



BENEDICTINE TOUCHSTONE

Summer 2007



Benedictine Nuns • St. Emma Monastery • Greensburg, PA 15601

Phone: (724) 834-3060 • Fax (724) 834-5772 • Website www.stemma.org • Email benedictinenuns@stemma.org



Prioress' Reflection

By Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB



Usually visible through the door at the M o n a s t i c Guest House, the beautifully hand-lettered calligraphy

print on the front cover graced our guests as they arrived for our Second Annual Fundraising dinner on April 14. (See center section for more photos.)

Seeing this message, guests perceive that they are entering another atmosphere, a sacred space, where they are to be welcomed as people of God.

More importantly, Benedict directs that admonition to us who seek to be closer disciples of Christ by following the practical guidelines of Benedict. What is unique about Benedictine hospitality? After all, the practice of hospitality differentiates humans and animals. People of every faith and of no faith practice hospitality.

Perhaps it is the clarity of the faith attitude that welcomes the stranger because this person is made in the image and likeness of God and therefore deserving of welcome.

People are welcomed for various reasons. Relatives and friends are invited to visit. Businesses tout their friendly service and “friendly skies” with their clients and customers. Salespeople hope to better their sales by being friendly. Jesus observed that many people were nice to the people who were nice to them.

At our recent fundraising dinner, I said that all of us came that evening to the monastery because of our God-hunger that makes us human. A monastery is a God-pointer, a place where one can meet God. A monastery is not only a special meeting place between us nuns and God but also for all who come here and God.

Who comes and how do they come? Many “come” and entrust us with their prayer requests

“Welcome Guests As Christ”

through the envelopes enclosed with these newsletters, through emails, and through phone calls. The needs of the church and the entire world are included in the General Intercessions in *The Liturgy of the Hours* and during the Prayers of the Faithful in the Eucharist.



A monastery is a God-pointer, a place where one can meet God. A monastery is not only a special meeting place between us nuns and God but also for all who come here and God.

An oasis in the desert of life, a monastery is a setting where people have gone for centuries to spend quality time with the Beloved of their souls, to find rest and refreshment for weary souls, to question God and to find the strength to continue living with their questions.

What happens when God’s actions confound our expectations? When the loved one we have prayed for so fervently still dies of cancer? When someone we

really trusted ruins our business? When a business closes and one is no longer the right hiring age? When one’s life has become a desert and the only markers are shifting sands?

Several years ago, a young man came to the monastery and asked to talk to someone. With his second marriage days away, he had had another awful fight with his fiancée. He thought that his basic problem was that he had grown up without any relationship with God and, therefore, the expensive and many “toys” that he had acquired did not satisfy him. What made him stop at St. Emma Monastery? He said he knew that he could find someone here to talk to about God.

A year later he stopped again—and yes, sadly, he was again divorced. He explained that since he was not a Catholic and could not go to Confession as a sacrament, he needed to sit before another human being and say to God that he was really sorry for having messed up his life.

Recently a young married woman came to our bookstore. The day before, she had miscarried her first baby after hoping for years for this gift. Even more than something special to bury this tiny, tiny baby in, she needed someone who could hear her question of “Why would God do this? We had just come to terms with the fact that we would never have children.”

There was the woman who apologized for ringing the doorbell at supper time. Just months before, she had developed a personal relationship with Jesus and now she was experiencing temptations. Did this mean that she was not sincere in her faith? She had been listening to Gospel songs, saw our sign and stopped. She was not Catholic.

“To welcome guests as Christ”—what an awesome faith opportunity and responsibility—especially for us Benedictines but also for you. Perhaps it is a way of helping bring about Jesus’ prayer that all might be one.



Come and See Weekend – July 6-8, 2007



Speaking of hospitality, this “Come and See” weekend enables Catholic women to explore the possibility that Jesus might be inviting them to “follow Him” through a monastic vocation.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to:

- Experience living a monastic life?
- Ask nuns “What is it like?”
- Meet a community whose main ministry is the monastic life?
- Name the hunger in your heart that yearns for something “more” even though you should be satisfied with what you have?
- Ask nuns “how did they really know?” that this life was for them?
- Pray, work, and interact with this community for a firsthand experience of what it is like?

If you are between the ages of 17 and 40 (and single), we invite you in the name of Jesus Christ to “come and see.”

Benedictine Nuns Daily Prayer Schedule

5:30 a.m. ~ Vigils ~ Lectio Divina I

6:30 a.m. ~ Lauds

7:00 a.m. ~ Eucharist
Terce

11:45 a.m. ~ Sext/None

5:00 p.m. ~ Vespers

7:30 p.m. ~ Compline ~ Lectio Divina II



An only child, Sr. Gaudentia heard and answered the invitation of Jesus to follow Him as a Benedictine nun in Abtei St. Walburg, Eichstaett, Germany before she was 17! In March, we celebrated Sr. Gaudentia’s 93rd birthday. On Good Shepherd Sunday, she had her 74th anniversary of monastic profession.

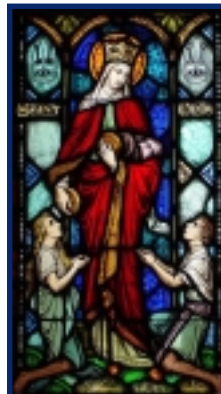
*There is no cost for this weekend.
For more information,
please call Mother Mary Anne
at 724-834-3060.*

www.stemma.org

Prayer Enrollment Cards Available

We now have available prayer enrollment cards for Birthdays, Healing and Thinking of You in addition to the Memorial Cards (for the deceased) introduced in the last issue of the *Touchstone*. Each packet contains a beautiful card for you to send or give and a form with return envelope to mail to us with the name of the individual for whom you are requesting prayers.

Suggested donation: \$10.00



*Please remember us
when revising or
making your will.*

*Our legal name is:
The Sisters of Saint Benedict
of Westmoreland County*

*Our Federal ID-# is:
75-231-104*

Second Annual Fund-raising Dinner April 14, 2007



Thank you...
to all who participated,
volunteered, or donated
to this fund-raising dinner.
The evening cleared
nearly \$23,000.





Stewards of His Gifts to Us

By Robert J. Allen

Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and us. A covenant cannot exist without God, Love, and Trust.

The life of a Benedictine Nun is a life of prayer. It is the habit of being in the presence of God and in communion with Him. Our life is in communion with God and these Nuns through their prayer for us each day at Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours. These prayers extend throughout the Church, which is His body. "Its dimensions are those of Christ's love." (The New Catechism)

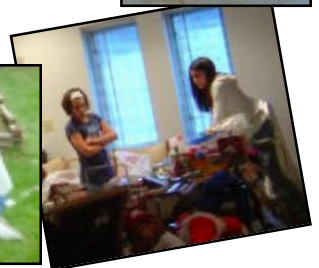
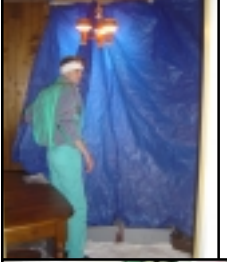
I encourage each of us to look first to the family, the first place of education in prayer. Based on the Sacrament of marriage (of covenant) the family is the "domestic church" where children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer.

As we study the person in the gospel known as "steward," we come to realize that this was the person whom the king trusted and was given very responsible duties or possession to oversee. This calls us to be stewards of his gifts to us. How do we respond? The answer is found by evaluating our practice in faith. Do we trust in God's love? Without trust and love, there is no covenant.

The Annual Appeal is an outgoing commitment of love as shown by the VOLUNTEER. They are an extension of the Benedictine hospitality to the world and all who ask for their prayers. We set aside the months of June and July to ask for your trust, love, and prayers to share with us your treasure. It is your donation that sustains us for our eternal life. There are countless ways that can draw us closer to the Lord in a deeper life of prayer to honor the covenant you have with God and the Church.

Your eye probably noticed the frame on my article before you noticed the article. These are some of the wonderful and very generous volunteers at St. Emma Monastery who make it possible for the Nuns to have NO hired help. The Nuns and the volunteers do all the regular work inside and outside at St. Emma. It is remarkable.

These pictures are worth a thousand words—and savings of thousands and thousands of dollars! These people enable you to get the best possible return on the donations that you send to St. Emma. May God bless their generosity — and yours!



2006 Income, Expenses for St. Emma Monastery:

Income:		Expenses:	
21.68%	Retreat House	13.08%	Health Insurance
13.36%	Bookstore	9.63%	Bookstore
11.39%	Capital Campaign	7.41%	Interest on Mortgage
8.10%	General Donations	6.71%	Professional Fees
5.73%	Monastic Guest House	5.97%	Capital Additions
4.49%	Misc. Donation Envelopes	4.36%	Utilities - Retreat House
4.13%	Bequests	4.36%	Utilities - Monastery
3.81%	Winter Newsletter	4.13%	Insurance
3.71%	Annual Appeal	4.04%	Kitchen/Food
2.10%	Summer Newsletter	3.88%	Development
21.51%	Other	36.42%	Other

IRA Tax-Free Giving

The IRA owner must be at least 70-1/2 years old.

- Charitable gifts must be completed by December 31, 2007
- Gifts must be made in an outright manner - gifts to fund gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts do not qualify.
- A maximum of \$100,000 per donor may be given.
- The distributiopn must be made directly from the trustee of the IRA to the charitable recipient.
- A gift from your IRA counts toward your minimum annual distribution requirement.

Source: Internal Revenue Service

Outdoor Statues



Lightweight, unbreakable polyresin outdoor statues. Shown (L-R): Our Lady of Grace, St. Joseph with Child, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sacred Heart.

Sizes: 32" and 24" • Finishes: white, granite, color

Other subjects available:

- Our Lady of Fatima • St. Francis • Immaculate Heart
- St. Jude • St. Anthony and Child • St. Therese
- Our Lady of Lourdes • Divine Mercy • St. Michael
- Our Lady of Fatima • Madonna & Child •
- St. Joseph the Worker • St. Anne • Padre Pio
- Our Lady of Mt. Carmel • St. Patrick

Prices:

	Color	White	Granite
32"	\$171.45	\$111.95	\$122.45
24"	\$89.95	\$53.45	\$59.95

Visit our Gift & Book Shop if you are looking for an outdoor concrete statue – sorry, these are not available for shipping.



A Heavenly Taste contains 226 scrumptious recipes from the monastery and retreat house kitchens as well as from those of some of our friends. A great gift for any occasion – bridal showers or holidays – or just to say “thank you” to some one you care about.

Cost per book is \$15.00 or two for \$25.00 plus shipping and handling.

Visit these websites for other fine products.

- www.blissmfg.com
- www.jeweledcross.com
- www.roman.com

Order Form: It's easy to order! Mail to: St. Emma's Monastery, 1001 Harvey Ave., Greensburg, PA 15601 • (724) 834-7483 • Fax (724) 834-5772

Payment Method

- Check Money Order
- VISA Mastercard
- Discover

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (If we have a question about your order.) _____

Need by _____



Shipping Costs	
Up to \$ 20.00	\$ 5.95
\$20.01-\$40.00	\$ 6.95
\$40.01-\$75.00	\$ 8.95
\$75.00-\$125	\$9.95
\$125.01 & up	\$10.95
NO CODs	

Item	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Price

6% sales tax, PA residents

Shipping & Handling
See chart to left

THANK YOU!

TOTAL



Golf Cart Donation

Special thanks to Bob Gaia, Pasadena, MD, who generously donated us a golf cart to ease the transportation of items to and from the Monastic Guest House and a variety of other tasks.

“Late Night Catechism”

Many thanks to Mother of Sorrows Church, Murrysville, PA, who generously thought of us as the recipient of the “collection” taken up after their “Late Night Catechism” fundraiser.

Prayer Requests & Intentions

Please use the enclosed envelope to send us your prayer requests and intentions.

Benney the Boiler Memorial Appeal Update

Our now famous Benney the Boiler is not only resting in pieces, but his memorial has underwritten his replacement and is providing for our maintenance of his sister, Winnie.

Thank everyone for coming to our aid and for your generous support of St. Emma which has raised \$32,755.25 for our maintenance budget. We are so very grateful and want to share with you some of our favorite quotes:

• *It wasn't nice to lose your boiler on the wonderful feast of Guadalupe. Maybe Our Lady was saving you from a tragedy!* – Father Donald

• *I'm so sorry to hear of the loss of your boiler. Although Jim and I didn't know him personally, we know he was a great source of warmth and a real blessing in the winter.*

– Jim and Linda

• *Your story of “Benney” touched me.* – Bob

• *Your letter establishing a “Boiler Memorial” was done with great finesse...plus requested to memorialize “Benney” your Boiler, he served you WELL!!!* – Doctor Alfred

• *You write the best letters! We pastors should take a course from you!* – Anonymous

• *What a warm friendly companion you had in Benney and is – good for you to memorialize him.* – Robert

• *Mother Mary Anne teeters on the border of being a saint and a used car salesman.* – Love, (her) brother, Cliff

Retreat Schedule 2007

For reservations, please call (724) 834-3060 or email: retreats@stemma.org

Retreat Programs

June	25-July 1	SILENT Rev. Mark Gruber OSB, \$345
August	3- 9	SILENT Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap, \$345
	24-26	Men/Women Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap, \$130
Sept	14-16	Women Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap, \$130
	21-23	Women Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap, \$130
	28-30	Silent Rev. Mark Gruber OSB, \$130
October	19-21	Women Rev. Mark Gruber OSB, \$130
	26-28	Legion of Mary Rev. Paul Robine, \$130
November	2- 4	Couples Rev. Tom Smith, \$250/couple
	9-11	Couples Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap, \$250/couple

Silent Directed Retreat

August 3-9 Rev. Mark Gruber OSB *waiting list*

Encounter with Silence

June 24-July 1 Rev. Frank Erdeljac, accommodations at Monastic Guesthouse: \$450; Retreat House \$400

Carmelite Spirituality Day of Recollection

October 7, 2007 • Retreat Master: Rev. Bede Mulligan, OCarm
8:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., \$25

Silent Auction Donor List

Abbey Press	University of Pittsburgh, Athletic Dept.
Acta Publications	Cromo di Milano
Bliss Manufacturing	Orbis Books
Lone Maple Sales & Service	Universal Designs
W.E. Jackson & Company	Holy Land Stone Company
Devon Trading Corp.	Dr. John C. Ridinger, Dentist
St. Anthony Messenger Press	Lorraine M. Doan Publishing
Sculpture by Timothy Schmaltz	Dr. Suzie Brouwer
Veritas Polska, Inc.	Farrell Electric
Printery House	David Raimondo
Paraclete Press	Marlene Sobota
Nostalgic Hymns	Sally Anne Novak
Fireside Catholic Publishing	Regis Cherry
Reinhart FoodService	Fred Belmondo
J.A. Sullivan Co.	Pauline Books & Media
Ferrante's Lakeview Inc.	Robert J. Allen
Gertrudann Tatananni	Long's Catering
Roman, Inc.	St. Vincent Seminary
Lapels	Christine Gaia-Hopper
Everyday Gourmet Bakery & Bistro	

Thank you!