



Tidings

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY

SUMMER 2021

www.annunciationmonastery.org



Prayers and applause surround Sister Nicole Kunze on her 25th anniversary of monastic profession on June 19. (Photo credit: Deacon Joe Krupinsky)

A Conversation with Sister Nicole Kunze, Prioress, and 25-Year Jubilarian

Sister Nicole Kunze, prioress, celebrated her 25th anniversary of monastic profession with sisters, family, and friends, on June 19 at Our Lady of the Annunciation Chapel in the Benedictine Center for Servant Leadership. She shares a bit about her life before, and after, becoming a Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery:

Q: Have the past 25 years gone by quickly?

A: Yes. I've had four careers (high school teacher, graduate student, college professor, and prioress), along with the move to our current monastery in 2000. A lot of changes have taken place over those years!

Story continues on pages 3 & 4



MESSAGE FROM THE

Prioress

None of us need to be reminded that the past sixteen months have presented us with trials and challenges. Everyone experienced losses on various levels. We have weathered the storm and I believe we are coming out of it. We look forward to resuming activities and events that were postponed for our safety and the safety of others. We sisters are grateful for your care and concern for us. We pray that you and your family are well.

In June 2020, Sister Michaela Hedican of St. Benedict's Monastery gave our community retreat via Zoom. It was entitled "Heartened by Hope" and it provided us with much to reflect on and consider. In one of her sessions, she shared the thoughts of Paul Wadell, a theology professor at St. Norbert College, on Christian hope. Wadell stated, "We do not hope alone, we hope together. Hope requires companions, people who want our good and who help us along our way." We do not hope in isolation. We need to share our hopes with each other. Hope grows when it is shared. We have hopes as individuals and as a community.

Communal hope is a shared vision for the future. The hope of some can be the spark that lights the flame within another. The communal nature of hope is not so much that it imagines, but that it imagines with—it is an act of community, regardless of the size or type of community. This communal nature can be with your spouse, your family, your church community, or some other

group where there is care for the other and a common goal.

In our monastic community, we gather on Fridays to pray for rain. We pray for rain, even when rain is not in the forecast. This is hope. We place our hope in God and we trust that God will provide.

As we hope together, we need to be ministers of hope to one another and share these examples from Paul Wadell. We minister hope through acts of kindness in our daily lives—a phone call to someone living alone, running an errand for someone who is unable to do it for themselves, or making cookies for a neighbor. We minister hope when we ask another how she is doing and take time to listen to what she says. We minister hope when we forgive and allow ourselves to be forgiven. We minister hope when we affirm the dignity of each individual who comes into our lives. We minister hope when we feed the hungry and care for the sick. Wadell did not mention Saint Benedict in his article, but these examples could have come straight out of the Rule of Saint Benedict.

Ministering hope to one another is an action we should engage in at all times. Someone, whether it's a member of our family, a friend, or a stranger, is in need of the kindness each one of us can give. Let us be ministers of hope to each other.

Sister Nicole Kunze

Q: Did you have any leanings toward religious life from your childhood?

A: No, but I was blessed to grow up in a family where faith was an important part of our life. I was born and raised near Valley City, N.D. In high school, I just knew that I wanted to become a high school science teacher. As I looked at colleges, I realized I really wanted to attend a Catholic college. That was the seed that called me to ultimately choose the University of Mary.



*Sister Nicole with her parents and family before the Jubilee Mass.
(Photo credit: Deacon Joe Krupinsky)*

Q: What piqued your curiosity about religious life?

A: In college, I was aware of the sisters. I paid close attention to their vocation stories when I attended Benedictine convocations. Joining the sisters for Mass had an impact in my life. Each encounter seemed to increase that awareness of God's call in my life. In my sophomore year, I had Sister JoAnn Krebsbach as a theology instructor. She was a great teacher and a great example of living one's faith. There was something unknown about how the sisters lived and I was open to learning more. At the end of my sophomore year, my friend and I attended a "Come & See" weekend at the monastery. I remember calling my mother that Sunday evening and telling her I could really see myself doing this.

Q: How did your family react to your interest in religious life?

A: Well, they know that I take time making decisions. A few months after my weekend retreat, I became an affiliate of Annunciation Monastery. This was much more quickly than I would usually make such a life-changing decision. I think it took my family some time to realize the gift of monastic life and how the sisters were ordinary people who enjoy doing the same things other people do. My family spent time with the sisters. We prayed and had meals with the sisters. I think that was a turning point for them and for me. They started to understand the richness and rhythm of this life of prayer and community. My parents expressed their support for me in a letter that I received while on a retreat. They ultimately want me to be happy. Now my family feels right at home here and is a part of our monastic family.

Q: Did your professional goals change once you became a sister?

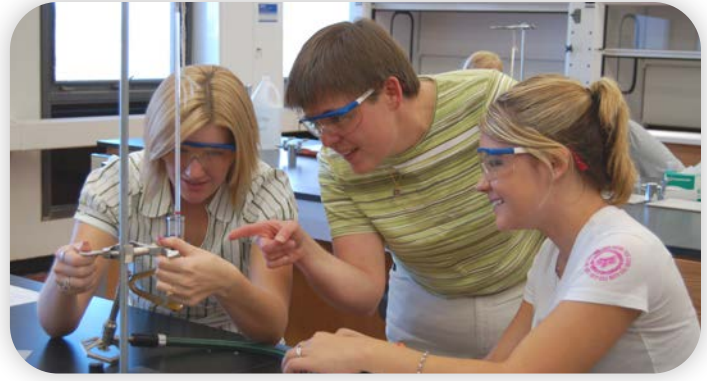
A: Yes and no. My love of teaching was sealed after teaching biology and chemistry for five years at St. Mary's Central High School. I wanted to get an advanced degree so I could teach at the University of Mary someday. The sisters were so supportive while I attended the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. During those five years, I missed the sisters and the rhythm of monastic life. Thank goodness for email and letters from the sisters. They encouraged me and prayed me through earning my Ph.D. in chemical education. Several sisters came to my graduation. It was a great experience and I was so happy to come home again. I fulfilled my dream to teach at the University of Mary and became associate professor of chemistry, following in the footsteps of my former professor, mentor, and friend, Dr. Marla Behm.



*Sister Nicole graduated with a
Ph.D. in chemical education.*



Sister Nicole teaching experiments at St. Anne's Grade School during Catholic Schools Week.



Sister Nicole taught chemistry at the University of Mary.

Q: Did it ever occur to you that you might be elected prioress someday?

A: I was always open to serving the community in whatever way was needed. I am honored that my monastic community placed their trust in me. When I think of the opportunities I've had to further my education, develop my gifts and leadership skills, I am so thankful for choosing this vocation. Sometimes others affirm us by naming gifts we don't even realize we have.

Being prioress has allowed me to get to know many of the sisters in a deeper way than I ever would have. I've occasionally asked myself the question, "What do I have to offer these women who have many more years of experience than I do?" Yet, I am affirmed that I do have something to offer. We learn from one another.



Sister Nicole, Prioress of Annunciation Monastery

Q: With your busy and challenging role as prioress, how do you stay grounded?

A: My personal prayer is an anchor in my life. Taking time for exercise each day is critical. I get up at 5:00 a.m. each day to exercise. I try to spend time outdoors in the evening on the deck to read, work, journal, or listen to the Twins games.

Q: What would you tell women who are considering a call to religious life?

A: I want them to know that this way of life is a life worth living because it is a unique way to seek God with others in community. I have had opportunities to travel abroad and have been able to serve throughout the U.S. and beyond. These are experiences that may not have been open to me had I chosen another path. As I get older, I realize the horarium (schedule/routine) in monastic life is a gift, rather than a restriction. This has become more evident to me in the last five years. The gift of sharing our life of prayer, community, and service, is a blessing.

Q: What are your hopes for the future of the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery?

A: It is my hope that our monastery will continue to be a place offering radical hospitality to all who come here. Whether that is a woman discerning vowed membership, lay women and men considering our oblate program, people looking for a quiet space for reflection, or associates from our sponsored institutions seeking an opportunity to experience the Benedictine values, in each case we are receiving all as Christ and assisting them in whatever way we can. The exchange is mutual. That was a lesson I learned during the pandemic. Monastery guests give us so much more than I think we give them.

The Ministry of Cooking

Mealtime is significant in the life of a family, the same goes for the monastic community. The kitchen table is a place where we come together to reconnect with one another and share thoughts, news, and recommend books or readings, while enjoying a nourishing meal. One of the guiding principles of monastic life is to pray together and eat together.

The cooks at Annunciation Monastery play a key role in Benedictine hospitality. Rhonda Kay Schaff and Renee Bonn have worked in the kitchen for over a year and recently RaeLynn Droog (Rhonda's sister) was added to the team.

Rhonda enjoys the peaceful, relaxed pace of working at the monastery. "We have all worked in kitchens before and our personalities just work well together. We have gotten to know the sisters so it kind of feels like cooking for family."

RaeLynn says she appreciates attending Mass with the sisters when she works weekends. "It's a nice break to go to Mass and spend time with them in prayer."

Rebeca Rhoads supervises this great team of cooks. "I couldn't ask for a better team of people," she explains. "They work so well together and always provide beautiful meals for the sisters and guests."



*In Loving Memory
of Renee Bonn*

*Remembered with love
and prayer, always.*



*Monastery dietary team: RaeLynn Droog, Rhonda Kay Schaff, Rebeca Rhoads, and Renee Bonn
(Tragically, Renee passed away on May 18.)*

Gratefully Benedictine

**Each year our sisters talk about being gratefully Benedictine at the Benedictine awareness convocation at the University of Mary. Brother Symeon Rubbelke, monk of Assumption Abbey and student at the University of Mary, shared his thoughts this year. *Used with permission.*



What exactly is it about the Benedictine way that I am so grateful for it? At first glance, I cannot put my finger on it, kind of like my attraction to Assumption Abbey. When I think of the Benedictine charism, I suppose the simplest way for me to describe it is to fall back on past training.

Imagine, if you will, a vigorous chokecherry sapling, growing in the middle of a field. A skilled botanist notices it on his land and grafts a vigorous branch onto it of a different, exotic cultivar. The grafted tree thrives. Over the years, the tree spreads its roots and the botanist continues grafting different branches. The taper at the trunk from the wind grows wide, the branches differ greatly, some with thorns, some smooth, some with large buds, some with small, the leaves differing in texture and color. Spring proves incredible with all the different flowers, and the fruits of great variety for all occasions in their due seasons. Branches are pruned at the will of the botanist, and during the dormant seasons, the tree looks lifeless.

To me, this is the monastic life. God chose this monastery in this place, grafting, pruning, fertilizing and watering as he sees fit. Each Benedictine related spiritually, yet distinct, grafted into the life in common, and it takes time for the graft to take. Once imbibing of this same sap, each monk flowers with the particular perfume and fruits in its due season, giving seed for others to plant (if they so deserve it). Rooted in the Rule and the same three vows—obedience, stability, *conversatio morum*—it draws the food and water of the place planting, letting the sun, wind, and weather, shape its form of life, taking on the flavor of the land.

I suppose the details seem so plain and repetitive. I find it quite amazing how life-giving and beautiful it all is. Benedictines eat, sleep, work, and pray. Benedictines experience boredom, rapture, sorrow, irritation, and joy. The life is overall pretty normal, yet at the same time, profound. And the mystery keeps unfolding, as deeper we grow into knowing the life. It's ordinary, so much so, you might say it is extraordinary.

This is how I'm most gratefully Benedictine. Just as a grafted tree, rooted in the ground, bears fruit, so does an ordinary life lead to an extraordinary conversion.

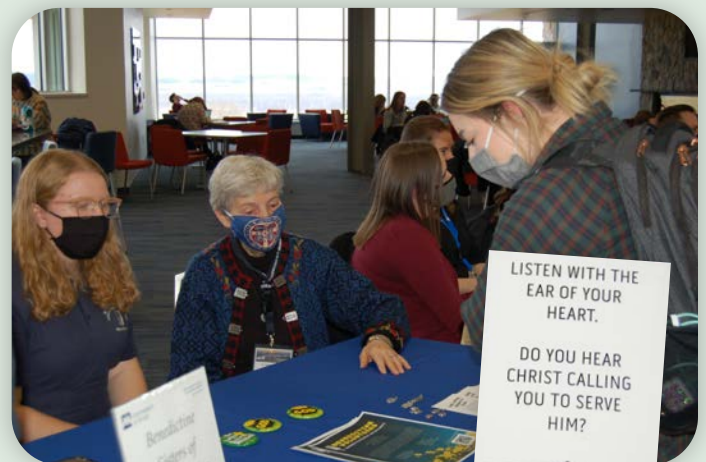
Sister Nancy Miller Oversees Mission Integration at CHI St. Alexius Health

CHI St. Alexius Health has hired Sister Nancy Miller as the new Mission Integration Director at CHI St. Alexius Health. A member of the Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery, who sponsor CHI St. Alexius, Sister Nancy has also served as a Board Member at the hospital for 13 years.



As Director of Mission Integration, Sr. Nancy is tasked with fully integrating CHI St. Alexius Health's mission and values as well as its heritage, ethics, and identity into the medical environment.

Sister Mariah Dietz served in Mission Integration at CHI St. Alexius Health for eight years prior to her retirement in 2020. Now retired, but as active as ever, Sister Mariah enjoys working at the monastery switchboard, visiting with the sisters, and volunteering at the CHI St. Alexius Health archives and gift shop. Sister Mariah is grateful to have more time to devote to deepening her prayer life and cooking for the sisters of St. Alexius Convent. Thank you for your service, Sister Mariah!



Sisters Idelle Badt, Marena Hoogland and JoAnn Krebsbach visit with University of Mary students at the Vocations Jamboree in March. Is God's voice tugging at YOUR heart?



Art & Social Justice

A January 15 artist reception at the Bismarck Arts and Galleries Association (BAGA) was warm and lovely. It featured the beautiful creations by Sister Nancy Gunderson of Annunciation Monastery and breathtaking white, intricate sculptures by Bradford Hansen-Smith. Sister Nancy’s brilliantly colorful world of Australian birds, flowers, and icons offered a glimpse into a warm and welcoming paradise. These exhibits were on display at BAGA in January and February 2021.

Sister Nancy’s “Save the Children” art quilt was accepted into the North Dakota Human Rights Arts Festival. The art festival has been traveling to art galleries around the state.

“I created this social justice piece because my heart aches when I think of the children held on our border and immigrants who risked their lives to get here by foot and by water. I created the piece to show the contrast of what we as a country promise—to the current reality.”

‘On the background of the quilt is a shadow of the Statue of Liberty, a welcoming symbol to immigrants arriving in the United States. Lady Liberty has watched over the New York Harbor since 1886. On her base is a tablet inscribed with words of Emma Lazarus in 1883. The poem portrayed the Statue of Liberty as “Mother of Exiles.” These words are written in the foreground of the piece. They are the hope, and now failed promise, of those arriving at our borders.’



‘Behind the bars are children from diverse countries seeking safety and asylum. They are peering through the bars, begging to come into the United States relying on the hope the Statue of Liberty holds out to them. The Statue of Liberty stands in the background as a sharp contrast to the reality of children taken away from parents at our borders and held in fences and cages.’

‘May this piece not only create an awareness, but inspire a prayer and social action to once again be a welcoming country and protector of children.’

In other environmentally conscious pieces, Sister Nancy artfully illustrates the devastation caused by climate change. She shares the story of her Meadowlark art quilts:

LAMENTATION:

A Lone Meadowlark Remembers

The meadowlark remembers...
when the sky was blue and it joyfully sang in the
warmth of the morning sun

The meadowlark remembers ...
when the prairie, now parched and cracked by drought,
was green and insects buzzed in the grass and
pheasants hid in its waving lushness

The meadowlark remembers ...
when the ribboned algae stream once bubbled and
gurgled and challenged its contained boundaries.

The meadowlark remembers ...
when the browning pines at the foothills boasted of
green and their needles emanated a pleasing fragrance

The meadowlark remembers ...
when it wasn't the lone bird carrying the story

The meadowlark remembers ...
when its song was not a lament in scorching sun

The meadowlark remembers.

~poem and art quilts by Sr. Nancy Gunderson, OSB



On March 13, Sister Nancy Gunderson taught a class full of participants at the Capital Quilters National Quilting Day event at the North Dakota Heritage Center. The quilters learned from Sister Nancy and each other about painting and outlining the Meadowlark design and free form stitching.



Standing rt. to lt.: Sisters JoAnn Krebsbach and Agnes Reinert. Seated rt. to lt.: Sisters Ruth Margaret Karabensh and Gemma Peters.

Sisters Celebrate 60 and 70 Years of Monastic Profession

Marking their 60th anniversaries of monastic profession are Sister JoAnn Krebsbach and Sister Agnes Reinert. Celebrating 70 years of monastic profession are Sister Gemma Peters and Sister Ruth Margaret Karabensh. They will celebrate in a private celebration with the monastic community in August.



Sister JoAnn Krebsbach grew up in Washburn, N.D. She admired the sisters who came to Washburn to teach catechism and eventually chose to become one of them. She made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1961. Sister JoAnn received her Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy-Theology, Social-Behavioral Science from the University of Mary in 1965 and did Graduate Study in English at the University of Nebraska and in Theology at Notre Dame University. She earned her Master of Science in Education from Northern State College and a Master of Ministry, with an emphasis in spirituality, from Seattle University.

Sister JoAnn taught elementary and junior high students for twelve years and enjoyed serving as religious educator and youth minister at Corpus Christi Parish, Bismarck. She was subprioress for three years before becoming an Associate Professor at the University of Mary, where she taught and served as chair of the university's Philosophy/Theology Division. She served as subprioress of Annunciation Monastery from 2008 to 2016. Sister JoAnn is a member of the University of Mary's Board of Trustees and the Annunciation Monastery monastic's council. As affiliate director and member of the vocation committee, she assists with the Benedictine Volunteer program.

"These past 60 years have been life-giving," says Sister JoAnn. "I find fulfillment in our daily prayer and living in monastic community with so many inspiring and faithful women."



Sister Agnes Reinert was born in Mott, N.D. When she was in high school, one of her teachers asked her to write down three choices for her professional life, she easily wrote, "nurse, teacher, sister." little did she know God would call her to be all three of those choices and would one day be celebrating her 60th Jubilee as a Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery.

Sister Agnes made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1961. She graduated from the University of Mary nursing program and served at St. Alexius Hospital (now CHI St. Alexius Health) as a registered nurse. She was an instructor for students in the licensed practical nurse program at St. Alexius. Her ministries include a variety of nursing positions at St. Alexius and Garrison Memorial Hospital and as chaplain of those hospitals. As chaplain, she was an instructor for students enrolled in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). She earned her master's in theology from St. Louis, Mo.

Sister Agnes served as an instructor of courses in Theology at the University of Mary and was a volunteer law enforcement chaplain for the Bismarck Police Department for nine years. This ministry allowed her to comfort and pray with others during times of great need. She served as outreach pastoral care for the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit for 15 years where she also facilitated weekly Bible study and taught CCD. Sister Agnes enjoys her current ministry as chaplain at CHI St. Alexius Garrison. She visits patients, residents, and staff and is available for spiritual support as needed. She offers communion and prepares the chapel for weekly Mass. Sister Agnes is also a certified spiritual director. She says, "Prayer, community and service are primary values for me. These values maintain and sustain my relationship with God, with community and with persons in the broader community."



Sister Gemma Peters grew up on a farm near Rugby, N.D. Sister Gemma says her family life centered around faith, church, country school and relatives. Family prayer was a constant in her childhood. Sister Gemma's first yearnings to become a sister came after her experiences with the Benedictine sisters who came to teach vacation Bible school. She was touched by their joy, concern for others, and their complete giving.

Sister Gemma made her first profession on July 11, 1951. She received her Bachelor of Science in education from Minot State University, Minot, N.D, where she majored in elementary education and minored in speech pathology. Sister Gemma pursued Graduate Study in Education from DePaul University, Chicago, Ill, and Clark College, Dubuque, Ill. She earned a Master of Religious Education from Seattle University, Seattle, Wash. She was well-prepared for her ministries as elementary teacher at Cathedral Grade School, Bismarck, N.D., and at St. Patrick School in Dickinson, N.D, where she also served as principal. She was also principal of Christ the King School, Mandan, N.D., and later went back to teaching at the Trinity School System in Dickinson and St. Mary's Elementary School in Bismarck. From 1973 to 1983, Sister Gemma served in various capacities at Corpus Christi Parish in Bismarck as religious education coordinator, pastoral minister, church choir, and as religious education neighborhood program director.

Her love of teaching and growing in faith served her well as she worked in initial formation for Annunciation Monastery, and as an assistant professor at the University of Mary. She is a spiritual director and worked from 1999-2018 as the monastery coordinator of guest ministry. She has led countless retreats and tours, is known for her bread baking, and her love for God and nature.

She recalls, "After I became a sister, I realized I was not doing something for God and His people. I realized that I am not doing, but being. I am called to BE God's presence—to reveal His love, care, joy, and compassion to those I meet. God is real and present."



Sister Ruth Margaret Karabensh grew up in Sweet Briar, N.D. As a child, she attended country school. While at Mass, she was curious about the sisters who walked single file into church every day. When Sister Bernadette Fischer approached her about becoming a sister, she was surprised. The thought had already been brewing in her heart. At the age of 20, she knew God was calling her to religious life. She made her first monastic profession on July 11, 1951.

Since becoming a Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery, Sister Ruth Margaret has had varied ministries. She worked as an aide in pediatrics at St. Alexius Hospital. Her other ministries included making altar breads, sewing, laundry, housekeeping, dishwashing and food service, driving, and welcoming guests to the monastery. She served as director for the work-study program at Priory High School, as an aide for the laboratory and physical therapy at Garrison Memorial Hospital, Garrison, N.D., and in housekeeping and food services at the San Raphael Mission in Tucson, Ariz.

Reflecting on her years as a sister, Sister Ruth Margaret notes how she has grown in faith, patience, and wisdom. She says, "Happiness and peace of heart have to come from within and is deepened by prayer." With 70 years of using her gifts and experience to serve the monastic community and others, she exemplifies this happiness and peace.

SNAPSHOTS

In February our Sisters sponsored and served at "The Banquet" a free community meal offered at Trinity Lutheran Church. Thank you to all who serve at this incredible event.

Pictured are Sister Agatha Muggli, Sister Gerard Wald, and Sister Janet Zander.



Several of our sisters visited students at Cathedral Grade School during Catholic Schools Week. The sisters read stories to the children and answered questions about what life is like as a Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery. Pictured to rt.: Sisters Kathleen Atkinson, JoAnn Krebsbach, Krista Ferrell (library aide at the school), Idelle Badt, Rosemary DeGracia, Mariah Dietz, and Agatha Muggli.

Congratulations to the University of Mary hockey team on winning the national hockey championship!



A few hockey players came to the monastery to share their experience and their trophy with the sisters and Father Anthony Baker.



A weekend in April brought the wonderful young women of Scholastica Hall (University of Mary) to St. Alexis Convent for a weekend retreat of prayer, sharing, crafting, and singing. Two of them became Benedictine volunteers at the monastery this summer.

Meet Our Benedictine Volunteers!

A Note From Sister Marena, director of the Benedictine Volunteers Program

“The sisters should serve one another...for such service increases reward and fosters love.” Each Saturday, we hear these words at the conclusion of evening prayer as Sister Nicole blesses our weekly service to one another. Taken from the Rule of Benedict, these words remind us of one of the core tenets of monastic life: to see, receive, and serve all as Christ. For the last two months, we have been blessed with the opportunity to share this lifestyle with three young women who participated in our Benedictine Volunteers program.

Established in 2015, Benedictine Volunteers continues to evolve to serve the needs of women looking for time and space to discern their next steps in life. Some women who have completed the program have returned to the workforce; some have gone on to continue their education. When I first came to the monastery as a volunteer in 2017, I wasn't consciously discerning religious life, but here I am nearing the completion of my second year as a sister in first profession.

The program's vision is to inspire a spirit of service and discernment by which each volunteer fully realizes the unique call God has placed in her heart to joyfully animate the world with God's love, compassion, and justice. On May 3, we welcomed our first ever group of women to participate in our “Summer Volunteer Experience,” specifically designed for women attending the University of Mary. This nine-week program gave these women the chance to experience monastic life, while engaging in a variety of volunteer placements at the monastery and in the Bismarck area.

Some highlights around the monastery have included Teresa's attentiveness and reverence as assistant sacristan, Sophie's listening ear and caring heart for our aging sisters, and Davin's sharing her gifts of music (playing the violin and singing) and baking (even Sister Hildegard complimented Davin's lemon bar recipe!), not to mention group activities such as serving at Ministry on the Margins and gardening. It has been such a wonderful experience to share in the lives of these women, to watch them grow in community with the sisters and with one another, and to enjoy the life and energy they have brought into our home.

As we near the end of their time in our program, we see this is not the end of our time together, but rather as only the beginning of a lifetime of love and friendship. Thank you for serving with us, and with St. Benedict, we pray, may you prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life.

»» **Sophie Lelemsis shares:** *“Since arriving at Annunciation Monastery on May 3, I have received much. It has been eye-opening to spend time with the sisters and a gift to live their beautifully structured life. I have been introduced to their humor (such as the witty Sister Joseph throwing an orange at me and the loving*



Sister Marena Hoogland (second from left) directs the Benedictine Volunteers Program at Annunciation Monastery. With her are three Benedictine volunteers. Lt. to rt.: Sophie Lelemsis, Sister Marena Hoogland, Davin Jarvela, and Teresa Twichel

sarcasm of Sister Denise). My time here has been a beautiful lesson in growing in dependence in God by dependence on the sisters. By living with a community of women I did not know very well on my arrival, I have been put in situations where I come to see that I am not always right. Whether a sister is telling me I have honey butter on my nose, toothpaste on my chin, or need some friendly correction about something I could do differently, there is the chance for me to experience the freedom of knowing my littleness—and to know that oftentimes others know what is best for me more than I do. The friendly corrections are done with charity and gentleness and have been a gift. I am thankful for what God has been doing for me through these loving and attentive sisters.”

»» **Davin Jarvela shares:** “I am from Minnesota’s Iron Range. In my time living and praying with the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery and participating in their rhythm of life, I’ve begun to understand what the Benedictine motto of peace truly means. I have become good friends with my fellow volunteers and thoroughly enjoy spending my days with the lovely women of this community. I can’t wait to see what the next few weeks bring, but I hate to see the time go by so fast!”

»» **Teresa Twichel shares:** “I am really enjoying my time here and getting to know the community. Throughout the week there are many different tasks that I have, some of my favorites are volunteering at Ministry on the Margins’ food pantry, working in the archives at the monastery and CHI St. Alexius Health, baking, and working in the monastic library. Each of these tasks allows me to dive into the community in different ways. I get to join in the community activities including prayers, small groups, afternoon coffee and dishes. My time here would not be the same without ‘Sunday Night Pots and Pans,’ I have come to really appreciate quality time with Sisters JoAnn and Rosemary. I have enjoyed being a Benedictine Volunteer because it has allowed me to grow and create bonds with many of the Sisters while making so many amazing memories. As Sister JoAnn would say, volunteering here has been “more fun than a barrel of monkeys!”



Sister Mary Walker, OSB
Born: October 21, 1939
Professed: July 11, 1961
Died: March 9, 2021

In Loving Memory

Sister Mary Walker, a Benedictine sister for nearly 60 years, had a love of learning and genuine interest in others. With master’s degrees in social work and theology, she taught for more than 20 years as assistant professor of theology at the University of Mary, years she called some of the best years of her life. Her former students remember her with great respect and fondness.

Sister Mary was an avid reader and always had recommendations for a good book or resources which she amply provided to her students, earning her the nickname “Sister Mary Handout.” In her great concern for social injustices, she advised students to “pray the newspaper.”

Remembered with fondness for her creative and prayerful spirit and grateful heart, Sister Mary will be deeply missed. May Christ bring us all together in ever-lasting life as we pray for Sister Mary’s peace in the loving embrace of God.

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UPDATE *from Ministry on the Margins*

Sister Kathleen Atkinson was presented with the American Heroes Award by the National Society Daughters of Colonial Wars on May 18 by Nancy Legerski, Honorary North Dakota State Regent. The award is “In appreciation of those who embody the virtues of duty, courage, and sacrifice in service to their home, community, and country.”

Sister Kathleen shares this award with the sisters, employees, supporters, and the many volunteers, at Ministry on the Margins, who unwaveringly met the needs of those living on the margins, especially during the pandemic.



Thank you!

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the First International Bank & Trust! A \$10,000 Live First Community Grant was presented to Sister Kathleen Atkinson for Ministry on the Margins. Thank you, First International Bank & Trust!