

THE BENEDICTINE *Witness*



VOL. 1 Summer 2025

SACRED HEART MONASTERY AND SACRED HEART BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION



The Benedictine

Sacred Heart Priory Archives
Richardton N. Dak. 58652

Witness

VOL 1, NO. 1

Sacred Heart Convent, Minot, North Dakota

OCTOBER 1965

Rev. Mother Anita Writes



We need not tell you that this is the first issue of a news magazine to come from Sacred Heart Convent. But we do wish to explain why we have decided to print this paper.

We have always been interested in the life and work of you, our relatives, alumnae, benefactors, and friends. We hear from you and about you in letters, in the newspapers, on the radio and television. But most of the correspondence has been one-way. We have neglected to give you an equal opportunity to hear from and about us. Through this paper we hope to establish a two-way communication system.

With each issue of this paper you will learn more about our Benedictine life of prayer and work—a life dedicated to the glory of God through the sanctification of our own soul and the souls of others.

You will learn about our missions where we carry on our work for Christ: St. Benedict's Academy in Bogota', Colombia; St. Vincent's Nursing Home in Bismarck; St. Luke's Hospital in Crosby, North Dakota; St. Nicholas School in Garrison, North Dakota; Little Flower and St. Leo's School in Minot; St. Mary's School in Malta, Montana; and St. Mary's Central in Bismarck. In the summer we also staff a catechetical center on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and teach catechism at several parishes in the Bismarck and Great Falls dioceses.

From 1949 to 1965 we also staffed Sacred Heart Academy in Minot. Many wonderful young women were graduated from SHA, and we are now proud to claim them as alumnae. This paper will, in a special way, belong to them also, for we consider our alumnae our co-workers in our work for the Church.

The year is 1965, the Sisters are living in Minot, North Dakota. So many connections have been made through families, friends, and alumnae since 1910; Rev. Mother Anita Soukup decided to start a newsletter. Prior to this issue they used typewriters to do the newsletters called *Cloister Bells* (1947 - 1967) and *Angel Wings* (November 1938 - February 1976).

According to the first issue of *The Cloister Bells* and I quote: *Published every once in awhile. Editors: All the nuns! Contributors: Ditto!*

Angel Wings was a written "review of activities and ideas typed monthly in the interests of the postulants and the candidates of Sacred Heart Scholasticate, Minot, North Dakota, and for their numerous friends, clerical, religious, and lay."

Rev. Mother Anita's article (to the left) written for the first Benedictine Witness is worth the read! The Witness continues today to follow her direction to let you hear from and about us! Thank you for your years of friendship and support.

60 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

OF THE WITNESS

May God bless Sr. Lucille, Sr. Laura and Sr. Paula with a life filled with more love, laughter and wisdom in their years to come.



Sister Lucille celebrating 90 years.

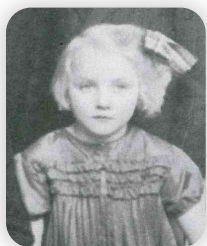


Sister Laura celebrating 90 years.



Sister Paula celebrating 80 years.

Commemorating 80 and 90 incredible years!



Sr. Lucille will be celebrating her 90th birthday on August 23rd. She is busy with sacristan duties and keeping our plants alive. We appreciate all she does for us. Sr. Lucille's wisdom for a life well lived is, "always remember to pray first".



Sr. Laura celebrated her 90th birthday on April 15th. We are grateful for her service as sub-prioress for our community and for what she does for us. Sr. Laura's insight into a life well lived is, "pray and be patient, enjoy your surroundings, see Christ in everyone and everything, sleep well, and awake with a happy heart".



Sr. Paula celebrated her 80th birthday on July 5th. She is our Prioress and is busy with many jobs. She enjoys gardening and putting around in her spare time. Sr. Paula's advice for a life well lived is, "keep the faith, all will be well".

Sister Anna Rose Ruhland's Retirement



On June 1, 2025, Sister Anna Rose Ruhland retired from a 26 year career as chaplain at St. Vincent's Care Center and Marillac Manor located in Bismarck, North Dakota. Both facilities were our ministries until 2000 and then other health care entities took over

ownership. However, the Sisters were very strong in their commitment to carry out the Catholic identity in the provision of health care. It was delightful to work with our Bishop and the administrators from Sanford Health and Good Samaritan. We could say it is the ecumenical way.



Sister Anna Rose

We all know that health care is not just about our physical health, but more importantly it is about our spiritual and emotional health. Sister Anna Rose began her ministry work as a dietitian on the Fort Berthold reservation as well as at hospitals and nursing homes. She loved her ministry in helping others find creative and healthy ways to eat. In her interactions as a dietician, she saw a need to journey with others in their spiritual health and growth. Some would say she provided "Food for the Soul".

In 1998 Sister Anna Rose went to St. Mary's Hospital/Mayo clinic and began a program in clinical pastoral education. She completed this program and then became a Certified Catholic Chaplain. It was no easy job to get through all of this.

She was stationed at St. Vincent's/Marillac in October of 1999. Over these years Sister Anna Rose has listened to many of the residents' faith stories. She prayed with them and blessed them. It is unknown how many residents she sat and prayed with as they left this world for eternal life. In addition, she shared faith issues with employees, visitors and others such as family members. Sister Anna Rose was a sign of God's presence to all.

As the Director of the Pastoral Care department, Sister Anna Rose had the privilege of working side by side with many of our wonderful diocesan priests and deacons. Just a quick calculation, it would appear Sister Anna Rose set up and attended over 10,000 Masses with the residents. In addition, she arranged for the sacraments of anointing of the sick and reconciliation.

In the past year the Pastoral Care department came under the leadership of the Diocese of Bismarck. Our Bishop has assigned a priest to be head of the department. Sister Anna Rose is delighted to be retiring. Now she can use her free time to do the things she enjoys most.



Sisters Patti, Janeane, Anna Rose, Laura and Phoebe at the retirement party!

Thank you, Sister Anna Rose, for your years of service and ministry. May God bless your retirement and may the Angels be with you in the coming years.

From the Foundation Office

Over the years I've had the privilege to meet so many people due to my work in the Foundation Office. I remember especially the committee members that joined us for our Celebrate the West events. Hard to believe our last event was 10 years ago.

Reflections was the theme of our event in 2015; a look back to the 20 years of events. Some of our committee members were with us through all of them. One such person was Marianne Schaaf, who passed away in May. She is remembered as a gem who always found wonderful baskets for the Glen Ullin community. Blessed be her memory.



20 year look back display that was at the entrance of the 2015 Celebrate the West Event!

As I write this I'm reminded of the verses in Ecclesiastes 3:1-2: *There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot...*

Reflect, uproot, and then move forward. As they say, there is a reason the rear-view mirror is small and the front window is so large.

Since 2015, the Sisters have literally moved forward. In their seasons of being in North Dakota they have taken every opportunity to move forward; from Elbowoods, to Garrison, to Minot, to Richardton and now Dickinson. Always taking good memories with them to create new memories.

They are thankful for all of you who have kept them in prayer and those who have supported them whether it's been just a short time, or a long-time friend. Thank you! Thank you!

Look forward with hope for the future!



Hope

Last year on Christmas Eve, 2024, Pope Francis, opened the Holy Door to begin a Jubilee Year in 2025. The Holy Father Francis wanted the coming Jubilee Year 2025 to be lived as a "year of hope," very symbolic in times when the world's wars seem to be unending and multiplying. The idea of a jubilee year dates back to Old Testament times and has been a tradition in the Church since at least the year 1300. The Jubilee Year of 2025 is the second that Pope Francis declared, the first was the extraordinary Jubilee, the Year of Mercy celebrated in 2016. You will want to watch your parish bulletins and diocesan newspapers for events around the jubilee year in your diocese.

What does it mean to hope? Especially in such times as these?

Hope is not a passive emotion; it's a force that can motivate action and provide strength during difficult times. It can inspire perseverance and a sense of purpose. The Hebrew word for hope, "tikvah," can also mean "rope," symbolizing how hope ties us to our future and God's promises. Spiritual hope is more than just a feeling; it's a deep-seated belief that can sustain and guide individuals through life's challenges.

A Bible verse that might readily come to our minds is from Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” This is the hope I have seen many and myself as well cling to when the world doesn’t make sense. When I do not understand why there is one more act of violence, one more child abused or one more act of injustice allowed. There is something that “ties” me to God and God’s promises. Hope.

Isaiah 40:31, “But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.” This verse helps me to remember that I can trust in God to hold me up in the unjust times. It also calls for a response from me-to run and not grow weary, to walk and not be faint. To continue with God’s help.

What do you hope for? I hope that each day that all of us, each of us God’s son or daughter, will respond to the call to hope and to act justly to help bring about the world God wants to see. One where the commandment to love each other is obeyed and joyfully followed.

May God bless you!

Sister Phoebe Schwartze



Sr. Michael Emond

Sr. Michael passed away on Monday, May 12, 2025, at St. Benedict’s Health Center in Dickinson, ND. Sr. Michael was born and raised in Malta, Montana and due to her premature birth (3 months early), her bed was in a shoebox in the warmer oven in the old cook stove. Sr. Michael has eight siblings which consisted of two sets of twins. She and her siblings grew up helping with the chores and learning to cook and bake, (the Sisters were blessed with years of Sr. Michael’s homemade goodies at Christmas and her canning from our garden during the summer). Sr. Michael had an extensive education which started with a small country school where she and her siblings walked a mile and a half to and from school. Sr. Michael entered Sacred Heart Monastery in 1955 and celebrated her 60th Golden Jubilee on July 11, 2017.

Her education is as follows:

Four years of high school at Sacred Heart Academy in Minot, ND.

1963 St. Francis School of Nursing, Minot, ND (RN degree).

1972 St. Joseph’s Hospital, Minot, ND (Certified Registered nurse Anesthetist)

1979 University of North Dakota (Family Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Certification).

Over the years Sr. Michael worked at St. Vincent’s nursing home (Bismarck, ND), St. Luke’s Hospital (Crosby, ND), Malta Hospital and nursing home (Malta, MT), Lemmon Health clinic (Lemmon, SD), West Regional Hospital (Hettinger, ND) and Richardton Health Clinic where she retired in 2015.

After retiring, Sr. Michael focused on her ministry of prayer, cooking/canning/baking, answering online request for prayers, and helping wherever she was needed. Sr. Michael was determined to can one hundred quarts of tomatoes last summer which we are enjoying to this day.



Story continued on the back page

Benedictine Sisters of Richardton

2441 10th Ave W
Dickinson, ND 58601

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
UNITED PRINTING



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Volume 1 - Summer 2025

Published twice a year

E-mail: richardtonsisters@sacredheartmonastery.com

www.sacredheartmonastery.com

Phone: **701-456-1900**

When asked why she became a Sister, Sr. Michael would respond. "My love for Jesus and being able to share my love of Jesus and my life in medicine to all I come in contact with." Sr. Michael was an excellent listener and would often counsel those who needed her sage advice. She loved fun and never turned down an invitation for an outing.

During her final months, life became more challenging as her disease progressed. She knew her health was declining and so with her resilient determination and help from the Sisters, she was able to finish all her Christmas baking, likely knowing it would be the last time. It was a sad day for the Sisters when Sr. Michael was no longer able to care for herself at home. Sr. Michael went to St. Benedict's Living Community a week before Christmas.



We are quite sure the angels, her family/friends and Jesus will be enjoying her caramels, peanut brittle and caramel corn next Christmas. *(Sorry, Assumption Abbey, we do not have Sr. Michael's talent in making her famous caramel popcorn for you at Christmas, and believe me, you are much better off without us attempting to make it for you).*

Sr. Michael, you are deeply missed by all of us, especially those whose lives you profoundly touched. Sr. Michael died peacefully and with much love in her heart for her Sisters, her family (especially her niece Denise) and her many friends.