

# Seek. Pray. Share.

Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 1 FALL 2012



## INSIDE

Helping seminarians

Our teachers'  
influence

Reverence for life

Higher math standard

# Teaching beyond books



The Sisters of St. Benedict came to Ferdinand, Indiana, way back in 1867 to be educators. As needs grew in the area, more and more of our sisters became teachers.

So teaching was our primary ministry for over 100 years. Benedictine sisters provided the educational foundation for much of southern Indiana. Many schools were staffed entirely by our sisters. And although we've since branched out into other fields, such as parish work, health care, and social work, teaching young students remains a staple of ours.

In this issue of *Seek. Pray. Share.*, we take a closer look at some of our sister educators.

Our teaching ministries cover a wide range. From pre-schoolers to university-level math students. From Indianapolis to Evansville to Owensboro to Louisville. From the deep diversity of the inner city to the religious focus of Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology.

And our influence goes beyond our sisters in the classroom. Many current lay teachers were inspired to become educators when they were students of our sisters long ago. We also sponsor college scholarships for Hispanics, which ties nicely to our support of immigration.

Our educators have won many honors over the years for their service. Recently, the mayor of Evansville, Indiana, proclaimed a "Sister Karlene Sensmeier Day" for her contributions as principal of St. Benedict Cathedral School.

Many of our educators also continue honing their teaching skills. Seven have either recently completed, or are pursuing, Master's degrees in their field. Six are continuing their full-time ministries as they study. Sister Kathy Cash, a math teacher at Louisville's Trinity High School, recently was named the University of Louisville's Outstanding Masters Student in Middle and Secondary Education.

As you read the following stories, you'll discover that the education we strive to deliver is much more than what can be found in a textbook. Although book learning is important, some values are best understood and grown through the personal touch. That's where the Benedictine background plays a key role.

A lot of what we provide is preparing young people to make a life for themselves with God. Mixed with that is teaching and encouraging students how to get the best out of themselves. And by hopefully showing them the proper attitude and approach to take with life, which can be crucial, too, in their being successful in any job they take on.

We hope you enjoy this update on what the sisters are doing, whether it's explaining to pre-schoolers the wonders of maple tree whirlybirds or getting a student to absorb the intricate solution to a thorny math problem.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Kristine Anne Harpenau OSB". The script is fluid and cursive.

Sister Kristine Anne Harpenau, OSB  
Prioress





# Seek.Pray.Share.

Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana

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Cover: Sister Ida Otto shows students at St. Bernard Preschool and Daycare in Rockport, Indiana, the cabbage in their school garden.

Top photo: Sister Rosemary Dauby works in the Chicken in the Pot booth at the Summer Social on July 7.

Bottom photo: Sister Mary Alice Schnur talks to visitors at the art show held at the Summer Social on July 7.



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Sister Patty Lasher, a licensed mental health counselor at the Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, talks with a seminarian studying for the priesthood.

# Sister Patty helps men grow into priests

by Greg Eckerle

As a 17-year counselor at the Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, Sister Patty Lasher plays a critical role in helping seminarians become the best priests they can be.

She's a difference-making part of a unique formation team at the school, which focuses on men studying for the priesthood. Saint Meinrad Archabbey, a Benedictine monastery that operates the Seminary and School of Theology, is one of only two archabbey in the United States.

As a Sister of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, the irony runs deep for Sister Patty, as her Benedictine community of women religious is only a few miles from the Saint Meinrad community of Benedictine men.

So she fits easily into the Saint Meinrad way of life.

But what's highly important to her "is being part of someone else's growth, watching their potential being developed, and watching people grow."

She's in the perfect spot for that as a member of the human formation segment of Saint Meinrad's four-pillar formation staff. The other pillars are intellectual, pastoral, and spiritual formation.

"My pillar is all about who these men are as humans," said Sister Patty, "and how to help them become a better human being."

A licensed mental health counselor, she thinks it's a privileged position to participate in that process

Father Brendan Moss, formation dean and director of pastoral formation, said, "Priests are men that dedicate their whole life to their relationship with Christ, to the work of discipleship, which is a continual conversion. That's what Sister Patty's work is all about, so these men might be priests who serve God and God's people. To do that, we have to know ourselves. What Sister Patty really does is help seminarians know themselves."

Sister Patty helps aspiring priests examine their strengths and weaknesses, and how they might help or hinder them as they serve God's people. How might the truth of their life's experience help them, or limit them?

Father Brendan points out, "The beautiful thing about Sister Patty's relationship with the student is that it's professional, in a protected place, and it's not judgmental. She helps them in the journey to better self understanding, and that's not easy work.

*“My best guess,” says Father Brendan, “is that Sister Patty has affected the lives of hundreds of people.”*

“Students have said to me, on multiple occasions, ‘She will not let me get away with something,’ or ‘She will hold me accountable.’ That’s particularly important, because in her work to help people better understand themselves, the challenge is to reach an appropriate level of authenticity. And authenticity is a necessary attribute for ministry.

“The gift she brings as a counselor is the treasure of Benedictine continual conversion. With God, we are pure potential. Her work is helping people grow into that potential.”

Sister Patty’s counseling sessions with students are confidential.

“My best guess,” says Father Brendan, “is that Sister Patty has affected the lives of hundreds of people. Her impact goes far beyond Saint Meinrad. She has been affecting the lives of people in dioceses all across the United States, and much further. That’s a powerful impact. Her work not only has present-day benefit, but also reaches into the future. Her work with seminarians today helps ensure good and holy priests in the years to come.

“Her impact is very much representative of the Sisters of St. Benedict at Monastery Immaculate Conception. They have fulfilled the needs of the church where the church has asked them to do so.”

Sister Patty says the issues that seminarians discuss with her could be anything, from addictions to family issues. They are all very open to working on them to become the best priests they can be in their years at the school.

“I think I see these men at their very best,” says Sister Patty. “They’re open and sincere. I don’t think there’s a more privileged place. I appreciate that it’s part of something bigger.

“I think about what St. Benedict said in his Rule. When you’re forming people, it’s like removing rust from a vessel. Do it gently, so you don’t harm the vessel.

“When I look at people, I see potential. Part of what I do is help that individual see what I see. Sometimes people think they are never going to get through a situation. Part of counseling is seeing the person’s gifts and discussing how they can use them to get where they want to go.

“It’s about empowering them to do what’s necessary to be who they want to be. And getting them to realize they have everything they need to do so, as God put those gifts within them.”

A gift Sister Patty has is a delivery style that is as believable as can be. She speaks softly at just the right times, with uncanny inflection and sincere concern. Her mannerisms combine in

a way to make one want to listen, and to quickly realize how sensible her words are. Then, it’s clearly logical to take the next step on the personal path she’s laid out with you. Countless men have successfully taken that next step, and many to follow.

“When men come back as ordained priests and tell me how happy they are, I take a lot of pride in that, just because I’ve been a part of what prepared them,” says Sister Patty. “The most rewarding thing is they have a wonderful life as a priest. I can live on that for the rest of my life, that’s really all I need to know.”

Her biggest challenge is helping the seminarians be patient with their own journey, to help them appreciate their incremental growth, and to have them realize their growth is life-long. All yearn to be a finished product when leaving Saint Meinrad, but Sister Patty knows it’s but one step in a life journey.

“It’s not that I bring so much, I’m just helping them to see what’s inside of themselves already. They might attribute something to me, but they do all the work,” she says.

Still, the encouragement, the motivations, and the insights Sister Patty brings lays the foundation for the men to be empowered.

And, as she reasons, when they come back later and are happy with their lives, what’s better than that? ■







Sister Ida Otto helps pre-school children plant tomatoes and okra in a playground garden she started at St. Bernard School.

# Digging Sister Ida — and garden dirt

by Greg Eckerle

It's afternoon naptime, but several of the pre-school children at St. Bernard School in Rockport, Indiana, are restless.

The classroom lights are off in the Child Care Center, soft music is playing, and after-school care coordinator Ashley Mascenik and Sister Ida Otto are doing their best to calm down the young students, ranging in age from three to five.

"Lay down, Miss Emmy," says Sister Ida, softly.

"Go to sleep, Mister Briley."

About a minute of silence passes.

"Sister Ida, my shoes are falling off."

She moves quietly to tend to the problem. She soothes another child, then gently places a cover over another.

"I know you miss your mommy. You little wiggle worm. Now take a nap, then it'll be time to get picked up. Now, ssshhh."

Sister Ida smiles warmly, reassuringly. The child smiles back, and slowly closes her eyes, smile intact.

Sister Ida, who entered the monastery in 1962 and taught for

years at Rockport and at Precious Blood School in Jasper, now helps with after-school care however she can five afternoons a week. While much of it is getting the youngsters to rest, she's best known for the school garden she started, her arts and crafts projects the kids delight in, and the genuine love she showers over the pre-schoolers.

That love is returned many times over.

Ask anyone at the school about her, and the first response is likely, "Oh, I just love Sister Ida."

Her effortless interaction and unmistakable sincerity with the children is impressive. That's why so many older students, remembering their pre-school days, go out of their way to give her a warm hug whenever they spot her. Or why parents, at the Christmas programs, will snap photos of their children with her.

"The kids adore her," says Mascenik. "She's patient with them, she finds something special about each one, and makes sure each of the kids feel like they're important to her. She's always leaving thoughtful notes. She handmade Valentines for everybody. During the holidays, she made a special gift for each child."

Sister Ida Otto and four pre-school students at St. Bernard School in Rockport, Ind., delightfully throw maple tree “helicopter” seeds into the air.



Sister Ida relishes working with the young age group.

“I think we can help them so much. Their parents are so busy working, we can teach them the little things to enjoy in life.”

Like showing them how to plant and grow produce in the school garden she created. Or reading them stories. Or doing little art projects. Or teaching them songs. Or to simply thrill in watching a fistful of maple tree “helicopters” flutter crazily to the ground.

“They’re our citizens and leaders of tomorrow,” says Sister Ida, “and sometimes they don’t have such good role models. Not that I’m a role model, but I think you can teach them so much without even being a classroom teacher. You don’t realize they pick up whatever you say.”

School secretary Cheri Lopez says, “Sister Ida sets a good example. She has a way of being firm with them without ever making them feel bad. I love that she grows a garden out in the playground with them. She lets them dig in the dirt, but with a purpose. Ask any of my seven kids, even the three who didn’t have her in class, and they’ll all tell you how much they love Sister Ida.”

The rewards for Sister Ida are the simple things from the young ones – hugs, flowers picked out of the grass, a picture drawn just for her, and to hear, over and over, ‘Oh, I love you,’ even from “some I have to get after sometimes.”

“I think the Lord gave me a big bundle-full of patience,” she says, smiling. “That’s what you need for this age, patience, and understanding, and love.”

“Being a Benedictine sister helps. We like to carry on God’s work, and I like to start with the little ones, because Jesus always loved the little children. I try to help them all out, but sometimes those having a rough day may need an extra hug.

“I do teach them some about religion, especially during Christmas and Easter. Like sharing with each other. Caring for each other, and for the world. And to not hit someone, Jesus wouldn’t have liked that.”

Kristy Yeager, the school’s director, says, “Sister Ida is just phenomenal. She’s definitely a staple here. She gets down on the floor with the students and interacts with them, but is also a

disciplinarian without having to raise her voice or be harsh. One of the questions on our annual home evaluation is what is your favorite thing about St. Bernard, and we will always get at least one that says simply, Sister Ida.”

Fifth grade teacher Julie Payne says, “She’s so loving and so giving. It’s like she walks with an aura of love around her. More than anybody I’ve ever met, she has that presence.”

Principal Sara Guth thinks Sister Ida is probably the most loved person in the whole building.

“I think it’s because kids can just sense goodness in people. The kids have such pure hearts, and they see that she loves them genuinely, and treats them with respect. She doesn’t lose her composure. She brings such a gift to St. Bernard, and has such a spiritual side.”

Sara particularly remembers an incident with a couple of students that were “an absolute handful.” Sister Ida was talking to them in the hall, trying to keep them in line, but nothing was working.

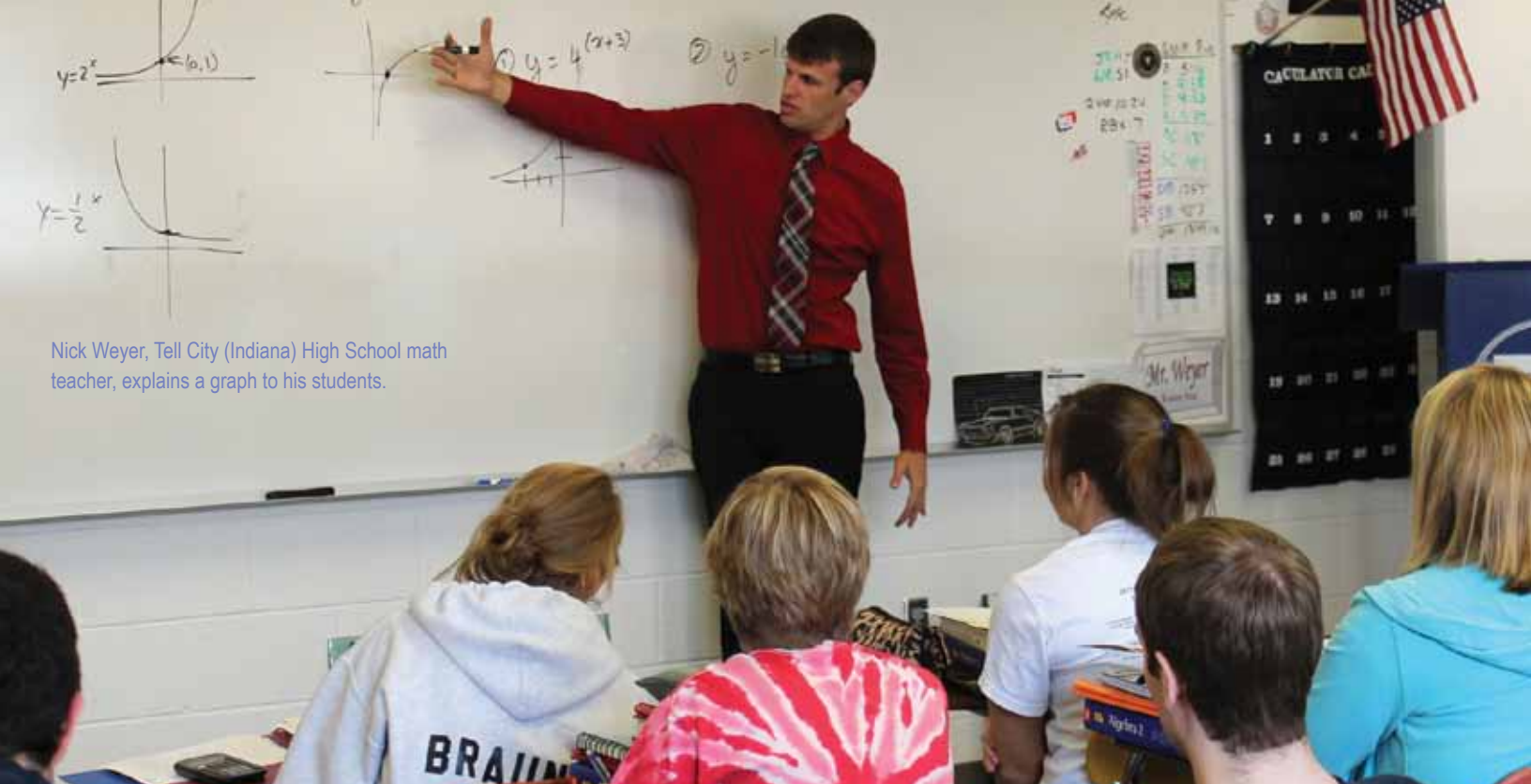
“Finally, I stuck my head out, and saw her, with her eyes closed, saying, ‘Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you . . .’ It said it all. It was just awesome.”

And Sara fondly recalls Sister Ida always dressing to the hilt for whatever themed activity the school has. Be it Crazy Hat Day, or Mismatch Day, or wearing your favorite team’s gear. One time she dressed like a farmer, complete with her dad’s bib overalls, a huge farmer’s hat, a big red bandana, and boots.

“She was just hilarious.

“I love Sister Ida.” ■





Nick Weyer, Tell City (Indiana) High School math teacher, explains a graph to his students.

# Influencing today's teachers

by Laura Reckelhoff

When in the first grade, Nick Weyer remembers his teacher, Sister Mary Roman Dall, as being very tall, skinny, and soft-spoken. Since Weyer is now a grown adult, Sister Mary Roman doesn't seem quite as tall, that must have been based on perspective, but she always has a greeting for him and inquires how things are going in his life. As a math teacher at Tell City High School, Weyer has a goal to have a similar teacher-student caring relationship with his students after they graduate.

Weyer is one of many who are teaching today that were influenced by the Sisters of St. Benedict that taught them.

Weyer recalls another lesson from Sister Mary Roman. "She talked to the boys in our class about a particular boy who was the type that acted up. She explained how we weren't doing anything wrong against this kid but that we could do better. She said we should try being friends with him and including him in spite of how he acted and being his friend may even help him."

Treat others how you would like to be treated was the lesson Sister Mary Roman was teaching those little boys that day. It must have stuck with at least one since Weyer can still remember the situation. Now being a teacher himself, he hopes lessons he passes on also have a lasting impression.

Janessa (Rohleder) Steckler had Sister Sylvia Gehlhausen for a second grade teacher. Now Steckler is also a second grade teacher at Nancy Hanks Elementary School. Though many things have changed in schools, she finds herself thinking back to her second grade experience quite often.

Steckler says, "Sister Sylvia made learning fun and interesting. She always seemed excited about it. At least that is how I saw it as a second grader." Now Steckler realizes how difficult it actually is to make lessons exciting and engaging to young students.

As Steckler recounts memories from Sister Sylvia's classroom, she now looks at it from a teacher's perspective as well. "Sister Sylvia would bring her guitar and sing, tying singing into what we were learning. Now I realize it was a way to keep our attention.

"We would go on nature walks with Sister Sylvia, and she'd talk about all the plants and animals that we'd see. I feel with the education standards we are required to meet now, it is harder to be impromptu like that. But I did a nature walk one time and wondered how did Sister Sylvia do this? In my second grade mind, everyone was excited about the walk. Not everyone seemed as excited when I tried it as a teacher."



A few years ago, with Steckler's invitation, Sister Sylvia visited her classroom. It had been about 25 years since Steckler was the second grade student but Sister Sylvia was delighted to see a former student's classroom. Sister Sylvia shared something with her that day, too. It was a book she keeps of all her former students, including Steckler.

Steckler knew she wanted to be a teacher since kindergarten. She says, "Certain teachers inspired me more and Sister Sylvia was one. She had a way of connecting with the kids. I wanted to be a teacher just like her."

Lee Begle never thought he'd be a teacher, or even in the field of education, but now he is principal at Ferdinand Elementary, a position he's held for 33 years. Starting off in a one room schoolhouse, through high school, and during his two years at the Sisters of St. Benedict's St. Benedict College, he had many sisters that taught and influenced him along the way. Some of those sisters became peers when Begle was a teacher and then a principal.

The first sisters Begle remembers having as a student was Sister Stephanie Seng in second grade and Sister Wilhelmina Fischer in third grade. He says, "I remember them wearing habits, which was a bit intimidating, but I liked them. Both were pretty strict, and you knew to behave."

In high school, Sister Mary Carmen Spayd was a big influence on Begle. She loved sports and he played basketball, so he felt a lot of support from her. Begle says, "The sisters would pray for our games."

Begle's study hall was monitored by Sister Mary Carmen, but Begle and Dan Bettag were often left in charge of the class, a



Janessa Steckler, second grade teacher at Nancy Hanks Elementary, works with a cluster group of students on reading comprehension.

responsibility Begle enjoyed. It's likely one of the first experiences that started his path to a career in education.

In college, Sister Benedicta Clauss helped Begle reach his potential. He says, "She really helped me get through that first year of college. She was always positive, encouraging and helped build my confidence as a student."

"One confidence builder was during speech class. We had to give a speech with distractions. I was on the steps of the convent with someone on my back and gave a speech."

Begle tells of another sister he had as a teacher: "Sister Mary Walter Goebel was one of my all time favorites. She took an interest in me as an individual. I never met anyone more kind or caring, and we developed a good friendship."

When he became principal, Begle replaced Sister Mary Ann Hartlage. He says, "She opened the door for me when she left. She supported me in getting my administrative license." As principal, Begle had sisters working for him as teachers and had sisters as peers, which was quite different than the teacher-student relationships of his school days.

Weyer's first grade teacher, Sister Mary Roman, was one of the sisters that worked under Begle. He describes her as, "the true epitomy of a sister. She was the perfect employee. We were always in sync, and I never had an issue with her." Sister Mary Roman retired after many years of working for Begle.

Weyer, Steckler, and Begle are just three examples of students that became teachers themselves, after being influenced by sisters. The three now influence our next generation of teachers as do the sisters that continue to teach in area classrooms. The sisters' educational influence still permeates through generations. ■



Ferdinand Elementary students move to their next activity station on the last day of school as Principal Lee Begle greets them.



During a religion class opening prayer period at St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis, Sister Becky Mathauer listens as an 8th grade student makes a prayer request to his classmates.

# “We’ve never had anybody like you”

by Greg Eckerle

St. Joan of Arc School in inner-city Indianapolis is likely the most diverse Catholic school in the state – and now it has a Sister of St. Benedict, too.

About 45% of its students are African-American, about 45% Caucasian, with the rest being Hispanic or multi-racial. About 30% qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

Still, there had not been a woman religious teaching at the pre-school through 8th grade institution in over 20 years. Not until Sister Becky Mathauer joined the staff last year and began proving the value of diversity in teachers as well, as she started programs and practices never done before.

Sister Becky loves how the school’s diversity helps her grow as a person, and students thoroughly enjoy her innovations.

Even a fellow teacher once told her “we’ve never had anybody like you.”

That’s because she brings her Benedictine values every day, plus the perspective of teaching in small town schools for years, and of growing up in Indianapolis.

Most notable may be her presence of prayer. Every parent meeting starts with a prayer. So does every one of her classes, every day. Those classroom prayers take on special meaning for students, as they’re encouraged to share openly who they’d like to pray for. The exercise has become so ingrained and popular that, on the two rare occasions Sister Becky inadvertently skipped past it, students were quick to remind her to do the prayer.

Such a reaction became a joy for Sister Becky, as she reveled in watching her students’ relationship with God grow.

“Prayer has become a fixture for them,” she says. “And there’s so much that needs to be prayed for. They know now there’s a forum to do that, and they look forward to it.”

St. Joan of Arc is a prayerful school, yet Sister Becky brings welcome depth as a woman of prayer, who lives a life of prayer daily and naturally processes everything through a foundation of prayer.

She teaches social studies and religion for grades 6, 7, and 8, and 4th grade religion.



*“Sister Becky brings another level to the religion that she teaches.”*

School Principal Mary Pat Sharpe says, “It’s nice for the kids to have the opportunity to interact with a religious. She provides that dimension of religious life, which the students didn’t have first-hand knowledge of. So it’s good to open their eyes to other vocation opportunities. She brings students other ways to be in prayer. Those are a couple of important pieces we didn’t have before.

“Sister Becky brings another level to the religion that she teaches. And she’s also the lead teacher with our liturgical calendar celebrations, guiding us through activities for Lent and Advent.

“I think parents are delighted to have a sister on staff. I think everyone is very pleased to finally have a sister in the building again. She is having an impact.”

One new activity she began is taking the students to church for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, or what they call “chapel time.” Sister Becky asks them to write in their journals during that time, often about a reflection question.

With so much noise in students’ lives today, from TV to ipods to the Wii and Xbox3, to cell phones and the internet, she felt they needed a space to be quiet at times, to just reflect and talk to God. And it’s worked. Students will sit diligently inside the communion rail on the sanctuary floor, writing for 20 minutes, or praying together. Even after experiencing it a couple times, kids will ask if they can go for more chapel time.

“I want to give them different ways in how to be with God, and how to just be quiet, because they’re not used to that,” says Sister Becky. “It’s really important to me, and to them.”

She also loves the extracurricular service projects she helps coordinate for the students. They’ve ranged from food drives for the underprivileged to clean-ups at parks and multi-family living areas. Sister Becky led the collection of hygiene bags to send to the displaced victims of the Henryville, Ind., tornadoes, too.

She requires her students to write a service hours reflection paper each quarter. She wants them to realize how Christ is working with all involved in such projects.

“One student wrote this was the first time they’ve gotten this much into service, and didn’t realize what they could be for someone else, even at their young age, and what it means to give back to someone else,” says Sister Becky. “I think it helps them appreciate more what they have, with their cell phones, ipads, and Kindles. I think it’s helped them look a bit deeper into themselves.”

Sister Becky, as a Benedictine, strives to be Christ-like for the students, providing them a safe place, and to be not only a

teacher, but someone they can talk to about their frustrations and uneasiness with all of life’s challenges.

“We want to provide them tools to learn how to communicate, how to deal with difficult situations, to think before they react, to see all sides of the situation first.

“It’s really rewarding to see kids’ eyes light up, watching them smile, seeing them understand who they are, how they’re growing, and who they’re becoming.”

But it’s not only the students who are growing and improving. So is Sister Becky. As she adds to the school’s diversity, she also gains from it.

“It helps me grow to see all the different lifestyles and backgrounds of my students. To see what some have to go through, and the struggles they endure. It gives me a different perspective on acceptance. We’re not all going to respond the same to a situation, we’re not all going to do things the same way. But we are all one and the same in the eyes of God. Understanding that acceptance is the foundation of a good Christian life.” ■



Sister Becky helps an Indianapolis 8th grade student with an in-class religion assignment.



Two students answer math flash card problems for Sister Jill Reuber.

# Principal: student interaction with religious “powerful”

by Greg Eckerle

Dr. Michael Bratcher, principal of St. Patrick School in Louisville, Kentucky, had nearly survived a particularly hectic week last spring when another parent called late on a Friday.

“As principal, you get all kinds of calls, most of them concerns or suggestions, people telling me how to do things a little bit their way,” he said, smiling.

“But this parent said, ‘I wanted to tell you how much we appreciate Sister Jill Reuber. We just cannot tell you how happy and excited we are that Sister Jill is at St. Patrick and our son is in her class.’

“To get a phone call like that is pretty cool. We’re really blessed to have her.”

Sister Jill is in her second year at St. Patrick, teaching reading, writing, social studies, math, science, and religion to over 20 first-graders. Two other Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand are also in their second year at the school – Sister Sarah Yungwirth, special needs coordinator, and Sister Doris Schepers, the 7th and 8th grade religion teacher.

Dr. Bratcher, who holds a Ph. D. in Catholic Education, said, “To have a Catholic religious in the classroom, I can’t tell you how much it means to me and the parents, but more importantly, how much it means to the students every day.”

He terms the daily interaction “a pretty powerful thing.”

“Sister Jill is a great teacher. It’s amazing to see the progress her students make. The fact she’s a sister is an extra blessing for us, and makes for a more powerful experience for students.”

The walls of her 1st grade classroom are filled with posters proclaiming the power of God and faith.

Signs on the outside of the door remind children about God and prayer. Above the door on the inside a banner exclaims, “God is love!” Nearby is a huge poster saying, “Jesus Loves Me, For the Bible Tells Me So.” Other signs read, “You are never without a friend when you know God,” “Prayer is talking to God,” and “Be Polite, Be Fair, Be Honest.”



First grade students at St. Patrick School in Louisville raise their hands to answer a question about a story read to them by Sister Jill Reuber.



It makes for a welcoming atmosphere at the school, letting the students know they can pray there, and share their faith with each other.

Sister Jill says, "A lot of our religious instruction is in story form, so they can connect with it. It's not just 'Jesus died,' we cover how he died, and why.

"In first grade, you want them to understand that they are God's creation, that God loves them, just as their parents love them."

Arts and crafts created by the students are a popular part of the story-telling. One highlight was each child creating a wooden spoon saint, then explaining their saint to the class.

Sister Jill, who is working on her Masters in Reading, particularly enjoys watching the students progress in reading skills.

"It's beautiful to watch from the beginning of school to the end. At first, they just read words. Then sentences, then stories. Seeing them blossom as readers is really life-giving to me."

She is moderator of the Rosary Club, where students make rosaries that are sent to U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Included for each soldier is a card saying, "This rosary was made by a student at St. Patrick's."

Sister Jill is also involved with the students' annual trip to the Neighborhood House, an inner-city service for underprivileged youth. It's a poignant lesson for the St. Patrick kids to see other children in need. Among the trip activities are reading, musical chairs, and lunch. At Christmas, the St. Patrick students will send shoes to the house, and at Easter, decorated bags filled with candy, crayons, and dollar bills.

Now 31, Sister Jill didn't think she was "holy enough" when growing up to become a sister. But she found "you could be yourself" with the Ferdinand Benedictines.

"When I started visiting the monastery, I realized I didn't have to know all the Bible Scripture, and I didn't have to pray all the time," she says. "Yes, prayer is important, it's a way to integrate, but I realized I could be who I am with the sisters. Praying together as a group really built my relationship with God.

"Through the formation process, I really opened up and became comfortable with who I am, and to be able to share, and be a Benedictine, and be a teacher. I loved going to school, and I love teaching, so that built within me to where I wanted my students to love coming to school."

Judy Guest, an instructional assistant for Sister Jill at St. Patrick's, easily sees her strengths as a teacher.

"Sister Jill is very patient and understanding with the children, yet firm. She's very special. You know she's a holy person, but yet she's down to earth.

"You can talk to her about a problem, you feel comfortable with her. I don't feel like I'm walking on eggs, that I have to watch everything I say because I'm in the room with a nun. We can kid around."

And there was an unexpected bonus for Mrs. Guest when Sister Jill taught the children the Stations of the Cross.

"As she went to each station, talking about what they mean, why, and what happened, it really made me think about them again." ■

# NEWS from the Dome



Sister Lorraine DeVault holds Emma Dilger, one of the quadruplets born recently to Chris and Shauna Dilger of Ferdinand, Indiana. Some Benedictine sisters are assisting the Dilgers with caring for the children.

## Reverence for life permeates Sisters' 145 years

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand are celebrating a special milestone this year – their 145th year of tireless ministry in parishes and communities, mostly in southern Indiana, Louisville, and northern Kentucky.

But their positive influence has spread far past those borders, stretching to South America, Europe, and beyond.

The sisters have taught, guided, cared for, and walked with thousands of people through those years. Many of those they've helped live nearly stranded on the margins of society, be they low-income families, the homeless, neglected children, unwed mothers, prisoners thirsting to rebuild their lives, or the many who fight inner doubts and demons, not knowing which way to turn.

Through all the challenges they face, the sisters rely on living the Gospel values, from hospitality to prayer, to community, to service to others, and strive to emulate Christ's abiding love for people and deep reverence for human life.

Reflecting on the Benedictine community's 145-year-life, Sister Kristine Anne Harpenau, prioress, emphasized how the sisters have nurtured a culture of life throughout their long existence.

"I think of our Benedictine educators who have taught children about the value of life since 1867," she said. "And of all our religious educators, teachers, nurses, pastoral ministers, and social workers, who have aided those in need, from young children to pregnant women to the sick and aged at death's door.

"We commit ourselves daily to act with the Gospel as our guide, so we never move along blindly. Living as Jesus did occurs only through faithfulness in prayer, seeking God's wisdom, and immersion in our community life."

Sister Kris also shared the Ferdinand Benedictines' statement regarding the sanctity of life:

"The Sisters of Saint Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, in alignment with the teaching of the Catholic Church, stand for respect for the life and dignity of each human person, from conception to natural death. We believe human life has value, no matter one's state of development or decline, and regardless of what one has done. We believe abortion is unacceptable under any circumstances, and we work to provide adequate support for women and men facing pregnancy in less-than-ideal situations. We work and pray for the end of poverty and war, and we pray for the abolition of the death penalty. For us, all life matters."

Sister Gail Hamilton talks to an Alzheimer's patient.







## Ferdinand sisters celebrate jubilees

Sisters Christine Marie Fendel, Mary Louise Uebelhor, Norma Fultz, and Patricia Ann McGuire celebrated their 50th anniversary of profession at the monastery on Saturday, August 4. The golden jubilee sisters made their first profession of monastic vows in 1962 and their final profession in 1967.

## Leading the House in prayer

It seems fitting that the recent final legislative session of the Indiana House of Representatives in Indianapolis opened with an invocation from someone dedicated to prayer.

Sister Kathryn Huber, a Ferdinand Benedictine, who devote themselves daily to prayer, gave the invocation.

She was a natural, because if anybody knows the power of prayer in discussing and resolving challenges, it's the sisters.

Sister Kathy quoted St. Benedict: "Every time you begin a good work, you must pray to God most earnestly to bring it to perfection."

She also told the legislators that Benedict said "prayer should be pure and short because it is not in a multitude of words that God hears us." Many legislators nodded and chuckled at that comment.

Sister Kathy then asked for a moment of quiet "to place ourselves in the presence of God," and followed with her invocation:

"O God, compassionate and merciful, You guide everything with order and love. Look kindly upon this assembly of our state leaders and fill them with the Spirit of Your Wisdom as they conclude the work of this legislative session.

"May they be just and upright in their thinking and honest in all their actions; may their decisions be for the peace and well-being of all.

"We likewise commend to your unbounded mercy all citizens of this state, especially do we ask your protection of those suffering from the devastation of the recent tornados.

"As our legislators leave this assembly and begin the work of preparing for elections, may they show due respect for all candidates and speak the truth with kindness.

"We ask this in the name of the Holy One. AMEN."

Sister Kathryn Huber (far left) of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand leads the Indiana House of Representatives in prayer in Indianapolis before their final legislative session of 2012.



Sister Kathy said, "One representative had his young grandson as his guest, and the little boy wanted to shake my hand when I finished."

Several people went up to Sister Kathy to express their gratitude. One representative asked for a copy of the prayer and said he felt a sense of connection with the message. Another representative noted how his spirit connected with Sister Kathy's spirit.

Sue Ellspermann of Ferdinand, state representative for District 74, had asked Sister Kathy to give the invocation.

"Few female ministers and no women religious had led the invocation," says Ellspermann. "I invited Sister Kathy as a past prioress who I knew would represent women religious well. She had a strong presence and I had many comment on the quality of her invocation."

Sister Kathy later received a thank you letter from Majority Caucus Chairman Kathy Kreag Richardson of Noblesville, which said in part, "Given the somewhat weighty decisions we must make during the legislative session, a prayer for guidance is greatly appreciated."

Ferdinand Benedictine Sister Maria Tasto, who was in attendance for the invocation, said, "Sue Ellspermann gave a short introduction to the sisters, and mentioned how seeing the 'Castle on the Hill' when she returns to her hometown always brings her blood pressure down."

## Providing money for education

A dedication to education and a desire to serve those in greatest need are two of the driving forces that led the Sisters of St. Benedict to offer a college scholarship to Hispanic women pursuing a college education through Vincennes University Jasper Campus.

The sisters have a tradition of helping provide an education to immigrants of the area. They were founded in Ferdinand 145 years ago to teach the children of the German immigrants and now assist the Hispanic immigrant community.

When the scholarship program began in 2009, the monastery's Social Responsibility Committee thought awards could be given each year for four years. They believed the students would follow the standard college model of maintaining a certain grade point average as a full-time student and then receiving a diploma after four years. They quickly learned those same students they

wanted to help were very non-traditional students. Sister Mary Dominic Frederick, Social Responsibility Committee member, says, "These women have to work, some have families, and English is not their native language. They have many challenges."

The scholarship requirements have been modified to give the most help to the non-traditional students. Now it is also available to part-time students who are taking at least six credit hours.

Other requirements include a high school diploma or general educational diploma, maintaining a grade point average of 2.0 or better, and having financial need. Students in the counties of Dubois, Spencer, Perry, Pike, or Daviess are given first consideration.

The Ferdinand Benedictine sisters hope the scholarship program expands to help more women in their struggle to higher education,



Anabel Juarez and Maria Ramirez display their certificates received during a recognition ceremony at the monastery for being recipients of the sisters' annual \$1,000 VUJC scholarship awards.

even if the route they take is non-traditional. Sister Mary Dominic says, "In giving the scholarship to Hispanic women, ideally it will also help integrate the American and Hispanic cultures."

For more information or for an application, contact the Vincennes University Jasper Campus at 800.742.9198.

## Sisters transfer to Ferdinand monastery

On May 6, 2012, the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand welcomed Sisters Mary Esther Steckler, Doris Market, Mary Ann Schepers, and Christine Marie Fendel, who transferred their vow of stability from Holy Spirit Monastery in Grand Terrace, California, to Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand.

These four sisters originally made their profession of monastic vows at the Ferdinand monastery. After receiving a request in the 1960s from the bishop of the San Diego Diocese for sisters to staff schools in his diocese, the superior of the Ferdinand monastery responded by sending sisters to California. They eventually established Holy Spirit Monastery and continued serving in ministries in various dioceses in California.

Holy Spirit Monastery in Grand Terrace was closed this year, and the five remaining sisters transferred to other Benedictine communities, four to Ferdinand and one to Glendora, California.

The sisters' work continues in Ferdinand. Sister Mary Esther, a native of St. James in Gibson County, is in prayer ministry. Sister Doris is originally from Evansville, Indiana, and is now in supportive services and tutoring at the Guadalupe Center in Huntingburg. Sister Mary Ann, who was serving as prioress at Holy Spirit, is a native



Sisters Mary Esther Steckler, Mary Ann Schepers, Doris Market, and Christine Marie Fendel transferred their vow of stability to Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana.

of Celestine, Indiana, and serves in supportive services at the monastery. Sister Christine Marie is originally from St. Meinrad, Indiana, and serves in supportive services and works with St. Ferdinand Parish in ministry to the sick and elderly.

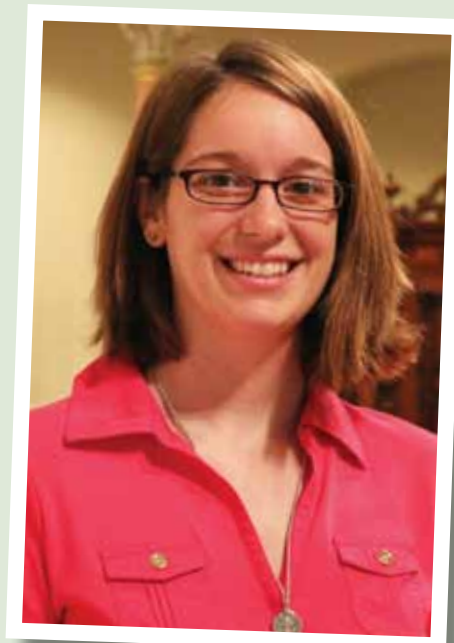


## Sisters receive new member

On Sunday, August 19, Rachel Geracitano stood in the Blessed Virgin Room at the entrance to Monastery Immaculate Conception with her new community of sisters. She had just been officially accepted into her postulancy, the first stage of incorporation into the religious community of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana.

A 22-year-old native of Louisville, Kentucky, Postulant Rachel is a recent graduate of Bellarmine University with a major in theology and a minor in psychology. Her parents are Karen Hobbs and Mickey Geracitano, and she has one older sister.

Postulant Rachel says: "I was born and raised Catholic. I went to Catholic grade school and was very active in my parish. Through my recent years of theological study at Bellarmine University as well as actively participating in Bellarmine's Campus Ministry, I have grown deeper in my faith and want to continue to search and explore God's will for me. The past two years especially I have increasingly been attracted to religious life. I have had the opportunity to work with Sister Michelle Sinkhorn not only in my discernment process, but also with retreats and service trips. She, along with the entire community of sisters, has been incredibly welcoming to all my visits and questions about their life. I feel drawn to the Benedictine community in Ferdinand and am excited to learn and experience religious life with them."



## Sisters of St. Benedict Spirituality Ministry

*Please join us for Benedictine spirituality!*

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| October 13, 2012  | <b>Introduction to <i>Lectio Divina</i></b>  |
| November 10, 2012 | <b>Walk This Way: Spirituality of the Two Halves of Life</b>                                   |
| February 9, 2013  | <b>Sacred Saturday: Organic Living</b>   |
| February 18, 2013 | <b>Compassionate Healing</b>   |
|                   |  |
| March 1–2, 2013   | <b>Heartfulness: The Christian Contemplative Journey</b>                                       |
| April 20, 2013    | <b>Harvest of Wisdom: Exploring the Benedictine Blessings of Prayer, Work, and Hospitality</b> |
| May 4, 2013       | <b>Song-Prayers of the Heart Throughout the Ages</b>   |
| May 4, 2013       | <b>A Day Apart: Rest and Reflection</b>  |

Sister Maria Tasto, OSB  
Sister Kathryn Huber, OSB  
Sister Kate M. Willegal, OSB  
Sister Anita Louise Lowe, OSB  
and Sister Michelle Mohr, OSB  
Sister Maria Tasto, OSB  
  
Sister Karen Joseph, OSB  
Sister Louise Laroche, OSB

Personal retreats, lodging for group retreats, and spiritual direction are available by contacting Kordes Center.

The Sisters of St. Benedict Spirituality Ministry holds retreats at Kordes Center, on the spacious, relaxing monastery grounds. It's an ideal place to pray, think, and reflect. Come experience a sincere hospitality and religious environment that's difficult to find elsewhere.



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## Thank you, donors!



Tammy Angel, Food Service Director, shows off the new food warmer donated by Tom and Jan Gill.



Sister Mary Clare Scheessele boards one of the elevators in the monastery. Thanks to multiple donors, the aging motor of this elevator will be repaired to keep it working properly. The elevators in the monastery are essential in order for the many sisters that cannot physically climb stairs to access the various floors of the monastery.



Sister Anita Louise Lowe, Liturgist, reads from one of three new Roman Missals. They, along with new Gather Books for liturgy that are often used, were purchased with a \$5,405 award from the Women of the Rule. The previous Gather Books were too old to receive supplements for the new translation of the Roman Missals.



Sisters Dolores Folz and Kathryn Huber wash dishes utilizing the new dishwasher made possible through donations. The old one could not maintain the proper heat levels required by the State Board of Health to sterilize the dishes. The new unit reduces dishwashing time from 1.5 hours to 30 minutes.



Sister Agnes Weinzapfel and Sister Mary Leon Kiesel watch Sister Barbara Ann Offerman demonstrate the new call system emergency pendant. Support Our Aging Religious (SOAR) awarded a grant to the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand for the new wireless emergency system that will pinpoint the person's location.



## The sisters' army

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand have an army supporting them. An army of donors helps make it possible for the sisters to serve in their various ministries, to maintain the monastery, to care for their elderly, and to perpetuate their calling to be ministers of God in many other capacities.

A life-long income for the donor is also possible through a charitable gift annuity. That income is only a part of the reason for doing an annuity with the Sisters of St. Benedict.

At one time, Wilma Hoerner-Hudson, of Evansville, Indiana, was a member of the Sisters of St. Benedict community, but decided she was being called another direction. But, Hoerner-Hudson still wants to support the sisters and is doing so with her annuity gift. She still considers the sisters to be family and, she says, "If there is any money left when I die, I am leaving it to the sisters, so I can start giving it to them now. Annuity gift giving fits my lifestyle." To her advantage, Hoerner receives money to help support herself, and her husband, while they are living.

Bill and Mae Bridge periodically made donations to the sisters before deciding to have an annuity. Bill Bridge says, "Since we are retired, it supplements our income. It's a win, win situation." The couple lived in Michigan and Florida before settling in Holland, Indiana, and has always contributed to their church. "When I got a raise, God got a raise," says Bridge. He has an uncle, great uncle, and aunt who are Benedictines in Pennsylvania and Virginia, so giving to the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand was natural to him. Bridge enjoys

visiting the monastery and has attended a weekend retreat. He also likes when Sister Barbara Catherine Schmitz comes to visit periodically. Bridge says, "God has been good to us. This is our way of paying him back."



Mae and Bill Bridge

Angela Vaccaro of Fort Pierce, Florida, has several annuities, mainly with entities that assist children in various capacities. She wants to contribute "wherever I think I can do good." The informational letters and flyers she received from the sisters led her to contribute since she felt they were one of those entities that significantly contributes to others. According to Vaccaro, not only does she receive the annuity payments, but, she says, "In return the sisters say prayers for us."

Thank you to these, and all of the donors, for being a part of the sisters' army.



Current gift annuity rates can be found online at [thedome.org](http://thedome.org).

## In memoriam

by Sister Paulette Seng

### Sister Martha Marie Tempel

August 6, 1920 – June 29, 2012

Sister Martha Marie felt that she was appropriately named after Martha and Mary in Luke's gospel (10:38-42), but she would say, "I am more a Martha than a Mary; I am a doer, and I know I'm anxious about many things."

She knew her human weaknesses — which were also her strengths. If she offended someone in moments of frustration and anger, she sought to be reconciled. A strong, determined, and dominant woman who spoke her mind, she was also a gentle and caring woman with great empathy and compassion, especially for those struggling and in need.



Sister Martha Marie was a deeply spiritual woman who had a very personal relationship with God. Her prayers and conversations with God were honest and straightforward. She struggled with God at times, but her love, trust, and fidelity grew strong during her 73 years in the monastery.

An elementary teacher for over 40 years, she was respected by her students, who remembered her kindness and caring, as well as her strictness. She gave them no choice, except to learn.

For leisure Sister Martha Marie loved following her favorite sports teams, fishing, gardening, walking, and tending flowers. The last flowers she planted, about a month before her death, were "forget-me-not" flowers. And so we remember her.



The full obituary for Sister Martha Marie is posted on [thedome.org](http://thedome.org).



Sister Doris Marie explains the steps to solving a math problem.

# ‘Old School’ often best school

by Greg Eckerle

Sister Doris Marie Knebel knows full well the reputation she has as a math teacher at Resurrection School in Evansville, Indiana.

A strong disciplinarian. A stickler on her expectations of students. And strict.

But none of that bothers her. Because she knows her approach will benefit students. Even if it's not always appreciated by them at first. It will be later, when they rely on the grit and determination learned in her class to face life's inevitable tougher challenges. Not to mention high school math.

Sister Doris Marie, in her 17th year at the school, teaches two 6th grade classes, two 7th grade classes, and one 8th grade pre-Algebra class. Her career also includes 23 years as a school principal, preceded by another 10 years of teaching.

Being in the classroom is where her heart lies, because that's where she can best see students working up to their potential. Her demands are often the catalyst to make that happen.

It's no secret she pushes kids academically. She makes them learn.

"If you don't set high standards for them, if you set the bar here (she puts her hand at chin level), that's about as far as they'll go," says Sister Doris Marie. "But if you set the bar up here (raises her hand to forehead level), they may not get all the way there, but they're going to be a heck of a lot further than if you set it down here (at chin level)."

"I want to challenge them to do the best they can. If I lower my expectations, then I'm not doing them justice. They may have to struggle, but there's victory in struggle, too."



*“Some days it would be much easier to let students do what they want, but my conscience won’t let me. Because then I’d be failing in my duty towards them, if I didn’t expect their best.”*

She expects students to submit math work that is neat, correct, and above all, shows the steps taken to solve the problem. If the steps aren’t there, the work is done over. Then she knows the student really understands the material, rather than getting lucky, or maybe they were using a calculator.

Sister Doris Marie often says she is still of the ‘old school,’ firmly believing that the only way to get better at something is to practice it. So she requires students to complete extra problems. She knows many teachers don’t do a lot of review with kids, yet she won’t budge on practicing to ensure understanding.

Just last spring, a former student she had battled with over not showing his work came to the school to pick up his younger brother. He made a special trip to Sister Doris Marie’s classroom to tell her “I didn’t appreciate your strictness as a student, but now that I’m on my own, I appreciate it, because I was ready to face what I was to face, because you insisted that I do it.”

She also periodically receives notes of appreciation from parents for what’s she’s trying to do for their children.

She recalled that her first year of teaching “was a disaster, the kids ran all over me.” The next year she was determined to not be taken advantage of again.

“I can’t teach when there’s chaos, because I don’t think students can learn,” says Sister Doris Marie. “There has to be an orderly environment where they can concentrate. I don’t put up with a lot of foolishness. I have very few discipline problems, but I can’t do it any other way.

“Some days it would be much easier to let students do what they want, but my conscience won’t let me. Because then I’d be failing in my duty towards them, if I didn’t expect their best.”

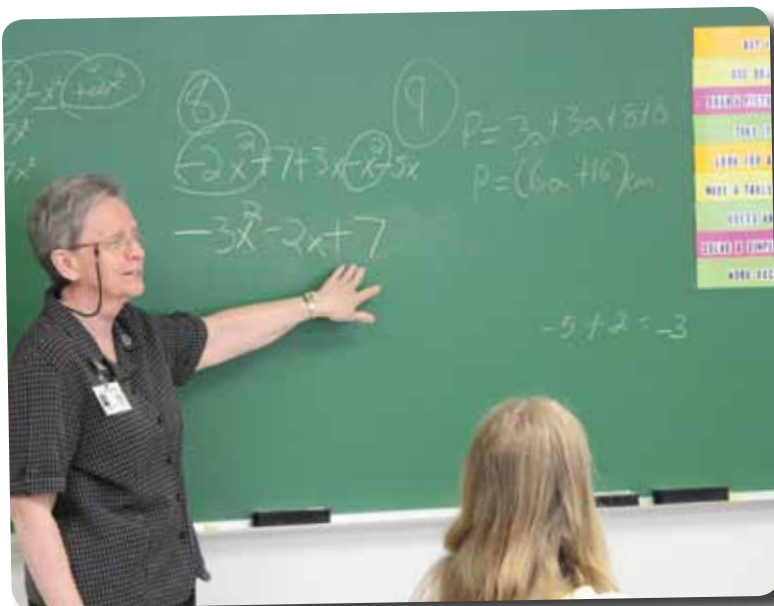
Yet she knows one can’t just run roughshod over people.

A former student, Bill Theby, now 60, jokingly said his class “tested her vocation,” but he characterized her as “very caring, she treated us right, was not judgmental, was always concerned about us, she’s what you want in a teacher.” She could be all business, but could also enjoy a laugh with the class.

Last spring, a 6th grade student, Grant Riordan, nominated her for a Teacher of the Year award sponsored by a local business, Brown Orthodontics. The firm received nominations from their patients for about 100 teachers in the Evansville area.

Sister Doris Marie was picked the winner, based on Riordan’s essay: “I have heard from older students that she is a very good teacher and you will appreciate her when you get to high school. Now that I am in her class, I understand what they were talking about. Sometimes she is really tough, but she does it because she knows it is important for us to know math really well. Sister Doris Marie comes in early and stays late every day to help students that need extra help. You can tell she really cares about her students and wants us to do good. She is truly an inspiration and great role model.”

Sister Doris Marie talks about mathematics equations to a Resurrection School class.



Sister Doris Marie Knebel listens to a student giving an answer in her math class at Resurrection School in Evansville, Indiana.



Knowing how competitive the job market is today, Sister Doris Marie harps on improving her students' work ethic. She's seen the pitfalls of having a lax attitude, and focuses on doing all she can to help the kids succeed.

A fellow teacher, Jen Baehl, notes that students eventually realize that Sister Doris Marie was tough on them because she cares so much for them. "They end up with a high level of respect for her," she says. "One of my favorite comments from one parent was they can't believe how much work she gets out of them, and thank goodness for her with the math, because their children would have never been successful without her."

The school's principal, Theresa Berendes, couldn't be more supportive of Sister Doris Marie's approach.

"She is an old school math teacher, which I love," says Berendes. "She has high expectations, and won't deviate from that. I love that as a parent and as her principal. She requires the kids to show their work. I always applaud her for not bending to pressure from people to lower her standards. She's a strong lady.

"When students leave here, they're prepared for high school math. Many of the kids, and their parents, will say that. And I attribute that to all her hard work with the kids."

That hard work includes Sister Doris Marie routinely arriving at school about 6:20 a.m. every day to provide students extra help. She also gives her time to tutor kids at lunch and after school.

"When you work and work and work with them, and then all of a sudden you see the light bulb going on for them, that's exciting," she says. "That just makes my day."

But even though math is important, there are other student actions that make her day, too. Like seeing them do a kind act without being told to. She treasures those moments, because they show concern for others.

"Teaching them respect, and kindness, and acting the way Jesus would want us to act, that's also important," says Sister Doris Marie. "Besides math, we're also trying to instill in them care and compassion for others. And it's a struggle, because society is always telling us it's all about ourselves."

So if her teaching to counteract a "me-me" society is deemed 'old school,' she is absolutely undeterred.

She credits her prayer life as a Benedictine sister with bringing a different perspective, helping her realize teaching is not a job, but a ministry. With the power of prayer behind her as she points out actions that should or shouldn't be done, she hopes students' hearts can be touched and they will be better people because she was in their life.

I think you can count on that. ■

# Perspectives

Who is your favorite historical person?

*My favorite historical person is Jesus. The Gospels are the main source of what I know about him. Nothing was published that he wrote, and yet we continue to read and hear about him daily. He is a person of integrity and compassion.*

*Jesus is my constant companion and friend. His example, and love for all, encourages me to follow him and do likewise, the best I can each day.*

*I begin my day with this simple prayer: "Jesus be with me this day, as I pray, work, and play." I'm quite sure he did all three too.*

— Sister Mary Roman Dall  
Assistant to the monastery coordinator



*My favorite historical person is Mother Teresa. I heard her speak at Louisville, Kentucky, many years ago. Mother Teresa said, "I heard God's call to give up all and to follow him into the slums and to serve the poorest of the poor." She spoke of how wrong abortion is, saying, "We are created in the image of God. From the time there is conception there is the life of the living God. That is why it is so wrong to destroy life; to destroy the image of God." Mother Teresa's work has earned her worldwide recognition. She is considered one of the world's most admired historical women!*

— Robin Emmert  
Electrician for the sisters for the past 36 years

*"Love is Eternal" is inscribed on Mary Lincoln's wedding ring; the words which both Abraham and Mary Ann Todd agreed upon proved their power and truth.*

*Mary, born into wealth, comfort, and high society, remained loyal to her husband. Facing personal difficulties, she was caught in a climate of high national intrigue in Washington. Mary staunchly supported her husband in his quest to save the Union despite her being from Kentucky.*

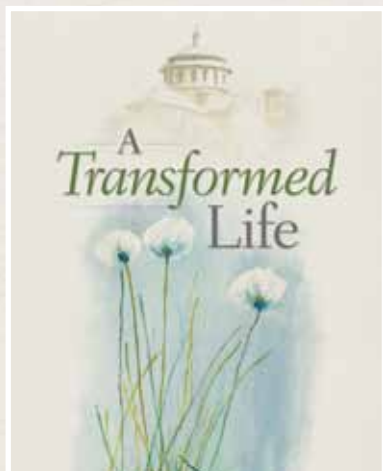
*Abraham, born in Kentucky as well — but far from wealth, comfort, and high society — faced a lifetime of difficulties which proved his love both for Mary and our country. His integrity, a rare characteristic in "the worst of times," gave us one of the "best of times" — the Gettysburg Address. Hope for me that "Love is Eternal."*

— Sister Mary Lee Hillenbrand  
Volunteer at Lange-Fuhs Cancer Center in Jasper, Indiana





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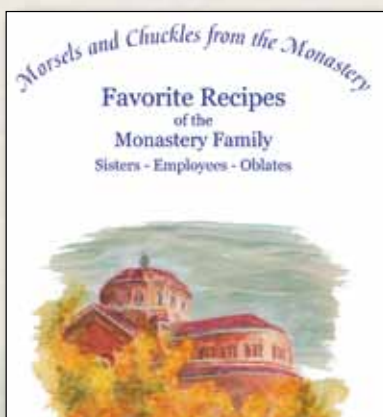
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## Calendar of Events

Oct. 19–21, 2012	Come & See Weekend
October 21, 2012	Oblation day
October 27, 2012	Mechtilde series concert – Ruth Cunningham
October 28, 2012	Diamond Jubilee celebration
November 16, 2012	Christkindlmarkt Eve performance
Nov. 17–18, 2012	Christkindlmarkt in Ferdinand
December 9, 2012	Music students' Christmas recital
December 24, 2012	Christmas Eve services in the monastery church
January 4–6, 2013	Come & See Weekend
January 20, 2013	Oblate meeting
Feb. 15–17, 2013	High School Come & See Weekend
February 17, 2013	Oblate meeting
March 15–17, 2013	Come & See Weekend
March 17, 2013	Oblate retreat day
July 13, 2013	Installation of new prioress

## Updating for our online visitors

We've made some changes to [www.thedome.org](http://www.thedome.org), a few modifications to make the site more user-friendly. Returning site visitors will immediately notice a different look, with navigation on the top of the page and a new color. The listing of upcoming events now takes center stage in the middle of the homepage, along with recent news articles. Plus there are a few other changes to make navigation easier. Visit the pages of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand's website and check out the enhancements for yourself.



For more stories about the sisters, visit [thedome.org/news](http://thedome.org/news).