Dear family and friends,

As we come to the completion of another year of Reflections, our theme for this issue is legacy of goodness. We began the year with legacy of truth, and then legacy of beauty in the last issue. These themes are rich and full of possibilities for pondering.

Goodness moves me right to people. People who are good and kind, loving and forgiving, present and enriching our lives in so many ways. Each and every one of you, our family, friends, oblates, and donors quickly come to the top of my mind. St. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 4:32, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God has forgiven you.” You are all so generous with kind words, loving acts and financial contributions. We are blessed to remember you each day as we gather to pray for the needs of the church, the world, and all of you.

I came across this little poem, “One morning I was looking out the window when a great, wild goodness came over me: I wanted to be kind to everything.” (Annie Lighthart). There is an open-hearted joy in those words. Everyone is called to this loving way to be in relationship with one another.

In the months ahead, as we continue on our journey, we will be counting on the great wild goodness of you, our family, oblates, and friends, and we will be creating goodness, kindness, and joy as we continue this phase of our journey.

In Nan Merrill’s translation of Psalm 1, goodness is reflected, “Blessed are those who walk hand in hand with goodness, who stand beside virtue, who sit in the seat of truth; For their delight is in the Spirit of Love, and in Love’s heart they dwell day and night.” (Nan Merrill, Psalms for Praying)

We are all called to a deep goodness, surrounded by our God, who is constantly present and blesses our every breath. May we and you feel this deep goodness during these days of transformation and may we keep a loving heart through it all!

Wishing you all a very joyful Christmas, filled with the goodness of our God-With-Us.

Sister Jane Hibbard, SNJM
Pastoral Administrator
Dear Friends of the Queen of Angels Monastery Community,

From the day our doors opened in 1882, this community of Benedictine Sisters has been fully committed to serving the people of Oregon, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. Throughout our long history here, and often while facing grave challenges, we have conveyed God’s presence in myriad ways. Always, we have done so with love.

It is this love that compels us to write to you today, because we face a new challenge. We ask for your prayers and understanding as we explore options with potential partners for the future of our Monastery’s property and buildings. We are having conversations with Mountain West Investment Corporation, Catholic Community Services, Father Bernard Youth Center, and the City of Mt. Angel. Whatever the future holds, it is very important that the legacy of our Benedictine ministry continue to shine forth: assisting those in need, providing hospitality and seeking the will of God in all things.

It is equally vital that we address future living arrangements for the sisters, 16 of whom currently reside at the Monastery. Along with hospitality and service to the people of God, the sisters continue to pray for people in all parts of the globe. As the planning process moves forward, the sisters are collaborating with Providence Benedictine Nursing Center and Orchard House for our future living arrangements. The sisters will begin transitioning in January, 2023. We are very grateful to be moving next door.

Our fundraising for the needs of the sisters is essential and will be ongoing, as we desire the best quality of life for each sister until she is ready to make her final journey to God.

As well, the planning process will consider our oblates, who are dedicated to carrying forth the Benedictine charism, along with the needs of the monastery staff and others who care for us day-to-day.

Please know that, at this stage, there are many questions we are not yet able to answer. We will keep you appraised as our plans develop and we know more.

We continue to count on your support, prayers and interest. At the same time, you can continue to count on us, as your intentions are at the heart of each sister’s daily prayer. We are deeply grateful for you as we move into our future, trusting God’s loving providence.

- Sister Jane Hibbard, Pastoral Administrator
As Sister Jane mentioned in her opening letter, the theme of this issue of *Reflections* is a “legacy of goodness.” We asked the Benedictine Sisters to comment on the goodness they have experienced in their life as a Benedictine.

“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced through the dedication of our oblates. Their zeal in listening to God makes me more aware of how I can continue to follow their example in seeking God with more love and an open heart to whatever God asks of me.”

– Sr. Maureen Niedermeyer

“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced, especially the many times the sisters of my community have given me assistance and help. This has been done through a kind word, a helping hand, taking time to listen, or through prayer.”

– Sr. Joseph Fennimore

“I’m grateful for the goodness in the love and care that all of our caregivers give to us in the Supportive Health Center.”

– Sr. Dorothy Rausch

“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced through the grace of God each day, through the love of family and friends, through my monastic community, and through the beautiful gifts of creation.”

– Sr. Dorothy Jean Beyer

“I’m grateful for the goodness I have experienced living in this country and our beautiful state. We are blessed to have peace and stability that many other places don’t have.”

– Sr. René Foster

“I’m grateful for the goodness of the many generous donors who have supported us throughout the many years, in our monastery and various schools and ministries.”

– Sr. Regina Rausch

“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced in the many challenges presented to me that have made me grow.”

– Sr. Angela Meister
“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced in being a part of our ministries in education as a student – elementary, high school and college – and as a teacher.”

– Sr. Donna Marie Chartraw

“I’m grateful for the goodness and generosity of our many donors. They have been great to us over the many years.”

– Sr. Rebecca Pirkl

“I’m grateful for the goodness I have experienced whenever I hold an infant in my arms, or whenever God is speaking to me through nature in a field of daffodils. God speaks to me through the people I love.”

– Sr. Susan Casey

“I’m grateful for the goodness that I have experienced being in a community of faith and love which has supported me in many ways all of these years.”

– Sr. Christine Rausch

“I’m grateful for the goodness I have experienced through prayer, teaching, the beauty of creation on this earth and the diversity of all life.”

– Sr. Joan Pokorny

“I’m grateful for the goodness in my family and friends. They have always been with me, supporting me, and supporting our entire Benedictine community”

– Sr. Marietta Schindler

“I’m grateful for the goodness in all of the caretakers and staff at the monastery. They keep the grounds beautiful and they take care of us.”

– Sr. Mechtilde Fennimore

“I am grateful for all God’s grace each day as well as for my family, friends and monastic community.”

– Sr. Alice Ann Schaefer
The New North Wing Staircase

Outside of the north wing of the monastery sits a stairwell. These steps act as a fire escape for all of the residents of the north wing, including those in the Supportive Care Center. In 2020, cracks in the brick wall that encased part of the stairwell showed potential problems with the underlying steel structure. Over the next months, various engineers, builders, and architects examined the structure and developed a plan. The structure was initially thought to be unsalvageable. However, after extensive work by The Grant Company, it was saved. All the handrails had to be rebuilt, including the addition of new slats to bring the railings up to code.

Once the structural work was completed, over 400 man hours were put in by the monastery’s outstanding maintenance crew. They worked tirelessly to sand, pressure wash, prime, and paint the stairs. Over 15 gallons of paint were used to coat the stairs, and a special top coat was added to fill in the cracks and prevent future damage to the concrete.

In the end, the project cost topped $100,000. Through various grants from amazing local community foundations, nearly the entire cost of the project was funded. We want to thank everyone who worked to make our home safer, and to all of those who financially and spiritually support us – without all of you, this wouldn’t have been possible!

Anniversary of the Dedication of the Queen of Angels Chapel

From the August 16, 2022 Homily of Father Stephen Rowan, chaplain

“The saying goes that ‘we shape our buildings, and then they shape us.’ Before this chapel was dedicated, it was designed to serve the purpose of prayer and worship, particularly for a community of Benedictine Sisters whose roots are elsewhere but who live now in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. The shaping of the chapel took this into account. For example, chairs are set to accommodate antiphonal singing – the back and forth of one community at prayer.

The organ and piano are set along the side, not drawing attention to themselves, but supporting prayer and worship. Shrines are set along a side wall that focus on the word of God, the sacrament of his body and blood, a picture that changes to fit the occasion and that in a beautiful way, assists meditation. A wall-to-wall rug, not a wooden or marble floor, fosters silence.

The presider’s chair suggests that our communal worship is convened, celebrated, and ended in an orderly way; the ambo sets apart the proclamation of God’s word, and the altar, which is also a table, is the focus of attention, because it is where the sacrifice of Christ is remembered and where communion with him is shared – just as it was with Zacchaeus when Jesus invited himself to supper. These furnishings were made from wood that was used in your previous chapel, and this signifies that the past is not only remembered with reverence, but supports your prayer and worship today. And, finally, there is the expanse of glass – not stained but clear; it is your window on the world for which you pray, which you tend as stewards, and which you make welcome through hospitality.”
The Benedictine Sisters and the oblate community welcomed new members on September 11, 2022 (pictured below, in order from left to right). First, Patricia Ames, Diane Wells, and Susan Freisinger (not pictured), were welcomed as new candidates. Then, Paul Peavy, Alice Phalan, Susan Black and Angelo Mauceri were welcomed as new oblates. Mary Hollinger was welcomed as a new oblate at her oblation on October 9. Jim Heggie (not pictured) was also welcomed as a new oblate on November 2, 2022.

The oblate website, which can be found at www.benedictine-srs.org/oblates, was recently updated. It now includes information on the oblate community, including the process of becoming an oblate, life as an oblate, and the candidacy process. The website is also home to the most current information for current oblate members. On the site you can find readings, meeting dates, and reading selections.

Interested in becoming an oblate? Contact Sister Maureen at (503) 845-2556 or visit www.benedictine-srs.org/oblates

An Oktoberfest to remember!

We would like to thank everyone who visited our booth at Oktoberfest this year. Sr. Rebecca Pirk, with the help of others, led the effort to transform the foyer into a German-themed booth complete with polka music. By the end of the four-day festival, we had only 3 of our famous buttermilk coffee cakes left. We would like to thank the Oktoberfest for their willingness to support and promote our booth even though it took visitors away from downtown. We would also like to thank all of the volunteers. We couldn’t have done it without all of you.

Remember to do your Christmas shopping at the Benedictine Sisters Gift Shop!
Open Monday through Friday, from 9am – 4pm.
840 S. Main St., Mt. Angel, OR 97362
Monthly Workshops

Supervision for Spiritual Directors via Zoom
2nd Friday, 9:30 am–11:30 am, Sep–May
$20 per person

Book Talk via Zoom & In-Person
led by Tim Nelson & Linda Jensen
3rd Saturday, 9:30 am–12 pm, Sep–June, Donation

Dream Group: Language of the Soul,
Monastery Dining Room
3rd Saturday, 10 am–12 pm, Sep–May
$20/person

Prayer of the Heart, Chapel
3rd Tuesday, 3:30–4:30 pm, All Year

The Creative-Spiritual Life Circle via Zoom
3rd Saturday, 1:15 – 2:30 p.m., September through May.

Progoff Intensive Journal Workshops via Zoom
January 11-12 (Life Context), 18-19 (Depth Context), and 25-26 (Life Integration)
9am – 5pm with breaks / $225 per session
To Register contact Evelyn Wemhoff at (503) 845-9847

Spiritual Direction
By Appointment
$60 with Sliding Scale Available
Sr. Dorothy Jean Beyer and Sr. Joan Pokorny are currently offering Spiritual Direction sessions via Zoom or in person. For more information, please contact Sr. Dorothy Jean at (503) 845-2556 or Sr. Joan at (503) 949-6284.

To learn more about these retreats, to register for a retreat or to see other upcoming events at the monastery, visit Benedictine-Srs.org or call (503) 845-2556

In Gratitude –
Thank you to all who participated in our Taize Prayer Service each month for the last 13 years – over 100 services! A Special thank you to Sr. Maureen and all of the planners and musicians. The last service will be December, 2022.

Christmas Vigil Mass
Saturday, December 24
Hymns 6:40, Mass 7:00 p.m.
Queen of Angels Chapel

Join us for hymns and Mass in the chapel, followed by a reception with hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls!

PLEASE RSVP
(503) 845-2556 or email info@benedictine-srs.org

Reflections
“Enter the New Year with Joy”
presented by Susan Black
January 7, 2023
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  Chapter Room
$55, includes lunch / Scholarships available
So many challenges exist in our individual and personal circumstances, and within our families, our communities, our state, our country, our world.
How can women and men of faith enter 2023 with joy and thus know God’s presence? How can we empower ourselves to live with joy? How can we “rejoice always”, as St. Paul urges?
This retreat is designed to help answer these questions, and more. Through discussion, reflection, art and writing experiences, prayer, music, other activities and quiet time, participants will learn how to increase their ability to live in God-given joy — and gain confidence in the power of individual personal joy to transform … everything. As St. Mother Teresa said, “I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”
Presenter: Susan Black, who also leads our monthly Zoom-based discussion group, the Creative/Spiritual Life Circle. Susan is an oblate, an artist and a writer; to learn more about her, go to the website www.BlackStarStudio.me.
Participants should bring with them a small “object of joy” — for example, a memento, a photograph or other image, a keepsake, a souvenir.

“Living the Beatitudes”
presented by Nancy Hendricks
February 11, 2023 - 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Chapter Room
$50, includes lunch / Scholarships Available
Jesus’ most important instruction to us is to love one another. In this retreat, we will delve into the Beatitudes of Jesus. We will explore how to live this teaching of love in our everyday, ordinary lives with the Beatitudes as our guide.
About the Presenter:
After a career farming vegetables and berries for over thirty years, Nancy Hendricks discerned to shift from feeding people’s bodies with food to journeying with people on their spiritual paths by leading retreats. Nancy received her Master’s in Pastoral Ministry in 2020 from the University of Portland. Nancy has been attending retreats at Shalom since the 1980s and is happy now to be able to lead retreats on a variety of topics.

“Teilhard de Chardin’s The Divine Milieu”
presented by Stephen Coffey, OSB Cam
March 3-5, 2023
3:30 p.m. Friday – 1:00 p.m. Sunday
Via Zoom
$99 / Scholarships Available
This weekend retreat will focus on Teilhard de Chardin’s masterpiece, The Divine Milieu. We will consider the major themes of this seminal work, which the Jesuit scientist and mystic wrote during his exile in China. Special attention will be paid to his cosmic Christology and the centrality of the mystery of the Incarnation in his thought. The retreat will include extended periods of lectio divina on key texts from the The Divine Milieu.
Presenter: Stephen Coffey is an ordained monk of the Camaldolese Community in California. His ministry is dedicated to spiritual direction and retreats.

World Labyrinth Day: Take Steps Together for Peace
May 6, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Outdoor Labyrinth,
West End of Shalom Building
Free
The Benedictine Sisters invite you to walk with them at their outdoor labyrinth on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 1 p.m. Please gather at the labyrinth at the west end of the Shalom building. The event will take place rain or shine!
At 12:45 p.m., there will be a brief explanation of the Peace Walk on the labyrinth. We will then walk the 20-minute Silent Peace Walk, using the format of Benedictines For Peace. Following the walk, refreshments will be served in the Benedictine Sisters’ dining room. All are welcome!

To Register for a Shalom at the Monastery Retreat:
Call the Benedictine Sisters at (503) 845-2556, or send a check payable to the Benedictine Sisters of Mt. Angel, Attn: Sr. Dorothy Jean Beyer 840 S. Main St, Mt. Angel, OR 97362 at least three days before the start of the retreat. Scholarships available, call to learn more.
Honoring Our Retired Sisters

Sr. Donna Marie Chartraw was born in Lebanon, Oregon, in 1941, and was raised in nearby Albany. She attended high school at Mt. Angel Academy as a boarding student, and entered the Benedictine Sisters’ community shortly after high school. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Mt. Angel College and a master’s degree in education from the University of Oregon.

Sr. Donna Marie served in elementary schools for 40 years, grades 1-4 and 7-8 at various times as needed, teaching in Catholic schools in Lebanon, Shaw, Silverton, Portland, Oregon City and Albany, her grade school Alma Mater where she taught 1st grade for the last 26 years of her career. She was principal in three schools. For 14 years, along with other sisters, she also taught religion classes to public school students in eastern Oregon at the end of the regular school year.

After retiring from teaching, Sr. Donna Marie worked as leader of liturgical music within her community, and then was elected prioress by her community in 2007 and served until 2015. She led the Sisters’ 125th anniversary celebration in 2007, and worked to strengthen the sisters’ monastic life and ministries. Currently, she is the assistant to the administrator and works in the community’s business office and in liturgical music ministry.

At her 60th Jubilee, Sr. Donna Marie said, “I am deeply grateful for the gift of these 60 years as a Benedictine Sister, and for all the wonderful people who have been on this journey with me in any way.”

Sister Donna Marie’s story is inspirational and extraordinary, and one of many here at Queen of Angels Monastery. Many of our sisters continue their monastic work and ministry well into their retirement years. Our monastic life and ministry during retirement is only sustained through the generosity, support and love of our friends and family.

Every gift helps. We are tremendously thankful for all of you who supported our Founder’s Day Virtual Celebration. It was a huge success. However, we continue to need and pray for your support of our monastic community. Your gift will go directly to support our elderly and retired sisters.

Our goal for this year’s annual Retirement Appeal is $100,000. This year, thanks to Richard & Joanna Kreitzberg, your gift to our retirement appeal will be matched, up to $25,000. I sincerely hope that we can count on your support to help us take advantage of this wonderful matching grant and help us reach this important goal.

We prayerfully and humbly ask that you consider a gift or pledge today to support our retired sisters. We thank you for your past generosity, your prayers and concern. Please know that we remember you and your special intentions in our daily prayers.
Thank You for an Amazing Founder’s Day Celebration!

We would like to thank each and every one of you who supported our 2022 Founder’s Day Virtual Celebration. Thanks to matching grants from the Larry & Jeanette Epping Family Foundation and Becker Capital Management, we were able to raise over $140,000 for the Benedictine Sisters, and welcome a half dozen new members to the Society of St. Benedict, our monthly giving group. We would like to send a special thank you to this year’s table sponsors:

**Presenting Sponsor:** Larry & Jeanette Epping Family Foundation

**Queen of Angels Sponsors:** Ed & Carol Johnson, Jim & Mary Kay Consor

**St. Scholastica Sponsors:** Margaret Mylet, Becker Capital Management

**St. Gertrude Sponsors:** Barbara Lenfesty & Dr. Richard Mullins, Mari Miller

**Mother Bernardine Wachter Sponsors:** Steve & Laura Holcomb, Dennis & Georgia Kutach, Hockett Farms, Inc., Stewart & Mona Hayes, Gary & Yvonne Thomas, and one anonymous donor.

**Mother Agatha Hess Sponsors:** Rae & Mathew Parlier, Sharon Miller, Jim & Judy Schaecher, Jim Butsch, Marietta Miick, Catherine & Frank Battilega, Mary Fronk, Dan & Sue Remily, Jim Huffstutter, Fran & Floyd Sperle, and Larry & Nancy Rocha

A special thank you to our in-kind sponsor, Hanson Vineyards. We would also like to thank the nearly 130 family and friends that helped make this year’s virtual event a success. Be sure to watch this year’s special Founder’s Day video on our website www.benedictine-srs.org/foundersday

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This time each year, I spread the word about remembering the Benedictine Sisters in your estate plans. The benefits of leaving gifts to nonprofits like the sisters’ monastic community is well documented. However, this year, I encourage you to look at your estate plans differently. Rather than being an instrument to plan for the future, use them as a way to mark and remember the past with gratitude.

Over the years, the sisters have touched thousands of lives through their ministries. If you are receiving this issue of *Reflections,* the sisters have most likely been a part of yours as well. I ask that you consider including in your estate plans a gift of gratitude, kindness, and remembrance of the impact the Benedictine Sisters have had on your life.

I would like to take a moment and thank our newest Society of St. Gertrude members, those who have elected to leave thank-you gifts for the sisters in their estate plans: Rosalie Weather, Ray Holden, Ann Harrington, Ed Zollner, Lisa Huber, Virginia McClure, Carol & Leonard Obersinner.

Please note: The legal title and address for the sisters is:

Benedictine Sisters of Mt. Angel
840 S. Main St, Mt. Angel, OR 97362
Tax ID #93-0387331

If you are interested in learning more about leaving a legacy gift to the Benedictine Sisters, contact Michael Trevino in the Mission Advancement Office at (503) 845-2556 or by emailing michael@benedictine-srs.org
A Prayer for the “Season of Creation”

I think a lot about Adam in the garden,
About God inviting him to name every living thing,
About God’s delight in hearing such freshly formed words—
Bobolink and badger, red finch and rhinoceros.
I think a lot about how the first act of co-creation
Was a symphony of sacred taxonomy.
And I imagine God standing with us now,
High on a precipice somewhere east of Eden,
Sharing in our sorrow as we gaze down upon devastation.
I imagine we are being called, once again, to name things,
To call them what they are:
Rising seas and rising temperatures,
Drought and wildfire, pollution and extinction.
Our call to co-creation is now a call to conservation.

Amen.