



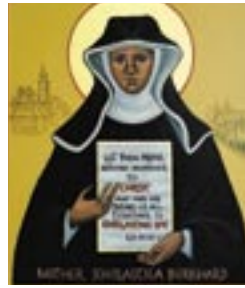
the Mount

150th Anniversary Edition



MOTHER SCHOLASTICA BURKHARD

The philanthropy and generosity of Erie photographer Ed Bernik, of Jim Lynch, Mike Herman, Jamie Potosnak and the design team at fishtank creative, and of The Clinton Press Inc., in Erie, have made this issue of *The Mount* affordable for the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. This anniversary issue of *The Mount* is produced by Tricia Wood DeMarco; designed by artist Chenoa Seay, and edited by Sisters Mary Ann Luke and Ellen Porter. The executive editors are Sister Patricia McGreevy and Kathy Linse, director of communications, Benedictine Sisters of Erie.



On the Cover: This icon of Mother Scholastica Burkhard, the first prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, was written (painted) by Sister Mary Charles McGough, OSB, as a visual representation of the Erie community’s 150th anniversary celebrated with oblates, Saint Benedict Academy alumnae, benefactors and friends from June 23, 2005 to June 25, 2006.

Mother Scholastica was one of five sisters from St. Walburg Abbey in Eichstätt, Bavaria, who—after serving as missionaries for several years in St. Marys, Pa.—answered the call in 1856 to minister to German immigrants in Erie.

Icons are often used as a quiet focus or centering image for prayer. In this impression, a simple representation of the Walburg Abbey in Bavaria above Scholastica’s right shoulder shows the roots of the Erie Benedictine community. The image sketched above Scholastica’s left shoulder represents the sisters’ first East Ninth Street convent—a small frame house adjacent to St. Marys Church in central Erie. The colors used emphasize brown, associated with poverty; gold, which is linked with divine energy; and white, which is frequently identified with purity and illumination.

To pray with this image in front of you, you may wish to read the jubilee prayer written for the 150th anniversary of the Benedictine Sisters in Erie by Sister Mary Ann Luke in February 2005 on the back cover of this issue of *The Mount* magazine.

Erie Bishop Donald W. Trautman will bless the Scholastica icon at the opening of the jubilee year.

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From the Prioress

150th jubilee marks time of blessing, gratitude, and hope



Imagine life in 1856. All of the mass communication tools we now have were nonexistent. It may have taken weeks, months, or even years before people knew of changes in government or society that would impact their everyday lives.

Throughout Europe, one word of information, however, was spreading: America. Millions left their homelands, risking all for the promise of a better life in a very new country, itself on the verge of civil war.

Now imagine being one of a community of German women monastics, living a fully cloistered life to the rhythm of the Rule of St. Benedict, praying with your sisters, working hard beside each other in heavy habit, privileged to be educated and to educate, to have access to printed Scripture, paper and pen.

And when called to leave behind all that had been familiar—to venture into a harsh and rapidly changing world with almost no money, connections or support—a handful of these young, German-speaking nuns, under the leadership of Mother Benedicta Riepp, somehow mustered the faith to cross the Atlantic ocean from their home of St. Walburg Abbey in Eichstätt, Bavaria. Their call? To help educate and acclimate new German immigrants in St. Marys, Pa.

Only five years after first coming to the United States, the young nuns found the courage to meet yet another call to ministry, and, in 1856, six sisters climbed aboard a buckboard wagon to travel to Erie, Pa., to again answer the call to educate and guide German immigrants. They were called to live in the same poverty as those to whom they were sent.

The sisters settled in a small frame house on East Ninth Street, adjacent to St. Marys Church. Sister Scholastica Burkhard—whose icon graces the cover of this magazine—was appointed to be the prioress of this first community of women religious in Erie.

Through the years, the sisters dared again and again, out of lives centered in prayer and community, to minister to those in need, especially women and children. Serving as administrators and educators in both urban and rural Erie Diocesan schools, feeding the poor, providing opportunities for professional, spiritual and cultural growth, speaking out for peace and against injustice—the dynamism of the Benedictine charism has allowed us always to find new ways to minister to the new needs constantly appearing.

Now, 150 years later, we take time during our jubilee year for gratitude and for hope, recognizing our blessings, most particularly the blessing of you—our benefactors and friends, our oblates, volunteers and supporters, our former students and current guests and seekers. Companioned by one another, we embrace this time, our time, as holy. We give our lives together as gift to the Church, yesterday, today, and into the next 150 years. It is a time of God's favor—jubilee time.

Christine Vladimiroff, OSB

Prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie

PRIORESSES REFLECT ON HISTORY AND COMMUNITY



*Sister Mary Margaret Kraus
Prioress 1964–1978
Currently serves as a
volunteer official visitor
for the Pennsylvania
Prison Society.*

“When I entered the community in 1939, I never thought that I would be doing anything other than teaching school as long as I could and then working within the community—we didn’t have options at that time for other ministries. Our life was very strict and heavily scheduled. We didn’t ever leave our motherhouse alone. Most of our sisters taught at St. Marys School right next to the convent on East Ninth Street. Other sisters did housework, starched and pleated coifs for the habits we wore, and made altar breads.

“We had very little visiting. My family lived half a block away, but they could come in only one Sunday a month to visit from 2 to 4 in the afternoon—it is very different now. In the very early years, the sisters chanted all the prayers in German; when I entered it was in Latin until the 1960s when it changed to English, and that made a big difference in understanding the psalms more easily.

“The two things that held us together while we were going through those years of change after the Vatican Council were definitely our prayer life and living together in community. Even though some had very diverse ideas about where and how to live, at the present time most of us live here at Mount St. Benedict. Community prayer and liturgy have always been the glue holding us all together.

“During the changes in the 1960s, the older sisters had the grace to accept the ideas of the younger people, and the younger people were inspired by that. They also had the courage to try different things and

know that they had the support of the community. Many firsts, such as founding the Pax Center, were done with the prayers of the community behind the effort—the way it still is today. Benedict’s Rule encourages great moderation, but Benedict also allows for, and even encourages, change if the time and place warrant it.

“Moving to this new monastery opened up so many things for us: an infirmary for the sick and elderly of our community, a chapel, guest rooms and dining room, retreat programs. Having moved out here has opened up the community to allow people to be a deeper part of our lives and to join in with us. Now the monastery is a center of spirituality and hospitality.”



*Sister Joan Chittister
Prioress 1978–1990
Best-selling author,
well-known national
and international lecturer.*

“Benedictine peace is peace that starts with me, that proves to me, that is a sign to me, that I am to be peacemaker, peacegiver, peacedoer in the world in which I live. Peace, or pax, is the fundamental, the ancient motto, of Benedictine life. You cannot have internal peace when there is no external peace. When I’m not contributing to the peace of the order around me ... when I make no contribution to the organization of civilization itself, then my internal peace is a false peace.

“Benedictines take a vow of stability; that means that we stay not only in the monastery where we make our profession, we stay in the area where that monastery is—that area becomes as much our monastery as the building itself. That community is a community for us, too.

“Some things changed clearly, even perhaps drastically, after Vatican II, but some things didn’t

change at all—our commitment to community life, communal prayer, to listening to one another. Clearly though, we began to move away from a very static view of women, of depersonalization, and move toward the whole notion that individuals have individual gifts, that they make a community stronger, not weaker, that we don't have to have uniformity and conformity to have community. We could not continue to throw away half of the human resources in the world by ignoring or not allowing the contributions of women. Negative spirituality movements began to be questioned—those movements were based on what you had to give up in the world, rather than on what you develop in the world.”

others. We must take that spirit, that love of God, that love of creation, that urge to make things better, to other people—it's not meant to be just for us.”



*Sister Christine Vladimiroff
Prioress 1998–present
President of the Leadership
Conference of Women
Religious, former CEO and
president of Second Harvest
Food Bank Network.*



*Sister Phyllis Schleicher
Prioress 1990–1998
Currently co-director of
Catholic Rural Ministry
serving 15 parishes in
Potter and McKean counties.*

“The Rule of Benedict is actually the rule of life, and in that Rule he gives us a path to life. The very first word of the Rule of Benedict is, “Listen,” and we listen with the ear of our hearts. Discernment, through prayer and reflection, comes out of that.

“In the last 150 years, this community has attracted women with very generous hearts, women who are willing to be poured out in the work of the church and the service of others, and it continues to do so. They live a life of faithfulness, which is a matter of dailiness. Faith is not in big deeds, but it is a constancy, a love that excludes no one.

“At the time of our centennial in 1956 we were primarily educators, but after Vatican II, through prayer, discernment, and studying the Rule, sisters saw other needs outside of the classroom and sought new ministries. We are still educating in our various ministries, but we are reaching out in a very different way.

“Our life is a communal search for God. Only if our search for God is authentic in our prayer life and our service to one another, dare we raise our voices for justice and peace in our world. We must live the message first and live an alternate lifestyle based in the Gospel.

“In rural ministry, we make our charism, our life, our way of prayer, known to the people through opportunities for spiritual enrichment and prayer in their own area. Just as in the inner city, we bring beauty, art, and education. We feed the hungry and assist the poor—particularly women and children—in every way possible, including spiritual nourishment.

“We are living in a post-modern era, so we all need to rearticulate our charism and our purpose in a way that makes sense to the people who are living today, who see the violence in our world, who see the need for people to be lifted up out of poverty. Our lives need to have significance and meaning in this 21st century.

“We are formed, we are refreshed, we are enlivened, through our prayer and community living. But it's not for ourselves. We must reach out to

“Our benefactors enable our good work to go on, through us and through the women who will come after us. They continue to make this monastery a center where people who are hungry for the spiritual nourishment in life can come and will be welcomed as Christ.”

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These excerpts are taken from extensive interviews with the four living prioresses who have led the Benedictine Sisters of Erie during the last 41 years. The interviews are part of a new video celebrating the sisters' 150th anniversary, portions of which can be viewed at ErieBenedictines.org.
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HISTORIC TIMELINE of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie



1856 Mother Benedicta Riepp brings five sisters to Erie from St. Marys, Pa., to teach the children of German immigrants, establishing the first community of women religious in the Erie area. Tuition is 10 cents a week. Sister Scholastica Burkhard is appointed superior of the new community.

1859 Three sisters are sent from Erie to establish a community in Covington, Ky. The community in Erie becomes independent and numbers 15.

1860 A new, three-story convent is built at 327 East Ninth St., part of which houses St. Mary's parish school.

1861 Three Erie sisters travel to Chicago to establish a community there.

1868 The Benedictine Sisters of Erie becomes a corporate institution.

1869 The first St. Benedict Academy boarding school for girls opens in a one-and-a-half-story, frame building just east of the convent. Tuition is \$1 a month.

1874 A chapel is built for the sisters at 345 East Ninth St.

1875 The strict rule of clausura, or enclosure, is lifted so that sisters can teach in surrounding areas. Four sisters leave the Erie convent to teach at St. Joseph's in Oil City, Pa., where a Benedictine presence continues until 1981. Over the years, small groups of sisters regularly administer and teach at schools throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and as far as Colorado and Mexico.

1877 Benedictine Sisters from Erie begin teaching at Immaculate Conception's primary school in Clarion, Pa., until the sisters' "mission" there is closed in 1991.

1880 The Benedictine Sisters of Erie adopt their first constitution.

1881 Mother Scholastica dies.

1890 A new, four-story St. Benedict Academy is built as an addition at 345 East Ninth St.

1892 Seven Erie Benedictine sisters begin teaching at St. Scholastica Academy, Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's elementary schools in Sharon, Pa. These schools remained open until 1984 and 1995 respectively.

1904 Sisters begin to teach at St. Boniface School in Hammett, Pa. The sisters minister there until 1938, and again from 1988 until 1994.

1906 The sisters purchase of a 120-acre farm on East Lake Road in Harborcreek Township, east of the city of Erie for \$11,500, the site of today's monastery.

1908 The sisters resume recitation of the Divine Office, or traditional, daily Benedictine prayer. Rome had denied them permission to do so after coming to the United States because they were not cloistered.

1919 Benedictine Sisters of Erie begin to attend college in order to "keep abreast of the educational movement of the time."

1917 The sisters' style of headdress changes.

1920 St. Benedict Academy, which now includes "eight grammar grades and a three-year commercial course," adds three science laboratories, a new library, and new furniture. Erie sisters begin to teach at St. Michaels in Fryburg, Pa., and continue to do so until 1982.

1923 A four-year high-school program is introduced and accredited at St. Benedict Academy. Teaching sisters begin to earn state certification.



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1929 Benedictine Sisters of Erie join the national Congregation of St. Scholastica, whose role is to help monastery members maintain their spritual heritage and external Benedictine Charism.

1930 Camp Glinodo, a summer camp for girls, is established. Four new cottages are built for campers. The original brick farmhouse is converted to a recreation and dining hall. The name Glinodo came from a mix of letters in the Latin version of the Benedictine motto, "In Omnibus Glorificetur Deus."

1945 Sisters begin teaching at St. Stephen's School in Oil City, where they remain until 1994.

1946 Sisters begin teaching at St. Gregory School and High School in North East, Pa. The high school closes in 1968. Benedictine presence continues until 2004.

1948 Sisters hold the first of many "summer festivals" which continue until 1989.

1954 Vows are professed in English for the first time.

1955 The new St. Benedict Academy opens at 330 East 10th St.

1956 Oblate program opens to people seeking a deeper spiritual life.

1957 Sisters begin teaching at Mount Calvary School in Erie and continue to do so until 1984.

1962 Pope John XXIII convenes the Second Vatican Council, which continues through 1965. Erie Benedictines begin teaching at Venango Christian High School in Oil City, Pa., and continue to do so until 1980.

1964 Sisters begin to recite the Divine Office, or daily prayers, in English. A building fund is begun for the new

Mount St. Benedict Monastery on East Lake Road. Sisters begin teaching at Kennedy Christian High School in Hermitage, Pa., where they stay until 1979, and again in 1990-91.

1965 Erie Benedictines begin Head Start program. Sisters are permitted to visit their families at home. Sisters begin printing *The Benedictine Sister* to acquaint the lay community with the activities of the sisters.

1966 Experimentation with modified habits begins. "Sisters '66," a fundraising musical program is performed in Erie and in mission areas. It appears nationally on the Ed Sullivan Show.

1967 Sisters have the option to return to their baptismal names.

1969 St. Benedict Child Development Center is founded.

1970 The sisters move to Mount St. Benedict Monastery and the new chapel is dedicated. The sisters agree that each member be allowed to choose her mode of dress. The first St. Benedict Head Start program began at 345 East Ninth St. in Erie.

1971 Timberlodge is built at Camp Glinodo.

1972 An open placement policy for ministry is begun. Pax Center, A Christian Center for Nonviolence, moves to 345 East Ninth St.

1973 Sisters are given the option of living in large- or small-group houses. A quarterly newsletter, *The Mount*, reaches out to the broader community.

1974 The Pax Center in downtown Erie begins a soup kitchen. Benet Press begins operating at the Mount and continues until 2000.



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1975 The community sponsors two Vietnamese families and houses them for a year in two remodeled cabins at Camp Glinodo.

1978 \$100 per month and 10 percent of the proceeds from two annual fundraisers are allocated to Pax Christi, an international peace organization.

1979 The community adopts a corporate commitment to nuclear disarmament. The East Coast Migrant Head Start program occupies a portion of the ground floor of the Monastery.

1980 Individual sisters are enabled to discern their own ministries as part of a yearly process. Benedictines for Peace is formed—an outgrowth of a peace demonstration earlier in the year at the Pentagon by members of the Federation of St. Scholastica. The community develops *That God May Be Glorified*, a new five-week arrangement of the Psalms for the Liturgy of the Hours. The name of Camp Glinodo is changed to Glinodo Conference Center.

1981 The first Good Friday Peace Pilgrimage is held—a silent, contemporary Stations of the Cross between Mount St. Benedict and St. Peter’s Cathedral in Erie. The Benetwood Apartment complex for low-and moderate-income elderly residents is built next to the monastery.

1982 Chapter 57, a Benedictine fine arts and gifts shop, is opened at the monastery. The community assumes sponsorship of the Erie Community Food Bank. The monastery begins to provide a variety of spirituality programming for the broader community. Environmental education programs begin to be offered at Glinodo Conference Center. The Benedictine Center for Life Development begins to provide educational and spiritual development programs.

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1983 The first Holy Week Retreat, “Comfort My People,” is held at the monastery. The Emmaus Food Pantry is opened in downtown Erie. The “Spirit of the Seasons” retreat program begins at the monastery. The first Holy Hour for Peace, a special service held periodically at the monastery, begins.

1985 Brother Thomas Bezanson becomes artist-in-residence with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

1986 Ground is broken for a 40-room addition to the monastery.

1987 *A Reader’s Version of the Rule of Saint Benedict in Inclusive Language* is printed. The community votes to declare all properties Nuclear Free Zones.

1988 St. Benedict Academy closes and is renamed St. Benedict Education Center. Sisters take a vow of nonviolence on Pentecost Sunday. The first sanctuary family moves into Casa de Paz, a house in Erie rented for the use of refugees. *The Mount* changes from a newsletter to a magazine format.

1989 The first of three hermitages is completed east of the monastery to provide a setting for silent retreats for both religious and laypeople through the ministry of Listening Point.

1990 Kindermusik classes for children 18 months to 7 years are offered at the monastery.

1991 The Benedictine Sisters of Benet Lake, Wis., merge with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. Stillpoint, a ministry offering contemplative prayer, is begun.

1992 The former motherhouse and academy building at 345 East Ninth St. houses the Alliance for International Monasticism, Benetvision Publishing, Emmaus Ministries, the St. Benedict Child Care and Development Center, the community’s Development Office, and Pax Priory.



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1993 The Erie County Board of Assessment rules that more than 600 tax-exempt organizations be taxed, including many Benedictine ministries. A public campaign is begun to appeal the ruling. The Development and Communications Office is established to promote public awareness and understanding of the vision and ministries of the sisters and to increase funding for the operation of ministries.

1994 Benetvision begins to publish *The Monastic Way*. The Neighborhood Art House begins a summer program and funding is established. The St. Benedict Alumnae Choral sings in Encore '94.

1995 The Neighborhood Art House and the Emmaus Food Pantry move into 201 East 10th St., later dedicated as the Benedicta Riepp Center.

1996 ErieBenedictines.org is posted on the World Wide Web. A housing program for women, Erie Dwellings and Advocacy for Women (DAWN) is established as a collaborative effort among the Erie Benedictines, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwest Pennsylvania, and the Sisters of Mercy. The first Women's History Month art show debuts at the Monastery.

1997 Oblates from Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, commit to membership with Mount St. Benedict. The deed from 327 East Ninth St., where the first motherhouse was located, is given to the sisters from the Diocese of Erie. Glinodo is named as an Earth Force site.

1998 An Easter collection of \$2,500—the only collection taken annually in the Benedictine chapel—is sent to the United States Catholic Conference Office of International Peace and Justice. The Community of Life prayer and intentions program is started at the monastery.

1999 The Benedictine Sisters and Emmaus Ministries buys St. Marys School and auditorium from the Erie Diocese. The facility is renamed the St. Benedict Community Center, a recreational facility for neighborhood and special needs children. Benedictines for Peace initiate "Take Back the Site" prayer vigils at scenes of homicides in Erie and the surrounding communities. Catholic Rural Ministry—a joint project of the Erie-area Benedictine Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, and Sisters of Saint Joseph—is begun for Catholics of Potter and McKean counties in Pennsylvania.

2000 Emmaus Ministries opens Sister Gus' Kid's Café in the former St. Marys School, providing meals, games and recreational activities for low-income children. The Garden of Memories is dedicated and blessed at Mount St. Benedict. The first oblate convocation ceremony is held at the monastery.

2001 The Benedicta Riepp program is begun to provide a temporary membership option for women interested in Benedictine religious life.

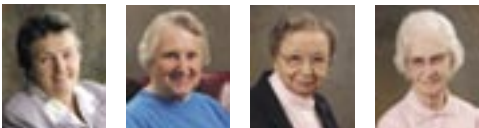
2002 The Bookmark: A Neighborhood Reading and Rap Room as well as The Franklin Terrace Learning Center open at the Franklin Terrace Housing Project in Erie. The Saint Benedict Education Center publishes *Breaking the Cycle of Indignity: Welfare Reform Face-to-Face*. Benedictine Sisters of Erie receive the 2002 United States Catholic Award for furthering the cause of women in the Catholic Church.

2004 Renovation of the monastery chapel and a capital campaign are endorsed by the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

Come share our gratitude and our hope

During our 150th jubilee year of celebration

*"We are Ready, God, to Sing."**



The Benedictine Sisters of Erie gather for a jubilee photo in the monastery chapel. (Four sisters who were unable to be in the group photo are pictured inset, left to right: Joan Chittister, Jerome Eustace, Elaine Keecer and Andrea Weidle.)

Throughout the 150th jubilee year, sisters—both individually and as a community—will reflect upon the Benedictine charism: “To seek God in cenobitic life and to respond through prayer and ministry.”

Three core committees of sisters led the community in studying and reflecting upon these three areas of the charism—cenobitic life, prayer, and ministry—during a year of preparation for the jubilee.

Cenobitic life, which means choosing to live in a monastic community under a rule and a prioress or abbot, will be celebrated during jubilee in terms of relationships—of sisters with one another, through a homecoming for former members, during an oblate weekend, and through a homecoming for alumnae of St. Benedict Academy.

A prayer committee has researched the evolution of monastic prayer during the last 150 years. On the first

Sunday of each month during the jubilee year, key facets of Benedictine prayer will be specially remembered at 9 a.m. morning praise in the monastery chapel. A display in the foyer outside chapel will correspond with each month’s reflection on monastic prayer.

A ministry committee has planned gatherings to celebrate the current ministries of the Benedictine Sisters, as well as to express gratitude for the vocations to the monastic way of life fostered in parishes throughout the Erie Diocese, and for the many kindnesses of family, friends and students from these parishes to the sisters over the years.

In addition, sisters have planned a display for the Erie County Historical Museum and many special liturgies and celebrations, detailed in this 150th jubilee calendar.

Events Calendar



JUNE 23 *Thursday* The formal opening celebration of the 150th jubilee year begins with Solemn Monastic Vespers at 7:30 p.m. in Mount St. Benedict Monastery Chapel, 6101 East Lake Road.

June 23 coincides with the Erie Benedictine community's annual Founders' Day honoring Sister Benedicta Riepp, who first brought Benedictine sisters to the United States, and Scholastica Burkhard, first prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

A history of the Benedictine Sisters in Erie and surrounding communities also opens this day to the public at the Erie County Historical Museum, 419 State St., and runs through October 2006. The interactive display explores the Benedictine charism statement: "To seek God in cenobitic life and to respond in prayer and ministry." The display will reopen in June 2006 in conjunction with the closing phase of the Sisters' 150th jubilee year.

The museum hours are Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for senior citizens, and \$2 for children. Each Wednesday, admission is half price.

JULY 9 *Saturday* A homecoming of gratitude for former Benedictine community members and participants of the Benedicta Riepp temporary membership program will be held, beginning with the Vigil of Sunday at 5 p.m., in the monastery chapel. Evening Praise will be followed by a social hour and dinner in the monastery dining room.



AUG 2 *Tuesday*
Begins Sisters' annual

community days of Learning, Leisure and Legislation.

4 *Thursday* A service of memories recalling the deceased sisters of the community will begin at 4:30 p.m. Evening Praise, followed by a community dinner celebrating the lives and contributions of particular sisters over the years.

5 *Friday*
A litany of deceased sisters will be sung beginning at 9 a.m. Morning Praise in the Garden of Memories.



6 *Saturday* A downtown celebration of ministries begins with a 2 p.m. public prayer service at St. Marys Church, 315 East Ninth St. The service will offer gratitude for the sisters' former teaching ministries and the people they knew at St. Marys and Mount Calvary in Erie, St. Marys and St. Gregorys in North East, and St. Boniface in Hammett, Pa. Following will be a social at the former St. Mary's Auditorium, now the Saint Benedict Community Center. The celebration continues until 5 p.m.

The following ministries open for tours from 2:30 until 5 p.m.: St. Benedict Community Center, 320 East 10th St.; St. Benedict Education Center, 330 East 10th St.; the St. Benedict Child Development Center, Benetvision and Emmaus, at 345 East Ninth St.; Sister Gus' Kids Café, 310 East 10th St.; Emmaus Soup Kitchen, 218 East 11th St.; the Neighborhood Art House, 201 East 10th St.

Events Calendar

7 Sunday

The annual blessing and renewal of commitment by the sisters to their collective and individual ministries will be held at 9 a.m. Morning Praise in chapel.

21 Sunday Sisters reunite and celebrate with parishioners, friends and former parochial school students from the Fryburg and Clarion areas during a prayer service and reception from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church, 720 Liberty St., Clarion, Pa. The celebration is open to the public.



SEPT 11 Sunday
20 Sisters
05 reunite and celebrate with parishioners, former students and friends from the Oil City area during a reception from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Josephs Church, 35 Pearl Ave., Oil City, Pa. The celebration is open to the public.

18 Sunday Sisters reunite and celebrate with parishioners, friends and former parochial school students from the Shenango Valley area during a reception from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at St. Josephs Church, 79 Case Ave., Sharon, Pa. The celebration is open to the public.



OCT 2 Sunday **20** **05**

The sisters will reflect on how sacred space has influenced the evolution of the monastic tradition of prayer, from construction of the very first chapel through the current plans for renovating the monastery chapel.

8 Saturday Nine Benedictine Sisters of Erie celebrate their own jubilees of 75, 60,50, and 25 years of religious life.

14 Friday Oblate Weekend opens with 7 p.m. Evening Prayer, as the oblate communities of Erie and Mexico join together to mark their special relationship with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. The celebration will continue in prayer, song and dance, honoring both the history and present association of oblates with the monastic community.

15 Saturday Oblates join sisters in chapel for Morning Praise at 8:30 a.m. A panel presentation from current and former prioresses on the history and roles of Benedictine oblates will be held in the dining room beginning at 9:30 a.m. At 11:30 a.m. a litany of gratitude, prayer and thanksgiving will be celebrated in the dining room. At 2 p.m. the jubilee journey of Mount St. Benedict's oblates from Mexico will be celebrated in the dining room, followed by a social gathering for oblates. At 5:30 p.m. the Vigil of Sunday will be held in chapel. Dinner will be shared at 6 p.m., followed a social with sisters and oblates.

Events Calendar

16 Sunday

The oblate commitment ceremony will be held at 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer in chapel. Eucharistic Liturgy will be celebrated at 10 a.m. followed by lunch with the sisters.

28-30 Friday to Sunday

Annual Fall Community Weekend welcomes Sister Cecilia Dwyer, prioress of St. Benedict Monastery in Bristow, Va., who will lead a weekend of study and reflection at the monastery titled "Liturgy of the Hours in a Monastic Community." Sister Cecilia is a noted lecturer in the role of liturgy in the monastic tradition.



NOV 25 20 05

Friday Alumnae Homecoming Weekend will open with a Christmas concert sponsored by the St. Benedict Academy Alumnae Association at 7:30 p.m. at Erie's downtown Warner Theatre.

26 Saturday

The annual alumnae Christmas dinner, style show and gift basket raffle all begin at 6 p.m. at the Avalon Hotel in Erie.

27 Sunday

Alumnae join sisters for 10 a.m. Eucharistic Liturgy in the monastery chapel, followed by a farewell social in the Garden Room of the monastery.



DEC 25 20 05

Sunday Christmas Day

JAN 1 20 06

Sunday Sisters include a special focus at 9 a.m. Morning Praise, remembering that at the heart of everything Benedictine is the ancient motto of Pax, or peace. In the early days of the sisters' presence in Erie, the educational system was the venue to strive for justice in the treatment of minority populations, particularly the German immigrant community. The sisters actively supported the civil rights movement of the 1960s and, in 1978, the community adopted a corporate commitment to address issues of peace, military disarmament, the environment, and issues related to the poor and oppressed in society, especially women.



FEB 10 20 06

Sunday Feast of St. Scholastica



MAR 21 20 06

Tuesday Feast of St. Benedict

Events Calendar

25 Saturday A "Forum on Religious Life," sponsored by the Benedictine sisters for the religious of the Diocese of Erie, will be held at the monastery from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sister Mary Collins, OSB, prioress of Mount St. Scholastica Monastery, Atchison, Kan., will address the monastic tradition while Sister Mary Ann Zollman, BVM, of Dubuque, Iowa and former president of Leadership Conference of Religious will address religious life in the apostolic tradition.



APRIL 16 Sunday
20 Easter
06 Sunday

28-30 Friday to Sunday Spring Community Weekend. Sister Ephrem Hollerman, OSB, of St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, Minn., will address the topic of "Monastic Values." The sisters will host a special jubilee year celebration at the annual benefactors' brunch.



MAY 7-13 2006 Sunday to Sunday An exhibit of Brother Thomas' porcelain ceramics opens to the public after the 10 a.m. Eucharistic Liturgy at the monastery and continues through Saturday, May 13. Brother Thomas Bezanson, OSB, has been an artist-in-residence with the Benedictine Community since 1985. Brother Thomas' work will be on display as part of the community's jubilee year.



JUNE 13-18 2006 Tuesday to Sunday The "Humility and Truthful Living" community retreat week, will be led by Australian Cistercian Michael Casey, OCSO.

25 Sunday Closing of jubilee year. Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated at 10 a.m. in chapel with Notker Wolf, OSB, Abbot Primate of the Order of Saint Benedict. The prioresses and sisters of the 24 Benedictine monasteries in attendance at the General Chapter of the Federation of St. Scholastica will be the special guests on this occasion.



"We are Ready, God, to Sing," is the title of a liturgical song by Alan Gaunt, copyrighted 1997 by Stainer and Bell Ltd. All rights reserved.

In memory of



Sister Mary Hugh McCaffrey

*Called to the fullness of the Resurrection
Feb. 17, 2005*

Sister Mary Hugh McCaffrey died at her home, Mount St. Benedict Monastery, on Feb. 17, the day after her 94th birthday.

Sister Mary Hugh was born in Lancaster, Ohio, on Feb. 16, 1911, a daughter of the late Cornelius and Catherine Weiss O'Connor. The family soon moved to Columbus, Ohio, where she received her early education. She worked in business and at a children's hospital in Columbus until 1950 when she entered the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Benet Lake, Wis. Sister Mary Hugh made her final profession as a Benedictine Sister on Sept. 3, 1956, and has celebrated her silver and golden anniversaries of profession.

For many years, Sister Mary Hugh served as office manager and print shop supervisor at Benet Lake Press, a ministry of the Benedictine monks at nearby St. Benedict's Abbey. At the same time, she served her sisters as superior of Holy Family Convent at Benet Lake and as the community's treasurer. When the Benet Lake community merged with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, a process completed in 1991, she became a member of the Erie community.

Out of her deep concern for the welfare of children, Sister Mary Hugh taught religious education classes at nearby parishes on weekends throughout her years in Wisconsin despite a full schedule and advancing years. When the abbey press closed in 1994, Sister Mary Hugh, who was then 83 years old and filled with faith and perseverance, began a new ministry as pastoral minister at the Kenosha Hospital and Medical Center, in Kenosha, Wis. She was a vital and comforting presence there until 2002 when she retired to Mount St. Benedict Monastery, still filled with faith and perseverance.



Sister Mary David Callahan

*Called to the fullness of the Resurrection
March 15, 2005*

Sister Mary David Callahan, 81, died at her home, Mount St. Benedict Monastery, on March 15, after a long illness. She was born on July 24, 1923,

in Oil City, Pa., a daughter of the late Leo David and Anna Short Callahan and received her early education in St. Joseph Parish schools. She graduated from Saint Benedict Academy in Erie in 1941 and entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in August of the same year.

Sister Mary David made her final profession as a Benedictine Sister on Aug. 21, 1945, and celebrated her silver and golden anniversaries of profession. She was an accomplished pianist, organist and composer who began her ministry in music at age five with piano lessons. At age 12, she was playing the church organ as well as the piano. Her formal education in music included a bachelor's degree in music with a concentration in composition, theory and piano awarded by the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N.Y. and a master's degree in liturgy and liturgical music from Notre Dame University, South Bend, Ind.

Sister Mary David taught piano and choral music in several parish schools: Immaculate Conception, Clarion; St. Stephen, Oil City; Venango Catholic High School, Oil City; and at St. Benedict Academy, Erie. She served as organist at St. Julias Parish, Erie and St. Titus Parish, Titusville, Pa. The compositions which were her primary focus since the 1950s are well known and widely published. While most of her work is related to liturgy and ranges from psalm tones to hymns to masses, she composed orchestral and instrumental works, including a symphony.

Sister Mary David served her Benedictine community as novice director and as liturgical musician at Mount St. Benedict Monastery. As novice director, she trained dozens of young sisters in the Rule of St. Benedict; as musician, her compositions and interpretations of her own and other music graced and energized monastic liturgies daily for many years.

As well as her parents, Sister Mary David was preceded in death by her sister, Dorothy. She is survived by her religious community of sisters; her brother, David L. Callahan of Oil City; and her nephew, Dr. Paul LaFemina of Las Vegas, Nev.

The above tributes were written by Sister Mary Ann Luke. Memorials in honor of Sister Mary Hugh or Mary David may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie Development Office, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.



JUBILARIANS



75th JUBILEE

SISTER MARGARET HARRISON AND SISTER JOANNE HUETHER have already celebrated four jubilees together: 25th, 50th, 60th and 70th. On October 8 they will observe yet another as they commemorate 75 years of monastic profession as Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

Both sisters entered the community from St. Joseph Parish in Sharon, Pa., and both spent most of their religious life in education. Sister Joanne dedicated 45 years of ministry to elementary education and teaching Sunday school at St. Stephen and St. Joseph, Oil City; St. Joseph and Sacred Heart, Sharon; St. Mary and Mount Calvary, Erie; and in parishes in Crossingville, Coalport and West Middlesex.

Sister Margaret spent 40 years teaching music in Oil City, Clarion, Fryburg, Sharon and Erie, followed by 12 years in the healthcare field at Brevillier Village in Erie.

Both sisters are retired and live at Mount St. Benedict Monastery. In her retirement, Sister Margaret “keeps the sisters in stitches” from draperies to alterations to mending.

60th JUBILEE

Two sisters will be celebrating their 60th jubilee: **SISTER JEROME EUSTACE AND SISTER JEAN LAVIN.**

Sister Jerome spent many years in elementary education, religious education and church work in various parishes, including St. Mary and Mount Calvary, Erie; St. Joseph and St. Stephen, Oil City; Immaculate Conception, Clarion; and St. Gregory, North East. She has also worked as a nurse’s aid at Twinbrook and receptionist at Benetwood. Sister Jerome is currently involved in child care, community services (mainly switchboard) and is the housekeeping supervisor at Mount St. Benedict.

Sister Jean was a music instructor at St. Stephen, Oil City; St. Benedict Academy, Erie; St. Michael, Fryburg; and Sacred Heart, Sharon. She also served Youngstown University as a professor of piano/theory. Sister Jean worked in several capacities in the business department of Mercyhurst College as a professor and director as well as at St. Benedict Education Center. She is the director of the Stillpoint contemplative prayer retreats.

50th JUBILEE

Four sisters will be rejoicing in their commemoration of 50 years of their professions as Benedictine Sisters:

SISTER PAULA BURKE; SISTER MARY BERNADETTE LADNER; SISTER VERONICA MIRAGE; AND SISTER MICHELLE WILWOHL.

Sister Paula’s ministries have included food service in addition to teaching elementary school at St. Joseph and St. Stephen, Oil City; St. Gregory, North East; St. Michael Fryburg; and Sacred Heart, Sharon. She currently coordinates circulation/mailing at Mount St. Benedict Monastery.

Sister Mary Bernadette has worked as a coordinator and director of religious education in many parishes outside of the Erie Diocese, including Lake Villa, Ill., Benet Lake and Twin Lakes, Wis.; Tuscon, Ariz., Reed City, Mich.; Drexel Hill, Pa. In addition to Kennedy Catholic High School in Sharon. She has been novice mistress and prioress at Holy Family Priory, Benet Lake. Sister Mary Bernadette is the assistant librarian at Mount St. Benedict.



DID YOU KNOW?

50th JUBILEE

Sister Veronica's ministry in elementary education as a teacher and administrator has taken her to St. Joseph, Oil City; St. Mary, Erie; St. Gregory, North East; St. Michael, Fryburg and Sacred Heart, Sharon. She is currently a teacher in the Diocese of Cleveland.

Sister Michelle has also worked in elementary education as a teacher at St. Stephen and St. Joseph, Oil City; Sacred Heart, Sharon; St. Mary and Mount Calvary, Erie; and St. Gregory, North East. She is also a licensed practical nurse and has worked at St. Vincent Health Center, Hamot Medical Center and the infirmary at Mount Saint Benedict. Sister Michelle is an administrative assistant at St. Benedict Education Center.

25th JUBILEE



SISTER DIANNE SABUL is marking her 25th year jubilee. She has ministered as a nurse aid, activities assistant

and director at St. Mary's Home and also worked for Pax Christi as an office manager and administrative assistant. She is the director of programs and facility at St. Benedict Community Center.

SISTER MICHELLE enjoys singing and playing piano, flute, guitar and organ. She is "still a novice in karate after six months!"

SISTER MARGARET has taught piano, violin, organ, cello, acoustics and composing in addition to directing school orchestras and choirs.

SISTER DIANNE is most happy when kayaking and singing and would love to swim (or kayak) with a humpback whale off of Cape Cod or in Alaska.

SISTER JEROME likes golf and enjoys watching football on TV.

SISTERS SHARE WORDS OF WISDOM

SISTER DIANNE: Always be willing to change and open to growth.

SISTER PAULA: Develop a wonderful sense of humor and adventure!

SISTER VERONICA: Experience the Benedictine spirit of hospitality; join in our prayer life and celebrations.

SISTER JEROME: We are a community, a family. Bring yourself, live a day at a time, progress slowly to become a "family" member with us.

SISTER MICHELLE: Know deeply and love deeply Jesus the Christ and walk in his way, his truth and be transformed into his likeness and you'll have no regrets.

SISTER MARY BERNADETTE: Pray and be open; visit the community you feel called to.

SISTER JEAN: In addition to verbal prayer, silent, contemplative prayer will open you to the directives of the Holy Spirit regarding both prayer and ministry.

SISTER MARGARET: If you feel called to religious life, prepare to embrace it wholeheartedly.

SISTER JOANNE: Take one day at a time. Trust in the Lord. Thank God for all that has been, and ask for the grace to say "yes" to all that shall be. If you want to be happy, be grateful.

alumnae

alive in '05 *"I believe in music, I believe in love."*

More than 150 alums sang this song during "Encore '94."

In 1994, the sisters asked the alumnae to come together to help raise money to begin a new ministry, the Neighborhood Art House. We responded in true SBA tradition. Over 150 alums, oblates and sisters practiced faithfully under the direction of our dear Sister Mary David every Monday evening for an entire year.

The result was Encore '94—a night most of us will never forget that brought in more than \$40,000 for the Art House. Since then, SBA alums have raised an incredible total of more than \$400,000 in support of Benedictine ministries, Catholic education and the Alumnae Association.

We gather again this year, 180 strong, with the sisters to celebrate their 150th anniversary of service in Erie. The chorus, under the direction of Sister Marilyn Schauble, will perform a Christmas Peace concert "Alive in '05, a St. Benedict Academy Homecoming"—in the historic Warner Theatre on the evening of Friday, Nov. 25.

Our alums have always shown our love, gratitude and support for the sisters in the past, so this year will be no exception. We gathered with the sisters in March to mourn the loss of Sister Mary David. What better way to pay tribute to her and the many gifts she and the sisters gave to us than to come together for another concert?

Practice has already begun and the Encore spirit is alive and well!

Barbara Brown, president of the alumnae association, shares these thoughts:



"The alumnae are all so grateful for the education we received and the relationships we built while at the academy ... helping the sisters celebrate their 150th year seemed like the least we could do.

"I believe I speak for the entire SBA alumnae association in saying we want to give back to the sisters who taught at the academy for 119 years of the 150 they have been in Erie.

"As for my own path in life, it was shaped by the integrity and spirituality of the women that modeled Jesus' love and life to me. Join us on Nov. 25 as we pay tribute to the Sisters of St. Benedict."

"We'll always come to thee again, when alma mater calls. ..." (SBA school song)



Sister Rosanne Loneck, OSB, '61 (left), laughs with Ann Kuna Shiel, '79, and Jackie Orzechowski Szoszorek, '79.



Sister Judith Bobn, OSB, '58 (right), is delighted to see Mary Ann Kania Muller, '66.

The concert will benefit the Benedictine sisters and their ministries in honor of the 150th anniversary.

Concert information will be going out to alums in August and will include information about:

Concert tickets: \$16 per person. Tickets will be available through the Warner Theatre Box Office at that time.

Overnight accommodations available for the weekend at nearby hotels.

New memorabilia items, including SBA tote bags, polo shirts and sweatshirts will be available at the concert and also at the Christmas dinner.

Cat's Meow art pieces, created by The Bare Woods from a print of both academies. Pre-paid order is \$20 each plus \$4 shipping /handling.

Place your own spirit ad in the concert program.

CALENDAR of events

Wednesday, June 29
Alumnae Summer Picnic
Mount St. Benedict
Monastery, 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 16
Sunday, July 17
Relay for Life

Friday, Nov. 25
Homecoming Christmas Concert
Warner Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 26
SBA Annual Christmas Party
Avalon Hotel, 6 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 27
Close of Homecoming Weekend
Liturgy of the Eucharist, 10 a.m.
Reception to follow
Mount St. Benedict Monastery

Visit ErieBenedictines.org for event updates and to download sign-up forms, or send your e-mail address to Alumnae Director Ann Comstock at sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org to receive electronic reminders and sign-ups. If you don't use e-mail, write to Ann at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery, 6101 E. Lake Rd., Erie, Pa., 16511. And whenever you see or hear about SBA alumnae being honored or highlighted for their achievements, let us know. Clip an article, jot it down, or call us, so we can share the news with all our members.

alumnae

alumnae brunch



Georgeanne Kuklinski, '66, and Cynthia Patalita, '66



Meg Maly, '71, her sister Nicolette Maly Azicri, '68, and Charlene Matson Serfozo, '68



Anne Marie Kuna Shiel, '79, and her mom Carol Fischer Kuna, '56

On Sunday, April 10, the annual alumnae Communion brunch was held at the Lawrence Park Golf Club. More than 75 women enjoyed the brunch and the opportunity to meet with old friends. At the event, \$4,000 in scholarships were awarded. Since 1991 the alumnae association has awarded approximately \$29,750 in scholarships.

This year's winners were:

Dan Marz, nephew of Rosemary Niebauer, '72

Katelyn A. Kaveney, daughter of Lori Kaveney, '80

Andrew Rettger, nephew of Patricia Rettger, '76

Katie Sebastian, granddaughter of Pat Straub, '59

Gavin Eisert, grandson of Mary Eisert, '64

Jamey Cooper, great-nephew of Gert Crynock '41

Victoria Murawski, granddaughter of Lucille Murawski, '41

Nicholas Maly, nephew of Nicolette Azicri, '68

Katlynn Machalinski, daughter of Marlo Machalinski, '91

Marie Earll, niece of Jane Earll, '76

Ashley Lent, granddaughter of Phyllis Volk, '58

James Durovchic, cousin of Charlene Schroeck, '62

Alexandra Grab, great-niece of Pat Gennaro, '57

Tyler Perkins, great-nephew of Mary Philip Kiehlmeier, OSB, '35

Noah Skrzypczak, nephew of Susan Chase, '82

Victoria Steineck, daughter of Jane Steineck, '76

Josh Cooper, grandson of Geraldine Waiter, '62

Julie Theiss, daughter of Christina Theiss, '81

Mario Corder, step-grandson of Carol Cannarozzi, '71

Katelyn Sedelmyer, granddaughter of Dorothy Kraus, '45

let us pray ...

For our sister alumnae who passed into eternity—

Irene A. Strobel Seyboldt '35	Irene Wizikowski Kacprowicz '57
Elinor M. Dailey Wagner '37	Maryann Elizabeth Mikula Swanson '63
Rosemary Meyer Lucore '38	Barbara J. Greca '66
Ann Marie Polaski '41	Jean Shewan Abata '78
Margaret L. "Peg" Kessler '49	



news from the alumnae director



St. Benedict Academy alumna **Jackie Mikrut Ennis, '60**, was honored as one of the Dynamic Dozen of Women Making History for 2005 by the Mercy Center for Women. The women were selected because of their demonstration of dedicated service in the neighborhood, workplace or community; honesty, integrity and strong moral values; commitment to women's issues; courage of convictions and a commitment to personal growth and development.



Sister Carol Pregno, OLC, '60, is the Superior General of the North American Union of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in Carrollton, Ohio. A graduate of Villa Maria College, Sister Carol became interested in social work through her experiences with the sisters at Gannondale: their acceptance and compassion, their commitment to emotional and spiritual healing, and their calling forth the residents to become all they could be.

Consuelo (Beck) Beck-Sague, M.D., '70, has retired from the U.S. Public Health Services after more than 20 years, the last 19 at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. She and her husband will be moving to the Dominican Republic where they will work in providing specialized care to Dominicans and Haitians living with HIV.



Mary Ann Borgia Frew, '62, is married to David Frew, Ph.D.; both are retired from Gannon. David is the executive director of the Erie County Historical Society and Mary Ann is its operations manager. She recently initiated the very successful "Ethnic Erie" project at the Watson-Curtze Mansion.

A graduate of Saint Vincent's Hospital School of Nursing, she worked as an RN there and at Metro Health Center. A faculty member at Gannon University, Mary Ann became director of the medical assistant program. After retiring, she taught at Erie Business Center.

JUBILEE PRAYER

O God, architect of time and giver of gifts,
we stand in this place, daughters of centuries,
by your providence.

Benedict has taught;
Benedicta has dared;
Scholastica has persevered.

We are the summary of your plan and reapers of its grace.

Because we are theirs and yours, we ask still more:

Give us, O God,
Love, to prefer nothing to you;
Hope, that rises after every stumble;
Wisdom, to know the beauty of all creation;
Mercy, to see pain and relieve it;
Great works to do, for justice on earth;
Fidelity, day after day, to the Benedictine way of monastic life;
The prayer and kindness of community, in which we come to see you;
Gratitude, for all our sisters who have gone before and for those who will follow;
Peace—endless, all-pervading, joyful peace;
And limitless faith, that makes all possible.

Thanks be to you, God of all good,
in whom alone we rest our Benedictine hearts,
in time and in eternity.

Amen



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