

HORIZONS

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ST. SCHOLASTICA MONASTERY, Fort Smith, AR

July, 2010

Answering God's Call, Sister Cecelia Marie Brickell Makes Her Perpetual Monastic Profession

Sister Cecelia Brickell, OSB made her perpetual profession as a Benedictine Sister on June 24 at St. Scholastica Monastery. During the 10:30 a.m. Mass celebrated by Fr. David McKillin, OSB, Sister Cecelia made three promises—stability, fidelity to the monastic way of life, and obedience. The promises of poverty and chastity are components of fidelity to the monastic way of life.

Sister Cecelia entered St. Scholastica Monastery in January, 2005 and made her three-year temporary profession on June 24, 2007. Her father, Greg Fernicola, brothers, Joe and John Fernicola; sisters Janella Harbison and Susan Pearson; daughter Jennifer Brickell and many friends from Helena celebrated Sister Cecelia's day of profession with her and the St. Scholastica community.

Reflecting on her profession, Sister Cecelia said: "In preparation for this next step in my journey, I took some time to look back at the past. At each step I can see God leading and teaching me, even in the steps that began with my mistakes. With each step I learn to trust in and rely on God more and myself less. Although I don't know how many steps remain in my journey, I look forward to experiencing each one because each brings me closer to my God."



*"In her profession, our Sister Cecelia Marie has given all that she has, her past, her present, and her future to God....Her conviction of God's presence allows her to commit herself to it without restriction....Let us together daily walk the path of God's commands."
- Sister Maria DeAngeli*

A Message From the Prioress



“Rejoice in the Lord always! I say it again Rejoice!” These are the words of St. Paul to the Philippians. I use that quote because we, here at St. Scholastica’s, have reason to rejoice in these months of June and July.

On June 13-19, we had a time for renewal with our annual retreat on “Monastic Living” that was given by Sister Kathy Huber from Ferdinand, Indiana. On June 24, the feast of St. John the Baptist, Sister Cecelia Marie Brickell made her Perpetual Profession of her Promises to the Monastic Life. The last sister to make Perpetual Profession was Sister Patricia Bolling in 2007. Father David McKillin, OSB was celebrant for the ceremony.

In the month of July, our community will have another time for rejoicing and thanksgiving when nine of our sisters will celebrate fifty, sixty, seventy, seventy-five, and eighty-five years of monastic profession. These sisters lived their Promises in faith with good zeal, hope with courage, and service with love while facing the challenges of each day of their life’s journey. In gratitude and honor we celebrate with them their Fidelity to the Monastic Way of Life.

After the close of our community Chapter on July 27, we will celebrate another joyful occasion when four of the Sisters from our Daughter House in Columbia, Missouri will transfer their promises of Stability to St. Scholastica Monastery. Due to the lack of vocations, Our Lady of Peace Monastery, after a great deal of painful discernment, chose dissolution. We are happy to have the sisters with us and will walk with them in this time of adjustment.

To all our benefactors and friends, we are grateful for your support in the various ways that it is given. We remember each of you in our daily prayers.

“Hope is the power behind love.”

Sister Maria DeAngelis, OSB

In Loving Memory



Sister Marian Walbe, OSB, died on February 19, 2010 at the age of 93. She was born Mary Cecilia Walbe on November 21, 1916 in Morrison Bluff, Ark. to Joseph and Anna Walbe. She entered St. Scholastica Convent in 1931 and made her monastic profession on June 24, 1935, taking the name “Marian.” She earned her B.A. in Education at Avila College, Kansas City, Mo in 1966. She was a primary school teacher for 55 years at St. Benedict School, Subiaco; St. Mary School, Barling; St. Boniface School, Fort Smith; St. Francis DeSales School, Lebanon, Mo.; St. Theresa School, Little Rock; St. Joseph School, Amarillo, Tex.; St. Ignatius School, Scranton; and St. Joseph School, Paris. In 1990 she moved to Hesychia House of Prayer, New Blaine, Ark., where she was a part of the core community. She retired to the monastery infirmary in 2009.

Sister Marian is survived by one brother, Joseph Walbe of Fort Smith; four sisters, Anna Lou Frietsche and Juanita Perry, both of Fort Smith; Margie Borengasser of New Blaine and Josephine Basgall of Gardner, Kan.; three sisters-in-law, Rosetta Walbe and Mary (wife to Joseph) Walbe of Fort Smith and Catherine Walbe of Friendswood, Tex.; two brothers-in-law, Ben Frietsche and Ed Borengasser; many nieces and nephews and

her religious community.

Oblate **Barbara Marie Adams** died March 2, 2010 at the age of 89. She was a member of the first St. Scholastica Oblate group making oblation in 1979. She was the retired cafeteria manager at Christ the King School, Fort Smith, where she fed the children for 35 years. She was well known for her delicious cinnamon rolls. She was a member of Christ the King Parish and the Presentation Circle. She was preceded in death by her husband, Edward C. Adams and son, Thomas J. Adams. She is survived by four children, Michael L. Adams and wife Susan Rollins; Jane Brummel and husband Richard; Mary Adams; and Ray Adams and wife Linda; nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Oblate **Agnes H. Brigglar**, 90, of Hattieville, Arkansas, passed away June 11, 2010. She made her oblation on November 1, 1995 and was a member of the St. Vincent Oblate group. She was a homemaker and member of St. Mary’s Catholic Church. She was preceded in death by her husband of 51 years, Ollie Brigglar. Survivors include three sons, Jim, Ronnie, and Danny, and two daughters, Mary Ann Kordsmeier and Patricia Zimmerman; 18 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren.

From the Development Office By Sister Elise Forst, OSB



“Abundance exploding out of scarcity” That was our chaplain, Father David McKillin’s recent reflection on the gospel of the multiplication of loaves and fishes. That phrase has been floating in and out of my consciousness since I heard it a week or two ago. As I reflect on the response of our friends and benefactors to our appeals for help, the phrase comes to mind again. Your generosity in the face of the news we hear each day about the economic woes of so many people seems to be another example of “abundance exploding out of scarcity.” Just as it took a lot of trust for the apostles to respond to Jesus’ command “to feed them yourselves” and start distributing those two fish and five loaves of bread to a great crowd of people, so it takes a lot of trust to make our needs known at a time when many people are experiencing scarcity. But each time we do, we experience “abundance exploding out of scarcity.” With many sharing their few “fish and loaves of bread,” many baskets accumulate. Thank you.

In response to our appeals to you since last fall, you have generously given about \$140,000. That has helped us pay for the projects we mentioned in our fall appeal letter. Our building repair projects are being completed. Workers have finished installing a new roof on the monastery and part of the Center building, and we are happy to report we no longer have to put out pans or mop up water when it rains. For the last several months, workers have been repairing interior water damage. They completed repair of the Chapel in February, and have moved on to the other floors. At present, they are repairing extensive damage on the fifth floor. When that is finished, they will move on to the sacristy storage area, the chaplain’s quarters, and the library. Your gifts are helping to supplement the payments we have received from insurance coverage.

Your gifts also helped us send two of our Sisters away to school for the fall semester. Sister Dolores Vincent Bauer took classes at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota, to prepare her to be formation director. Hopefully she will be putting what she learned into practice this fall when we welcome a new postulant. Sister Cecelia Brickell enjoyed her semester at St. Gregory’s University in Shawnee, Oklahoma, working towards a theology degree. She returned here in December to prepare for perpetual profession in June. She will complete her residency at St. Gregory’s in Spring, 2011, and looks forward to receiving her Bachelor’s degree in Theology in Summer, 2011.

In our fall appeal letter, we asked for help to purchase generators to provide some electrical power during power outages. As the Sisters looked at the \$90,000 estimate, they decided to put the project on hold.

Your gifts are always a help to us in caring for our dear and wise elderly sisters. As we care for them, they support us with their prayers and joyful spirit. In their lifetimes, they have often experienced “abundance exploding out of scarcity.” The wisdom gained from these experiences add to our trust that abundance will continue to flow. And that is our prayer for you, our friends and benefactors: may you experience abundance in all the areas of your lives.

Please remember us when revising or making your will. Our legal name is St. Scholastica Monastery, Fort Smith, Arkansas.



At left, workmen repair the 5th floor monastery lounge. At right, clockwise from left, Vi Cessna, kitchen staff; and Ravi Thiagarajan, Chief Financial Officer, display 5 year service plaques; and Sandy Seiter, Business Office Secretary, displays her 35 year service plaque received at the Employee Appreciation Dinner May 6.

Nine Jubilarians Celebrate 595 Years of Monastic Life on July 24, 2010



Sister DeChantal Hyland, OSB, who is celebrating 85 years of religious life, was born in Nazareth, Texas on October 7, 1906. She received her B.A. from Marymount College, Salina, Kansas and her M.A. from the University of Texas, Austin, majoring in English. She taught in schools in Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas for 61 years, often serving as teacher and principal jointly, and tutored privately until she was 97 years old. At 103, she continues to enjoy listening to her favorite sporting events, especially the Cardinals, Razorbacks and Notre Dame.

Sister Rose Ashour, OSB, celebrating 75 years as a Benedictine sister, grew up in Morrison Bluff and Subiaco, Arkansas. She joined the Benedictines while attending St. Scholastica Academy. She received her Bachelors Degree in Education from Mount St. Scholastica College, Atchison, Kansas and her Masters in Education and Administration from St. Mary College, Leavenworth, Kansas. She taught elementary school in Ratcliff, Charleston, Brinkley, Scranton, and Shoal Creek, Arkansas; Ada, Oklahoma; Moberly, Pilot Grove, and Kansas City, Missouri. In later years she worked in pastoral ministry, religious education, and homebound ministry. When Our Lady of Peace Monastery, Columbia, Missouri, was established in 1969, Sister Rose transferred her stability there, returning to St. Scholastica when Our Lady of Peace closed in 2010. Sr. Rose said her grade school teachers inspired her to enter religious life. "I had Benedictine Sisters for my teachers in grade school so I knew that's the kind of Religious I wanted to be," she said.

Sister Consuella Bauer, OSB, former Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Little Rock, is also celebrating 75 years of religious life. She was born on July 29, 1916 in Morrison Bluff, Arkansas to Marcus and Frances Bauer. She entered St. Scholastica Convent in 1931 and made her monastic profession on June 24, 1935.

Sister Consuella, a teacher and school administrator, earned her B.A. in Latin, with minors in French, English, and Education at Marymount College, Salina, Kansas in 1942. She earned her M.A. in Latin, with a minor in Greek, at Catholic University of America, Washington, DC in 1956.

She taught in elementary schools in Missouri, Texas, and Arkansas from 1935-47. From 1947-68, she taught English and Latin at St. Scholastica Academy, Fort Smith, also serving as principal for the last nine years of its history. Her advocacy resulted in St. Scholastica Academy's becoming the first desegregated high school in Arkansas. When the academy closed in 1968, she served as principal in St. Gabriel School, Kansas City for four years. She returned to teach a final year in St. Anne's Academy, Fort Smith from 1972-73.

She moved to Little Rock in 1973, serving as Diocesan Superintendent of Schools from 1973-77 and as Diocesan Director of Religious Education from 1977-1985. She continued to serve in religion and parish work at St. Mary Church, North Little Rock.

Sister Consuella was a gifted poet and, in her later years, enjoyed corresponding with the many students she had mentored as a high school journalism teacher. She continued her interest and advocacy for social justice throughout her retirement,

Sister Pierre Vorster, OSB, who is celebrating 70 years in religious life, was born in Subiaco and attended St. Scholastica Academy. She received her Bachelors Degree in Science from Mount St. Scholastica College, Atchison, Kansas and her Masters Degree in Education from Creighton University. She taught elementary school and high school science for 30 years. She was the editor of *Horizons* and communications liaison for 25 years and served on the board of Project Compassion for many years. She continues to serve on the board of Area Agency on Aging. She is currently the Supervisor of the Monastery Grounds. Reflecting on her 70 years of



Sr. DeChantal Hyland , OSB
85 years

Sr. Rose Ashour, OSB
75 years

Sr. Consuelle Bauer, OSB
75 years

Sr. Pierre Vorster, OSB
70 years

service, Sister Pierre said: "It is important to use our God-given gifts to care for all creation and in doing so serve God and humankind. 'Use it or lose it.'"

Diamond Jubilarian **Sister Miriam Hoffman, OSB**, said, "The Benedictine Sisters taught in our school--I thought it wouldn't be such a bad life to live." The community is nourished by Sister Miriam's culinary and organizational talents as the monastery's kitchen manager, a position she has served in since 1994. Sr. Miriam was born in Altus, Arkansas, joined the monastery in 1947, and attended St. Scholastica Academy. She received her Food Service Manager Certification from Fontbonne College, St. Louis and began her service managing the Dietary Department in the Monastery-sponsored hospitals in Dermott and Morillon.

Sister Anne Michele Raley, OSB grew up in Paragould, Arkansas, made her profession as a Benedictine on June 24, 1950 and received her Business degree from Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, Texas. She began her professional career as an elementary and high school educator for 16 years. In 1963 the Prioress appointed her as Treasurer of the Monastery. After a five year term she did office work for several non-profit organizations. From 1978-1997 she was bookkeeper at St. Joseph's Home, North Little Rock. She returned home to the monastery in 1997 when St. Joseph's closed, and now serves as a monastery receptionist and mail clerk. Sister Anne Michele is active in the monastery's Social Concerns Committee and a faithful member of Justpeace. "The gratitude I felt at my golden jubilee has only deepened in the past ten years. I have been blessed and challenged to a greater awareness of God and my calling to be of service."

Sister Louise Sharum, OSB, who celebrates 60 years as a Benedictine sister, was born in Massard, Arkansas. She received her B.A. from Mount St. Scholastica College, her M.A. from St. Louis University, and a Ph.D. from Texas Tech University. She taught at all levels, elementary through college. She wrote two histories of the monastery: the first, *Write the Vision Down*, published in 1979, covered the first hundred years of monastery history. The second, *Until the Morning Star Rises*, published in 2004, covered the next twenty-five years. In 1980, she proposed building a house of prayer on the Shoal Creek site where people could get away from their regular work and experience an atmosphere of prayer and solitude. She served as Hesychia House of Prayer's director from 1981-85 when she was called back to the monastery to become prioress. After serving in this administrative position for 8 years, she returned to Hesychia, where she serves as director. The site now includes several hermitages for brief and long-term visits. Reflecting on her sixty years as a Benedictine, Sister Louise said, "What stands out for me as I look at the past sixty years is God's fidelity. I grow daily more grateful for my call."

Diamond Jubilarian **Sister Mary Hawkins, OSB** is assigned to St. Benedict Monastery, Canyon, Texas, formerly a dependent monastery of St. Scholastica Monastery. At St. Benedict Monastery Sister Mary, who is one of the founders, is religious superior, formation director, chief gardener, librarian and jack-of-all-trades.

Mary was born in Tulia, Texas. When World War II began she went to Washington, DC, to work as a secretary in the Pentagon. In 1945 Mary joined the Catholic Church and entered St. Scholastica Monastery in 1947. She made monastic profession in 1950. After profession, Sister Mary (Sister Augustine until after Vatican II) taught in Subiaco, Fayetteville, and Ft. Smith, Arkansas, Moberly, Missouri and Nazareth, Texas. She also served St. Scholastica Monastery as assistant formation director and prioress. During these years she received her bachelor's degree from Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, Texas; her masters from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, and studied theology at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. Sister Mary considers her Benedictine Monastic vocation as one of God's greatest blessings in a life filled with God's blessing.

Sister Regina Schroeder, OSB, who will be celebrating her Golden Jubilee, was born and raised in Windhorst, Texas. She followed her older sisters, Sisters Barbara, Marietta, and Stephanie, to St. Scholastica Monastery and made her profession on June 24, 1960. She received her Bachelors Degree in Education from Avila College, Kansas City, Missouri and her Masters in Religious Studies and Pastoral Ministry from Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan. She taught elementary school in Pilot Grove, Moberly, Lebanon, and Springfield, Missouri and Lake Village, Arkansas. She served in parish ministry in Springfield, Missouri and in parish ministry and as marriage tribunal advisor in Russellville, Arkansas She is currently the monastery procurator, where she has also served as formation director and gift shop manager. "I remember so vividly the words of my novice director, Sr. Norbert, before I made my final promises when she said, 'Always be open to the Holy Spirit and be ready to respond to what you hear the Spirit say in your heart. Be flexible, be faithful to your life of prayer, be obedient and live simply.'

"I have been so blessed during the fifty years since I heard these words. In trying to live them as a Benedictine Sister, I have experienced the richness of the love of God through my sisters in community and the thousands of persons who have touched my life during my many years of service to the Church. What a gift!"



St. Scholastica Welcomes Four Sisters From Our Lady of Peace Monastery, Columbia, Missouri

In 1969, 26 pioneering Benedictine sisters, following the example of their predecessors at Shoal Creek, volunteered to leave their home at St. Scholastica Monastery to open a daughterhouse, Our Lady of Peace Monastery, in Columbia, Missouri. On Holy Saturday, 1969, the 26 transferred their promise of stability to the new monastery and began a ministry that lasted 40 years.

"I had been teaching in the Jefferson City Diocese for twelve years," Sister Rose Ashour said, recalling the first days of Our Lady of Peace, "and so I was happy to volunteer to transfer to the daughterhouse in Columbia."

In their 40 years of service in the Diocese of Jefferson City, the sisters staffed schools in Moberly, Pilot Grove and Clear Creek and St. Joseph Hospital in Boonville. In recent years, they have been active in parish ministry, prison ministry, spiritual direction, and diocesan work.

This year, after a long process of prayer and discernment, the seven sisters still at Our Lady of Peace decided to dissolve the monastery. Sisters Rose Ashour, Rose Maria Birkenfeld, and Barbara Bock returned home to St. Scholastica. Sister Jane Fladung, who resides in a nursing home near her family, will also transfer her promise of stability to St. Scholastica. The remains of four sisters--Sisters Susanna Jones, Ruth Ann Heaney, Joann Schmidt, and Sabina Gillespie, Our Lady of Peace's first prioress--were brought to St. Scholastica on June 4 and interred in the cemetery.

Sister Alice O'Brien, who will make her perpetual profession at St. Scholastica in 2011, began her period of formation at Our Lady of Peace and transferred to St. Scholastica in 2008.

In May, Sisters Alice, Kimberly Prohaska, and Cecelia Brickell went to the youth vocation fair in Jefferson City at the request of the bishop. Sister Barbara Bock will continue to serve as Oblate Director to the community of oblates in Columbia, and is glad that the oblate group will continue to be a Benedictine presence in the diocese.

Sister Barbara, the last to arrive at her new home on June 20, was happy to return to the community she had left in 1969. "It feels like it is all in God's plan," she said. "I am grateful for the 40 plus years I had in Columbia. I will miss being close to family, cousins, and friends and our beautiful land, but I am happy to be here again."

Sister Rose, one of the monastery's 75 year jubilarians, remains very active. She will help in the monastery periodical room. As an award-winning poet, she is very interested in St. Scholastica's book of poetry, *Joyful Gifts*, that will be released in July. Several of her poems will appear in the anthology.

Sister Rose Maria works part-time in the monastery gift shop. Sister Barbara has not received her assignment yet. "I will wait and see what transpires as I get replanted," she said.



L to R: Sisters Rose Ashour, Rose Maria Birkenfeld and Barbara Bock.

Inset: Sister Jane Fladung



VOCATION NEWS



Clockwise from lower left: Sisters Kimberly Prohaska and Alice O'Brien at Rex Fest, Little Rock; Sister Elise Forst nurtures plant received at World Vocations Day service; Sandra Nelson visits monastery in April and June; Sisters attend 5th grade vocation day at Subiaco; Sisters Kimberly, Cecelia Brickell, and Alice at Jefferson City Diocese vocation day; Sister Dolores Vincent Bauer at 5th grade vocation day

St. Scholastica Welcomes New Oblates and Enrollees in 2010

On Sunday, May 16, nine men and women became Benedictine Oblates and three women enrolled in the Oblate Program at the 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Scholastica Monastery. The Oblates enjoyed a celebratory luncheon with the sisters after Mass. Congratulations to our new Oblates: Kathy Furstenberg, Haymeé Giuliani, Judith Ann Hurt, Maryanne Meyerriecks, John Morgan, Karen Munsil, Barbara Kay Padgett, Dawn Scarborough, and Ann Wiggins; and to Eileen Scott, Kanyin Bode Harrison, and Nora Bryant who enrolled in the Oblate program. Congratulations, too, to Kristina Matthews, who made her enrollment May 19.

The Oblates are planning several trips during the 2010-2011 year that begins September 19. Some of the places being considered are Hesychia House of Prayer, Subiaco Abbey, Little Portion Hermitage, and Jones Center. If you are interested in becoming an Oblate, please contact Sister Magdalen Stanton at 783-4147 ext. 356.



L to R standing: Maryanne Meyerriecks, Eileen Scott, Barbara Padgett, Ann Wiggins, Kanyin BodeHarrison, Nora Bryant, Judith Ann Hurt, Karen Munsil, Dawn Scarborough, and Haymeé Giuliani. Seated L to R: John Morgan, Kathy Furstenberg, and Sr. Magdalen Stanton, OSB.

News Briefs

Sister Kimberly Prohaska, UA Fort Smith Campus Ministry Director, attended the Catholic Campus Ministry State Convention February 20-21. On April 16-18, she accompanied the students to the CCM Retreat at Shoal Creek. As Vocation Director, she attended Rex Day at Christ the King, Little Rock May 2. On May 7-8, she attended a Diocesan Vocation Meeting in Little Rock. With **Sister Alice O'Brien**, she attended the Heartland Benedictine Vocation Directors meeting in Ava, Missouri on March 2-6.

On May 2-4, **Sisters Alice O'Brien, Kimberly Prohaska** and **Cecelia Brickell** visited the Diocese of Jefferson City to represent the Benedictines at the diocesan Vocations Day.

The monastery gave two dinner tours in March through the UA Fort Smith Lifelong Learning Program, welcomed Habitat for Humanity volunteers from St. Joseph University, Philadelphia on May 27, and gave a tour to Catholic homeschoolers June 11.

Sister Madeline Bariola attended the Benedictine Renewal Program in Rome, Italy, from May 20-June 18.

On July 16-18, the monastery will welcome back St. Scholastica Academy alumnae for their triennial reunion.

On July 28-September 4, **Sister Hilary Decker** will be visiting Uganda and Kenya to teach Benedictine values to Cistercian sisters in Butende and Benedictine sisters in Tororo, Uganda.

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Justpeace is continuing its monthly witness at the southeastern corner of Creekmore Park on the first Sunday of each month from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. to pray for diplomatic solutions in the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Holy Land.

Our monthly film and lecture series will resume in September.

On June 26, Justpeace members attended "Gather at the Labyrinth" at the Learning Fields at Chaffee Crossing. The ceremony featured music, dance, and walks through the garden. 1,000 origami cranes were distributed.

The sisters continue to attend Hispanic Masses at the different area churches.

We are grateful to everyone who helped the sisters sponsor a young student at Subiaco Academy whose scholarship, although generous, is not enough to cover his educational expenses. He will begin his junior year at Subiaco in August. The young man, his family, and the sisters appreciate all the help he has received in the past year. If you would like to help this worthy student finance the 2010-11 school year, please contact Sister Maria De Angeli.