

# *The Review*

*of Benet Hill Monastery*



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Red Mountain Pass

-Redpath

*unanswered questions  
are far less dangerous  
than unquestioned answers*

*-author unknown*



# Questing, Discernment, Innovation

*A Message from Anne Stedman, OSB Prioress*

*“I said to the person who stood at the gate,  
“Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”  
And the person replied,  
“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way.”*

*“God Knows” by Minnie Louise Haskins*

Fall arrived at the Monastery as we celebrated the first year anniversary of our Dedication on October 11. We give humble thanks to each of you who helped us financially make this dream a reality. And we give thanks to all of you who have been an integral part of our first year in the Forest whether it be your presence at Sunday Liturgy, any of our ministries, open houses, Picnic in the Pines or taking a little time to retreat in the peace of our Pines.

Now is the time for us to ask the questions: God, what is your preference for our lives? ‘Recognizing our giftedness’ (Charism), how can we best serve the needs of you, the people we journey with and serve? We have completed the survey of our present ministries and have created a taskforce to probe the information needed to create a vision for our property and sustainability – the legacy we hope to pass on to those who follow us.

In order to help us, as a Community, make this vision a reality, each of us commit ourselves to the sharing of our personal wisdom and the labor of our minds, bodies, spirits and hearts. Creating a new future for ourselves is filled with unanswered questions. It calls us to enter into the silence and wait for the revelation of God which comes in the embroidered challenges of our daily lives and the sifting through the multiple needs of our wounded world.

While we wait we embrace the words of Cardinal John Newman *“A true Christian may almost be defined as one who has a ruling presence of God’s presence within themselves.”* All of life is seen differently when one is ruled with this presence of God; in this issue of the Review you will see this in our sisters’ lives. You will see it in Sister Charlotte’s breath taking photography of our Colorado trees. You will read of Sister Naomi’s labor of love in service to our sisters and brothers in Jamaica. You will hear how our Oblates benefitted from Sister Rose Ann’s weaving of her personal story and Benedictine history during their annual retreat. You will chuckle with Jo Ann Schuh, Francie Pfallmer and Barb Lynette’s Tea Time with the sisters on Tuesday afternoons. You may marvel with us as we continue to create and develop our classes online to reach women and men throughout the country.

And most of all. We ask you to rejoice with us as Sisters Joan Luke and Ana take their place as women in First Profession within our Benet Hill Community.

This fall we ask your prayer in our discernment for future ministry and we promise you our prayer as we gather daily in our Spirit of Wisdom Oratory.†



# Sister in the Spotlight

## Sister Naomi Rosenberger, OSB

by Gina Berger



Sister Naomi Rosenberger, OSB

**Be still and know that I am God.** Psalm 46

Besides the above scripture passage, Sister Naomi Rosenberger experiences God's voice as "a whisper" in her heart (1 Kings 19), leading her to live out the Gospel. These two passages have challenged her throughout her faith journey to go deep within and listen to the quiet voice of the Creator speaking to her. She believes that all the unnecessary chatter and distraction (noise) keep us from really listening to the quiet voice of God.

Sister Naomi is a charter member of Benet Hill Monastery. Born in Kansas City, MO, she grew up with two younger sisters Patricia Vaughn and Sandra Mitchell, who she considers a great gift in her life. She says that her "two younger siblings arrived after I thought I was an only child!" Her parents and grandparents had a great influence on her faith development. Sister Naomi's mother was devoted to prayer and trusting in Divine Presence. Her love of horses and riding was given to her by her father who gifted her with a Shetland pony when she was old enough to ride. She is grateful to her grandfather who fostered and encouraged her vocation in early childhood through the traditions of the Catholic Church in Eucharist, devotions and prayer. The only question Sister Naomi had was where she would serve God in her calling. She seemed to be leaning toward the Carmelites because of her study of the writings of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and St. Teresa of Avila. But her lived experience of the Benedictine Sisters in high school won her over.

The qualities that attracted her to the Benedictine Sisters was their compassionate outreach toward students, sensitivity, strength and recognition of each person as unique. The Sisters were living examples of how to honor others for their gifts in academia, art, music, liturgy, and many others. She had the knowledge of a call deep within her heart to become a sister in high school, but did not respond to the call until two years after graduation. She was sitting in mass and listening to a homily when the priest talked about "when?" When will you respond- she knew that God was saying "the time is now- what are you waiting for?"

*"Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, she sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."*

*-Robert F. Kennedy*

Sister Naomi's vocation has led her to opportunities in education, travel and a life filled with challenging and enriching experiences. She enjoys nurturing the interior experience of prayer and closeness to God she feels in community. Her greatest and most enriching experience as a sister has been while on mission in Jamaica: "I worked with the gifted and talented Bishop, Paul Michael Boyle, C.P. in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mandeville, Jamaica as the Chancellor, which provided me with countless opportunities to use my talents and gifts. I assisted him with establishing a diocese and building an infrastructure to sustain it. We, the Sisters, invited homeless and orphaned children into our convent home. These people of faith live in hope and trust, and exhibit the Gospel values in their daily journey. We served numerous women and children (many of whom suffered intense personal and physical hardships) which brought about the deep awareness of global oneness within me. It was a profound experience and daily reminder that we must all respond to the cry of the poor."

Sister Naomi continues in her mission work because making a difference in the lives of women and children is a constant call in her heart from God. Opal is one special child, discovered at age seven in a dire situation. She weighed only 14lbs and was suffering from severe malnutrition. We airlifted her to Boston Children's Hospital where she was beloved by all who came into her presence. "It matters not what kind of house you live in, how much money you may have made, what kind of car you drive, or how important you may be... what is important is to have made a difference in the life of one child."

Besides her work, Sister Naomi loves to read, listen to classical music and play games. Her favorite board game is backgammon and she loves solving Sudoku. She is an avid sports fan of the Broncos, Notre Dame and the Yankees, but her favorite pastime is her passion for serving others.



Opal with Sister Naomi Rosenberger

# First Profession

by Sister Therese O'Grady, OSB

Benet Hill Monastery rejoice with Sister Joan Luke Silverstein and Sister Ana Cloughly as they professed vows of Obedience, Stability and Fidelity to the Monastic Way of Life for three years on October 9, 2010 at Vespers.

Sister Ana, a native of Long Island, New York, was working in Campus Ministry at Colorado College and UCCS in Colorado Springs and became acquainted with Benet Hill by participating in the Scripture Program and the Benedictine Spiritual Formation Program.

Sister Ana speaks of her choice to profess Benedictine vows in this way. "I have chosen monastic profession in the Benet Hill community because I feel it is here that I am best able to deepen my baptismal covenant with God and live the gospel. The aspect of communal living that I enjoy the most is that we do everything together for the good of all. The "vows" are my commitment to live this life of togetherness focused on God. In my monastic profession, I join my "yes" to Mary's yes and to the yes of so many Benedictine women over the centuries, particularly to the yes of the women of Benet Hill Monastery. It is my sincere desire that together with my sisters, my life too will "proclaim the greatness of my God".

Sister Ana shares her gifts of writing, technology and teaching in the Contemplative Vision Program.

Sister Joan Luke is a native of Colorado Springs and while working as a Sheriff's Deputy took the Scripture Course at Benet Hill. She says she was looking for a deeper meaning of what life was about. "I find God speaks to me in subtle ways, in everyday life even though sometimes it is hard to see." Her interior question was "Why not?!" I ask myself every day if I am serving Christ and my sisters. I do a self-evaluation to see if my life is reflective of love and compassion for myself and others. The most important part is to keep focused and steadfast on my journey.

Sister Joan Luke shares her gifts of music in the liturgy and gardening on the grounds of the monastery and shares her joy of life with the sisters in many ways. She also assists in the maintenance needs of the monastery.



Sisters Ana Cloughly (left) and Joan Luke Silverstein (right) present Sister Anne Stedman their vow documents.



# Oblate News

by Barbara Neilon

## Oblate Retreat

Seventeen attended the Annual Oblate Retreat at Benet Hill Monastery on Saturday, September. 25, 2010. Sister Rose Ann Barmann skillfully weaved her own story of 50 years of monastic life with Benedictine history to present key elements of Benedictine life: stability, seeking God, community, listening and lectio divina. Participants heartily agreed that Sister Rose Ann presented "not just knowledge, but heart." Oblates had time for silence and personal reflection along with interaction with each other and the sisters during lunch.

The day concluded with Vespers and the enrollment of three new oblate novices who begin their year of study of the Rule of St. Benedict in preparation for full oblation: Renee Brown of San Jose, CA, Donna Contrerez-Wetherbee of Denver, and Patricia Thompson of Arriba, CO. The simple ceremony, in which the new novices received the Medal of St. Benedict and a copy of the Rule, was followed by a celebratory dinner with the sisters.

Anyone interested in more information about Benedictine oblates may contact Oblate Coordinators Barbara Neilon at [bneilon@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:bneilon@benethillmonastery.org) or Sister Joseph Marie at (719) 550-3716.



**Back Row:** Renee Brown, Sister Marilyn Carpenter (oblate mentor), Patricia Thompson **Front Row:** Donna Contrerez-Wetherbee, Barbara Neilon (oblate mentor)



# Day in the Life...

by Gina Berger

**SISTER FRANCINE STALLBAUMER** attended the annual gathering for Assistant Prioresses held at Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, AL. on Sept. 17 – 21. Sister Jane Becker, OSB from the Monastery of the Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, IN. spoke on "Transitions: The Inside Story of Monastic Life." She highlighted how to embrace transition and 'the role of monasticism in the changing world.

**SISTERS MARY JANE VIGIL AND JOAN LUKE SILVERSTEIN** attended a conference hosted by the Diocese of Colorado Springs entitled "Festival of Faith" on September 24 and 25 at St. Francis Parish. The guest speaker, Fr. J. Glen Murray, SJ, addressed the updates in the New Roman Missal: "New Words, Deeper Meaning, Same Mass"

As the past Director of Theresians, **SISTER ROSE ANN BARMANN** was a guest at the "Kick Off" for the 50th anniversary of Theresians International in Houston, Texas October 18th, 2010. Paula D'Arcy was the featured speaker for this benefit for Theresians.

**BENET HILL SISTERS** participated in "Bridges to Islam: An Experiential Introduction to the Muslim World" during the

month of October. These four sessions gave the sisters a hands on experience of meeting persons from the Muslim community, learning about the Islamic Religion, visiting a mosque and joining an interfaith peace project. The sisters believe that this experience broadened their understanding of the Islamic beliefs and will help them to be peacemakers in our culture and world.

**DR. RICHARD JOHNSON, PH.D.**, a national presenter on Spiritual Gerontology, gave a workshop for the Benet Hill Community on Saturday, October 9, 2010. The Franciscan sisters and Oblates joined them in discovering the growth, purpose and meaning in aging and the rich living water God offers each of us in the maturation process. Participants left the sessions with "The 12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality: Powerful Lessons on Living Agelessly".



Dr. Richard Johnson

## Book Review

by Sister Anne Madeleine Brost, OSB



### Awe-Filled Wonder The interface of Science and Spirituality

by Barbara Fiand, SNDEN

Madeleva Lecture, 2008 Paulist Press

This little book--80 pages--outlines the transformation of Spirituality in the light of the most recent scientific discoveries. Fiand brings together thoughts of mystics, scientists, and philosophers, opening new ways of thinking about God and Creation. She interweaves ideas from Meister Eckhart, Brian Swimme, Beatrice Bruteau, and many others.

The discovery--first mathematically by Einstein, and then visually with the Hubble telescope in the 1920's--that the Universe is expanding, has caused us to talk about God in new metaphors. We need to think of God as within "Creation, an ongoing, evolutionary event bursting forth from the center of the universe and continuing to expand in ever-new and extraordinary ways." God is the Love, Light, Life that flows through all creation. This metaphor leads us to see all in communion, ourselves included.

Fiand shows how we are one, how Jesus is the emergence of God in humanity. Jesus' life expressed divinity to the fullest. This is a good "first book" for those of us who want to understand how contemporary science and spirituality come together. Reading it can help transform our way of living and praying. This book may be purchased in our **Benet Gifts** shop.

## Tea Time

by Gina Berger



JoAnn Schuh and Barb Lynette

Tea time is a weekly event hosted with homemade goodies by Barb Lynette, JoAnn Schuh and Francie Pflamer. Each week they bring a treat and a question to share with the sisters of Hildegard's and other sisters who frequently join in. Sometimes the question may be serious and other times just for fun.

This week the sisters were asked what patron saint they would be known as. The answers were of a less serious nature:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Sister Ernestine Lopez:<br>Patron Saint "of those who are hard of listening" | Sister Rose Ann: Patron Saint "of belly laughter"                        |
| Sister Diane Liston: Patron Saint "of tree cutters or tree whackers"         | Sister Katherine Wawersich: Patron Saint: "of the tone deaf"             |
|  | Sister Mary John Thomas: Patron Saint "of those who think they can cook" |



Sisters Leann Cogan, Ernestine Lopez and Francie Pflamer

We invite you to submit questions for the Sister's Tea Time by emailing: [gberger@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:gberger@benethillmonastery.org) or clicking on **Ask a Sister** at [www.benethillmonastery.org](http://www.benethillmonastery.org). We will pick one question for the next Review.



# Retreat Happenings

by Sister Mary John Thomas, OSB, Eileen Beuler

## Do you hunger for spiritual meaning and wisdom?

Then maybe it's time for you to make a retreat at Benet Pines! As one recent person commented "I feel very blessed to have been graced with the presence of this place of beauty & solitude, and with the hospitality of each of the sisters." Many people have noted their stay filled with gifts: the gardens, an enlightening walk through the labyrinth, the meals and the comfortable accommodations. Through it all we consistently hear about the "sacredness of this amazing place" and the ability to be grounded and connect with one's purpose in life.

Along with sponsoring two retreats this past year with Sister Rose Mary Meyer on Walking the Labyrinth and Father Tony D'Souza on Discovering Awareness, we also have hosted Centering Prayer Groups, Buddhist and Yoga Workshops, Book Clubs, Quilting Clubs and Catholic, Methodist and Baptist Parish Staff Days of Reflection to name a few. The

Retreat Center is a destination for those nearby from Monument and Colorado Springs to as far away as Texas, Illinois, California and India.

No matter where you come from or what faith tradition you practice you are offered the "utmost in hospitality and kindness" as many retreatants told us. Benet Pines is a place where God can be found when you need to take the time to listen and be present.

The opportunity to meet with a spiritual director or massage therapist is also available at an additional cost.

If you have a day, a weekend or just a few hours, make it a point this year to come rest, pray and find solace and solitude with God on the grounds of Benet Pines Retreat Center at Benet Hill Monastery. To get started and help you find a time for your own "Get away with God", contact Sister Mary John and Eileen at [bpinescs@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:bpinescs@benethillmonastery.org).



Eileen Beuler, Father Tony D'Souza and Sister Mary John Thomas

*"We are very grateful for the loving hospitality of all the staff at Benet Pines. Over the many years we have been privileged to rest in the beautiful atmosphere of peace which supports our work as contemplatives of the Christian message."*

*-Joy Powell,  
Women's Writers Group  
Retreatants since 1987.*

## Development Office

by Rose Ann Barmann, OSB, Development Director

You who have been associated with Benedictines, know that Hospitality is a key value of our Monastic way of Life. Many of you have experienced a warm welcome from our sisters when you come to the Monastery or encounter them on their missions.

Stewardship is another value which, like hospitality, captures the essence of Benedictine life. On a most basic level, Saint Benedict prescribed special care and reverence of material things, "treat all goods as vessels of the altar." Benedict's vision of the use of material goods is an ideal that every Monastery strives to en flesh in their daily lives and decision-making moments. Over the past months Benet Hill Monastery has made deliberate decisions to use wisely the material goods and gifts that you, our families and friends donate to us.

With the blessings of an outstanding lay staff who are gifted with the abilities to use the latest technological advances to communicate our Benedictine Mission; and by purchasing professional software tools and a Xerox color printer/copier we now have the capability to create the Review, brochures, flyers, e-newsletters, website and videos at the Monastery. We can count on wonderful volunteers to assist us with productions and mailings. We are able to print and produce full-color materials for literally pennies per page as opposed to as much as \$1.00 a page when we outsourced our printing. In fact, this issue of the Review cost us 26 cents to produce. You can help us to continue to be even better stewards of our material goods by allowing us to "connect" with you electronically as is explained on page seven.



*If you want happiness for an hour---take a nap.  
If you want happiness for a day----go fishing  
If you want happiness for a month—get married  
If you want happiness for a year---inherit a fortune.  
If you want happiness for a lifetime—help someone else.*

”  
-Chinese Proverb

In this issue you will not find a donation envelope, but in the very near future you will be invited to contribute to our Annual Appeal in a separate mailing. You may also donate to this appeal online. Thank you and God bless you for all the good things you help us to do for God's People.

# Connections - Technology at Benet Hill

by Sandy Kinchen, Mary Kunkel

We all know that Benet Hill has been very well connected since they came to Colorado many years ago. They have been blessed with a wonderful following of friends, students, alumnae and oblates. All those whose lives have been changed by Benet Hill know that it is a resource to be cherished and continued. Now we hope to take the Benet Hill connection into the 21st century through the internet. We want to be better connected to you and share Benedictine spirituality and hospitality with an even larger community. The internet makes that possible.

This summer we launched our new website which is bold and informative. The goal for all of us was to make the website engaging, interesting and a place to visit over and over again. I think we succeeded. You will find many links that allow you to investigate the Benedictine world and history, opportunities for Benedictine vocation and answers to questions about programs and classes.



## What's new on the website?

One of the most exciting features is the scrolling announcements section titled **Benet Hill Monastery Events** located in the top half of the home page (beige colored area). Upcoming **events** and invitations from the Sisters to our Benet Hill Friends can be found here. **Cancellations** or changes to scheduled events will also be posted in this section. If you are planning a trip to Benet Hill **check this section first** to get the latest news.



## Want to Get Connected

- 1) go to [www.benethillmonastery.org](http://www.benethillmonastery.org)
  - 2) find **Get Connected** link on right hand side of page in green section
  - 3) click and fill in the form
- Sign up for e-newsletters including the Review.

## How do I register, see photos or find out about what happened at an event?

The green section at the right of the web page includes a registration link for upcoming and open events along with photos. Check here often for new postings of different happenings with the Sisters or Ministry Center.

**What's there right now?** Pictures from the Jubilee celebration, Picnic in the Pines photos and Alumnae Reunion news can be viewed. Check often, you might just see yourself.



**What is an e-newsletter?** This is a specially formatted email about a specific topic sent through the email system. It can have pictures, quotes, informational articles, poems, just about anything interesting to a person or group.

## What e-newsletters does Benet Hill send out?

**Ministries and Benet Pines Retreat Center** covers current up-to-date information on events and classes at Benet Hill. These informational notices come out once a month with special issues in the Spring and Fall of the year. **Thoughts from the Monastery** focuses on providing inspirational prayers and information on the spiritual seasons of the year.



**Do you accept donations online?** Online donations and payments for registrations are handled through our Paypal connection. Just click either the **Donate** or **Capital Campaign** button at [www.benethillmonastery.org](http://www.benethillmonastery.org). If you currently have a pledge to the Capital Campaign you can now make online payments. Online donors can designate a program or ministry if they desire in the "Please note" field on page two of the donation process. The monastery accepts Visa, MasterCard and electronic transfer.



## You Are Invited...

### **TaizePrayer Service**

#### **Trusting Tradition: Spiritual Movements of Monasticism**

4th Sunday of the month, 7:00 pm  
Experience prayer through song during this powerful service.

### **Monthly Centering Prayer**

1st Saturday of the month, 9 am-12:30 pm  
Includes centering prayer session, private reflection and a teaching.  
Donations accepted

### **Prayer with Sisters**

Sundays 8:30 am -noon  
December 12, 2010  
February 13, 2010  
A monastic morning of hospitality, prayer, reflection and worship.

*Benet Hill Monastery*  
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## Fall and Winter Workshops at Benet Hill Monastery/Ministry Center

### ***Feast of the Immaculate Conception***

***December 8, 2010***

9 am -3 pm  
Cost is \$30 includes noon prayer and lunch  
Come celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with an Advent Day of Reflection with Sister Rose Ann Barmann, OSB

### ***Forgiveness Workshop***

***February 26, 2011***

9 am - 1 pm  
Cost is \$25  
This prayer is a tool of centering prayer and offers a process for forgiving others and oneself.

### ***Oblate Winter Workshops: Liturgy of the Hours*** ***Saturday, January 29***

9 am -11 am  
Open to anyone who would like to learn about praying the Divine Office. The workshop will include such topics as why pray the office, unscrambling the terminology, the characteristics of each of the hours, and how to choose a prayer book.

### ***Winter Classes in:***

#### ***Scripture and Contemplative Vision*** ***January 6, 2011***

Watch for new classes beginning in January. Open to all who seek lifetime learning.



For more information contact  
Barbara Neilon at  
[BNeilon@benethillmonastery.org](mailto:BNeilon@benethillmonastery.org)

For more information, and to register online, visit:  
[www.benethillmonastery.org](http://www.benethillmonastery.org)

Benet Hill Monastery \* 3190 Benet Ln. \* Colorado Springs, CO 80921\* PH:719-633-0655, ext.200  
*situated in the peaceful rural woodland setting of Black Forest*