

Our wide-reaching net



We often say the support of our readers travels with us wherever we minister. Sometimes that can be quite far away from our home base in Ferdinand, Indiana. We simply strive to meet needs no matter where they are.

So in this issue you can read how Sister Rose Mary Rexing traveled to Africa to help tend to people’s healthcare needs, and how Sister Rebecca Abel travels throughout North America and to Europe sharing her expertise as a library consultant. Plus there’s a story on the recent visit to Ferdinand by all of the sisters from our monastery in Peru, and a report on Oblate Stephanie Smith’s experience at the World Oblate Congress in Rome, Italy.

Somewhat closer to home, there are articles on how Sister Donna Marie Herr helps feed the

hungry in Evansville, Indiana, and how Sister Betty Drewes provides spiritual direction in Paducah, Kentucky.

We’re also continuing to progress in Ferdinand. The contract has been signed to lease monastery acreage to Trilogy Health Services, LLC, to build a public nursing facility. The sisters will retain ownership of the land, and we will continue to provide services for our sisters in the 17-bed Hildegard Health Center in the monastery.

So welcome to another edition of what is happening with the sisters. We love keeping you up to date on how we are touching the world and planning for our future. And we certainly love your involvement in helping make it all possible.

Sr. Barbara Lynn Schmitz, OSB

Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz, OSB
Prioress



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Mission: We, the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, are monastic women seeking God through the Benedictine tradition of community life, prayer, hospitality, and service to others. By our life and work, we commit ourselves to be a presence of peace as we join our sisters and brothers in the common search for God.



Seeing Christ in the poor

by Greg Eckerle

Helping the poor has long been a passion for Sister Donna Marie Herr.

As the coordinator for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry & Office of Emergency Assistance in Evansville, Indiana, the past 10 years, she is in a great spot to assist those in need.

Even in her prior 37-year stint as a teacher at Evansville's Mater Dei High School, she often promoted the need to help others. "I tried to teach the students to live out their faith as being the hands that feed, as Jesus did," she says. "He lived for 33 years, then entrusted that same mission to us. We are the hands and feet of Christ now."

And when it comes to feeding the poor, Sister Donna Marie steadfastly follows her approach of recognizing the presence of Christ within each person.

A powerful passage written by a long-time St. Vincent de Paul official she knew is always in her thoughts. He wrote it just before he died of cancer: "For the past 50 years, we've kept people's lights on, kept their homes warm, we've kept food in their refrigerator, and we keep our mouth shut about their names. For us, their name is Jesus Christ."

And one of her favorite illustrations depicts Christ in a bread line, in between several poor people awaiting some food. When describing

the drawing, she quickly mentions the related gospel words of Christ: "what you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me." She acknowledges it's a challenge for some to recognize that, but she personally feels it a privilege to serve in that way.

The prayer Sister Donna Marie leads pantry volunteers through twice a day, five times a week, strongly echoes the same theme: "Lord Jesus, you who willed to become poor, give us a heart directed toward the poor; Help us to recognize you in them – in their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune. Strengthen us, so that we may serve you in them . . ."

She uses the prayer to propel herself and pantry volunteers into the right frame of mind for the day, reminding them to continually recognize Christ in their clients. The volunteers do that so well that Sister Donna Marie says, "One of the greatest joys I have is just watching the hospitality of our volunteers towards those who come in. That truly makes this a dream ministry for me. I am having the time of my life."

The pantry, which relies entirely on donations and grants, hands out free food, a personal hygiene item, a housecleaning item, and toilet paper to about 2,800 extremely low-income people every month. Recipients are limited to a 3-day food supply every 30 days.

Above: Sister Donna Marie Herr hands a prayer card to a volunteer before their normal prayer to start a work day.



Sister Donna Marie Herr carries a shipment of eggs into the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in Evansville, Indiana.

The Office of Emergency Assistance fields up to 600 referrals monthly for people with a variety of urgent needs – anywhere from meeting utility bills to paying rent to getting any kind of furniture for their bare apartment. A volunteer force of nearly 100 keeps the operation humming, with most working a half-day every week. Besides providing financial assistance and food, Sister Donna Marie points out the organization also offers the gift of friendship and a listening ear.

Sister Donna Marie particularly savors the times when clients realize a volunteer has a "listening heart" and they share their struggles, and sometimes ask for prayers. One desk volunteer keeps a journal of people's prayer intentions. Some of the entries provide a sobering reality of what customers are dealing with –

- That I can get my life back on track
- Finally left extremely abusive husband, but can't keep up financially
- Pray for our family to stay together, for my mom to stay strong so we can keep our home
- To get a good paying job and to get our own home
- For healing for my daughter who is deeply angry
- For my son who is in jail and is going to be sentenced to prison time
- For me, a single father with custody of 6 children
- That my MS won't progress and that I don't end up in a wheelchair

Sister Donna Marie talks about a man who arrives every fourth Wednesday. He is quite talkative, but has an extreme

speech impediment and is difficult to understand. He normally appears an hour before the doors open, and Sister Donna Marie delights in going out to see him every time. Because she knows Christ is in him, too.

Just as she knows Christ is in the others who show up -- grandmothers raising grandchildren, the disabled, people just released from prison, the man with the shell of a push lawn mower on which to lay his food, the ones who can only get there by walking or riding bicycles, and the ones who are upset that the services are for emergency help, and not for regular income.

She tells the story of a volunteer registering a young man from Texas, who moved to live with his grandmother after his father died. Spotting the cross he was wearing, the volunteer asked why he wore it. He said it reminded him to always have hope. The volunteer told him to never give up, to keep that hope alive. Sister Donna Marie beamed after hearing that interaction, typical of the volunteers' compassion and hospitality.

She also saw the time a mother came with three children. A referral desk volunteer noted one daughter's birthday was the next day. The volunteer asked if she would like a birthday cake. Tears instantly rolled down the eyes of the mother.

"One of the great delights for me is to witness the compassionate service exhibited routinely by our volunteers," says Sister Donna Marie. "It's very touching for me."

"We meet emergency needs, and try to do things to improve clients' lives."

Her own caring heart is quickly noticed by others.

Vicki Eichmiller, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul, says, "Sister Donna Marie has a way of making people feel calm, when she is kind and loving and brings a peace to things. Some people get agitated at the situation (they're in), but I've never seen anyone get upset with her."



Sister Donna Marie places food onto a shelf at the food pantry.



Sister Donna Marie unloads food from a delivery van.

“Because of her devotion to the pantry, we have received some wonderful bequests. I believe it’s a reflection of the time she takes to write personal thank you cards and to make everyone feel special. She does a volunteer (recognition) week here (annually). She makes it such a family environment that she has a waiting list for people to volunteer. It’s really incredible. Volunteers love to come here, and they’ve often said it’s because of Sister Donna Marie.”

Volunteer Erma Pfeiffer says of Sister Donna Marie: “She is definitely a role model; she helps everyone. I don’t think she ever misses a funeral for volunteers’ families. She never seems unhappy.”

Another volunteer, Mary Damm, notes how hard Sister Donna Marie works. “No grass grows under her feet. She’s so calm and always so appreciative (of the volunteers). Even when some (customers) come in and get nasty, she’s able to cool them down.”

Besides selecting the volunteers, Sister Donna Marie coordinates their schedules, and helps train them on office procedures and the computer program. She orders and processes incoming food, and writes personalized thank you notes for every donation the facility receives.

One of her favorite beliefs is that people may not remember what you did for them, but will remember how you made them feel. She readily compliments volunteers on such behavior toward clients.

“I especially try to affirm people when I see that they really have a caring heart for people,” she says. “It’s a beautiful thing to observe. I’m privileged to see how our volunteers treat others. Another really neat thing that I see here is the community that forms among the volunteers. When I pick substitute volunteers, I try to choose someone I feel will be comfortable in that group. Simply, our operation would never be possible without the volunteers.

“One of the office volunteers told me, ‘It means so much to me to come here. It puts everything in perspective. This is the highlight of my week.’”

Sister Donna Marie was honored in 2017 by receiving Leadership Evansville’s Celebration of Leadership Award. She was nominated by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Evansville, which wrote in its nomination letter, in part, “. . . when we hired her for manager . . . was the day that our pantry was blessed. . . . With her personality, a job that would be hard for most people, for her is common. . . . Sister Donna comes to us with her dedication to her Benedictine background . . . What an inspiration (she is) to us . . . “

Eichmiller says Sister Donna Marie is “a picture” of having people remember how one makes them feel. “She always has a smile and asks what she can do for me. People know that she made them feel special, loved, and cared for. She is a role model (for volunteers interacting with clients). She makes people feel comfortable. I’ve had people say, ‘Sister knows my name.’ That just warms my heart, when you work with people and make them feel like people, and not just a number. It’s pretty special. She runs a tight ship, but does it in such a kind and loving way that she makes it easy for people to want to be here.”

Volunteer Bob Wathen wholeheartedly agrees.

“She truly exemplifies everything of giving. She is very willing to do anything necessary to make sure these people are accommodated with food. She’s just a wonderful woman. She never misses a birthday card, and always has a little gift for you. She knows the candy bar you like. She’s always decorating for the seasons.

“I’ve never seen her upset. She’s what you aspire to be. Calm and receptive. If the world was like Sister Donna, we wouldn’t have any problems.”■



Sister Donna Marie sorts through incoming food.

The heart of hospitality

by Sister Briana Elisabeth Craddock, OSB



One of the most fitting comments someone recently made about one of our sisters was, “She makes her heart a home.” Those few words accurately sum up the concept of Benedictine hospitality.

As young Benedictines, we are taught the value of hospitality and its centrality to the Benedictine culture both through reading/study and through the example of our senectae – wise elders – in community. Since all of us come from different backgrounds, all of us have different concepts of hospitality. For some, receiving guests means cleaning the house and setting the table with fine china. For others, it means offering a soft drink and a snack to everyone who walks through the door. For still others, it means setting up a comfortable place in which the guest can be himself or herself without feeling awkward.

Striving to help people feel welcome, comfortable, sheltered, and well-fed is only one part of Benedictine hospitality. Ultimately, it is about welcoming the other person as Christ. In chapter 53 of the Holy Rule, St. Benedict tells us three times of the way in which guests should be received:

“All guests are to be welcomed as Christ, for he himself will say “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” (RB 53:1)

“By a bow of the head or by a complete prostration of the body, Christ is to be adored because he is indeed welcomed in them.” (RB 53:7)

“Great care and concern are to be shown in receiving poor people and pilgrims, because in them more particularly Christ is received; our very awe of the rich guarantees them special respect.” (RB 53:15)

While Benedictine hospitality calls us to welcome all people as Christ, and to remember that what we do for others we do for Christ, it also calls us to put on the heart of Christ as we receive others.

In the New Testament, we are given countless examples of Christ’s heart. In the gospels, we hear of Jesus reaching out to the people who are most on the margins: the poor, the sick, the stranger, the outcast, the widow, the sinful. In each of the stories, we hear of Jesus taking notice, reaching out, healing, and comforting. The loving reception and recognition of the other seems to be what the person recognized in one of our sisters.

The heart of Christ is open and non-judgmental, grateful, welcoming, compassionate, faithful, prayerful, loving, and generous. Hospitality is part of the Benedictine culture, but all of us are called to have the heart of Christ. We are called to make our hearts homes, to welcome all we encounter wherever we are – in church, at the grocery store, in a restaurant, in an airport, at a ballgame.

As we continue to strive to live the gospel, let us reflect on the following question: “How do I make my heart a welcoming home for others?” ■



Sister Rose Mary “dances with grace” on Uganda trip

by Greg Eckerle

The way God's grace works may never have been more evident than on a recent group mission trip that Sister Rose Mary Rexing took to Uganda in East Africa.

Sister Rose Mary, executive director of mission integration at Memorial Hospital and Health Care Center in Jasper, Indiana, was part of an 18-member team whose mission was to extend God's love to impoverished areas through free medical care.

The way it played out brought tears of joy to a lot of eyes.

One Ugandan woman, told her HIV test was negative, dropped to her knees and praised God.

Another woman, fitted with glasses for the first time, exulted, “I can read my Bible now!”

Many found instant relief from long-aching or abscessed teeth.

One Ugandan man didn't need medical help; he came just wanting to pray with someone. A few people motioned to Sister Rose Mary, who formed a circle of people, joined hands, and led a prayer.

Catholics often prayed with Muslims, knowing they both shared the God of Abraham.

When the medical teams arrived in the mornings in remote areas, the waiting patients started clapping in appreciation. A fellowship created in spirituality helped each other.

Surely God's grace was at work – on both sides.

The mission crew included an obstetrician/gynecologist, optometrist, two dentists, two family practice doctors, nurses, a lab specialist, an emergency medical technician and support staff. They worked

Above: Sister Rose Mary Rexing gives a candy sucker to a boy during her mission trip to Uganda.

up to 12 hours daily over five days, treating nearly 2000 people for physical, dental, and visual needs. Many of the Ugandans had never seen a doctor before.

Sister Rose Mary's role was managing the pedestrian traffic flow. She would walk with patients to get their diagnostic tests after their doctor visits. Then there was often a return visit to the doctor to get a prescription. Then she would walk them to the pharmacy to get free medicine. Or she would walk people to see the dentist or eye doctor.

But as a Ferdinand Benedictine, her hospitality, prayerfulness, and cheerful demeanor could break out at any time. Dr. Steve Hopf of Jasper witnessed many of those spontaneous moments.

At a makeshift clinic one day, Sister Rose Mary led a rousing rendition of the “Jesus Dance.” “It's hard not to notice Sister and three Ugandan ladies in a circle singing and dancing in the waiting area,” says Dr. Hopf. “The verse goes ‘I love Jesus!’ while swaying, turning, and clapping. Then they sang ‘And Jesus loves YOU and

YOU and ME and YOU’ while pointing to each other and anyone close by. Then a group hug. Everyone was reminded of why all of us were there – to serve Jesus. Sometimes things didn't run smoothly, but the reminder that it's the love of Christ that binds us was always helpful for everyone's heart.”



Sister Rose Mary gives an infant hat to a midwife, Susan, who is hoping to become pregnant.

Traveling in the van one morning to the clinic after some long days, Sister Rose Mary offered to read Psalm 16 to the tired, silent group. All agreed. She read, “I keep the Lord before me always . . .,” and a group discussion followed. “She reminded us of our common bond in Jesus,” said Dr. Hopf. “She was tuned in to the needs of the group and we were all grateful. She lets God's light shine. Anyone who has met Sister Rose Mary likely has noticed her incredible spirit, contagious smile, and sincere heart. She extended the love of God to the Ugandans just by her smile, hugs, prayers, and prayerful spirit. One day when we didn't have lunch, Sister powered through, and it was inspirational. Her focus on Christ helped all of us. This is a priceless gift when maybe you are discouraged. It is a gift at both Memorial Hospital and the Ray of Hope Clinic in Uganda. I am so



Sister Rose Mary and the Ugandan women who performed the “Jesus Dance.” “We were all tired from working, so I said, ‘Let's just pray and do a Jesus Dance.’ It was so much fun. We just thanked God for the day.”

happy she joined the team.”

That she was on the team is a credit to Dr. Hopf, who invited her. It simply seemed appropriate to him that since she was mission director at Memorial Hospital, that she would be invaluable on a mission trip. She hesitated at first, because of past difficulties with long flights and a concern for her ailing mother. But her thought was that she would go “if the Lord's calling me.” She wanted to make a difference if she went, and not be a burden to the team. “I kept praying, and finally said, ‘OK, Lord, I need a little stronger confirmation here,’” said Sister Rose Mary, chuckling. Not long after, she noticed Pope Francis's special intentions for that month, “Risen Lord, during this Easter season, we lift to



A Ugandan boy displays an “I Love Jesus” sticker given him by Sister Rose Mary. He later walked through the crowds, pointing to the sticker.



Sister Rose Mary prays for patients at one of the clinics in Uganda.

you our Christian brothers and sisters in Africa.” There was the call, and her answer. God’s grace was at work again.

“Going to Uganda was the neatest experience,” she says. “The best part was the people. They are so happy and content. I fell in love with them. I wanted to make room in my suitcase and bring some of them home with me.

“They are not bitter about the conditions they live in. (There is often no running water or electricity.) I learned about the importance of contentment from them. And they are so gracious over anything you give them.”

Sister Rose Mary handed out plenty of items. She gave out so many stickers to children that she came to be known as the Sticker Sister. And she presented homemade infant hats to mothers with babies, or to those expecting, or to those even wanting to become pregnant, while praying with them that they would conceive.

“They were just so grateful and happy, you would have thought you had given them the world,” she says. “It was so simple, but they would just hold the hat, and the tears would come.”



Sister Rose Mary and a Ugandan lady wave to a photographer.



A Ugandan boy with a stuffed animal given him by Sister Rose Mary. The animal was part of many gifts brought along by Carolyn Fuhs, a member of the Women of the Rule philanthropic group affiliated with the Ferdinand Benedictines.

Besides rounding up the stickers and hats before the trip, Sister Rose Mary also collected over 400 pairs of free eyeglasses. She recalled one lady, after realizing she could see clearly with the new glasses, immediately started genuflecting to the team’s optometrist, who was so touched he burst into tears.

“And the little children would genuflect. Oh, they would just melt your heart. You just wanted to scoop them up. There were moments throughout the day when you saw grace dancing in the people’s hearts, and in my heart.”

Sister Rose Mary also marveled over the Ugandans’ sense of neighbor and community. The importance of being neighborly is included in their national anthem and is taught in their schools.

The people were long on patience, too. Hundreds would be waiting when the medical teams arrived each morning. Some had to wait 9 hours to see a doctor.

Terri Clark, president and founder of Terri Clark Ministries, headquartered in Arkansas, who organized the mission trip, said, “Sister Rose Mary’s kind touch, gentle spirit, and warm, genuine smile for every person she encountered demonstrated the love of God to the Ugandan people. She held babies for mothers when they were being seen by the doctors. She took every opportunity to hold and love the children and babies.

“Sister Rose Mary was a spiritual encouragement to her fellow team members. Everyone was stretched and somewhat depleted physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of the long hours of work. (But after she read aloud the psalm in the van) throughout that day several team members talked about the psalm and commented to her it was just what they needed.

“I observed a special moment the last day when Sister Rose Mary, a nurse and a few volunteers prayed together in a circle for a patient.

They weren’t at all hindered by the noise and activity swirling around them. It was just one of several impromptu moments when Jesus was in the midst of those gathered in prayer.”

Says Sister Rose Mary, “I felt so blessed with the trip, it was a blessing I got to go. I wouldn’t trade it for anything. They were all so loving. I was surrounded by grace.” ■



Sister Rose Mary’s favorite photo to remember the Uganda trip is of this lady and her child. She likes the natural joy shown by the woman, so typical of the Ugandan people.



Sister Rose Mary hugs a Ugandan lady, also named Rose Mary.

In Memoriam

Sister Mary Alice Schnur
October 5, 1922 – August 19, 2017



Sister Mary Alice loved Benedictine life and embodied the values of the community. She was particularly interested in liturgy and scripture, and was described as a “visionary” in terms of her views of liturgy, especially in the use of inclusive language at prayer.

Sister Mary Alice’s joyful spirit manifested itself in a constant smile and ready laughter. Her kindness,

warmth, gentleness, and encouragement made people feel loved and important. She had a desire to be connected with others and

was well-known by many people in Guatemala, where she served as a missionary for over 30 years.

Sister Mary Alice was an artist and wanted others to enjoy art as well. She recognized artistic talents in her students and her sisters in community and encouraged them to tap into their talents.

For our 150th anniversary publication, “It’s Who We Are,” Sister Mary Alice shared her thoughts regarding being a member of the Sisters of St. Benedict: “A Ferdinand Benedictine is a person of integrity and authenticity, filled with the Spirit, hope, and joy, who is in love with God, people, and the universe.” Sister Mary Alice was such a person. Rest in peace, dear sister.



Stephanie Smith's Oblate journey lands at Rome Congress

by Greg Eckerle

Just a year after becoming an Oblate of the Ferdinand Benedictines, Stephanie Smith was facilitating a session on the prayer form lectio divina at the Fourth World Congress of Benedictine Oblates in Rome, Italy, last November.

Though her Oblate journey has been a whirlwind, she's a quick learner of the Benedictine way. Sister Brenda Engleman, Oblate director, had plenty of reasons to ask Stephanie if she would be interested in going to the Rome conference.

"Stephanie is a wonderful role model for the other Oblates," says Sister Brenda. "She has many gifts. She is very intelligent, articulate, and an outstanding leader. Yet, she is unassuming and I had no doubts she would represent our Ferdinand Oblates well. She has volunteered anywhere she was needed. Most of all, she is a faith-filled, spiritual person."

Also leading sessions at the Rome Congress were Sister Kathryn Huber and Oblate Shirley France.

The conference, which occurs every four years, drew 260 people from six continents to discuss the theme "A Way Forward - The

Benedictine Community In Movement." Attendees explored the role of Oblates and how to make a difference for monastic life in the future.

The wide variety of languages spoken at the conference naturally presented challenges, particularly in the smaller break-out groups.

"So the most impactful thing for me was sitting in church, especially during mass, and realizing all the different nationalities knew what was going on," said Stephanie. "Everybody was doing the same thing, making the same gestures. Nobody had to have a specific language in the mass. It was so cool."

"I really loved when the congregation said the Our Father. I could hear French behind me, German next to me, and English nearby. Since it was the Our Father, you knew what everybody was saying. It was so wonderful, it sent chills down my spine. There were probably 10 different languages being spoken. To have something so important be common to that many people, it just took away all the barriers."

Above: Sister Joan Chittister, the keynote speaker at the recent Oblate Congress in Rome, with Ferdinand Oblate Stephanie Smith.



The break-out discussion group that Oblate Stephanie Smith (kneeling, with red scarf) was part of displays the poster they created at the Oblate Congress in Rome. The work of all the groups was merged into a vision statement for the future.

Stephanie was also impressed by Sister Joan Chittister's keynote speech, where she talked about how essential Oblates will be to the future of the Benedictine tradition. Noted Stephanie, "As an Oblate, you can still have that community with Christ and with other people, and grow, and have it continue."

The conference experience also helped Stephanie commit more to prayer, especially to lectio divina. "The agenda was busy, but when everything stopped for prayer, it gave me an appreciation of how much better I feel when I center myself and take time to recharge by talking to God."

Besides being an Oblate, Stephanie is director of major gifts for the Ferdinand Benedictines. Her journey to connect with the Ferdinand community and to end up leading a session in Rome borders on the incredible.

Living just north of Indianapolis, she formerly was a deputy prosecutor in charge of sex crimes and crimes against children. She first became aware of the Ferdinand Benedictines when her church group spent a weekend at the monastery in 2005, attending a one-day retreat led by Sister Jane Will.

She recalled the grounds as being "so beautiful and so peaceful." She later moved to Arkansas for four years, where she "started really getting into Benedictinism." But her work in the prosecutor field, continually "hearing horror stories everywhere," began taking its toll. "Because of the kind of work I did, I would periodically go see a therapist, just to talk it out," she says. "A lady I saw in Arkansas suggested I read Sister Joan Chittister's books. Then I talked to a Benedictine spiritual director while in South Dakota for a district attorney's conference." She took to heart what the Benedictines were telling her, and dove ever deeper into learning about the way of St. Benedict.

After returning to Indiana and continuing her prosecutor work in sex crimes, she felt a growing need to de-stress from her job, and remembered that the Ferdinand sisters she had once visited were Benedictines. So, to relieve her job stress, she began making the three-hour drive to the Ferdinand monastery about one weekend a month, alone, staying at the Benedictine Hospitality Center. "I just loved it," she said. On one trip, she saw an Oblate brochure in her room, and ended up talking to Sister Brenda about the program. "I decided it was for me. And the more I came down here, the more I loved it. I kept saying to Sister Brenda, 'I love it down here so much, I wish I lived down here.' Then one day Sister Brenda mentioned a job opening at the monastery." Stephanie applied, started her job with the Mission Advancement Department in September, 2016, and became an Oblate the next month, after completing her year as an Oblate Inquirer.

"I came down here because they're Benedictines," says Stephanie. "I feel so at home here. You can just drive on the grounds and feel peaceful. It's all that energy."

"Being an Oblate has helped me immensely because of the connection with the Benedictine lifestyle, their beliefs and philosophies. It's helped me get centered and get my priorities right. It helps me focus on all the ways that God gives us to help us deal with the bad stuff, and to focus on all the positive things we have in life. I enjoy the solid friendships with the other Oblates, because they are not based on who I am or what I do, but because they're based on holding common beliefs. That's a really important thing to share with others. So it's been very good for me. My family has really noticed this difference. And a former acquaintance I hadn't seen in years recently said I look like I have no stress. Well, there is still stress, but it's so much less, and it's so much easier to deal with. I now know I don't have to carry it around with me for months." ■



Standing in front of the Ferdinand Benedictine Oblates poster on display at the recent World Congress of Benedictine Oblates in Rome is (from l. to r.) Sister Kathryn Huber, Oblate Stephanie Smith, and Oblate Shirley France.

Sisters now a Family Scholar House affiliate

Family Scholar House of South Central Indiana, which has been a growing ministry of the Ferdinand Benedictines since the fall of 2013, has moved into a significant new phase by becoming an official affiliate of Family Scholar House Louisville, the originators of the program in 1995.

Recently, the Sisters of St. Benedict hosted a meeting to update various area advocates of the program on its progress in helping single parents achieve a college education.

Sister Barbara Catherine Schmitz, outreach advocate, told the gathering that the Ferdinand Benedictines are “all about education and life-long learning, and our goal is to work with community resources even more to develop partnerships and advocates for single parent families.”

She was followed by Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz, prioress, who said, “St. Benedict said, wherever the need is, to serve. The need could not be more apparent to the single parent families that we are serving through Family Scholar House. We have a mutual passion to reach those people in need, who could improve their lives by studying and learning the life skills they need to move forward. I can’t imagine what it would be like to be so young with no support. To be trying so hard

and not be able to make it. So we want to work with you to reach the people in need. I think if you took the core values of Family Scholar House and the sisters’ core values, they would match. And they would match the core values of those here today. The sisters are excited about this, especially our younger members; this continues our mission. I think it will be a permanent part of our reaching out to help people of the area.”

Kristie Adams, vice president of programs and services for Family Scholar House Louisville, told the group, “The Sisters of St. Benedict are our third affiliate. For them to have 21 graduates (already through the program) is amazing. They did it with the leadership of Sister Barbara Catherine, having great volunteers and the community support around them.”

Sister Traci Stutz has also become an outreach advocate for the program, along with Sister Barbara Catherine.

Twenty people attended the meeting, including representatives from Vincennes University Jasper Center, Crisis Connection, Tri-Cap, Northeast Dubois School Corporation, Dubois County Tourism, and the city of Ferdinand.



Sister Barbara Catherine Schmitz updates a group on the progress of the sisters’ Family Scholar House ministry.

Six Benedictine Sisters Celebrate Jubilee



Six Benedictine sisters celebrated special anniversaries of their religious profession on Sunday, October 29, at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana. Sister Sylvia Gehlhausen marked the 75th anniversary of her profession of monastic vows. She entered the monastery in 1940 and made monastic profession in 1942. Sister Jan Youart, Sister Mary Agnes Sermersheim, Sister Mary Ann Schepers, Sister Christine Kempf, and Sister Corda Trouy celebrated their 60th anniversary. They entered the monastery in 1955 and made monastic profession in 1957. These sisters have served over 370 years in ministries in Indiana, Kentucky, California, and Pennsylvania.

Left: (L to R) Sister Mary Agnes Sermersheim, Sister Corda Trouy, Sister Sylvia Gehlhausen, Sister Jan Youart, Sister Mary Ann Schepers, and Sister Christine Kempf

Baumgart: “I feel honored to support” the sisters

by Greg Eckerle



Elaine Baumgart in the sisters’ health care clinic at the Ferdinand monastery.

Elaine Baumgart has gladly contributed financially to the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand for years as a member of the St. Hildegard Society and the Women of the Rule, but her connection to the sisters doesn’t stop there.

She’s also an Oblate of the Ferdinand community, a volunteer, and a member of the Hildegard Health Center board of directors. Besides that, she’s a pharmacist and a nurse, and still finds enough time to volunteer so much at Holy Rosary Parish in Evansville, Indiana, that she recently won the parish’s Bilskie Award for her many contributions. She takes communion to shut-ins, performs weekly adoration, is a sacristan, a Eucharistic minister, a greeter, and helps send cards to new parish members.

So, does she ever relax?
“My relaxing is being with other people and enjoying their company,” says Elaine, laughing. “I like to stay busy. I think it’s healthier.”

So when she points to her long connection with the Sisters of St. Benedict as helping her be the person she became, it says a lot about both the sisters and her.

“Being connected to the sisters has really helped me in my faith journey,” she says. “It’s helped me put my priorities in the right place, regarding prayer and being concerned about other people and doing what I can do help. I think that all comes from my background with the Benedictines.”

That background began in 1955, when she entered Academy Immaculate Conception at the Ferdinand monastery as a freshman. She became an Oblate as a junior. “I was always interested in learning more about the Benedictine way of life and how it affects people. I really am active in the Oblates and really do appreciate and

enjoy it. I’ve learned a lot being part of the Oblates. It helps me stay connected with the sisters. They really have been a major part of my life.”

Elaine earned her nursing degree in 1966 and her pharmacy degree in 1971. She worked in both areas for years, and still works part-time in the pharmacy at St. Vincent Hospital in Evansville.

She began supporting the Ferdinand Benedictines financially as soon as she was able to. As a member of the St. Hildegard Society, she has included the sisters in her estate plan. She’s also a member of the Women of the Rule, a philanthropic group which annually helps fund various ministries of the sisters.

“I just feel like these are things I can do financially to help the community, to support them as best I can,” says Elaine. “I just think they are remarkable, special women. I think they’ve been a tremendous influence in the places they’ve worked. All the people they’ve taught, worked with, and influenced, it’s just unbelievable. It’s been work that I’m sure God has been very pleased with. I just feel honored to be able to support that kind of work, for those are the values that I appreciate and love.”

Because of Elaine’s knowledge and skills as both a pharmacist and a nurse, the time she volunteers on the sisters’ healthcare needs has proven invaluable. She travels to the monastery about once a week, checking on the sisters’ medications – both prescription and over-the-counter – to ensure there aren’t duplications or problems with reactions. She surveys medications for compatibility, and helps keep sisters’ emergency packets up-to-date. Elaine is also a good resource for sisters’ questions about their medications. “I really enjoy coming to the monastery and doing what I can for the sisters, because they’re special,” she says. “It’s a good group. They don’t come much better.” ■

Want to leave a legacy with the sisters?

If you want to leave a lasting legacy with the Sisters of St. Benedict as Elaine Baumgart has, you are welcome to join the St. Hildegard Society. For more information about including the sisters in your estate plans, please contact Sister Barbara Lynn Schmitz at 888-649-1121, ext. 2631.

You can avoid capital gains tax by making a planned gift of stock or bonds. Or you can fund a charitable gift annuity, through which you would receive a tax deduction and make a gift that pays you income for life. Or you can name the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy, bank account, or retirement account.



Sister Rebecca a guardian of the word

by Greg Eckerle

Sister Rebecca Abel sometimes thinks of herself as the theology librarian's version of Sherlock Holmes. With over 40 years' experience, she's adept at digging out books and materials that students and professionals are searching for.

"I like helping people find stuff," says Sister Rebecca, who worked for 21 years as a librarian for the Ferdinand, Indiana, school system, then for 17 years as librarian for the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy, and the past four years as a library consultant working out of the Ferdinand monastery.

She has a well-deserved reputation for helping religious communities and schools weed out books and materials, allocate space for collections, install electronic catalogs, and then training others in how to catalog and process materials. She doesn't have to advertise her services, because institutions regularly come looking for her help.

This summer will be the sixth year in a row she works for a month at St. Bede Library for the Liturgical Institute at Ealing Abbey in London, England. She's helped libraries in Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Illinois, New Jersey, Arkansas, and Canada. She's also the online librarian for Catholic Distance University, located in West Virginia.

"God sent Sister Rebecca our way and the rest is library history," wrote Sister Joan Mormul in the newsletter for St. Benedict's Monastery in Winnipeg, Canada. "We were privileged to hire (her) to help us downsize

our library . . . and advise us on our next course of action . . . we have a very competent person to help us!"

Father Michael Calhoun, prior of St. Bede Abbey in Peru, Illinois, remembers their monastery library being so disorganized that it was nearly impossible to find a book before Sister Rebecca came to the rescue.

"Sister Rebecca was able to quickly assess what needed to be done," Father Michael wrote in an email. "She oversaw the moving of books, thus organizing the library in a sensible manner. Her library expertise has been invaluable to me." She trained Father Michael and some Oblates how to enter information about library holdings into a database, eliminating the need for the previous card catalogue.

Sister Rebecca is also technologically savvy enough to be in the forefront of consulting about online digital libraries. This new wave has vast potential, as it offers unlimited storage space, permits users to visit and browse from the comfort of their own home, and the book you need is never missing.

Above: Sister Rebecca Abel with Father Roshan, a student working on a Liturgy degree, and Father Ephrem Carr (far right), a priest from Saint Meinrad in Indiana who also teaches at Liturgical Institute at Ealing Abbey in London, England, in the summers.

An article in Catholic Distance University's newsletter last fall about their online digital library stated, "CDU's librarian, Sister Rebecca Abel, is a resource in herself. Both students and alumni count on Sister's passion and expertise to direct them to new discoveries." Sister Rebecca is quoted on how "CDU is in a unique position to build a digital library that can fulfill our mission to 'teach all nations.'"

She gave a presentation, "Building an Online Digital Library," at the BETH (European Theological Libraries) Conference in Zagreb, Croatia, last September.

Sister Rebecca particularly loves assisting "all these people that need help." That could mean taking a day to create one library page that has the links needed for students to find, and absorb, the information their professor assigns. She strives to give students easy access to the material, no more than a click away. "I don't make the students find it," she says. "I have it there for them. Because I know it's hard for them, since most are working, trying to pay to get a degree in theology, and maybe raising a family, too."

She fields a lot of requests from religious, from students and professors to find material. She is rarely stumped, because she has been researching these areas for an entire career. As Father James Leachman, president, Liturgical Institute, Ealing Abbey in London, England, wrote in an email, "Sister Rebecca has been fantastic. She both created and catalogued our library, which serves our liturgy, Latin, and liberal studies students. She looks after the students and staff. Sister Rebecca is a well-trained professional librarian. She is a star!"

She also has the knack for cleaning up libraries that are a cluttered mess. Her advantage is that she finds it to be fun. She knows she can walk into a room that is jumbled up, and restore it to smooth working order. The hardest part is convincing people to let go of materials they



Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York warmly greets Sister Rebecca Abel during her visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan last fall. When the then Msgr. Dolan was rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy, he hired Sister Rebecca as librarian for the college in 1996. The commitment was for five years, but lasted 17. "He was always very grateful to me for the work there," says Sister Rebecca.



Sister Rebecca gives a presentation at a conference in Zagreb, Croatia, about building an online digital library.

no longer need. Sister Rebecca's knowledge of books as a theological librarian comes in handy. "I've done this so many times. I know the books. I can look at a book's cover and tell religious communities they don't need this one. I've already seen all the theological reference books plenty of times."

She will find a new home for the books being weeded out. Because destroying books will raise her ire like nothing else. When terrorists attacked a magazine a few years ago, and pillaged its library, she posted a note on her LinkedIn account that showed her disdain and left no doubt as to the duty she felt as a librarian.

Her plea read, in part: "Librarians of the World, unite! . . . (The terrorists) were attacking freedom of speech everywhere. We librarians are the protectors of those freedoms. We collect information and make it available to all people, not just a select few. We organize the information so that it can be retrieved by all people. We may not be guarding Excalibur but we are guardians of something much more important, we are Guardians of the Word! . . . we must gather and protect the word for the future. Today, we face an even more important challenge in defending freedom of information. Unite as one in defending and protecting the word. Everywhere!"

"I was all fired up," admits Sister Rebecca, smiling. "I was really passionate about that. You put everything in the library, whether you agree with it or not. You're keeping the word so it doesn't get lost. That's my driving force. That's why I like to work in archives, too, because that's protecting history. Some people may not be interested in that stuff today, but a hundred years from now people will look back at the last couple of centuries and think about all the religious communities that were formed. Communities that taught, that helped the poor, that helped lepers. It was a renaissance of religious life."

And Sister Rebecca has spent her life trying to ensure future generations can easily learn all about how those religious served. ■



Sister Betty helps people get closer to God

by Greg Eckerle

Sister Betty Drewes has been a spiritual director for 40 years, yet she never dreamt she would be driving to Paducah, Kentucky, to meet with spiritual directees.

But being a faithful servant means going where God calls you, and when God called, Sister Betty answered and went to Paducah. For more than three years, she's been gladly making the six-hour round trip every month to meet with an average of 15 directees over four days.

"I believe this experience is Spirit-led," says Sister Betty, "and a special movement in my life as well as the people's lives in these parishes. They want to deepen their relationship with God by deepening their faith, renewing their hope and expanding their love."

The journey began when Ging Smith, faith formation director in Paducah, heard about Sister Betty's spiritual directing and asked her to come to Paducah to talk about it to religious educators. Afterward, Sister Betty asked if anyone would like to have spiritual direction. About 18 signed up.

"It's worth every minute of the trip," says Sister Betty. "I wouldn't trade it for anything, because I know how much they appreciate it. After a couple years, I asked directees what was the most prominent thing about spiritual direction for them. Many said it was just to have spiritual direction, since they had never had it before. They said it was like getting a fountain of living water, new life. They liked talking about their faith journey with someone who was interested, who was accepting of them for who they were."

"The pastor there is very supportive. He's told me that sometimes he's advised people in confession that he thinks they need to see a spiritual director."

Sister Betty points out that spiritual direction is different from reconciliation because the focus is on one's relationship with God.

Above: Sister Betty Drewes and Frank Burch share a lighter moment during a spiritual direction session in Paducah, Kentucky



Sister Betty Drewes and Dolores Webber discuss a book at a spiritual direction session.

She says there is no set way to perform spiritual direction, but that spiritual directors all have one main goal: to help people get closer to God. And it can't be accomplished in one session. It's a continual listening to God and responding in one's own way, a method to build a deeper relationship with God.

Several of Sister Betty's directees agreed to talk about their spiritual direction sessions –

Dolores Webber: I'm not usually impressed with people's spiritualness unless it carries into their every day interactions, and Sister Betty is just so positive and spiritual, there's no way you can ignore it. Sessions with her are like an accountability you keep in your head during the month between visits.

You don't feel she's judging you in any way. And she's really focused on you. I read somewhere where saints are people that make you able to see God, that God loves you, and she certainly makes you feel that way. I feel more spiritual because of the time I spend with her. I told her once I never felt as a kid that God loved me. These last few years, I feel that God loves me, that's awesome. I was in therapy a long time, but I feel (spiritual direction) is better because therapy was never God-directed. (Spiritual direction) is better because it's God-centered.

I work in the office where she has her spiritual direction. When she's there, it's just happier. She oozes happiness. She's got a great sense of humor, but it doesn't take away from the spirituality. It enhances it. The sessions get me to feel that it's time to slow down your human side and concentrate on your spiritual side.

(Dolores is a volunteer in the office at St. Thomas More Church in Paducah, and also an Oblate of the Ferdinand Benedictines.)

Sister Martha Keller: I think that Sister Betty would agree with me that it's not about her, it's about God. It's always a surprise where God is leading me, but she fulfills her role well in making sure it's

not focused on her as a director, but as the Holy Spirit working through her to help you know where God is. The conversation is always very enlightening.

I seek spiritual direction because it helps me be accountable to the journey with God, so it's been a pleasure having Sister Betty accompany me, discovering where God's leading me and what God's saying. I know several of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand and I know that they are well trained in spiritual direction.

Sister Betty is an excellent listener and also very affirming. She has lots of creative touches to her directing. I really feel like she's very attentive to me. She's very easy to share with. Probably her greatest strengths are her listening, her prayerfulness, and her sensitivity. She usually has the right words to comfort or challenge. I'm really grateful she has that gift and is willing to share it, so that spiritual direction is more accessible to people.

(Sister Martha is an Ursuline Sister of Saint Joseph in Maple Mount, Kentucky.)

Ging Smith: My sessions with Sister Betty have helped me tremendously get a good grip and sense of my spiritual life, its progress or lack thereof, and how I can best proceed given my limitations and challenges.

She is very calm and non-pressuring. Her Benedictine spirituality reflects in her way of praying, and looking at things I present every session.

I read the book "Into the Deep," that was life-changing for me. I asked Sister Betty why my other experiences did not move me as much as reading that book did. She told me very simply that it was because I was not ready by then. That struck me deeply. She was right. It is God's grace that moves us to respond to His invitation to go forward.



Sister Betty Drewes (left) and Sister Martha Keller converse during a spiritual direction session.



Sister Betty Drewes and Ging Smith.

If I want to grow deeper in my faith, I ought to have someone who can journey with me and guide me on what I have to do to get closer with God.

(Ging is director of faith formation in Paducah, working for three priests. She also teaches baptism classes with her husband at St. Thomas More Parish.)

Steve Shoulta: I just completed a Spiritual Director training session and that, in connection with (Sister Betty's spiritual direction) has definitely given me a stronger sense of God's love for me as an individual, and the need to share that with others. It's easy for us to beat ourselves up, to be too hard on ourselves. The sessions have also made me aware of the need to slow down, to just be present in the moment, instead of always being anxious about what hasn't happened yet, or worrying about things you can't do anything about. Those are big improvements for me in working with Sister Betty the last three years.

She always has a theme each month, but she's also flexible enough if there are other things I need to talk about. I also like that she usually gives you a takeaway to remind you to get back in the moment, such as a prayer card or bookmark.

I think we've enhanced each other's spiritual life in the process. It wasn't much of a struggle to develop that relationship. We hit the ground running. It's definitely good to have a voice of someone who has a lot more experience that you can share your struggles with. She's just real easy to work with. She's not afraid to ask the hard

question, (but) I don't feel like I'm put on the spot. I feel like I can share my deepest secrets with her, without any reservation.

(Steve works as a director of regulatory compliance for a company that provides data processing for banks.)

Frank Burch: The sessions with Sister Betty make me think a little deeper about where I'm at, where I'd like to be, and how I need to get there. I've enjoyed it greatly. Her strength is listening. I'm a big talker, and when I shut up, it's obvious she's been listening, because she addresses what my concerns were.

I had been going to spiritual direction with different priests, it was good, but it didn't really do the same thing that Sister Betty does. Some of the things she said made me think, am I looking at things from the wrong side of the fence? Do I need to look at things from the other side sometimes?



Steve Shoulta and Sister Betty Drewes.

I keep wanting to delve into my religion more. I'm getting of the age that death could be down the road very shortly. I thought, am I really doing all I can to know my religion? Sister Betty gives me plenty of ideas and things to think about, as to whether or not I'm doing as I should be doing.

(Frank, a retiree, volunteers at St. Vincent DePaul, at a hospital, and a community kitchen.)

Sister Betty continually enjoys the Paducah sessions, including the openness of directees to God's grace, especially in difficult moments, their radical honesty in sharing, their faithfulness to personal practices, seeing how God is present in their life situations, being a witness to their deeper relationship with God over the years, and their prayer together.

Sister Betty often says that as a spiritual director she receives spiritual direction herself. It's a time for her to be accountable for her own spiritual growth. And she knows a key focus is on "how the Spirit is leading us." Success there depends on listening, and Sister Betty has listened well enough to travel to Paducah every month to help others on their spiritual journeys. ■

Interested in spiritual direction?

For more information or to schedule an appointment with one of the Ferdinand Benedictines' spiritual directors, please call Anita Aders at 812-367-1411, ext. 2915, Sister Jane Will at ext. 2841, or 800-880-2777.



Peru sisters' visit full of teaching moments

by Greg Eckerle

When the entire community of six sisters from our dependent monastery in Morropón, Peru, arrived at the Ferdinand monastery for a three-week visit, they were overwhelmed to see two hallways crammed with sisters and lay employees waiting to give them a signature Benedictine greeting.

But the warm welcome was highly appropriate, as it was the first time ever that all the Peruvian sisters visited together. What followed was a lot of learning, and bonding, for both communities.

Sister Felícita Rentería, who was elected the Peru monastery's new superior during a discernment in their Ferdinand visit, felt that being

with the Ferdinand group strengthened the Peru community's own monastic Benedictine vocation.

Sister María Montalbán, the group's former superior, noted the Peruvians formulated their community's goals in a productive session while in Ferdinand. She and others also gleaned some good, usable ideas about formation from Sisters Pat McGuire and Louise Laroche.

Sister Magna Lucía Castillo, who is a religion teacher at Santa Rita School in Morropón, appreciated the way the Ferdinand sisters lived the Benedictine life in spite of all the differences between them. She was grateful for the importance put on the liturgy, and as a musical talent, Sister Magna picked up many music ideas she plans to use back in Peru.

Sister Nolberta Ramirez noted how organized each day's activities were for them, thanks to the scheduling of Sister Rosa Lee Koch.

The sisters enjoyed some new endeavors – like playing corn hole and pickleball, and sled riding in the snow. Sister Michelle Sinkhorn taught them how to translate from English to Spanish on the computer. Now they will be able to translate the many posts of Sister Briana Craddock on the sisters' Facebook page. Sister Agnes Marie Dauby taught the Peruvians how to make hats on a circular loom, Sister Mary George instructed on how to use a clothes dryer, while Sister Gail Hamilton showed them how to draw images, like stars, on cork and carve them out to use as stamps, to



Tour guide Sister Rosa Lee Koch shows some Peru sisters the church in the model of Monastery Immaculate Conception in the monastery lobby.

Above: Ferdinand Benedictines and lay employees welcome the Peru sisters upon their arrival at the monastery.

NEWS from the Dome

Hildegard Health Center Earns Top Performing Rating

Hildegard Health Center announced that it earned an overall rating of "Top Performing" from U.S. News & World Report, putting it among the top 15 percent nationwide. The rating system is applied to more than 15,000 skilled nursing facilities in the U.S.

"I applaud the outstanding efforts of our Hildegard caregivers and staff who enabled the center to achieve this prestigious designation," said Sister Kathy Bilske, administrator. "We are continually seeking to improve our performance in the quality care and services we give our residents to maintain a safe and secure environment for their well-being."

U.S. News & World Report pulls information from a program run by the



Sister Dolorita Libs sets up a Rummikub game with Lou Boehm, CNA, and Sister Agnes Marie Dauby, director of activities.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS created the Five-Star Quality Rating System to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare nursing homes more easily and to help identify areas of special interest. U.S. News modified this system to create their own five-level rating scale for nursing homes ranging from "Top Performing" to "Poor," which weighs performance over time and places emphasis on medical quality measures.

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand established Hildegard Health Center in 2005. As a licensed nursing facility, Hildegard provides 24-hour care for its residents. Hildegard is managed by the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, based in South Dakota.

Monastery No. 2 in 'Best of Indiana'



Monastery Immaculate Conception continues to impress its visitors.

The monastery was recently selected No. 2 for "Best Indiana Historic Destination" in voting by more than 24,000 Hoosiers. The nearby Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial was picked No. 1.

Find more information about "Best of Indiana" winners at www.visitindiana.com. Voters also selected Indiana's Best Fall Festival and Best Tenderloin as part of Visit Indiana's fall awards.



Left to Right: Sister Magna Lucía Castillo, Sister Marilú Córdova, Sister Nolberta Ramirez, Sister Felicitá Rentería, Sister Arcelia Chumacero, Sister María Montalbán

reward Peru school children for a job well done. Five of the sisters work at Santa Rita School.

Sister Marilú Córdova remarked that making personal connections with the Ferdinand sisters was very important for her, and helped her get more in touch with Benedictine roots. She also noticed how visitors to the Ferdinand monastery are invited to pray with the sisters.

Sister Arcelia Chumacero was particularly struck by the crowd gathered for their arrival, saying it really touched her. She also enjoyed staying in the Benedictine Hospitality Center, and after sharing meals with different sisters, felt like they knew one another forever.

The Ferdinand Benedictines also benefitted from their experience with the visitors.



Sister Kathy Cash (left) watches as Sister Magna Lucia and Sister Marilú (wearing the Colts scarf) sled down the hill in the back parking lot.

Now accepting applications for Service to Sisterhood

We are now accepting applications for Service to Sisterhood, a two-month summer program in which young women live, pray, work, and play with the sisters.

For more information, please contact Sister Mary Philip Berger by email at mpberger@thedome.org or by phone at 812-367-1411. Scan the QR code located on the right to apply.

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Monthly Quilt Raffle January – June 2018

Drawing will be held on the first Friday of every month.

Four winners will be drawn each month. *(If you win, your name will go back into the drawing for the next month.)*

Winners will be notified by phone or email. Names will be posted on our website. (thedome.org)

Cost: \$10 per ticket. For more information, call Monastery Gift Shop at 812-367-2500.

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Calendar of Events

2018

March 2-4	Honoring the Woman Within	May 20	Oblate Meeting: “Praying the Divine Office”
March 17	Understanding How the Church Uses Scripture for Holy Week	June 3-August 3	Service to Sisterhood
March 23-24	Brewing with the Spirit: A Monastic Craft Beer Experience	June 10-14	Camp Marian
March 29-April 1	Triduum Retreat	June 10-16	Private/Personal Retreat
April 15	Oblate Meeting: “Conversion of Life”	June 23-24	AIC/MHA Alumnae Reunion
April 20-April 22	Creative Women's Retreat	July 13-20	Directed Retreat
		September 7-14	Directed Retreat

For more information or to register for a workshop: 812-367-1411, ext. 2915 • 800-880-2777 • www.thedome.org/events



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Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana

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Sister Donna Marie Herr (second from left) and volunteers at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry make the sign of the cross as they begin prayer before the start of their morning shift.