"For I know well the plans I have in mind for you..."
Finding Ourselves in a Spirit Soaked Zone

I am both humbled and honored to have been elected Prioress at this moment in the history of my community and religious life. One of my favorite scriptures is Jeremiah 29: 11-14 where God promises us a future full of hope. I have walked with this scripture for years and know for a fact that the future has always held both hope and blessing for me. So I enter this moment of our community’s history with anticipation for the future God has waiting for me personally and for the community.

I was especially touched that I was installed into this position on Pentecost. Using Dan Watson’s words of finding ourselves in a “Spirit soaked zone”, I invited the community to be aware it is a mighty wind that moves the apostles to preach at Pentecost, and it is a mighty wind that moves our community at this time. It gives life, it cries out in our hearts; it is the source of charisms and of special powers! It is a movement toward that future full of hope!

The leadership team and I agree that these next five years will be filled with a new energy that will both ready us for the Spirit’s surprises, but also will gift us with a realistic view of our own future in terms of our aging and our legacy.

It is an exciting time because we live in a Spirit soaked zone! It is a time of visioning for the “New” that God will provide. It is a time to embrace the invitation that the God of the future gives to us. We need to stop looking at the past and steady our gaze on the horizon. We need to muster that good zeal that St. Benedict talks about in Chapter 72 of the Rule. “Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ.” Joan Chittister states: “Good zeal provides the foundation for the spirituality of the long haul”. So it is with this good zeal that we begin a new chapter in our history.

We were fortunate to have Sr. Teresa Maya, President of LCWR come and speak to the community. I found her words both freeing and challenging as I reflected on my new role. She said generally Religious should quit using the words aging, diminish, old, completion, and transition, and gravitate to a new mantra of leaven, potential, and transformation. Being leaven, finding our potential at this moment in history, and transforming our way of life in ways that will carry the legacy of what has been to what will be - these are spirit soaked words that invite this community, as well as all of you, to a privileged threshold into the future.

With Joy,

Sister Frances Briseño, OSB
Prioress

The front cover photo was taken by Sister Susan Mika, OSB at the new Leadership Installation in May. The ring of ivy represents growth and new life, by-products of the seeds planted by our foundress, Mother Lidwina Weber, OSB, that germinated over the years in the fields of education, health care, spirituality, human equality, justice and peace; The Rule - it has been a tradition in the Sisters’ Community that all former Prioresses partake in the passing of the Rule of Benedict to their respective successors; and the circle of candles which represents each new member of the Leadership Team, and a vision of shared leadership for the future.
... plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

Leadership Team 2018-2023

The Benedictine Sisters embarked on a new chapter in their compelling history on May 19th. The Community celebrated their new leadership with a morning prayer service. Sr. Frances Briseño was installed as Prioress, a position she previously held from 1992-1996. Family, staff, Oblates, and friends joined the Sisters in the afternoon for a blessing and reception at St. Scholastica Monastery. (see photos page 7)

Sister Frances, originally from Comfort, Texas, joined the Benedictine Sisters in 1967. She holds an MA in Marriage and Family Therapy and Christian Spirituality, and she is a certified Spiritual Director. Sister has served in numerous ministries in the Archdiocese of San Antonio during the past four decades including education, Co-Director of RENEW, retreat ministry, parish ministry, and jail ministry.

Joining Sister Frances in leadership roles on the Sisters’ Council through 2023 are: Sister Sylvia Ahr, OSB, Treasurer; Sister Michael Brandt, OSB, Sub-Prioress and Director of Benedictine Ministries; Sister Ursula Herrera, OSB, RN for Maverick County Hospital District and Director of the Sisters’ Caridad de Corazón ministry in Eagle Pass, TX.; and Sister Susan Mika, OSB, Director of the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment.

The community is grateful to Sister Bernadine Reyes, OSB who faithfully served as Prioress for the past 17 years.
MISSION STATEMENT
We, the Boerne Benedictines, are called to seek God in community and to respond in ministry through sharing our spirituality and addressing the needs of the people we serve, especially the poor.
“OUR DAYS ARE HAPPIER WHEN WE GIVE PEOPLE A BIT OF OUR HEART RATHER THAN A PIECE OF OUR MIND”
AUTHOR UNKNOWN

With Our Sincere Gratitude

Thank you to the following grantors for their support to our work and to our mission:

Scanlan Foundation
$2,500 for the Omega Retreat Center

LCWR Region 12 Border Fund
$2,000 for Caridad de Corazón Border Ministry

Marietta K. Randall Foundation Trust, Broadway Bank Trustee
$1,500 for the Sisters’ Archival Project

Kenedy Memorial Foundation
$500 for 2017 Event

LEAVING A LEGACY

PLEASE CONSIDER REMEMBERING THE BENEDICTINE SISTERS IN YOUR LEGACY PLANNING. THERE ARE MANY WAYS THAT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE SISTERS AS WELL AS THE THOUSANDS WHO BENEFIT FROM THEIR PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES.

OUR LEGAL TITLE IS BENEDICTINE SISTERS (CONGREGATION OF BENEDICTINE SISTERS), AND WE ARE A 501(C)3 CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION.

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT YOUR ESTATE PLANNER, ATTORNEY, OR SR. SYLVIA AHR, OSB, TREASURER AT 830.816.8504.

2018 Summer Sweepstakes

GRAND PRIZE
$1,000 VISA GIFT CARD

OTHER GREAT PRIZES!
$500 Visa Gift Card
$250 Visa Gift Card
$100 Visa Gift Card (2)
$50 Visa Gift Card
(Gift cards purchased through Frost Bank Boerne)

TICKETS: $5 EACH, $25 FOR 6, $50 FOR 12

DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH

NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN!

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT TICKETS: FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 2018

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE MORE TICKETS, PLEASE CALL 830.816.8504

2018 None’s Ball Update

Thank you to all who have supported this year’s None’s Ball. To date, over $26,000 has been received for the Sisters’ retirement needs. Donations are still being accepted in person, by mail, or on-line at www.boernebenedictines.org.
We wish to thank our event Sponsors, Underwriters, Friends, Silent Auction Donors, volunteers, and all who attended our March 21st event! Together, with your help, nearly $17,000 was raised for the Sisters’ needs! God Bless You!

SPONSORS

**Venezia**
Gertrude Mika
Karnes 6 J Minerals, LP - Fabian and Gladys Janysek
Vision Source Boerne

**Napoli**
Casias Construction
Cow Creek Taxidermy & Game Processing
Dr. Edward and Twyla Benson
Fred and Mary Lou Valentino

**Underwriters**
Anonymous
Frost Bank Boerne
Harriet Payne
Kenedy Memorial Foundation
St. Peter’s Knights of Columbus, Council 10940
Sandera Custom Homes

**Friends of the Benedictines**
Alamo Mailing
Anne Brunet
Bear Moon Bakery & Cafe
Benedictine Oblates
The Boerne Star
Boy Scout Troop #18
Carrie Zapata
Comal Golf and Battery
Girl Scouts of Kendall County
Hill Country Weekly
Kiolbassa Provision Co.
Mayfield Paper Company
Mike Brady
Omega Retreat Center
Peggy Raley
Sisters’ Attic
St. Peter’s Parish
Sysco Central Texas
Walmart Boerne

Above - Kathy Harbaugh gets some help from volunteer, Anthony McGrady, to carry all her silent auction items! Below - Dub Smothers and Crystal Villamueva share a hug at the event.

SILENT AUCTION DONORS

A Little Nature Store
The Benedictine Sisters
Beth Dewey
Bill Miller Bar-B-Q
Boerne Dental Center
Dr. Luttrell & Dr. Gomillion
Boerne Hill Country
Family YMCA
Boudro’s Texas Bistro
Bridget Robledo
The Buckhorn Golf Course
Buckhorn Museum and Cafe
Celeste
Cindy Ogle, LMT
El Rio Mexican Restaurant
Epicure Gourmet Market
Friends of the Benedictines
Gertrude Mika
Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas
Grey Moss Inn
Jim’s Restaurants
Karnes 6 J Minerals, LP - Fabian and Gladys Janysek
The Koehler Company
Lady Ellen and Gerald Clark
La Te Da
Lea Kochanek
LS4 Enterprises
Madge Vancura
Mary Lou Valentino
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Sarah Hewitt
Sea World San Antonio
Serendipity on Main
Silo Elevated Cuisine & Bar
Solange Designs
Trè Bella
Tina Vroman
Walmart Boerne
The Wash Tub
Will and Anne Brunet
Family, Oblates, Friends and staff join in the blessing of the new Leadership on May 19th.

Below, Sr. Bernice Lindsey, OSB visits with Msgr. John Wagner during the reception.

Below, right, (l-r) Sr. Victoria Anne Olivares, OSB, Sr. Esther Guerrero, MCDP and Sr. Patricia Connolly, DC enjoy the festivities.

Above, newly installed Prioress, Sr. Frances Briseño (front row, 2nd from right), is surrounded by family members. Right, Sr. Susan Mika, OSB with her mom, Gertrude Mika.

"We believe that the divine presence is everywhere." Rule of Benedict 19:1
Sister Mary Agnes Zinni, OSB has been a part of Contemplative Outreach San Antonio (COSA) since it first began in 2002. She is a commissioned presenter and facilitator for centering prayer, and a member of the COSA Servant Leadership Team.

COSA is a local chapter of Contemplative Outreach, a worldwide spiritual network of individuals and faith communities committed to living the contemplative dimension of the Gospel in everyday life through the practice of Centering Prayer. COSA’s purpose is to nurture the spiritual growth of Centering Prayer participants in the San Antonio/Hill Country community, to provide workshops in the method of Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina, and to offer retreats and resources to deepen our relationship with God. (http://cosa-contemplativeoutreach.org)

Sister Mary Agnes remembers when the first COSA meetings were held at the Ecumenical Center in San Antonio, Texas, then moved to the grounds of the Benedictine Omega Retreat Center from 2003 - 2013. In 2014, COSA opened its office at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio.

In 2002, Sister began a Contemplative Outreach Centering Prayer group in Boerne. “Centering Prayer is about silent time with God,” says Sister Mary Agnes. “Fr. Thomas Keating, co-founder of Contemplative Outreach, said, ‘Silence is God’s first language, and it’s a very difficult language to learn.’ It is our goal to help those who partake in Centering Prayer to ‘Be still and know that I am God’ (Psalm 4:10).”

Now in its 16th year, the prayer group still meets once a week at Omega to: view Fr. Thomas Keating’s DVD teachings on the Spiritual Journey of consenting to the Divine Presence and action within us; to share 20 minutes of Centering Prayer in Silence; and to conclude with faith sharing by participants. It is just one of 20 such groups around the San Antonio area that is associated with COSA.

If you are interested in knowing more about this ministry, please contact Sister Mary Agnes at 830.816.8504 or to learn more about contemplative prayer visit: https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org
Efforts of Benedictine CRI Continue to Make Progress

The Benedictine Sisters of Boerne are one of 21 Benedictine Communities that comprise the Benedictine Coalition for Responsible Investment (CRI). The coalition’s mission is recognizing the directive from the Rule of St. Benedict that distribution should be made to each according to need. The Benedictine CRI works to build a world in which corporate policies and practices reflect just and equitable distribution of resources for the common good. There were 266 shareholder resolutions filed for the 2018 Proxy Season. A recent resolution filed with Home Depot proved favorable for the coalition’s tireless efforts. Sister Susan Mika, OSB, Executive Director of Benedictine CRI, recently released the following update:

Home Depot Vote - The Highest Ever

“We have been filing resolutions with Home Depot for over 17 years, asking them to release their EEO-1 data which they collect each year because they are a government contractor. This is a profile of their workforce in nine different categories. Over the years, we have met with executives and told them ‘we don’t know if you are the best or the worst because we have not seen the data.’ Lyn Conley from Atlanta represented us at the annual shareholders’ meeting. The company posted the final voting results on the Securities and Exchange (SEC) website: our resolution received 48.3%. This is the highest vote we have received at this company ever. Last year’s vote was 33% which had been the highest.” Home Depot’s CEO, Craig Menear, commented that the board would take into account the result of the shareholder vote. For the complete story visit: https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2018/05/17/shareholder-proposal-on-diversity-reportreceives.html

Benedictines Welcome Young Women on Vocation Pilgrimage

On May 16th, the 2018 Women’s Vocation Pilgrimage made stops in San Antonio and Boerne to visit the Benedictine Sisters. This annual event, a part of Austin’s University Catholic Center, gives young women an opportunity to learn, firsthand, more about the different women Religious communities in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Five young women spent time in the morning with Sister Susan Mika, OSB learning about her work in the areas of Corporate Responsibility and Social Justice. In the afternoon, they were welcomed to St. Scholastica Monastery where they spent time getting to know the Sisters, their history, and more about their ministries. “We were delighted to host the young women,” said Sr. Bernadine Reyes, OSB. “Their enthusiasm brings such joy, and we wish them a ‘listening heart’ as they continue their vocational discernment.”
Who are Benedictine Oblates

Oblates of St. Benedict are Christian women and men who associate themselves with a Benedictine community in order to enrich their Christian way of life.

Oblates do not take on new religious practices. As individuals and as members of a body, they grow in love of God, neighbor and self. With the Rule of St. Benedict as their guide, Oblates adopt values that are part of the very fabric of Christian Spirituality, simply seeking to deepen their faith and to lead enriched Christian lives according to the Scriptures. Through association with a Benedictine community, Oblates receive help and guidance in living a full Christian life.

Our Oblate candidates participate in a one year formation process consisting of faith sharing and prayer, and classes designed to enhance their knowledge of Benedictine spirituality.

After this formation process is completed, our Oblate candidates make a commitment in the presence of our community to:

• Share spiritual and social life
• Integrate prayer and work to manifest Christ's presence in society
• Join the community on special occasions for prayer, liturgy, meals and celebrations.

Membership is open to Christian women and men, single or married, of wholesome character and emotional stability who, inspired by Benedictine spirituality, are willing to commit oneself:

• To grow in understanding of faith in order to live the Gospel values more deeply.
• To share in Benedictine community through prayer and ministry while remaining in her/his chosen way of life.
• To grow in knowledge of the Boerne Benedictine Sisters’ mission and heritage.
• To live the charism of Benedictine spirituality and extend those gifts for service promoting the reign of God.

We are grateful to the 133 Oblates who journey with us. If you are interested in knowing more about our program, please visit our website or call 830.816.8504.

What draws you to the Benedictine Way of Life?

“'The Rule helps to center me and ground me in what is really important. It helps me focus on the things that really matter.'

Susan Markworth, ObOSB

“'To be closer to God, that is why I became an Oblate.'

Shirley Melcher, ObOSB
IN MEMORIAM

“For me, seeking God is primary and should be uppermost in the minds of those who wish to live the monastic way of life. If God is not the foundation of our life, the most important element is missing. The primary focus of Cenobitic life is living all aspects of the way Christ would have us live.”

An excerpt from Sr. Lucille Goertz, OSB’s journal from her trip to Rome, 1980.

Sister Lucille (Mary Aloysia) Goertz, OSB
December 13, 1925 - April 22, 2018

Perpetual Profession
December 15, 1946

Sister Lucille faithfully sought God in her work and prayer. She lived the Benedictine way of life with courage, compassion, and conviction, always true to God and to her community. Her grace-filled leadership taught us life-long values and so much more.

Her memory is ever present, reminding each of us to live simplistically and purposefully, act justly, love unconditionally, and respect all of human kind.

We remember our beloved family and friends who have gone before us. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. And may the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
We would like to hear from you! We are continually updating our database. Please send us your updated information if it is incorrect on the mailing label.