

The Review

of Benet Hill Monastery



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-Redpath

The mystery for which
we are programmed
is our co-creative responsibility
for birthing the new.

-Diarmuid O'Murchu



Question, challenge, conceive

A Message from Anne Stedman, OSB Prioress

"If the imagination is to transcend and transform experience, it has to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps the very life you (and I) are living at this moment."

- Andrienne Rich

This was the quote I received from the Leadership Conference of Women Religious a few months ago, asking if I would write a brief reflection for June 15th. As I reflected on and prayed with this quote, I could not help but *realize* that this date was the day after our founding day as Benet Hill Monastery forty four years ago, and *consider* what lies ahead of us this Spring. We will be moving to our new Monastery and Ministry Center in **April** and we will dedicate this sacred space as our new home on **July 11th, the Feast of Benedict.**

Choices abound and are paramount as we look at new alternatives for our Monastic lives: common prayer and common table, embracing hospitality and ministry, opening our minds and hearts to a new way of being in our 'special place' within the Black Forest area, and sharing these new environs with you -- our families, oblates, friends and the stranger. We will always call ourselves to be *'radical signs of God's love and compassion.'*

However, we also constantly question and challenge ourselves to process one of the goals presented to us by the Conference of Benedictine Women in the words of our moderator, Sr. Judith Ann Heble, OSB. As women of the Word ***"Do we have a word for the world?"*** What do we want to say about: living together in a process of peace, rejoicing in diversity, a world view centered on Christ, stability, honoring and respecting everyone, and being inclusive? It is not only a word for the world, but a life that speaks louder than words."

We, as Community, choose to embrace this life, enter into this mystery and invite you to join us in this journey of transformation. When you and I dare to 'be still' and allow God to transform us at the core of our being; the Cosmic Christ, the living imprint of God, is rebirthed in us. We are able to see our world with new eyes and love all humanity in creative and concrete ways that we have never dreamt of. Transformed hearts create a transfigured world.

"If the imagination is to transcend and transform experience ... it has to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps the very life you (and I) are living at this moment." ✠

*Sister Anne Stedman,
OSB*

Journey of hope

by Naomi Rosenberger, OSB

As a missionary in Jamaica for fifteen years, I was always aware that Jamaica was second only to Haiti as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. That awareness prompted me to ask what must life be like in Haiti?

When the organization, Food for the Poor, invited my colleague, Sr. Connie Ostrander and I to accompany their pilgrims on a Journey of Hope to the Poor of Haiti from December 8-12 in 2008, I was sincerely honored.

We all have heard of the political strife and turmoil that is so pervasive in Haiti; we know that almost yearly one or more hurricanes wreak destruction and havoc upon the people and the country; we recognize the overwhelming poverty and destitution that haunt the countryside; we know of the schools sliding down a hill in a mudslide, killing parents and children. All of this is public knowledge. What may be unknown to most are the positive aspects of this impoverished country and its people.

Ann Walter, OSB

We will remember

by Gina Berger

Sr. Ann (Caritas) Walter, OSB was welcomed into the loving arms of her God on January 13, 2009. Born in Topeka, Kansas on March 9, 1923, she was baptized Harriet Ann. She received her BA in Music from the college at Mt. St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kansas in 1944 and entered Mt. St. Scholastica Convent that same year. She made her final monastic profession in 1949 and then received her MA in Music from De Paul University in Chicago. An accomplished musician, Sr. Ann shared her gift of music with many children, teaching voice, piano and the organ in Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Colorado. She also ministered as choir director at Ft. Carson for three years.



*"Forever I
will sing of
the goodness
of our God."*

Sharing her great gifts for organization and research, she served as archivist for the Archdiocese of Denver for ten years. In her later years, Sr. Ann became a tutor for foreign students at Benet Hill Center.

Looking back on more than sixty years as a Benedictine, Sr. Ann said, "My first thought is how blest I have been." Using one word to describe her life she said, "serenity" best exemplifies her feelings.

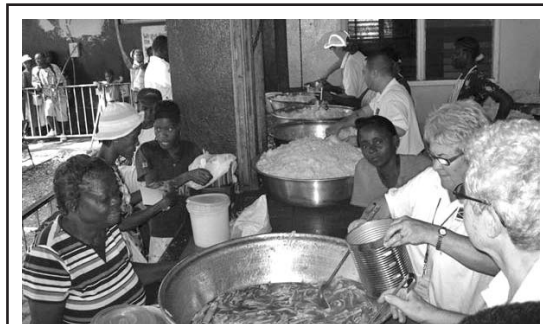
She is preceded in death by her parents John and Mary Alice (Hubbard) Walter and her brothers Rev. John Henry and Robert Eugene.

Sr. Ann's greatest love was for her family, her community and her God. The vibrant sound of her voice raised in praise of God, which resounds still in the hearts of all who were privileged to hear her sing, will be greatly missed along with her gift for storytelling and her incredible sense of humor. ✕

Journey of Hope *continued from pg 2*

The conditions of life for the children and women always sear my soul. Yet, the numerous organizations, political, Ngo's, non-profits, and religious entities are overwhelmingly present on the island. The U.N.'s multinational peacekeeping force was ever present. This presence has curtailed the violence and upheaval that surfaced as a result of political turmoil and oppression. I was especially moved to see a huge tank inside one of the orphanage complexes. As I engaged the soldiers in conversation, I discovered they were from Brazil and could not speak English. However, a young soldier came over when he saw his buddies unable to converse. He spoke English very well, along with French and Portuguese. He told me he was Catholic and his mother had named him Spiritus Sanctus. Indeed, throughout the country, I could sense the Holy Spirit manifested in numerous ways.

Our trip to Cite Soleil, the City of Sun, one of the most infamous slums on planet Earth, overwhelmed us. Here more than half a million people live amidst garbage, disease, and



Sr. Naomi (far right) and Sr. Connie help serve the poor in Haiti.

violence. Food for the Poor has an on-going project to replace the shacks made of scraps of metal, plastic, and even cardboard with safe and secure cinderblock homes. We visited an elderly woman who lived in one of the shacks, who graciously invited us into her home. Inside, Connie discovered that the woman's bed, although neatly made, had no mattress, rather a collection of rocks and metal, stuffed in between with rags, upon which she slept. Many others slept on their dirt floors that turned into mud when it rained.

Haiti is a beautiful country whose people are industrious and talented. The overwhelming population and lack of infrastructure, the deforestation of the land because trees are cut down to make handmade charcoal for fuel, the historical political turmoil and unfortunate corruption in government all exacerbate the problems the people face. Yet in the midst of all of this despair, I returned home thanking God for the individuals who give their lives in service to help those who are in need. ✕



All shall give as they are able

by Rose Ann Barmann, OSB, Development Director

"All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God." -Deuteronomy 16:17

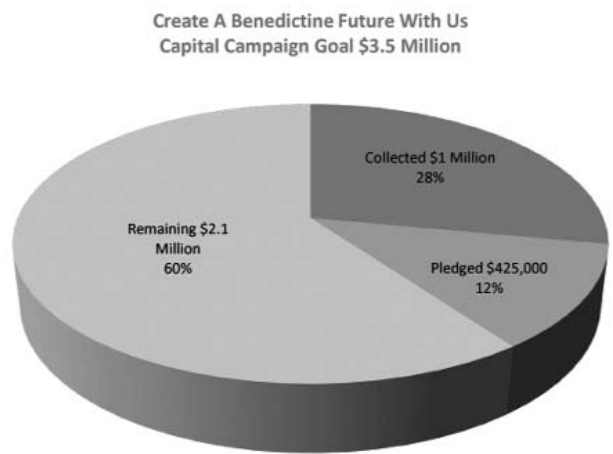
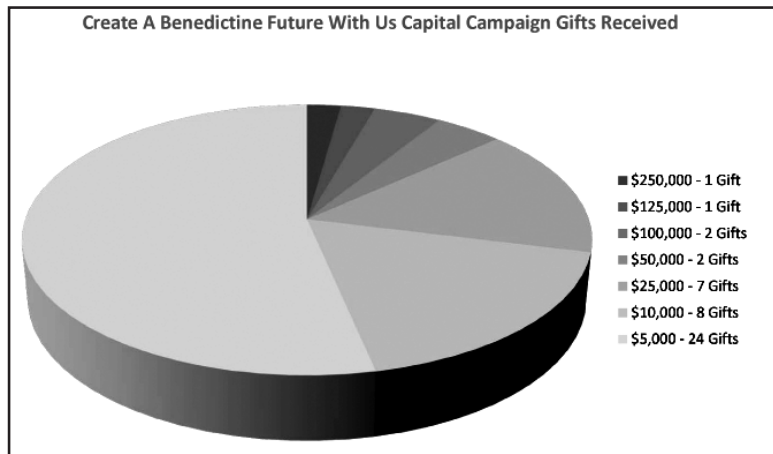
AS WE MOVE INTO 2009, we are ever grateful for the various ways so many of you have shared with us the blessings that the Lord has given you. Your presence in our lives is a blessing and that has translated into the financial gifts and spiritual support that you have shared with our community.

We have made presentations on our Capital Campaign in 14 parishes and one mission in the Colorado Springs Diocese and one presentation in the Diocese of Santa Fe in Albuquerque. Pledges and cash gifts from those parishes have totaled \$30,930.00.

We are in the process of scheduling visits to the remaining parishes in Colorado Springs and in the other Dioceses of Pueblo and Denver where our Sisters have served. ✕

Create A Benedictine Future With Us Campaign

is setting our sites and goal for 2009. Below are 2 charts that shows how far you have helped us come and our final goal for the campaign.



Capital Campaign events are being planned in: California, Kansas City and St. Louis, MO and Denver and Pueblo, CO. Here are some ways you can be a part of our Benedictine legacy for years to come for yourself, your children and your grandchildren.

CASH GIFTS AND PLEDGES are the most common and easiest way for making contributions to our Campaign.

LONG-TERM APPRECIATED SECURITIES are a good way to help our Campaign and offer you two tax advantages. First, you will have no capital gains tax on the increased value of the stock. Secondly, you qualify to receive a charitable tax deduction for the full market value of the assets.

LIFE INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE, BEQUESTS, ANNUITIES AND CHARITABLE TRUSTS are all ways to help support Benet Hill Monastery and our Campaign now or in the future.

Your generosity will definitely help us create a sacred place where people can come and grow in their relationship with their God, one another, themselves and all of creation. Join us in the business of "soul work," "God's Work," by creating a monastic environment where persons can discover the Holy within and all around. "Come, see, and be."

For more information about **CREATE A BENEDICTINE FUTURE WITH US CAMPAIGN** and any of these ways to give, contact: Rose Ann Barmann, OSB, Development and Campaign Director at 719 633-0655 EX. 31 or email bhdevelop@juno.com. Our legal corporation is: Benet Hill Monastery Inc. of Colorado Springs, Co. ✕

BENET HILL CENTER

2577 N Chelton Rd
Colorado Springs, CO
80909
719 633-0655

The mission of the Center at Benet Hill Monastery is to offer individuals the experience of Benedictine hospitality, community and spirituality. **CENTER GOALS:** offer ecumenical programs, invite cross-cultural participation, enable creativity, and work at creating a just and compassionate society through our teaching.

Pull Out and Save!

**BENET PINES
RETREAT CENTER**
15880 Highway 83
Colorado Springs, CO
80921
719 495-2574

The Benedictine faith community at Benet Pines promotes a prayerful, hospitable and quiet environment in a wooded mountain setting where persons of many religious persuasions may gather to discover more fully their God, themselves and each other.

BENET PINES RETREAT CENTER

Retreat Center Director Josie Sanchez, OSB

The Benedictine Sisters offer hospitality to all persons seeking a special time with their God. Retreats can be either hosted, private, or directed by a Sister. **In the Spring of 2009, Benet Pines will become our home for Benet Hill Monastery and all of our ministries.** ✕

Yoga Retreats for the Soul

by Teryl Lundquist - Yoga Journeys

For as long as I can remember, I have craved and created retreat for myself. Just this past December, I retreated to the little hermitage of Jesu Rama at Benet Pines, just for me, unlike the many times I have stayed there as a retreat leader. I drank in the silent presence of the tall pines and delighted in the simple luxury of aloneness.

I have always loved creating this kind of experience for others, as well. I first experienced Benet Pines as a participant for one of Lucinda Green's Buddhist meditation retreats, later as her retreat yoga teacher. I held my own weekend yoga retreat later that year, and have been coming back at least once a year since, mostly in winter, loving its quieter, deeper energy.



Marcy Diller, Yoga Spa Day Retreatant

Last year, with the new construction shifting us to day retreats, I began offering Yoga Spa Day Retreats. The sweet energy of the forest never fails to soothe our souls.

How blessed I feel to have this sense of home and family at Benet Pines! It brings me to a sense of what Dame Julian of Norwich said (quoted in a little book in Jesu Rama), "*All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.*"

Benet Pines creates a place for re-union of body, mind, and soul, as does Yoga. The Kripalu style of yoga that I teach is very meditative, organic and honoring of people's deepest needs; so it fits well with Benet Pines. The power of love, sweetness, and acceptance from the Sisters is present in each room, each meal, and each smile they give.



"Journey Inward" retreatants

Editor's note: One of the goals of Benet Hill programs is to train, form and empower leaders for ministry within their own communities. Many students, past and present, shared their ministry experiences with us, but due to lack of space in this edition we were unable to print all the responses. We will continue to print their submissions in the upcoming issues of the *Review*.



SCRIPTURE STUDIES PROGRAM

Celebrating its 25th year
Program Coordinator: Diane Liston, OSB

This 4-year Bible program will introduce you to God's revelation through the Jewish Scriptures and through Jesus in the Christian Scriptures. You will have the tools to interpret Scripture in the light of the author's purpose, the context, the cultural and historical background and the literary form. Classes are typically held from September through April (2009 - 2010), one session weekly, with breaks at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break and Holy Week. Classes begin Labor Day week.

For further information, visit the Scripture Studies page on our website at WWW.BENETHILLMONASTERY.ORG under the heading: "Spiritual & Educational Offerings." For those who at this time can not make a 4-year commitment, you may register for the following open classes which are being made available for new students.

Sr. Diane Liston started the Benet Hill Scripture Program 25 years ago. Since then well over 900 students have been involved in the four year program. Besides at Benet Hill, classes are being held in Parker, Castle Rock, and Pueblo. The program has empowered and enriched the student's lives and many have used what they have learned to teach and to minister to others. All of the present teachers are graduates of the program: Lori Waugh, Mark Klinger, Cliff and Jane Eisenach, and John and Sue Cox. Comments from each teacher along with many other students will be printed in the next several publications of the *Review*.



I BEGAN THE SCRIPTURE PROGRAM with Sr Diane at Christ The King Parish in Pueblo and loved it from day one. The Scriptures were beginning to make sense to me after so many years of trying to understand and not being able to do so. The Scriptures came alive and I truly fell in love with God's word. I now am leading a Scripture class at Saint Michael's parish in Canon City.

I wish everyone could take these scripture classes and know and love God's word more. -BARBARA RUBENSTEIN

AFTER LEAVING THE CHURCH for about 20 years, I found my way back and into the Scripture program. In the beginning I did not even know where to find the various books in the bible. Now the Sunday readings have come alive for me. I now realize that God's mercy is beyond comprehension and have used what I have learned many times to comfort a friend. In addition to the teachers, I have learned so much from my fellow students during our discussion time. It is a true gift in my life. - JOANNE MACDONALD

THE SCRIPTURE PROGRAM has come to mean much more to me than I imagined it would. My understanding and appreciation of Scripture has matured. The ability to view Scripture through the lens of critical historical analysis speaks to me in a way that has captured my imagination. I feel my faith in God and God's love has deepened along the way. -WILL BISHOP



Open Classes for New Students

▼ Book of Genesis & Psalms

Wednesdays, Feb. 18 - May 6, 9:15 - 11:15 AM

Benedict Hall
2602 N Chelton Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Newcomers: \$134.00 for the 10 weeks

Thursday, Feb. 19 - May 7, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Ave Maria Catholic Church
9056 E Parker Rd
Parker, CO 80138
Newcomers: \$134.00 for the 10 weeks

▼ Pastoral Letters & Mark's Gospel

Wednesdays, March 11 - May 6, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Thursdays, March 12 - May 7, 9:15 - 11:15 am

Benet Hill Center in Benedict Hall
Newcomers: \$108.00 for the 8 weeks

Thursday, March 12 - May 7, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Ave Maria Catholic Church
Newcomers: \$108.00 for the 8 weeks

▼ John's Gospel

Tuesdays, March 10 - May 5, 9:30 - 11:30 am

Benet Hill Center in Benedict Hall
Newcomers: \$94.00 for the 7 weeks

Thursday, March 12 - May 7, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Ave Maria Catholic Church
Newcomers: \$94.00 for the 7 weeks



CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH of Colorado Springs

Program Coordinator & Instructor: Therese O'Grady, OSB

In the *Spiritual Journey Series*

there are five courses of six-week classes. Participants may sign up at the beginning of each course.

Spiritual Journey - Course 4:

CONTEMPLATION: THE DIVINE THERAPY: This session continues the inner journey in Contemplation and the Divine Therapy. It provides a deeper understanding of the Spiritual Journey.

Prerequisite: Course 1, 2 & 3 **Fee:** \$70

Tuesdays, Feb. 17 - March 24, 2009, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Our Lady of Peace Chapel/ Benet Hill Monastery

Thursdays, Feb. 19 - April 2, 2009, 8:30 - 10:30 am

St. Paul's Catholic Church

9 El Pomar Rd, Colorado Springs, CO

Contact: Jeanne Barta 719 538-0167

Spiritual Journey - Course 5:

DIVINE LOVE: THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: This five-week session focuses on Divine Love as it deepens in the consistent practice of Centering Prayer.

Prerequisite: Course 1, 2, 3 & 4 **Fee:** \$70

Tuesdays, March 31 - April 28, 9:00 am - 11:15 am

Our Lady of Peace Chapel/ Benet Hill Monastery

Thursdays, April 9 - May 7, 8:30 am - 10:30 am

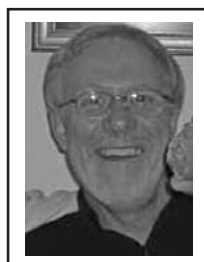
St. Paul's Catholic Church

9 El Pomar Rd, Colorado Springs, CO

Contact: Jeanne Barta 719 538-0167

Partial scholarships are available to participants.

Call Sr. Therese to register or for information: 719 473-6184.



LEARNING THE CENTERING PRAYER as taught by Fr. Thomas Keating and Fr. Basil Pennington is really learning a form of Christian prayer going back to the 15th Century and even back to the early Desert Fathers in the 4th Century A.D. It was never taught to me while growing up. I had no idea that our Western Christian Faith Tradition had a form of sitting prayer in silence

with no words - a non-conceptual form of meditation - as is common in many of the Eastern Spiritual Religions and teachings. Once learning the Centering Prayer method through its regular practice and participating in intensive silent Centering Prayer retreats - an opening and deepening to contemplation occurred which consequently led me to want to share the method of the prayer with others. As Fr. Keating has said, "all is Gift, and one cannot sit on this gift to receive it, but must share it with others in the Christian Community." This is why I feel led to share whatever I can in the Contemplative Outreach program at Benet Hill. -DAVID SALAMON

DR. JAMES FINLEY RETREAT

Join us,

**The Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery
and The Companions for the Silent Journey,**

as we host Dr. James Finley, renowned retreat leader, Merton scholar, and master of the Contemplative Way for a retreat to enrich your own path on the contemplative silent journey on May 1 -3, 2009, at Glen Eyrie Retreat Center, Colorado Springs, CO. For complete information or to register, visit Companions for the Silent Journey website.

<http://www.silentjourney.org/events.html>

Forgiveness Prayer Workshop

February 28, 2009

The Forgiveness Prayer is a tool of Centering Prayer. The workshop will present a process for forgiving others and oneself.

Fee: \$25

Saturday, February 28, 2009

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Benet Hill Center Reception Room

The following weekend intensive, silent, retreats at Benet Pines Retreat Center are designed to intensify one's practice of contemplative prayer. They include centering prayer periods with contemplative walks, Lectio, and time for solitude. Open to people of all faiths who have incorporated centering prayer into their daily lives for at least 6 months.

Women's Centering Prayer Weekend Retreat

March 13-15, 2009: Registration deadline: March 1, 2009

Fee: \$160

Friday: Arrive 6:30 PM / Sunday: Closing 3:00 PM

A deposit of \$50.00 is required by March 1, 2009.

Deposit is applied to the fee of \$160.

Men's Centering Prayer Weekend Retreat

April 3-5, 2009: Registration deadline: March 20, 2009

Fee: \$160

Friday: Arrive 6:30 PM / Sunday: Closing 3:00 PM

A deposit of \$50.00 is required by March 20, 2009.

Deposit is applied to the fee of \$160.

**FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION ON EVERYTHING OFFERED BY THE CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH PROGRAM,
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER LINK.**

BENEDICTINE SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM

Program Director Anne Stedman, OSB

Those who have walked this path, have much to share in how God has empowered them and enriched the world through them. In response to a request to share their experience, this is what they had to say.



THE BENEDICTINE SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM helped me explore my artistic and imaginative talents through classes such as 'Images of God', 'The Mandala,' and 'Introduction to Dreams.' Because we studied many topics in spirituality, I found myself in a different place, a prayerful space that

opened me to new ways of praying and interacting. Still, I feared the idea of being responsible for someone else's growth in the spirit. Imagine how relieved I was to find that God's spirit is the responsible party; I simply pray that the spirit will be heard through me. Finally, BSFP helped create deep friendships that last. -PETER MICHELIN (South Site)

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BENEDICTINE SISTERS of Benet Hill share their gift of God's amazing grace through the two-year Benedictine Spiritual Formation Program (BSFP) in Colorado Springs and Denver. This ecumenical program has been leading people to a deepening of wholeness and holiness for the past 27 years. I am grateful to be part of this ministry as I watch God move in hearts being led to a deeper spiritual presence

and/or a ministry of spiritual direction. Come and be embraced by the Benedictine charism of radical hospitality. Let God's hand touch you and be a part of love. For more information go to our website at www.benethillmonastery.org, and click on the Spiritual Formation link under Programs. *(The Benedictine Spiritual Formation Program is accredited through Iliff School of Theology in Denver.)*

- PATTY DEGEN

Patty Degen
South Site Coordinator
(Colorado Springs)
719 528-5303 / patty@bsfp.org

Sr. Mary Colleen Schwarz, facilitator & Patty Degen, South Site Coordinator



Marilyn Carpenter, OSB
North Site Coordinator
(Denver)
719 429-7500
smarilync@juno.com

MY PARTICIPATION IN THE BENEDICTINE SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM has born much fruit. After graduating from the BSFP program, I have had the privilege of accompanying others on their faith journeys and serving the program as an intern and then teacher and supervisor of second year students. The personal and spiritual growth that I experienced through my association with the program contributed in no small part to my completing a Masters in Divinity at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver which has enabled me to answer a call to serve as Pastoral Associate at Light of Christ Ecumenical Catholic Community in Longmont. -TONI STONE (North Site)



WHEN I ENTERED THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROGRAM in the fall of 2005 I had no idea of all that was ahead for me. As a life coach and lay counselor I felt there was more learning for me as I walked

the journey of life with my clients. I would say I'm possibly only beginning to realize "the fruit" of what this program meant to me.

Sr. Marilyn Carpenter, North Site Coordinator, and facilitator Rev. Michelle Danson interject a bit of levity into their class.



SINCE MY GRADUATION FROM BSFP, I have begun working as a chaplain at an alcohol and drug rehabilitation center near Denver. In that position, I have the opportunity to teach in a classroom setting and to provide spiritual direction for addicts in early recovery. The BSFP has helped me to approach this non-denominational ministry with openness and enthusiasm, and it has allowed me to connect with persons of varying spiritual inclinations who long to know a power greater than themselves without being subjected to heavy-handed evangelism. Through my BSFP adventures, I am better able to meet folks where they are and to walk with them on their spiritual paths. -DALE LEE (North Site)

I've noticed a new freedom to bring all that I am--not hold back--the freedom to say "yes" to new opportunities God has opened up for me. I entered the program terrified of speaking to a group. Somewhere along the way that terror just left and I'm able to share with groups in a way that was never possible for me before. I have also shifted in the way I welcome people--can it be the Benedictine hospitality that was shown and modeled to me? I have deeper awareness of the inherent worth and value of all of God's creation. Four of my friends have enrolled in the program during the past three years, not so much because of what I said about the program, but I think it's more like that great movie line in *When Harry Met Sally*, "I'LL HAVE WHAT SHE'S HAVING!" What a gift to have been part of the Benet Hill community. -NANCY METZ (South Site)

Francine Stallbaumer, OSB

SISTER IN THE SPOTLIGHT

by Gina Berger

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where shall come my help." -Psalm 121

Sr. Francine Stallbaumer loves this quote from Psalm 121 because it reflects not only her spiritual journey, but the Colorado mountains remind her daily of God's mystery, love and strength which resides in her heart. Francine was baptized Elizabeth Louise in Kelly, Kansas where she was born on the family farm to Leona and Francis Stallbaumer. She is the oldest of five children and when she was fifteen her family moved into Kelly where her father managed the local General Store.



Faith and loving support of Francine's parents and extended family played a major role in her formation and awareness that God was calling her into religious life. She was steeped in Benedictine influence as the Sisters taught her from elementary school through high school and also, she had a dozen cousins, an uncle and a great uncle who had already entered Benedictine life.

Francine responded to her call into the Benedictine tradition at age nineteen when her Uncle, Fr. Ernest, (a Benedictine Priest) took her on a trip to Atchison to meet with Mother Alfred Schroll. After a few days of retreat, she knew in her heart that this was her true calling. Sr. Francine celebrated fifty years of vowed life on August 14, 2005 surrounded by thirty-one family members at Benet Hill Monastery. Love and closeness to her family is a precious value that Sr. Francine cherishes.

Another important value to Sr. Francine is her enthusiasm to grow and learn with an adventurous spirit. "One turning point in my formation when my world view opened up was after I participated in the 'Active Spirituality for Global Community' in Cincinnati, Ohio for nine months in 1981-1982." The program is designed to give participants "a time to reflect, regenerate and respond, a space to stretch one's vision and integrate gospel values." She traveled and experienced being with Sisters from around the world. Sr. Francine utilized all that she learned and still speaks gratefully of how that experience continues to influence her.

Many students have benefited from Sr. Francine's ministry in education as she served as principal for over nineteen years in four different schools in Colorado. She worked for a number of years in two parishes as a Pastoral Minister. Her switch from schools to parish work was a welcome change and another life-giving experience.

Sr. Francine who has served the Community as Assistant Prioress for the last ten years, reflects on how the mystery of God working in her life reveals her gifts in administration, her sense of humor, and her sensitivity and compassion toward others. She often finds joy in the faces and actions of the small children walking through the halls at Colorado Springs Charter Academy. Sr. Francine relaxes with needlework, loves to read, travel and enjoy the beauty of nature. Her enthusiasm to learn and her adventurous spirit keep her young at heart and always seeking new ways to grow. ✱

A day in the life

compiled by Gina Berger from the Sisters



MARY JOHN THOMAS, OSB, A

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE: On November 21, 2007, I received word that my nephew Firefighter Michael J. Tluscik, Jr. died suddenly of cardiac arrhythmia while on duty at Fire Station #9, in Kansas City, Kansas. He collapsed at the station surrounded by his brother firefighters. Their presence, compassion, support and understanding

during this time of pain and loss were unbelievable. Michael's death was not only a loss for us, but also for the firemen with whom he lived and worked.

Experiencing and witnessing the Brotherhood of Firefighters is one I shall never forget. This past September 2008

we attended the International Memorial Celebration for Fallen Fighters who died during late 2007-08 at the Memorial Site in Colorado Springs. The names of all fallen fighters are engraved on a wall in this sacred space. Families, firemen, fire trucks, drum and bugle corps, came from the United States and Canada. "Truly the presence of our God was in this sacred place." Whenever I hear fire trucks or see firemen, the memory of this event becomes vivid for me, and I continue to pray for these brave men and women.

THERESE O'GRADY, OSB and **SALLY BOWMAN** (staff person for Contemplative Vision) received an invitation to participate in an audience during a video shoot for "The Introduction to Centering Prayer" for use at home. The filming took place in Boulder, Colorado and featured Fr. Thomas

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Benet Hill's novices

by Ana Cloughly, OSB

"As I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples." These words of Jesus in chapter thirteen of John's Gospel certainly ring true at Benet Hill Monastery where in October the Sisters welcomed a fourth woman into the novitiate this year. Novices spend their days in prayer and continual discernment, studying the monastic vows and the Benedictine constitutions. They plunge the depths of a radical choice to commit themselves completely to a life of love as they prepare for monastic profession. Reflecting on their call to Benedictine life at Benet Hill Monastery, the Sisters share what attracts them to Benet Hill:

SR. JOAN LUKE SILVERSTEIN, a former Sheriff Deputy says, "Benedictine life is so full of Christ's presence. My hope for a healthy relationship with Christ begins in building healthy relationships here at Benet Hill."

SR. ANNE MADELEINE BROST, from Whitewater Colorado, feels "attracted to the way that the three monastic vows are central to the life in Benedictine monasteries: Stability, Fidelity to the monastic way of life and Obedience which is a commitment to growing in awareness of God's Being in all of the Universe."



A clear path to follow

by Kathleen Hassler

Reflections on Becoming a Benedictine Oblate Novice

"EVERYONE KNOWS THAT MIDDLE AGE is a time for self assessment,

redirection, and prioritizing for the second half of one's life. The inspiration for doing just that came to me when I attended a two hour introduction to mindfulness and centering prayer. I also took several courses in Sr. Diane's Scripture program. After these classes it became obvious that I had a desire to become an oblate so that I could begin to give back to this wonderful community and also to nourish and develop my spirit in this very nourishing Benedictine environment.

I began my oblate studies in the fall of 2006 with Sr. Mary Colleen as my mentor. I have loved my in-depth study of the Rule of Benedict. It has deepened my spirituality in ways I could have never foreseen. What I love about Benedictine spirituality is the practicality of it, the "daily-ness" of it. Benedict recognized that it is a lifelong journey and process.

This is not some nebulous "out there" spirituality, but rather a consistent and clear path to follow. It is a framework for

SR. MARY GLEN, also from Whitewater, shares, "I feel called to the Benedictine discipline of listening to God and loving my Sisters in humility. This is God's invitation to love God and my neighbor. I am attracted to the Benet Hill community because it has listened obediently to the Spirit."

And the newest novice, SR. ANA CLOUGHLY expresses, "Benedictines listen with the ear of the heart becoming conscious of God's abiding presence. At Benet Hill, I live with women who seek God together responding to the Gospel in Christ-centered love and service."

If you are interested in learning more about Benet Hill Monastery and ways to become a Benedictine, please visit our website at www.benethillmonastery.org, or contact: Sr. Mary Colleen Schwarz at 719 633-0655 or Sr. Clare Carr in Denver at 303 756-7349. Srs. Anne and Mary (pictured) on right will make their First Profession on February 14, 2009. ✕



living in right relationship with my family, my community, the planet, and with God. By using it, I can aspire to a daily life lived in Christ, a life which is real, practical and balanced, and which reflects my true and authentic self. I am grateful. (Kathleen became an oblate novice on Nov. 16, 2008) ✕

WHAT IS AN OBLATE?

by Katherine Wawersich, OSB, Oblate Team Leader

OBLATES ARE CHRISTIAN MEN AND WOMEN who choose to associate themselves with a Benedictine religious community in order to strengthen their baptismal commitment and enrich their Christian way of life. Oblates seek to offer themselves fully to Christ, by pondering the wisdom found in the Rule of St. Benedict and by affiliating themselves with a Benedictine Monastery of women or men. Oblates promise to dedicate themselves to the service of God and neighbor according to the Rule of Benedict insofar as their state in life permits. This promise does involve a personal commitment to nurture the Benedictine values contained in the rule and to make time in their daily schedule for prayer and the reading of Scripture. For more information on how you can discern a call to become an oblate, call 719 633-0655. ✕



News from the Academy Alumnae

Dear Alumnae,

Greetings! I hope each of you had wonderful moments during the special days of the Christmas season. It was such a joy to hear from so many of you with cards, pictures, e-mails and visits. Do stay in touch and stop by any time.

Lucile Hartmann, OSB

learned that with the power of prayer and love from God you can accomplish anything. I think of my days at Benet Hill with deep respect and love. I wish I had been able to make it back for the reunion."

Get in touch with old friends!

BENET HILL ACADEMY ALUMNAE can now join and participate in **Facebook**, a free-access social networking website that is operated and privately owned by **Facebook, Inc.** Once you put together a profile (*as limited or as open as you would like*) you can add friends and send them messages and update your personal profile to notify friends about you.

The Benet Hill Academy Alumnae group was established in January by a 1977 graduate. There are three ways you can join in the fun and re-connect with classmates from all years at Benet Hill Academy and with the Sisters as they begin their journey to their exciting new home in Black Forest, Colorado. Sisters Lucile Hartmann and Marilyn Carpenter are also on **Facebook** so you can send messages directly to the Benedictine community. To join in either:

1. Go to facebook.com and register with your email address. Then search the 'group' database and request to join Benet Hill Academy Alumnae.
2. Establish a 'friend' relationship on **Facebook** with any other **Facebook** user and they can help you find the group link.
3. Email Kristin Flannery (Kristin Schaefer '77) who is the group administrator and she will email you with a link. Kristin's email address is kristin.a.flannery@att.net. You can also reach Kristin on her cell at (719) 209-5198, if you have any questions.

If you'd like to learn more about **Facebook** before joining in, go to the following website at:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook>.

We've already received inquiries about setting up independent groups by graduation year, but we thought it might be easier to start with one alumnae group first to see how many were interested. To-date, there are 18 active members in the Benet Hill Alumnae group that represent classes from the late sixties to the early eighties. **We'd love to connect with you!** ❖

Sympathy & Prayers to:

ALICE HEEDT '82 on the death of her father Fred Heedt in October 2008.

LISA HAYES '77 on the death of her daughter Jillian Ann Hayes in December 2008 and **MONICA HAYS WOODWARD '80**, aunt of Jullian.

Phil Schlener and the family on the death of wife and mother **ELENA MAZZETTI SCHLENER '74** in December 2008.

NANETTE HEFLIN '77 on the death of her mother Audrey Heflin on January 6, 2009.

ANNE KING EITEL '74 on the death of her father Peter King on January 7, 2009.

BARBARA MEDLEY LANGLOIS '78 on the death of her mother Marion Medley on January 11, 2009.

TINA DAMICO '78 on the death of her father Col. Robert H. Damico in January 2009.

Greetings from:

VERA LEMANSKI BROYLES '70 stays busy with her volunteer work at the library and new hospital in Teller County, CO. Her sister Stella walks dogs at the humane society each week. They both have retired husbands which make each day "interesting."

PAULA SHIELDS ROGERS '68 writes from South Carolina, *"I'm thankful I went to Benet Hill, was taught by strong women,*

Day in the Life continued from pg 9

Keating, Gail Fitzpatrick Hoppler and Fr. Carl Arico, all members of Contemplative Outreach, LTD. "This two-day affair was an enriching and truly awesome event where we heard Fr. Thomas Keating expand on his earlier talks regarding *The Human Condition, Silence, Involution, and The Archeological Dig.*" This video will be available Fall 2009.

ROSE ANN BARMANN, OSB attended the Theresian

International Asian Conference in Bangkok, Thailand Oct. 17-19, 2008. Theresians from eight countries gathered in sisterhood to listen to one another and reflect upon the Theme of the conference: "When Wisdom Speaks: Living Experiences of Biblical Women." Sr. Pat Mullen and Sr. Rose Ann facilitated the conversation among the attendees on ways Theresians Internationally can assist women to address issues facing women in their various countries. ❖

Benet Hill Monastery

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Winter Cabaret

by Ana Cloughly, OSB

THE BENET HILL COMMUNITY, Academy and Center alumni, donors and friends from Colorado Springs enjoyed an evening of music, dancing and friendship at our "Winter Cabaret" on Friday evening, January 23rd. Thanks to the generosity of Father Larry Solan and St. Patrick's Parish Community the event was held in their Bonzel Hall which was able to accommodate our more than 177 guests. There were performances by the New Horizon of Colorado Springs *Kicks Band*, 11 Benet Hill Academy Alumnae performing songs from the movie *Sister Act* and Jeff Tschida, a graduate of the Benedictine Spiritual Formation Program performing several selections including a song written by Jeff in connection with his BSFP experience. The evening also included a viewing of our Capital Campaign DVD which can also be viewed on our website at www.benethillmonastery.org. Special thanks to the Capital Campaign Steering Committee and Sr. Rose Ann Barmann, Development Director, for all their work bringing it together. We are deeply grateful to all who attended this wonderful evening for your generosity and loving support of our Benet Hill Community. ✱



*New Horizon Kicks Band -
Cliff Eisenach, Benet Hill
Advisory Board member
on sax far left*

*Below, l-r: Guests Art &
Joan Klein with Francine
Stallbaumer, OSB*



*Pictured l-r, are four of the
11 Academy Alums who
performed songs from the
movie *Sister Act*: Claudia
Klein, Tricia Boatner,
Kathy Wright and Kristin
Flannery*