looked to the next thirty years, grounded in our faith in the Divine and belief in the goodness and commitment of our oblates, staff, friends and allies. We sharpened and clarified our "North Star" – the charism, values, and vision that tethers us to our Bridging to the Future Plan around technology, shared leadership, radical inclusivity, stewardship of resources, daily operations, and 21st century monasticism.

All this led to a profound personal challenge when I was elected on June 12 and installed as the 7th Prioress on August 15. On that day, my sisters called me to servant leadership and Bishops Golka and Hanifen charged me with John O'Donohue's A Blessing for Leaders which ends with these words: "May leadership be for you a true adventure of growth." Oh no - more challenge! I am thankful for all your prayers and support which turns leadership challenges into hope.

As abundant generosity poured in from our many family members, friends, and donors, our gratitude also yielded abundant hope in the future. You inspired us to celebrate a "campaign of thankfulness" in October and November. Our Advent "Waiting Tree" became a living witness of hope, promise, and love as you returned the Divine Shepherdess® Christmas 2021 ornaments with your prayer intentions. We were so honored to receive your heartfelt messages.

The stories on the following pages bring to life our blessed experience of your presence in our lives.

It is with soul-felt appreciation that I say thank you and bless you!

Sister Marie Therese "MT" Summers. OSB

S. Main There Summers DB Prioress



The year 2021 presented blessings and challenges in the financial experiences for the community.

- As the new treasurer, I was deeply touched by the continuous generosity of our donors throughout 2021. "Thank you" seems small for the magnanimousness of your giving.
- Sanctuary of Peace progressed slower than expected due to the broken supply chains for necessary items to complete the infrastructure. We are grateful to Vincent Crowder for his expertise as a project manager and builder.
- Like most Americans, we too benefited from the stimulus checks that each sister received.
- The Sisters' Thrift and Boutique and the Benet Gift Shop at the Monastery thrived during 2021. We are so grateful to Sister Lucile for her dedication to the Gift Shop and equally grateful for all the volunteers who serve at the Boutique and our superb managers.
- The increase of students in the Global Spiritual Direction Program was an additional blessing to the bottom line during 2021.
- No surprise to anyone, the "realized and unrealized gain" from our investments was down compared to 2020.
- While we deeply miss our employees who retired, their leaving was the impetus for evaluating the cost benefits between hiring and outsourcing. We experienced a decrease in related expenses.
- We decided to sell Benedicta, our final property on Chelton Road. The sale closed at the end of December. Though the sale challenged us in our practice of nonattachment, it was also a blessing.

Respectfully with gratitude,

S. Anne Madeleine Brost, OSB

Sister Anne Madeleine Brost, OSB Treasurer





Oblate Profile

FUTURING TEAM

Oblate Advisory & Action Team

MEMBER PROFILE

Aram Haroutunian, OblSB

As I look back over the past year, my first as an oblate, three things come to mind as I reflect on my experience as a Benedictine oblate of Benet Hill.

First, as part of the Futuring Team, I was struck by the groundbreaking work that has been done, and the incredible foresight, wisdom, and courage of the sisters to envision a future after they're gone. It takes courage to look at your own mortality; but perhaps even more so to be willing to allow others in, giving weight to new voices not part of the inner community of sisters they've come to know and trust all their lives. Yet this is what they've done and are doing, as they invite oblates like me to discern with them and have a voice in various community meetings. As one who works in Catholic healthcare, I rub shoulders with many sisters and brothers from other religious orders, and I can tell you: few, if any, have done the kind of visioning, transitional work that this community of brave women has done. It humbles and astounds me.

Secondly, I've been struck by how alive and present I feel when I'm among the sisters. There is truly something life-giving being around a community that has practiced the Benedictine way in the crucible of community for many years. They are not perfect and will be the first to say it. But they give me a pattern and a pathway for learning how to dialogue and work through disagreements and differences. And in this contentious and divided world in which we live, I've become convinced the Benedictine way, as laid out in the Rule, is what our world truly needs!

Finally, a recent experience at a workday in the forest had a deep impact on me. Five of us were assigned to rake the debris (mostly old pine needles) from the labyrinth. We did it from Nine to Noon. At times I didn't

think we'd be able to finish. It was hard work: not only the raking, but carrying it all outside the perimeter, forming giant slash piles. But we did it, and when we finished, I was utterly spent, and sat down in the center of the labyrinth. One of the long-time volunteers smiled and chuckled a bit, and said, "This is nothing! Usually, Sister Jan has us out here all day!" In that moment I was once again struck afresh by something I've long heard and known: that is, how hard the sisters work (indeed, ora et labora) even as they are not getting any younger. A big reason I wanted to become an oblate is because they need us to come alongside them: to listen, to discern the community needs, and to work with them. I feel honored to be able to do this.



Jerry O'Hare, OblSB

Serving on the Benet Hill Monastery Oblate Advisory and Action Team (OAAT) has been an amazing adventure and a humbling honor. My teammates are some of the most spiritual, committed "seekers" I've ever worked with. Together we pray for each other, for BHM, and our fellow oblates. We pray that God will "bring to perfection" everything we do.

Together we discerned the issues, direction, and future of our oblate community. Through this process, the concept of oblate "covenant groups" began to take shape and eventually became reality. Oblates who have longed to do "something more, something deeper" with their oblation now have options to do just that....and serve Benet Hill Monastery at the same time!

We also discerned a name change for the Oblate Advisory
Team when we realized that while giving advice can be a
wonderful hobby, committing to "action" was where the Spirit
was leading us. So "Action" was inserted into the name, and
action become part of our process. Soon after, we were asked
to take on a more active role in the formation of new oblates—
teaching or assisting the sisters with specific topics—and into
action we went! It has been humbling to see how hard the
sisters worked to ensure that oblate formation honored
our new oblates and honored our God.

So as with any Benedictine oblate, the OAAT members are constantly in the "learning new things" mode every day. We learn, we do, and the next day we get up and do it all over again. What a great adventure—what a great team!



Learn more about
Covenant Groups and
Oblate Formation:
sclare@benethillmonastery.org





Naomi Pryde (Thailand)

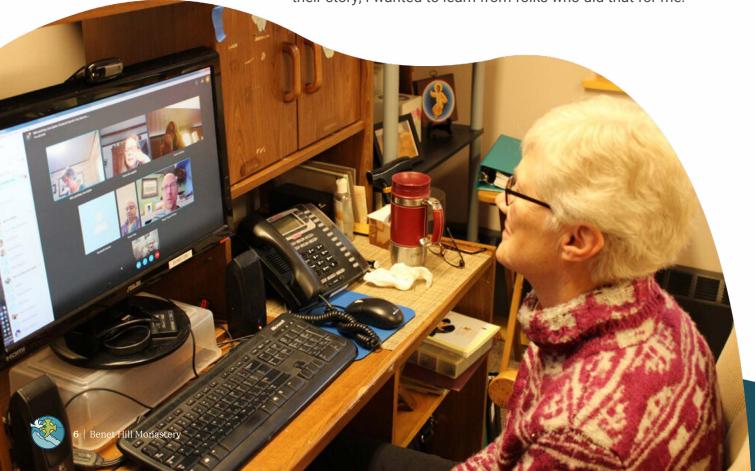
The Global Online Benedictine Spiritual Direction Program has been transformational in my life. The opportunity to study came at a time in my life when my faith was going through a major upheaval. From a personal perspective, the program has been an anchor to God, guiding me to return to my heart knowledge and listening to the whispers of Divine love, at a time when all the head knowledge of the past had begun to unravel.

Throughout the program, I have fallen deeper in love with God and as a result, have been given the courage to begin to delve into healing parts of myself that I have pushed away for far too long. As I begin to meet with directees, the program has provided me with the resources, loving encouragement and guidance I have needed to hold space to be a compassionate Soul friend to many. I am excited about being part of this ministry that has so significantly changed my life.

Tyler Hill (Colorado)

As I was searching for a spiritual direction program, I was curious if there would be one out there where I could be freely and fully myself. To be honest I was not sure if my spiritual background, collection of tattoos, and eccentric personality would fit well in any spiritual direction training, let alone in a Catholic monastery.

In my admissions interview at Benet Hill, in true Benedictine fashion, I was welcomed with honest and authentic hospitality. It was through this interview that I knew, without a doubt, this is the program I wanted to be in. If I was going to be a director who held sacred space for others to be themselves and find God in their story, I wanted to learn from folks who did that for me.



Ministries: Global Online Benedictine Spiritual Director Training & Certification

Larry Taylor (Ohio)

I've taken a ton of courses, seminars, and study programs as an ordained minister, chaplain, life coach, faculty member and pastoral counselor. I have never taken any training anywhere that matches this program. I entered simply because I wanted to grow spiritually, and I've experienced an unprecedented depth of spiritual growth over the last two years beyond anything I could have imagined. I know and love God more deeply than ever. My connection with my true being, with other people, and with creation has broadened considerably. I am discovering the Holy Spirit flowing through me as I walk with others along their spiritual journeys. This

Holy Spirit flowing through me as I walk with others along their spiritual journeys. The time has been profound and beautiful.

Caitlin Douglas (Australia)

I wondered how a disparate group of individuals scattered around the globe would achieve any meaningful interactions online, but our classes quickly turned into a space of deep transformation. As our course material became part of our lives and often the starting point for some very real and painful personal unravelling, our tight knit learning community became a much-loved space of wisdom, safety, and accompaniment.



Mary Colleen and Dana have crafted a course that has formed us, intellectually, experientially, and concretely, into being the deep listeners we are called to be in the world. They have expertly called out our gifts and loved us well. Now we are on the cusp of being commissioned and sent out to be of service in the world. Our entire cohort has realized we are on a lifelong path of learning and formation; we're grateful to have started in such a life affirming way in this course.

Ministries: House Church, Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, Spiritual Direction, and Retreats

hen the sisters relocated to Benet Lane in 2009, Sisters Therese O'Grady and Susan Matarrese stayed behind at Benedictus House to offer ministries. In 2021, the house was sold but the ministries continue.

Molly Mulligan

Following in the footsteps of early Christians who met in homes, I am grateful to experience a "house church" community. Meeting twice a month, we read reflections and share how our lives, joys, struggles, and faith intersect. The reflections expose me to the faithful of many rich traditions, inviting me to consider my faith actively and authentically. Through sharing and listening with friends, we embrace the struggle and the joy. Some Sundays I bring tears, sometimes laughter. Breaking bread together with this challenging and supportive community transforms my understanding of what it means to be an active, faithful, and strong feminine presence on this beautiful and aching planet.

Rose Trigg, OblSB

I have been blessed by Benet Hill's ministries, possibly most richly by our Lectio Divina group, lovingly known to us as "Lectio Ladies." Formed more than a dozen years ago, our small group is diverse in background, beliefs, and life experiences. We are held together in a close bond of sisterhood, all seekers on a spiritual journey with much to learn from one another. Observing the time-honored practice of "divine reading," once reserved by monastics for reading Scripture, we experiment with bridging to the present day by sharing divine readings from contemporary poets, spiritual leaders or from inspiring writers who challenge us to find the sacred in our everyday lives. In our weekly gatherings, sharing our own interpretations during this ancient but modern lectio has formed our closely-knit family. We celebrate with one another in our joys and uphold each other in our sorrows. Our practice is a living example love in action. Thank you to our Benedictine sisters.

†

Centering Prayer Practice groups occur each Tuesday, 10 – 11 am at the monastery, each Wednesday, 9 – 10 am at Faith Presbyterian Church (1529 N Circle Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80909), and the first Saturday of each month, 9 am – 12 pm at the monastery. "Centering Prayer fosters a whole different attitude towards one's feelings; it puts them in a different frame of reference."

- Thomas Keating

Janie Blind

My Centering Prayer experience began with a Saturday morning workshop years ago. I remember wondering how I would ever be able to sit in silence for 20 minutes and let God speak to me. Since that day I have felt God calling me to pray in silence twice a day. I have been supported by my Wednesday morning group to persevere in my practice and to let go of my thoughts, desires and words, even painful ones that I have held on to for years. We include Lectio Divina in our morning practice by reading Nan Merrill's Psalms for Praying. By sharing a word or phrase that touched us in the reading, we grow in our understanding of God's love for us. I am blessed to participate in this group and so thankful for the love and support of the sisters.

Mark Weaver

Over the years I have participated in various forms of spiritual direction. I can testify that it has been and is an essential part of my spiritual health. We all need a person who is in our corner both listening to the participant and to the Holy Spirit. One of my favorite traits of a good spiritual director is that they are less "directive"...you should do this or that... than they simply ask a lot of really great questions that help lead me to discover what God is already up to in my heart and mind. It's like a treasure hunt!

Harley Fisher

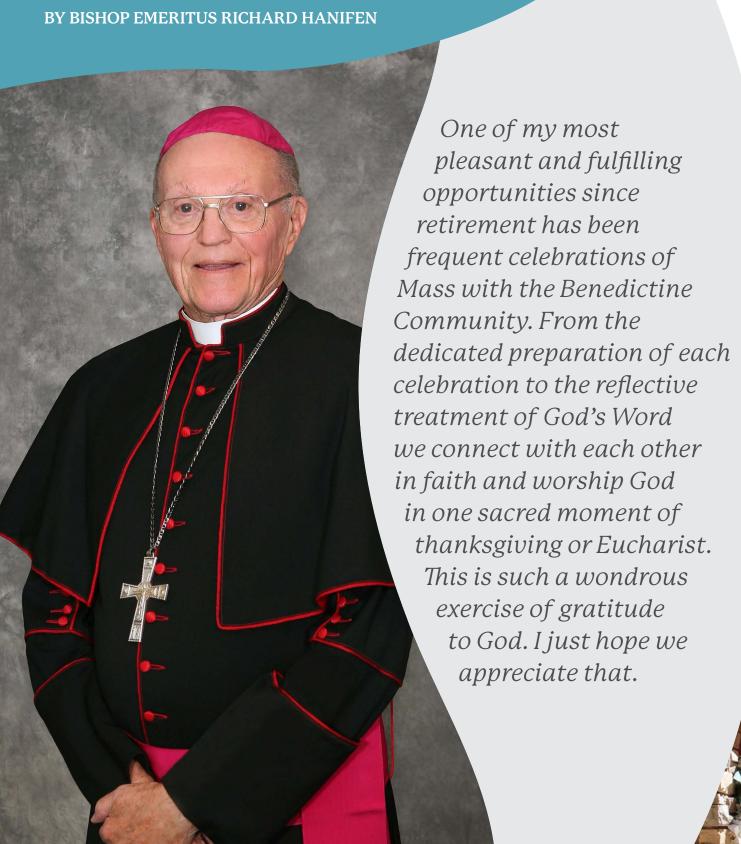
I arranged a retreat for a small group of seven at Benet Hill in late 2021 when many locations were still closed. This was our first time there, and we found the accommodations suited our needs quite well and the environment was quiet and peaceful. Simply put, it was a lovely experience, the sisters we met were friendly, and we were grateful for their Benedictine hospitality. We found that Benet Hill perfectly suited us; we are scheduled for another retreat in the Fall, 2022.



To inquire about spiritual direction (companioning), stherese@benethillmonastery.org

To inquire about retreats smary@benethillmonastery.org

Ministries: Sunday Assembly





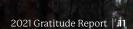
As our family reflects on the past year since our mother Toni Lohman's Celebration of Life, we continue to find comfort in the beautiful and sacred memories that were created that day. We are eternally grateful to the sisters and staff of Benet Hill Monastery for the gentle guidance and support in fulfilling our mom's last wishes. These included her family's involvement in the Mass and music, and a reception. Benet Hill Monastery allowed a videographer to memorialize the celebration and opened their dining room and porch to provide the perfect place to enjoy the magnificent view, the catered lunch, and to share memories.

Our parents planned years ago to be buried at Benet Hill Monastery and on August 6th both were interred together. Sister Clare shared in the most loving way that now they both would be hugged by the earth for eternity. Benet Hill Monastery provided the perfect environment to celebrate our mother's life and continues to be the most peaceful place to visit the grave site of our parents. We are grateful.

- The Children of Orval and Antoinette (Toni) Lohman, including Benet Hill Academy Alumnae Mary Ellen (Lohman) Simmons ('71) and Ann (Lohman) Rosenow ('74)



To learn more about the columbarium, sclare@benethillmonastery.org



Sisters' Thrift & Boutique and Benet Gifts

A steady supply of volunteer hours and donated goods fueled the success of the monastery's two retail operations in 2021. The total of In Kind Goods and Services were valued at an astonishing \$267,316! This includes 3,784.25 of volunteer hours donated to the Boutique. In November, we honored Joan Lowe with the St. Benedict Award for her extraordinary service there. With typical humility, Joanie said "While giving time to help the sisters, I have made use of my time. I enjoy the customers, managers, and other volunteers. Volunteering at Sisters' Thrift & Boutique has truly been a blessing."

Thank you to Sister Lucile for the countless handcrafted plates of cookies, cinnamon buns, and jars of jelly for the Boutique and Gift Shop. And a special thanks to Shari Middlemist who stepped in to manage Benet Gifts in addition to her role at the Boutique.

Like the Boutique on Facebook! For information on donating goods or volunteer services,

(719) 282-0316 or boutique@benethillmonastery.org

On June 19, 2021, the sisters celebrated the groundbreaking for a co-housing intentional community of residents. The project is grounded in Benedictine values of hope, hospitality, and care for creation. When completed, the community will consist of twenty-six energy efficient patio homes on five acres, nestled among forty-five acres of pine forest just across Benet Lane from the monastery. The project is unique

and visionary.

The project plan has been sorely tested but remains intact. From the outset, the General Contractor and Project Manager have juggled timeline disruptions due to pandemic-related supply chain issues and labor shortages. The devastating Marshall Fire in Boulder County on December 30 exacerbated these issues. However, as highlighted by the increase in the Construction in Progress on the 2021 Statement of Financial Position, the project has gained ground. Project Manager Vincent Crowder reports that he has received deposits on close to half of the homes. At a recent community meeting, the sisters reflected on how God has been faithfully present at every critical decision point, providing unexpected answers to unanticipated problems. God is good!



Residential

Community

Sanctuary of Peace





SISTETS Thrift & Boutique

Audited Financial Statement of Financial Position (For year end Dec. 31, 2021, with Comparative Amounts for 2020)

Increased cash to pay infrastructure construction costs of Sanctuary of Peace (Page 13)

> Liquidated investments to increase cash for Sanctuary of Peace (Page 13)

Began construction on Sanctuary of Peace June, 2021 (Page 13)

Assets	(Reviewed)	(Audited) 2020
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,494,728	\$247,108
Cash - donor restricted	\$3,156	\$26,075
Accounts receivable	\$3,923	
Prepaid expenses	\$38,548	\$28,290
Retail inventory	\$45,707	\$49,278
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$1,586,062	\$350,751
INVESTMENTS:		
Designated for specific purposes	\$4,391,379	\$5,985,649
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	\$4,391,379	\$5,985,649
OTHER ASSETS:	-	
Construction in progress	\$1,343,410	\$244,698
Contributions receivable	\$78,152	\$70,101
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	\$1,421,562	\$314,799
PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT, net:	\$5,115,178	\$5,407,057
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$12,514,181	\$12,058,256

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities & Net Assets		
CURRENT LIABILITIES: Accounts payable & accrued liabilities Deferred revenue Refundable advance TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$55,452 \$308,482 \$62,559 \$426,493	\$54,512 \$108,336 \$70,101 \$232,949
NET ASSETS:		
Without donor restrictions		
Current operaring fund	\$104,400	\$81,163
Board designated:		
Plant fund	\$5,115,178	\$5,407,057
Continuing care fund	\$3,680,588	\$3,166,085
Education fund	\$343,819	\$364,068
Future fund	\$1,863,907	\$1,800,634
Mission outreach fund	\$853,882	\$824,661
Contingency fund	\$122,758	\$155,564
Total Net Assts without donor restrictions	\$12,084,532	\$11,799,232
With donor restrictions:	\$3,156	\$26,075
Total net assets	\$12,087,688	\$11,825,307
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$12,514,181	\$12,058,256

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

Net Assets

(For year end Dec. 31, 2021, with Comparative Amounts for 2020)

Revenue	Without Donor Restrictons	With Donor Restrictons	(Reviewed) 2021 Totals	(Audited) 2020 Totals
Contributions	\$497,451	\$15,000	\$494,451	\$595,464
Gain on disposal of assets	\$463,832	. ,	\$463,832	\$3,465
Retail operations	\$415,595		\$415,595	\$322,955
Sisters' income	\$332,990		\$332,990	\$359,133
Ministry	\$206,367		\$206,367	\$114,568
In-kind donations	\$267,316		\$267,316	\$247,965
Net realized and unrealized gains on investments, net	\$227,432		\$227,432	\$300,965
Interest and dividend income	\$52,318		\$52,318	\$45,457
Miscellaneous income	\$50,746		\$50,746	\$2,587
Property, equipment and investment gifts	\$9,092		\$9,092	
PPP grant				\$14,715
Satisfied program restrictions	\$37,919	(\$37,919)		\$128,642
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,543,058	(\$22,919)	\$2,510,139	\$2,135,916

Net Assets

Closed sale of Benedictus House Dec 30, 2021 for a onetime gain (*Page 8*)

Increased traffic and sales in retail operations as vaccines became available (Page 12)

Expanded online capacity of Global Online ministry (Page 6-7)

Expenses				
Program services				
Facilities	\$605,323		\$605,323	\$557,718
Retail operations	\$596,963		\$596,963	\$289,979
Sisters' direct living expenses	\$536,787		\$536,787	\$555,062
Sponsored ministries	\$179,461		\$179,461	\$200,533
Mission advancement	\$89,495		\$89,495	\$113,839
In-kind				\$253,430
Total program services	\$2,008,029		\$2,008,029	\$1,970,561
Supporting services				
Monetary administration	\$249,729		\$249,729	\$291,860
Total supporting services	\$249,729		\$249,729	\$291,860
Total expenses	\$2,257,758		\$2,257,758	\$2,262,421
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$285,300	(\$22,919)	\$262,381	(\$126,505)
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	\$11,799,232	\$26,075	\$11,825,307	\$11,951,812
	4,,	420,070	\$1.1,0 <u>2</u> 0,007	Ų,×01,012
NET ASSETS, end of year	\$12,084,532	\$3,156	\$12,087,688	\$11,825,307

Thank you to our Generous Donors

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Gratitude Report

For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
It will surely come, it will not delay.

Habakkuk 2:3