



## FROM THE DESK OF SR. RENÉE!

Life with coronavirus limitations has actually been *good* in its own way!

In all my time in community, we have been so busy with our work, meetings, appointments, etc. In these last few months, with most public events being canceled or happening virtually by computer, we did not we did not leave the monastery much at all. A few of the Sisters would go out for groceries, appointments, and necessary errands, but for the most of us, we could stay at home.



*Sr. Renée and the Sisters are following the safety guidelines during the pandemic.*

I have been a monastic for about fifty-seven years, but since I left the novitiate, I have been busy, out-and-about for the work or service I was doing. With so many events canceled, I did not really “miss” anything or get behind in what I needed to accomplish. It was as if everyone received a stay-at-home vacation with no strings attached.

It soon occurred to me I had more time to pray, to read, to study, to write letters, etc. and I *really* liked this lifestyle! One morning I awoke and realized clearly that *this* is “monastic” life. I had time to do things that I had set aside for when I really had the time or energy. I called people dear to me to ask how they were doing and if all was well with them. I wrote long, handwritten letters to friends and family. I found I could spend most of my morning in private prayer and reading and then look forward to Noon Praise and lunch with the community.

“Virtual” Mass was strange at first, but after a while, I could enter into it. Our coming together for Divine Office three times a day keeps common prayer real and in person. We eat two meals together each day and then do dishes together as well as seeing one another throughout the day. I could not imagine how cohesive we could have been had we still lived in our monastery in Richardton. Because our present monastery in Dickinson is about one-fifth of the size that monastery, we encounter one another much more frequently. We all sit together at table so we are all engaged in the conversations of what is going on here and the world abroad. It is there that one idea may emerge, get refined by other comments, and we decide what we want to do with it.

So many people in our country have stepped up to ease the struggle of a completely new world of restrictions, separations and fear. I chose to listen to those who responded to the challenges with acceptance, creativity, humor, and helpfulness. Most of the time, the struggle and resistance we find in any situation such as this coronavirus pandemic, worsens or improves by our attitude. We *chose* our attitude; it is not thrust upon us.

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When we look for people to admire in this frightening time, they are there in the midst of it working tirelessly. Personally, I have found so many of the tributes and ways of showing gratitude to those doing necessary things (all our first responders, medical staff, safety personnel, etc.) have been deeply moving. I have found the creativity for cheering others astounding. I have unlimited respect and gratitude for parents who, even in the face of the lack of jobs, income and the world of security, put their kids first and assure them all will be well. Having been a teacher (and a very happy one!) for most of my life, I am edified by how these teachers reach out to their students well over and beyond their teaching contract.

*God is in our midst!*

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## FROM THE DESK OF SR. KATHLEEN!

### *May: The Month of Mary*

The pious practice of honoring Mary, the Mother of Jesus, during the month of May, arose at the end of the 13th century, and has been recommended by Popes especially during times of war or times of great suffering.

Presently, Pope Francis asked the faithful to make May 14 a day of prayer, fasting and charitable works to “implore God to help humanity overcome the coronavirus pandemic.”

Many churches and homes, as well as in our Monastery have set aside a place to honor Mary. Special prayers, visiting shrines, reading the scripture passages pertaining to Mary are among the ways Mary is honored.

As a child, I remembered my mother having a deep devotion to Mary by praying the rosary. She was clinging to her rosary the day she was taken to the hospital. It also was a family tradition to pray the rosary during Lent. Later, my devotion to Mary and praying the rosary grew under the guidance of the sisters who taught me in the boarding school I attended; we sang hymns to Mary, had processions, and crowned Mary as Queen during the month of May.

The rosary prayer helps us to meditate with Mary on the life of her Son, Jesus, and to be mindful that Mary will intercede for us when we pray the words “pray for us” in the Hail Mary prayer. Mary, intercede for us! Ave, Ave Maria!

**Celebrating 104 years as an independent community the Sisters will have their raffle in October! Ten chances to win \$104.00. Watch your mailbox for your raffle ticket.**

## FROM ILA'S DESK!

Our big news for the Foundation is the success of our Giving Hearts Day fundraiser. We raised just over \$23,500.00! We are thankful for each of you who participate not only this yearly event but any other mailings we send out. We understand that you cannot support every one of them, or maybe you cannot support financially at all, but you can support the Sisters in prayer and with your friendship. We appreciate you all!



FYI: We made the conscious decision forgo our annual calendar fundraiser, which would have gone out in April. We hope to bring this back in 2021.

My time at the office has changed these past couple of months. Through it all, we were able to maintain the foundation office, process checks, and continue daily business with the help of Sister Renée and our Business Manager, Pat Wilson.

To write an article and not mention COVID-19 and the impact it has had on our world would be remiss. As of this writing North Dakota is starting to open up more businesses. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with those who have family who are ill or have passed away, or are affected by this virus in so many ways.

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*"You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith, and hope."*

*Thomas Merton*

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## MASS

May 6<sup>th</sup> was a glorious day for us. Without actually being at Mass for over 8 weeks, it was a delight to be able to attend Mass again.



Our Benedictine monk priests come to our Monastery for Mass. Here is Fr. Boniface who was chosen as the first to leave their Monastery and come here for Mass. All of the safeguards are followed with masks etc. before and after Mass. The monks cannot stay for lunch with us as we are not able to provide the six feet distancing without putting him in isolation from the rest of us. That is no fun, so now the priest leaves and goes about his business. We hope at some future date, we can again resume sharing a meal together.

Participating in Mass virtually was not the worst thing in the world, especially when you know the priest. Over the Easter Triduum we were able to watch the Pope's Mass. We were all surprised with the singing that was part of the services. However when the camera went to the choirs we noted everyone was six feet apart!!

Parishes in our town are now having Sunday Mass with all the safeguards. That means limited seating due to the six feet requirement, sanitation, etc. Gradually we hope that the all will be able to attend Mass but this is totally dependent on the virus. So we continue to pray for the end of the pandemic and an acceptable treatment that will end its spread as well as its deadliness.



## FROM THE DESK OF SR. PAULA!

Hello Spring!!! I hope that is what it is. We have had days when it lovely and in the 70's and days when it is in the 20's and 30's. While it seemed too early to plant flowers and gardens, this being our first spring here in Dickinson, we had some outside work that needed to be finished.

One of the nicest items it a small light pole and lights on our signage. This really helps when it is dark for persons to find the place, and us.

The second item we needed to address was the lawn. It was hydro seeded this spring. This place had its own well for exterior watering so that is quite a saving. An underground watering system was installed. Getting it all working is quite something.

On the west side of the property, outside the fence, we have quite a large strip of land that was a mess as it is considered no one's land, but available to the city for a potential future sidewalk etc. We have taken it upon ourselves to clean it up. You cannot believe the amount of trash that accumulates there weekly. We mowed and raked the grass and fixed it so we can keep it mowed and decent. Guess what? There is a beautiful rhubarb plant back there too so we will soon be able to make rhubarb pie.

Our small garden area is tilled and ready for planting. I hope that we will have some good tomatoes and cucumbers this year.

The patio is ready for the Sisters to sun themselves and get their vitamin D.

We are anxiously anticipating our first summer here in our new home. May you have a great summer also.



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*"The Lord is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus."*

*(Philippians 4:5b-7)*

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## FROM THE DESK OF SR. CAROL!

### *Birthdays*

Why do we celebrate birthdays? I suppose there are as many reasons as there are people.

1. It can be a reminder of the miracle that took place when we were born.
2. It could be a day to call our parents to thank them for giving us life, love and providing for our needs.
3. My spirits are uplifted when friends call me, send cards, pray for me and wish me peace, joy happiness and other good things.
4. A friend shared that she spends the eve before her birthday reviewing how she lived the past 365 days. She asks pardon for things she wishes she hadn't done and things she didn't do that she could have to make others happier. She thanks God for the many blessings that are hers.

Every birthday marks the event in which each of us left the security of our mother's womb and faced the real world. The world that would forever be different because we became a part of it, a world we can make better through our love and care for others.

We, the Sisters, like to help you celebrate your birthdays by sending you a card (Bell Tower Level donors and above receive birthday cards) thanking you for your generosity to us and letting you know that you are remembered in our community prayers and at Mass. We regret the April birthday cards were late this year. I guess we can blame that on the pandemic!

God bless each of you. May your birthdays always be a time of gratitude for the years God has given you. May they be days filled with peace, joy, love and happiness.



## DONOR LEVELS



**FRIENDS:** Donations up to \$999.99

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**BENEDICTINE SPONSOR:** Donations \$25,000.00 and higher

**PRIORESS:** Donations \$50,000.00 and higher

*(Lifetime accumulated gift total)*

**Benedictine Sisters of Richardton**

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Dickinson, ND 58601

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E-mail: [richardtonsisters@sacredheartmonastery.com](mailto:richardtonsisters@sacredheartmonastery.com)

[www.sacredheartmonastery.com](http://www.sacredheartmonastery.com)

Phone: 701-456-1900

## PRAYER

Loving and gracious God, we continue to praise and thank You and give You glory for the gift of life in all its forms! Alleluia!

We ask You to continue to hold all Your sacred creation in the palm of Your hand and to show **each of us, Your children whom You know and love and care for**, that You are our loving God and that You will provide for us in all our needs.

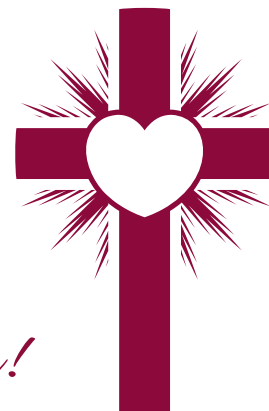
Open our hearts each moment to hear Your desire for us and to give us the grace to say "yes" to Your will!

May our hearts ever burn with the fire of Your love and may that fire of love spread throughout the world to all!

We thank You, God, for guiding all of us, Your children, as we navigate through these days of challenge and suffering. May all we are experiencing draw us deeper and deeper into Your loving heart, God!

And, may our hearts be open to the Spirit at work within us!

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Alleluia!



*Alleluia!*

Online donations: [www.sacredheartmonastery.com](http://www.sacredheartmonastery.com)