

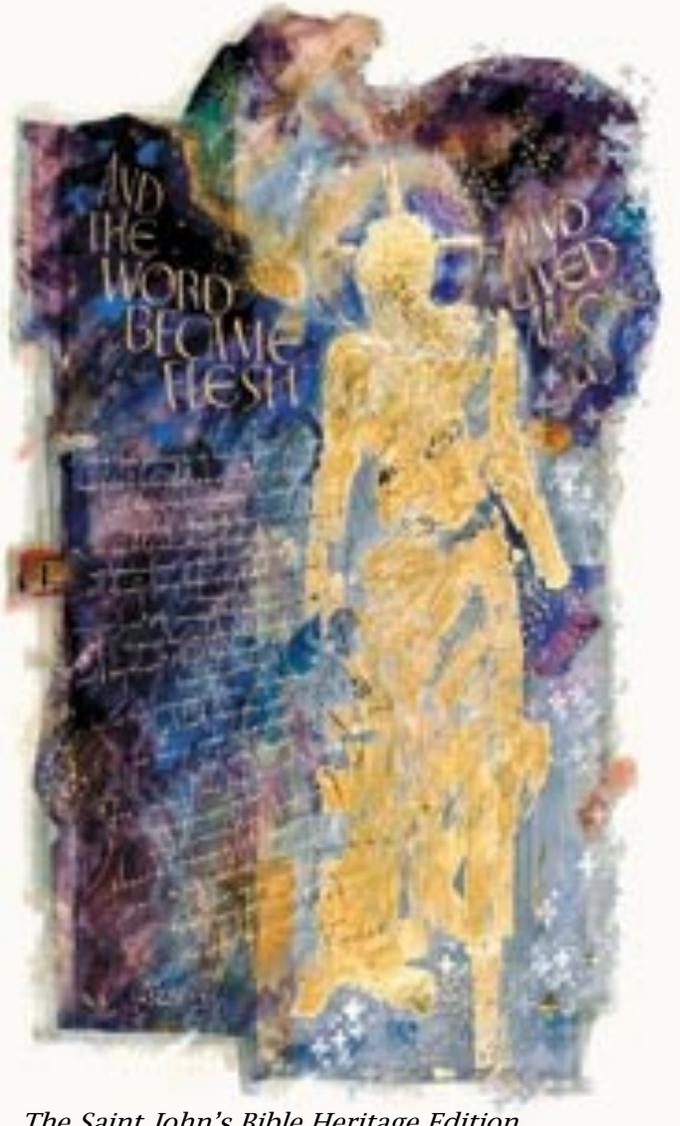


Lisle Benedictine Women

Vol. 41 No. 2

Sacred Heart Monastery

December 2018



The Saint John's Bible Heritage Edition

And the
WORD
became flesh
and made
His
dwelling
among us.

John 1:16

Dear Friends of the Benedictine Sisters,
With our grateful thanks for your love and kindness, we will
remember you in a Novena of Masses celebrated in our chapel
December 24, 2018 - January 1, 2019

Message from the Prioress...



And the WORD became flesh and made His dwelling among us
John 1:16.

Dear Friends,

As I write this reflection, November 13th, it is the feast of St. Gertrude the Great. We have a statue of her at the left hand side of the Benedale staircase leading to our chapel. There is an arrow pointing to her heart which reads "There is no place I would rather be but in the heart of Gertrude."

A thirteenth century mystic and theologian, Gertrude was a Benedictine Nun who is noted for her deep relationship with the Lord in prayer. A characteristic of Gertrude's piety was her devotion to the Sacred Heart, the symbol of that immense charity which urged the WORD to take flesh in her.

I have no idea of what it would be like to be a mystic, but I do know from November 1-15, 2018 the Benedictine Sisters in Duluth, celebrated their 125 years of presence in Duluth. The Benedictine Health System gifted us with a loan of the St. John's Heritage Bible for our viewing.

That "WORD" takes me to the profound experience the sisters and residents were exposed to as recipients of having the heritage version of the St. John's Bible present at both the Villa Center and outside our chapel.

Reflecting on the calligraphy and illumination portion of the Gospel of John 1:16 has helped me appreciate God's gift of self in the person of his Son, who came to show us how to live, die and be rewarded with eternal life, because His promise of life after death was fulfilled in that historical moment.

As we move through the death and resurrection season of fall into winter, and the powerful readings from the Prophet Isaiah during this Advent season, may we come to more fully recognize from the Emmanuel prophecies, especially Isaiah 11:1-9, what we all need to pray for and help to make happen so that the WORD made flesh can become incarnate in us and in our world.

Take some contemplative moments this Advent/Christmas season to meditate, be in awe, give thanks, and love the WORD made flesh.

Merry Christmas to all,

Sister Mary Bratsosky, O.S.B.

We Celebrate Our Jubilarians

On October 5th and 6th, the Community celebrated the profession anniversaries of five of our Sisters. Sister Christine Kouba created acronyms to give tribute to each of the Jubilarians.

NEVER WILL I LEAVE YOU; NEVER WILL I FORSAKE YOU.

Hebrews 13:5

Sister Rosalie Major, OSB—80 years of Monastic profession

R- Religiously Aware. Sister Rosalie religiously prays for whoever does an act of kindness for her, a beautiful mark of her thankfulness and compassion.

O- Optimistic. Rosalie is a happy person and cheers people up with her smile and greetings to have a good day.

S- Sympathetic. Whenever there is sadness or death, Rosalie is ready to offer sympathy, prayer and support.

A- Alert. At age 101, Sister Rosalie is still very alert and remembers well her relatives, friends and even students' names from long ago.

L- Loving. She is dearly loved by her relatives, friends and students because she initiates loving kindness and hospitality to them.

I- Interested. She is interested in the news and watches TV regularly to find out the latest happenings in the world.

E- Ecstatic. Rosalie becomes ecstatic if she meets a Polish person. She's visited Poland twice, and Pope St. John Paul II is her special Polish hero.



Sister Susanne Thome—65 years of Monastic profession

S- Service. Sister Susanne is known for her thoughtfulness and cheerful presence in serving, especially in visiting the sick or homebound.

U- Uncluttered, keeping her bedroom neat, simple and arranged without clutter. This also applies to the simplicity and cleanliness in how she dresses.

S- Substitute. Sister is a general substitute in cleaning up, helping prepare for Friday night get-togethers, and assisting with shopping and deliveries.

A- Alert. She has an eye for noticing things that are left undone or things that can be done.

N- Niles. Sister Susanne spent most of her ministry years at St. Benedict's Home in Niles, Illinois, cooking and preparing meals for the elderly residents.

N- Native of Haugen, Wisconsin, where she was taught by the Benedictine Sisters from Lisle at Holy Trinity School.

E- Easy-going. Sister Susanne is easy-going and loves to have a good time with friends. However, she observes well St. Benedict's admonition, "LET NOTHING BE PREFERRED TO THE WORK OF GOD."



Sister Barbara Ann Svec, OSB—60 years of Monastic profession

B- Benedictine. Barbara Ann is one of three in her family.

A- Attuned to Chant, using her rich voice to cantor for our services.

R- Religious Life. We celebrate her 60 years!

B- Benet Academy. Barbara Ann spent years at Benet Academy, as Math Teacher, then as Calendar Scheduler for staff and student body.

A- Archives. Her interest in researching histories of living and deceased Sisters of our Community has been important in preserving our Archive records.

R- Recreational. Barbara Ann has enjoyed craft work throughout her Monastic life, collecting post cards, playing computer games, and scrapbooking.

A- Awareness. Sister is aware of outreach projects and has joined the Lisle Heritage Society and participates in the Friends of the Lisle Library.



Sister Irene Jasien, OSB—60 years of Monastic profession

I- Inspiring. Irene is gentle, a good listener and a loving, approachable person.

R- Reliable. Trustworthy, she carries the burdens of others with prayer and attentiveness, as she ministers to the sick and elderly.

E- Efficient. She loves order, neatness, on-timeliness, keeping an undisturbed schedule, working with the right tools, and no procrastination. Cleaning out rooms and closets is her forte!

N- Noteworthy. Sister Irene taught first and second graders, and by word and example, she deepened children's love for God and neighbor. Later, ministering to the older generation, she visited the sick in homes, hospitals and nursing homes. No matter who she works with, she conveys hospitality and love.

E- Elegant. Sister Irene is neatly dressed with good manners, good posture and is positive in her speaking habits, easily convincing others of the value of her commodity or purpose!



Sister Jo Anne Form, OSB—60 years of Monastic profession

J- Job Well-Done. Our Divine Office booklets are proof that Jo Anne's professional hands have been at work.

O- Organized. Jo Anne's office, bedroom and personal belongings are always in order and readily accessible to her and to others.

A- Amazing. Sister is amazing in all the creative things she can do and the many positions she has held: parochial school teacher, Principal, Guidance Counselor, Financial Aid Counselor, and Development Office Coordinator.

N- Newsletter. The layout, design and mailings of the *Lisle Benedictine Women* kept Jo Anne going in several different directions. She is a computer expert and always ready to help others with computer skills.

N- Naturally Outgoing Personality. Jo Anne's outgoing way and positive approach in encouraging students' talents, has won praise wherever she taught.

E- Energetic. If you want help with a special job, just ask Jo Anne for help. She will roll up her sleeves and work with energy and proficiency.



May They Rest in the Peace of the Lord



Sister Agnes Ann Svec, OSB
December 31, 1924 - September 13, 2018

St Paul reminds us that those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. Sister Agnes Ann knew and lived and responded to that relationship.

Agnes Ann, born to Joseph and Anna Svec, was one of four children. Her siblings included Father Denis of St. Procopius Abbey, her brother Frank, and Sister Barbara Ann.

Sister Agnes Ann's introduction to the Benedictine world began at St. Vitus where she was baptized by Father Hilary Jurica, OSB, a weekend priest from St. Procopius Abbey. Sister Agnes Ann talked fondly of Father Hilary and the Saturdays when he took groups of children to the

Field Museum, Adler Planetarium, to parks and zoos.

When the family moved to Traverse City, Michigan, she fell in love with nature and gardening. Back in Chicago, during visits to the hospital where her sister Barbara Ann was receiving care, Agnes Ann solidified her desire to pursue nursing. Agnes Ann had a passion for learning. She completed nursing school at St. Anthony's Hospital in Chicago, earned a Bachelor's of Science at DePaul University, completed a Master's in Guidance and Counseling at Loyola University, and earned a degree at Illinois Benedictine College in their Institute for Management Program. She even graduated from the Lisle Police Department Citizens Police Academy.

What brought a surgical nurse, who loved her work and staff at St. Anthony's, to Sacred Heart Monastery? Her simple answer - that Sister Immaculate asked her to consider religious life. The truth was Agnes Ann had always been open to listening and responding to being a child of God. She understood well that "all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:5)

As a Child of God, Agnes Ann was open to the will of God and to adventure. She combined her many skills with travel to serve people. She participated in a "Third World Conscience Raising Experience in Cuernavaca, Mexico." She and Sister Immaculate accepted the invitation of Father Alban to go to Taiwan, where they

Sister Agnes Ann, continued

taught English to children. She was generously gifted with a pilgrimage to Rome, Lourdes and Fatima.

In addition to nursing, she was a teacher at many schools including Sacred Heart Academy, and Guidance Counselor at Benet Academy for 18 years. In 1985 she became the first Administrator of Queen of Peace Center, now Villa St. Benedict.

Sister Agnes Ann was heavily engaged in the annual Great American Yard Sale, taking care of and filling our gift shop with useful items, growing a flower garden outside our kitchen window, and learning the art of stained glass window making with one of our former sisters and friend, Marie Tatina.

Good Friday, 2016, after becoming somewhat weak, Agnes Ann fell, broke her arm and ultimately ended up at St. Patrick's nursing home. She found it difficult to be admitted to a nursing home but never complained and always asked "what is happening at Sacred Heart?"

On August 30, 2018 she was diagnosed with a brain bleed, and was put on hospice. Before going to the hospital that Sunday, she was not able to get a clear word out of her mouth, however, when undergoing blood draws and tests she could clearly recite the Hail Mary. She loved Mary and praying the rosary.

Sister Agnes Ann would have celebrated her 65th jubilee of monastic profession on October 5th of this year - now she celebrates in heaven. Those we hold dear never leave us. They live on in the kindness they showed, the comfort they shared and the love they brought into our lives. Thank you, Sister Agnes Ann, for your example and presence in our lives. Enjoy eternity with God your Creator and all who are there!



Sister Barbara Ann Svec, OSB
October 2, 1938 - October 12, 2018

Barbara Ann Svec was born in Traverse City, Michigan, the youngest of four. Of the four siblings, three found their calling as Benedictines and one brother has raised six children.

Sister Barbara's life has involved significant medical challenges, and she was no stranger to hardships and suffering. A congenital circulatory condition required many surgeries as a child and interrupted her early elementary school years. By the time Barbara was ready for first grade (at the ripe old age of 5), the family had moved back to Chicago and she attended St. Pius and, subsequently, St. Vitus and Holy Mount, where she was taught by the Benedictines. Health problems surfaced again prior to high school and a slow healing leg fracture kept Barbara out of school for two years.

Sister Barbara Ann, continued

Upon her recovery, Barbara enrolled as a sophomore in Sacred Heart Academy where her sister, Agnes Ann, had entered. Following a spring 1956 graduation, Barbara entered the community. She recalls feeling, as a young girl, that there was something “mysterious” about the Sisters. She watched them as a student and thought that the Benedictine community might be a place where she could learn about God and her faith. She was attracted to their vocation of teaching.

Sister Barbara’s ministry of education took her to a variety of schools over the years in the Chicago area as well as Texas. Chronic trouble with her leg required an amputation in 1966, but Sister Barbara has been characterized by one of her physicians as OTC (One Tough Cookie!) and she soon recovered from surgery and was back to teaching. Her longest assignment was at Benet Academy where she started out as a Geometry and Algebra teacher, but found her niche as Curriculum Coordinator. This work involved preparing all the course schedules, arranging for the faculty’s teaching schedule and finally, scheduling all the students. Sister Barbara thoroughly enjoyed this work and performed this role until the school computerized the process.

Back home at the monastery, Sister Barbara had been involved in many community roles, including editor of the Sisters’ newsletter and membership on the Monastic Council. She has meticulously computerized much of the Sisters’ archive materials. She was especially interested in recording the stories of all the Sisters, living and deceased, who made up the history of the Lisle Benedictines.

Her newsletter skills lead her to volunteer work for the Lisle Heritage Society and participation in the Friends of the Lisle Library. Sister Barbara has enjoyed many hobbies over the years including crocheting and collecting postcards, but mostly these days she mastered scrapbooking and doing needlework of all kinds. Most recently she had been making and giving away “hug” needlepoint sayings to cheer up residents or staff members.

A lifelong Cubs fan, Barb enjoyed singing, cantering, listening to classical music, reading, the mountains of Colorado, cats and dogs, and was proud to be able to bless and feed animals here at VSB on occasions.

Sister’s life came to sudden end when on her 80th birthday and the feast of the Guardian Angels, she was admitted to the hospital on October 2, 2018 and died peacefully the following week of congestive heart failure.

She participated in the diocesan celebration of Religious Life for Jubilarians on September 30th but was unable to participate in her 60th anniversary of religious profession with her community on October 6th. Sister Mary made sure that Barbara was able to enjoy her cards and gifts while in the hospital.

Yes, Barb, in the words of St. Paul, you have competed well; have finished the race; and have kept the faith. Continue your jubilee celebration with your family, now complete, in heaven with all your friends.

Excerpts from reflections by Sister Mary Bratrsovsky, OSB

In loving memory



Sisters Agnes Ann and Barbara Ann



Sister Agnes Ann with two of her passions: flowers and stained glass.



Barbara Ann receives "official" adoption certification from Sister Mary's Bratrsovsky's family for her 50th jubilee year.



Sisters Agnes Ann and Barbara Ann with family

Here and There... in the spirit of hospitality



The beautiful Grotto dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes is located on the grounds of Sacred Heart Monastery. Volunteers offer their time and helping hands to assist Sister Mary Bratrsovsky with planting and weeding.

The Student Nursing Association at Lewis University helps tend the Grotto.



Refreshments for Benedictine University students and Dr. Christine Fletcher after service time in the Grotto.

Queen of Heaven Monastery

Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession

On Sunday, June 24, 2018, Sister Mary Martha Kacmarek, OSB, a Byzantine Benedictine Sister of Queen of Heaven Monastery in Warren, Ohio, celebrated her Golden Jubilee of monastic profession at SS. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Warren. Most Reverend William C. Skurla, DD, Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Reverend Simeon Sibenik, pastor of Saints Peter and Paul Church, concelebrated the Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving. Father Simeon delivered the homily. Clergy present were Monsignor George Appleyard of Clintonville, PA and Abbot Leo Schlosser in residence at Leisenring, PA. Miss Mary Beth Byers cantored the Liturgy and Theodore Falatic chanted the Epistle reading. James Basista and John Welch served as acolytes.



Photo taken by Joseph Rudinec

Along with friends, family, and members of her monastic community, the Oblates of Saint Benedict and several Sisters of St. Basil the Great were also present. Following the Divine Liturgy, all enjoyed a festive dinner at Café 422 in Warren. Almost a dozen members of Sister's family from the Chicago and Indiana areas were able to be present, including her remaining sibling, Joseph, the oldest of the family.

Sister Mary Martha is the youngest of nine children born to the late Joseph and Mary Kacmarek of Chicago. A member of St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Chicago, she entered the Benedictine Sisters of the Byzantine Church in Warren in 1966 and made perpetual profession on June 5, 1971. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics from Saint Xavier College in Chicago and a Master of Science degree in mathematics from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

Sister Mary Martha has taught classes on the elementary, high school, college and adult levels, including catechetical classes at local Byzantine parishes. For over 20 years she regularly visited the shut-ins and hospitalized of Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Parish in Warren.

Ministry for her community over the years has included being sub-prioress, community secretary, treasurer, formation team member and monastic council member. Presently her primary ministry is faithfulness to prayer and continuing the responsibility of being community treasurer.

May God grant to Sister Mary Martha many happy and blessed years! Mnohaja i blahaja lita!

Appointment of the New Administrator

On May 29, 2018, In a ritual before evening prayer, Sister Mary Bratrsovsky appointed Sister Barbara Pavlik as Administrator of Queen of Heaven Monastery in Warren, Ohio. Sister Mary and the Warren Sisters also thanked and blessed the outgoing Administrator, Sister Agnes Knapik, for her five years of service.



Sisters in the photo from left to right are Sister Agnes Knapik, Sister Marion Dobos, Sister Mary Bratrsovsky (Prioress at Sacred Heart Monastery in Lisle,) Sister Barbara Pavlik and Sister Mary Martha Kacmarek.

The installation called for a Dinner at Enzo's to celebrate!



Retirement Fund for Religious December 8- 9, 2018 at most local Catholic parishes

The Retirement Fund for Religious provides support for thousands of elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

By 2027, it is projected that religious past age 70 will outnumber those under age 70 by three to one. You can make a difference in the life of an elderly religious.

Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

We thank you for your continued generous support of the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Donations by mail: Retirement Fund for Religious
National Religious Retirement Office
PO Box 96988
Washington, DC 20090-6988

WORDS OF GRATITUDE from Sister Anna Duong

September 5, 2018 - prior to returning home to Vietnam

In the Vietnamese language, we are told: "Wake up at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving." When I first came to the USA, I did not know where life would take me. Everything here was so new to me, but God's love kept enriching my heart to grow.



After studying at Assumption College for International Sisters in New Jersey, I entered Benedictine University in Lisle, which shall ever remain the lighthouse of my heart.

To my beloved Benedictine Sisters, you have enkindled my spirit with God's love. Thank you for allowing me to grow with you and develop as an individual with integrity. I treasure and hold you all in my heart. One of you said, "The road to your dreams isn't always easy to navigate, but don't give up." In my short yet inspiring stay in your monastery, you helped me stay on course. Six years came to bear a lot of good fruit in my life, both physically and spiritually.

Although apart from each other, your prayers and support come with me. I now see the reality of life clearer and have a listening ear attuned to hear your voices which I will carry in my mind wherever I go in this our common home, the planet EARTH. Rest assured that all of you will be in my prayers; please keep me in your prayers always.

Truly, it has been an exceptional pleasure for me to have been here and to have received a high quality education here in the United States of America. I promise to use all my experiences and enlightenment to serve my people in Vietnam, especially those who are on the margin in my Communist country.

Thank you and May Almighty God bless you all!

Update November 5, 2018 - from Vietnam

It is now two months that I am back here. "Time flies so fast like shoots of an arrow!" A member of the Religious Order of Sisters called LOVERS OF THE HOLY CROSS, I am now living in our Formation House as Aspirancy Directress and Vocation Animator.

I share my sacred duties with two other Sisters who are also USA graduates. We are journeying with 28 Aspirants and 20 College Students. My classes with the Aspirants are on spirituality, consecrated life and morality. Working with these young ladies gives me an opportunity to look back at my own vocation journey, so precious in God's eyes.

In reflecting on your Benedictine life and the motto of St. Benedict: "Ora et Labora", I hope to motivate these eager, young women to encounter Jesus by their sincere labor and genuine hearts as they contemplate God's goodness through their prayer and work. My experience with you reminds me of the gratitude I share with St. Paul: "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him in all speech and knowledge." (1Cor 1:4-5)

May God bless you always, my dear Sisters!



**The Blessing of Trees
and Bushes**

in memory of
DAVID WETTSTAEDT
LA'CHANG COLEMAN
BOB SCHUMACHER
LISA CALABRESE
RAYMOND JASIEN
CAROL SMITH
CAROLINA ADION
OSIAS DAMAYO



Villa St. Benedict

The past year has been exciting for the residents and families of Villa St. Benedict as we took important steps toward turning a long-held dream into reality. In September, we launched our *Ready, Set...Grow!* capital campaign in support of the VSB Great Room. This impressive space once housed the Sacred Heart Academy Auditorium and will be a wonderful addition to the Villa St. Benedict experience. With so many resident activities taking place each day, having this additional space will be a blessing for all and will provide so many opportunities...

Socially

- Movie Nights
- Life Enrichment Events
- Dinners
- Bingo
- Reunions and Family Gatherings
- Televised Sporting Events
- Concerts



Spiritually

- Chapel Overflow
- Singing Groups
- Programs to Promote our Benedictine Identity
- Liturgical Year Preparation
- Advent and Lenten Prayer Services

Intellectually

- Lectures
- Benedictine University and College of DuPage Classes
- Marketing Events



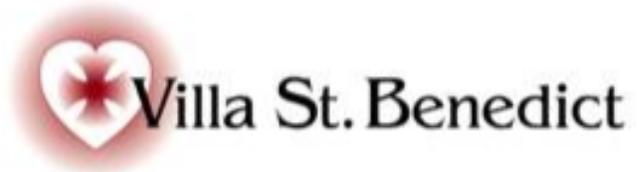


Physically

- Dances
- Noodle Volleyball
- Exercise Classes

Our thanks to the ***Ready, Set...Grow!*** Campaign Leadership Team – Judy Arcy, Paul Curtin, Cindy Power, Tom Shanley, Joy Wilcox – for the gifts they are sharing to make this effort a great success.

If you are interested in participating in the ***Ready, Set...Grow!*** campaign, please contact Tammy Bruner at 630.725.7011 or TBruner@villastben.org.



Welcome, Sister Candida Massabo

Sister Candida is a member of the St. Maria Goretti Sisters and is here from Mwanza, Tanzania.

We have the pleasure of her presence at Sacred Heart Monastery as she pursues her studies at Lewis University. Sister is enrolled in the three year doctoral program in Education and Leadership.

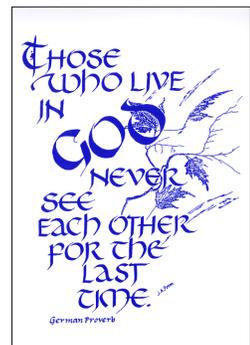
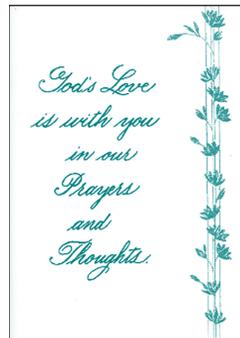
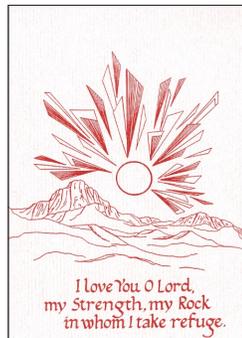
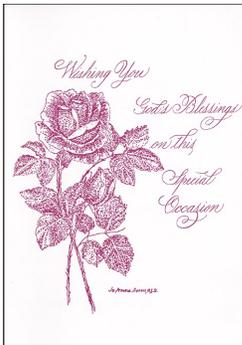
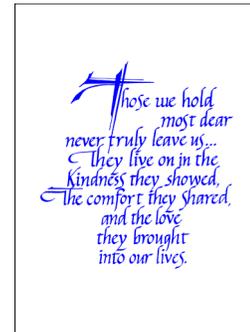
She may also have introduced herself to you as Sister Mary Kay!



Lisle Benedictine Women

Sacred Heart Monastery
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(630) 725-6000
www.shmlisle.org

Prayer Cards are available for all occasions
from the Benedictine Sisters



All information is available on our website: www.shmlisle.org
