



God's Blessings Have Abounded for Us in Our First 100 Years

We have enjoyed our centennial year and all those who have helped us celebrate! For those of you who could not join us for any of our events, you can at least read the tale and enjoy the pictures.

After our retreat in June, we reminded ourselves of our place in the larger historical picture by hanging pictures of our monastic foremothers in the main entrance hall to our chapel. Sister Emmanuel Pieper, OSB, of St. Walburg Monastery, Villa Hills, KY, did these watercolors as Sister Ruth Fox was giving their annual retreat at her community many years ago. The pictures had been in a file drawer, but those of us who saw them knew they were too beautiful not to frame and display. Only two pictures needed to be added to the collection, our foundress Mother Pia Tegler and our future members, and Sister Emmanuel painted them for us.

As part of our centennial we returned to our beginnings on the Fort Berthold Reservation. We started in Elbowoods in 1910 but, as that is now under Lake Sakakawea, we went to St. Anthony's Parish in Mandaree to celebrate with our Native American friends. Sister Lucille Heidt's retirement from the Indian mission this summer after 27 years ended our 106-year presence on the Fort Berthold Reservation. We honor our Native American friends for all the goodness they have shown us all these many years and appreciate their friendship into the future. We were honored with song and with beautiful star quilts for each of us.

This year we entered a centennial float in the parade in Richardton's Little Opryland Days in mid-August and took the trophy for the year! We would have had greater competition if we entered some heavy equipment or service vehicles,

but a win is a win. We do have to return the traveling trophy next summer but we just may run the odds and enter again—101 years of independence is good too.

Linda Sailer of *The Dickinson Press* came out and interviewed us for a marvelous feature article she did at the end of August. She has a real gift for capturing people and story and she excelled in her feature about us, "Celebrating first 100 years." The October *Dakota Catholic Action* highlighted us in the cover article "Sisters of Sacred Heart Monastery celebrate legacy."



After the blessing in chapel, these pictures of our foremothers were hung in the hall leading to chapel.



The ever gracious community at Mandaree gave each of us a star quilt as a gift. We were happy to join Sister Lucille Heidt (center front) for one of her Native American farewells.

(Continued on page 2)



The Dickinson Press and The Dakota Catholic Action both did generous features on our centennial.

We are grateful that we could share our story with more people than we might ordinarily reach through our publications because it is a story of faith in God and the dedication of our Sisters to the broader mission of ministry in the Church.

For the past several months we have also been working with Summit Marketing of Lenexa, KS, to expand our presence on the web. Besides making new connections with those who want to know more about us, we are also greatly pleased to renew connections with friends and families. An online presence is necessary but also a bit tricky because it is a short-attention medium: attention lasts for only a few seconds and if you cannot secure it in that short time, you may never get it. We need to reach younger readers and viewers in order to invite them to test a possible vocation in our community.

We have been blessed by so many friends in our 20 years of our fundraiser Celebrate the West. We reluctantly decided to discontinue it for several reasons, but we also wanted to be sure to thank all those who donated to it or attended. On September 24, the Saturday we would ordinarily be having the event, we invited all those involved with past events to come to the monastery for supper and tours of what they have helped us renovate or purchase over the years. The evening was most relaxed and enjoyable!

Prior to supper we had a social in the community room thanks to Pat and Brad Pender of Town & Country Liquor in Dickinson. They have supported us in our Celebrate the West event for years. It was great for us to be able converse with our guests rather than be so concerned with conducting a fundraiser. Fran Hauck, our baker and part-time cook, brought her fellow members of the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary to help serve the meal. Ila and Howard Perhus always help us, our friend Sally Holland came down from Stanley for this event, and so many others helped us pull this off. It was wonderful to sit down with and thank our supporters and later take them on tours to show them what they have done for us. We have been blessed with such good friends!

We celebrated our big centennial celebration for the general public on Sunday, October 23, with Most Reverend David Kagan, Bishop of Bismarck, as celebrant of our Eucharist, and Abbot Brian Wangler of Assumption Abbey assisted. The joyful liturgy opened with Native American drummers from Mandaree honoring us with a song of tribute as the prelude. Fr. Odo Muggli, OSB, played the organ so our community could process in *statio*, an ancient monastic practice of quiet mindfulness prior to a formal procession into chapel



Sister Laura visits with guests at the Celebrate the West reception.



A few of those who have supported us through years of Celebrate the West enjoy supper with us.

with a bow to the crucifix and then to our partner before assuming our place in our pews. As this was a solemn occasion we wore our *cucullas*, our choir robes which are the official signs of our monastic profession. A few of the women who have served as core committee members for Celebrate the West surprised us with corsages for this special occasion. We will never be able to thank them enough for all they have done for us.



Statio is an ancient Benedictine custom as are our *cucullas*, choir robes. All pictures of our public celebration are gifts to us from Deacon Joe Krupinsky, a professional photographer.



One of the most touching moments was the Oakdale Singers from Mandaree honoring us with a drum song at the beginning of the liturgy.

The liturgy was enhanced by so many people who have been important in our ministries throughout our history. Deacon Al Schwindt who assisted in the Mass was formed as a permanent deacon when its formation was one of our hosted programs and Marian Ringwall, wife of Deacon Kris Ringwall, read the first reading as a representative of the wives who also participated in the deaconate formation. Kirk Greff, present administrator of Sanford St. Vincent's Continuing Care Center in Bismarck, was the second reader. Brother Alban Petesch, OSB, served as master of ceremonies for the occasion and the Abbey Schola and the Queen of Peace Music Group provided the music.

(Continued on bottom of next column)



Bishop Kagan celebrated our jubilee liturgy and Abbot Brian Wangler (far right) proclaimed the Gospel.



Bishop Kagan is pictured here with our present prioress Sister Paula Larson in the middle. Sister Marie Hunkler (far left) and Sister Ruth Fox (far right) are both former prioresses.



Sister Paula joyfully invited two visiting prioresses to join in the recessional. Sister Nicole Kunze, left, is prioress of Annunciation Monastery in Bismarck and Sister Virginia Evard, right, is prioress of Saint Benedict's Monastery in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The American Legion Ladies Auxiliary again helped us serve the coffee and cake after Mass. So many people stepped up here and there to help us that we cannot possibly name them all, but we appreciate every one.



Jane Mayer and Fran Hauck, here with Sister Paula, were two of the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary that helped prepare and serve refreshments at both our Celebrate the West and public Centennial celebrations. Having cooked here for us they know their way around our kitchen!

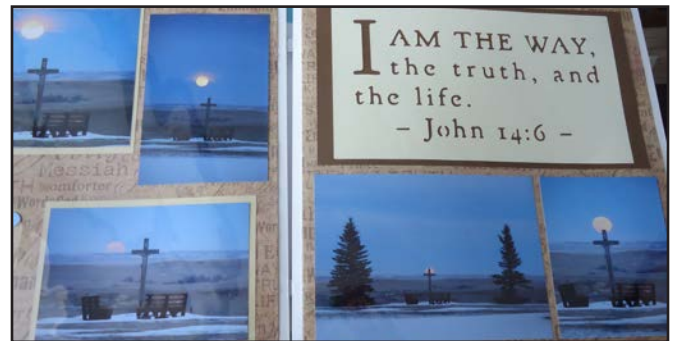
There was one last special celebration for those we wanted to show appreciation for our 100 plus years. We invited our brother monks from Assumption Abbey to come the afternoon of November 20 to have Sunday sundaes with us. Ice cream on Sunday is pretty much the dessert of choice in most Benedictine houses in the US so it was no big stretch, but we did provide a great variety of ice cream flavors and toppings. It was nice to dress casually and sit down to ice cream and conversation together. It was but a small return for all they have done for us in our 106 years of working together! Their first abbot and the first bishop of the Bismarck Diocese, Vincent Wehrle, OSB, was the one who sat in the parlor at the motherhouse in St. Marys, PA, and insisted he get some Benedictine nuns to work at Elbowoods with his monks. The rest is history that is still being made!



Bless Everyone for Our Centennial Gifts

We have received lovely gifts for our centennial celebration and we are grateful for each and every one. The Beulah Scrapbookers brought us early gifts that have special significance because of their specific, artistic nature. They brought us a beautiful memory book with pages by different scrapbookers with pictures taken here of what they found especially memorable. The second is a hand-painted plate of the front of the monastery by L. Maize. These two gifts reveal to us what others see here to cherish most. We are humbled by the generosity of so many who value their time here with us.

We can never thank the givers enough for thinking of us so generously, but we will certainly try!



The Beulah Scrapbookers brought us these lovely centennial gifts earlier this year.

Some of our centennial “gifts” are sheer necessity. We moved to Richardton from Minot in 1967 so some of our original equipment has entered the past tense, some by erratic functioning and others by dramatic sudden demise. Some of the equipment, such as our secondhand, already-old big gas dryer in the laundry and the floor scrubber, we brought with us from Minot. Other necessary equipment was new when we moved in but has now have filed for retirement for the last time, refusing to be coaxed into working for a few more years—or even a few more weeks.

The new cooler and freezer were installed in November. It took several weeks, so food needing refrigeration was stored all over the house—some in one of our decommissioned areas which have no heat. While the new equipment may not look very different or impressive, it works and it stays dry! We will never be known for having the newest and the best, but we do need “functioning.” We bless and thank all of you who have sent us a year-end gift to help us pay for these costly but very necessary things.

Sister Carol Celebrates 60th Jubilee

On June 5 the Benedictine Sisters of Richardton rejoiced with Sister Carol Axtmann in celebrating her 60th jubilee of monastic profession.

In monastic life, that is a great amount of time to grow and accomplish so many things Sister Carol, the fourth of nine children of Nick and Christine Axtmann,



grew up in Orrin and entered Sacred Heart Convent as a senior in high school. After graduating from Minot State Teachers College she began her 30 years of teaching at Little Flower, St. Leo's and Bishop Ryan in Minot and at Sts. Peter and Paul in Fallon, and at our St. Benedict's Academy in Bogotá, Colombia.

After earning her BA from the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN, she went on to earn a MA in theology from Mount Angel Seminary in Mount Angel, OR.

In 1988 she became a certified pastoral care chaplain, beginning another career in which she served at St. Vincent's Care Center in Bismarck, the Benedictine Living Center in Garrison, and Madonna Towers and Madonna Meadows in Rochester, MN. After her return from Minnesota in 2011, she has been serving as resident director of Subiaco Manor, our independent living apartment complex for the elderly in Dickinson.

The Collection Basket

If you have not visited our Facebook page recently, you are in for a great surprise! Early this year we contracted with Summit Marketing in Lenexa, KS, to mount a digital vocation campaign on our behalf and we have greatly increased our traffic online. It is not enough to know we are a community worthy of notice, we also know we need help to make that happen. This company has helped us develop online posts that are classy, informative and appealing. Our traffic has greatly increased as have inquiries about religious life.



We are getting ready for **Giving Hearts Day** on **February 9, 2017!** This is a great day of online giving to charities throughout North Dakota. This will be our fourth year of participating and we hope that it will be the best so far. We are gearing up our southwestern North Dakota

collaborative to help build giving to our charities here while saving money and energy by working together. Here in Richardton we are working closely with Assumption Abbey and the Richardton Health Center.

Those of you are still wary of online giving can help too. We need to raise \$4000 ahead of time in order to participate in Giving Hearts Day and these funds can come in by cash or check by February 1. After we declare our \$4000 or more has been raised, these funds will be reflected on Giving Hearts Day toward our total on that day. As our online donations come on that day whatever we have raised by February 1 will be reflected as a "match" dollar for dollar: for instance, if we receive an online donation of \$50 while we will be credited online with \$100 until our pre-match is all moved into our funds raised on Giving Hearts Day.

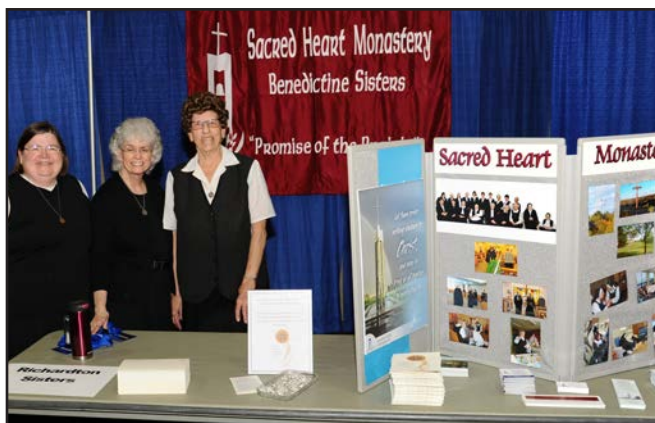
Please consider helping us raise our initial \$4000 ahead of February 1 or giving on February 9 online at impactgiveback.org to Sacred Heart Monastery.



We have set up a Sacred Heart Benedictine Foundation Endowment Fund account with the North Dakota Community Foundation (NDCF). Founded in 1976, the NDCF manages over \$70 million in assets for the betterment of North Dakota citizens and their communities (see www.NDCF.net for an introduction).

We decided to establish an endowment fund in the NDCF for several reasons. Primarily, we have had donors ask us if we had such a fund because North Dakota is generous to donors who receive income from North Dakota by offering a 40% income tax credit to those who donate a minimum of \$5000 and this is in addition to the federal tax savings. A second great advantage is that the NDCF manages the account for us.

If you have any questions, you can call Sister Paula Larson, our prioress, or the Foundation office here at the monastery for further information (701-974-2121).



Sisters Phoebe Schwartze, Renée Branigan and Michael Emond staffed our vocation booth at the Diocesan Thirst in October. It was a marvelous weekend for the Bismarck Diocese to come together and celebrate our faith and service to our Church.

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S. Paula

*Let us celebrate the coming of the Christ
with joyful praise and gratitude! We send you
Christmas blessings from our home to yours.*



S. Anna Rose



S. Annella



S. Brigid



S. Carol



S. Dolores



S. Janeane



S. Jill



S. Kathleen



S. Laura



S. Lucille



S. Marie



S. Mary William



S. Michael



S. Monica



S. Patti



S. Phoebe



S. Renée



S. Ruth

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