



BENEDICTINE TOUCHSTONE



Fall 2011

Benedictine Nuns • St. Emma Monastery • 1001 Harvey Avenue • Greensburg, PA 15601

Website www.stemma.org • Phone: (724) 834-3060 • Fax (724) 834-5772 • Email benedictinenuns@stemma.org



*“Come to me
all you who
are weary
and laden down
with cares...”*

Prioress' Reflection

By Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB



"Awesome! I cry when I think of it!"

"I sent my friends photos of it on my phone and told them they had to come and see

it – the photos do not begin to do it justice."

"I drove around the bend, saw it and had to stop my car—just to gaze at it!"

"There are no words." "You just have to experience it!"

Friends and guests have shared these spontaneous reactions upon seeing the life-size bronze Jesus seated at the table of the Last Supper surrounded by the empty benches (cover photo). This prayerful, interactive, statuary piece is situated by the rosary path below the monastery and the retreat house.

Several people have asked, "Where are the apostles?" To me, the empty seats provide the uniqueness of this sculpture and provide the "personal hook" for us to come aside, sit with Jesus, and remain with Him.

Previously I have always seen the apostles rightfully seated at the Last Supper; this interpretation invites us to be participants not observers at this meal, at this intimate gathering around the table eating with Jesus.

Jesus calls us his friends. Jesus has prepared this table and this space for us to join Him. We are the ones He calls in 2011, to be His disciples, His presence in our world today.

In the few weeks that Jesus has been sitting at this table, Jesus has attracted vari-

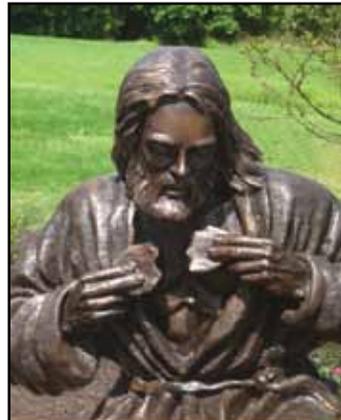
ous people: two women who recently lost their husbands sat in silent conversation and prayer with Jesus. One man was so compelled by the figure of Jesus that he sat and prayed his rosary there. Our Mennonite retreatant several times sat opposite Jesus and journaled her reflections and experience of being on retreat here.

A woman with a chronically ill husband found renewed energy sitting by Jesus. Several others were drawn "as if by a magnet" first to come and sit – and then to linger with Jesus.

A number of families joined their Busy Moms (on retreat in mid-August) for the Saturday evening Mass followed by pizza. Some of these children played in this area. The Gospel that morning was Jesus telling the apostles, "Let the little children come to me." How appropriate!

The Canadian sculptor, Timothy Schmalz, captured intensity, tenderness and compassion in bronze in Jesus' face. Jesus' tunic is open, exposing his chest. One visitor pointed out that the bread that Jesus breaks is attached to or a part of His chest so it gives visibility to Jesus' words, "This is my body broken and given up for you." The broken bread held by Jesus even looks like a heart.

As Benedictines we talk a lot about hospitality for Benedict instructs us to "receive guests as Christ." That tends to make us the host but the root word for hospitality refers to both guest and host. Oftentimes we think



**Dedication of
Last Supper representation
October 23, 2011 • 2:30 pm
RSVP by October 19**

of ourselves as hosting Jesus, of welcoming Him into our hearts and lives, of spending more time in prayer with Him.

But each desire to pray is Jesus offering hospitality to us, knocking on the door of our hearts and consciousness to enter into conversation and presence with Him. Jesus longs to speak to us, to reveal His hopes and plans for us, to offer us exquisite gifts.

Jesus invites you to come aside and enjoy His hospitality. That offer is

the central reality of a retreat—to be guests of the Lord in a special place and at a particular time. This Last Supper devotional will provide a wonderful rendezvous for you to meet Jesus and share your interests and concerns.

A verse from the hymn, *Shepherd of Souls*, captures Jesus' desire to remain with us: "Be known to us in breaking bread, But do not then depart; Savior, abide with us and spread Your table in our heart."

If a retreat does not fit your schedule, treat yourself to an afternoon drive. Step out of the hectic pace of daily life, even for an hour. Allow Jesus to refresh you, lift your burdens, and give courage back to your heart.

Mother Mary Anne Noll, OSB

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Benedictine Nuns Daily Prayer Schedule

5:30 a.m. ~ Vigils ~ *Lectio Divina I*

6:30 a.m. ~ *Lauds*

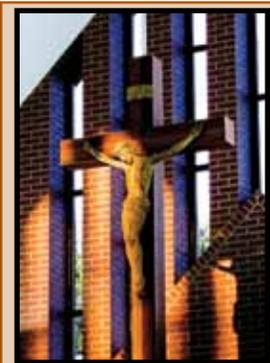
7:00 a.m. ~ *Eucharist*
Terce

11:45 a.m. ~ *Sext/None*

5:00 p.m. ~ *Vespers*

7:30 p.m. ~ *Compline ~ Lectio Divina II*

*You are welcome
to pray with us.*



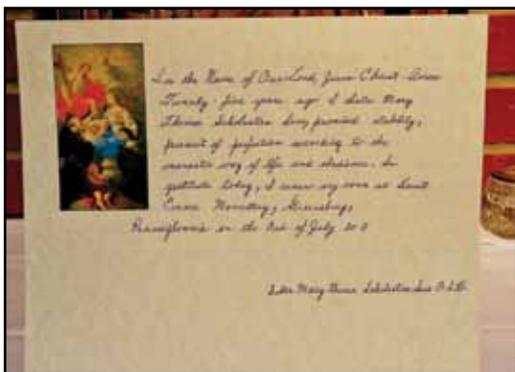
Sister Mary Therese Celebrates 25th Jubilee



On July 3 Sr. Mary Therese Sass OSB celebrated her 25th anniversary of monastic vows. Entering from nearby Marguerite, Sr. Mary Therese belonged to St. Benedict Parish where she had taught at St. Benedict School before working for Scott Electric Company, Greensburg.

One indicator of being a monastic nun is the variety of hats – or in our case, veils – that a nun wears! The organist both for our community and the retreats, Sr. Mary Therese is also in charge of the laundry for both, bakes for both and welcomes the retreatants.

We – and she – thank God for His faithfulness during these years of the first milestone of her monastic life and ask God for His continued blessings.



Open House Christmas Visit and Vespers

December 30, 2011 • Friday

1:00 View the 150+ crèches

Meet the nuns

Enjoy the cookies

3:30 Sing carols with the nuns

4:00 Join the nuns for Vespers

Please RSVP: (724) 834-3060 or
benedictinenuns@stemma.org

Considering Religious Life?

*Upcoming Monastic Live-in Experiences
for single women ages 16-38.*

*Advent Weekend, December 9-11, 2011
Holy Week, April 4-8, 2012*

*For more information, please email vocations@stemma.org
or call 724-834-3060.*





Our Volunteers

Mother Teresa said, "I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world."

Every day we receive various love letters from God and each is written by a different little pencil and has its own unique handwriting! Volunteers are these pencils writing love letters to us from God from every corner of St. Emma's. You, our other benefactors, often send us letters also from God and support us by "voluntarily" giving of your resources and your prayer.

Each year at this time we rightfully feature our volunteers: the miracle of God's Providence still continues that we have no hired help!

In a world where bad news gets top billing, we want to shout from the housetops our wonderful news about how special and devoted our volunteers are and how special they make St. Emma's.

The photos give some hints – by no means an exhausted list – of the wonderful services these volunteers perform. These people follow God's inspiration and God's timing is amazing. How often we really need someone extra and they appear or call to ask if we could use an extra hand!

These volunteers form the extended community of St. Emma's and we are so grateful for their love of God that is so deep and wide that it covers all of us and all of you with their love and prayer incarnate in their services to St. Emma's.

May God bless our volunteers abundantly!





Volunteers Help Make Flea Market Successful

Our Annual Flea Market would not be such a wonderful success without the help of so many people. As always, this was a terrific experience for us Sisters, our volunteers and for those who come. God bless all of you abundantly who made this event possible!

The success and specialness of our Annual Flea Market held in June are due to the efforts of many, many volunteers. Our thanks to all those who helped pick up, organize, sort, display, cook, serve, assist shoppers, clean up, donated or purchased items or helped in any way. As always, this was a terrific experience for us Sisters, our volunteers and for those who come. God bless all of you abundantly who made this event possible!



A special Note of Appreciation to our young people who volunteered:
Eagle Scout candidates helping with foundation of Last Supper, Catholic Heart Work Camp (who again spent four days here cleaning inside and out!), thirty-four St. Vincent Freshmen, and participants in Seton Hill University Day of Caring.

'Tee Time' for a Nun Is Great Day

"And a good time was had by all" sums up our first Tee Time for a Nun held September 12! Eighty three golfers played on the adjacent Hannastown Course and joined us for dinner here at St. Emma's.

The weather was picture perfect—75 degrees, sunny and a mild breeze.

Thank you very much to the Golf Committee, to the volunteers here who asked local businesses for door prizes (and to those companies and individuals who gave various and wonderful gifts), who set the tables so beautifully, made sure the grass was cut to perfection, parked cars, did the office work, etc.

Special thanks to Debbie Johnson of Johnson Photography who took the photo of each foresome and presented it to them at dinner.

And to the players: we are glad YOU came! We also thank the tee sign sponsors, the underwriter of the event, Keddie Chevrolet for placing the car for the hole-in-one, and the other generous donors who gave towards this event.

May God bless you all



Ready to play!



Registration.



Bragging rights went to: Gene Bert, Rick Jusy, Brian Damico and Randy Roble. Here they pose with Mother Mary Anne.

Farewell, Father Chad

Last August we welcomed Rev. Chad Ficorilli, OSB as our first Benedictine chaplain. On September 6, 2011, Fr. Chad began his new assignment as temporary pastor of St. Nicholas Church, Nicktown, PA.

We want to thank you, Fr. Chad, for your faithful service as our chaplain. We thank you, also, hearing confessions for retreat groups and meeting with private retreatants. May God continue to bless you and your ministry.

We extend a warm welcome to our new chaplains, Rev. Jacques DePaul Daley, OSB and Rev. Jeffrey Nyardy, OSB.



+ Rest in Peace +

We pray for the following who remembered us in their wills and extend our sympathy to her family:

+ *Vera Slezak*, Latrobe, PA

We pray for the following and extend our sympathy and thanks to their families for suggesting we be a designated charity in the obituary

+ *Rita Jane Selle*, St. Marys, PA

+ *Ed Wrona*, New Kensington, PA

Last Supper Pavers, Table Spots Still Available

There are still pavers available for the Last Supper. If you would like your family or a loved included, please call the monastery at (724) 834-3060. There are also a few table spaces available for \$1,000 each. We accept checks and credit cards.

- A. 4" x 8", \$100.00, 1 line of 16
- B. 8" x 8", \$250.00, 3 lines of 16 or logo on line
- C. 12" x 12", \$500.00, 5 lines of 16 letters each or logo on line

Good news! The IRA Charitable Rollover Passed for 2011/2012!

In "Division C -- the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2011" of H.R. 1424, Congress extended an excellent charitable planning opportunity for both 2011 and 2012. This act permits an IRA owner age 70½ or older to make a direct transfer to charity. The transfer may be up to \$100,000 in one year and this IRA rollover will exist for year 2011 and year 2012. Sec. 408(d)(8)(A).

Take Comfort, God is Listening

By Robert J. Allen

Have you ever considered that God actually listens to us – especially the needy, the poor and the sinner? Well those categories cover most of us! How comforting it is to know the Creator and Judge of everyone and everything listens to each one of us!

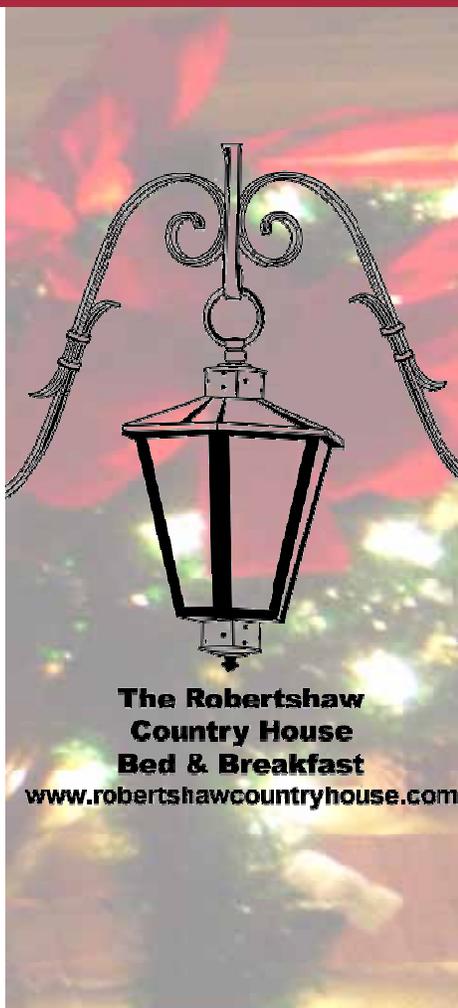
If you have ever been to St. Emma's Monastery, you realize almost at once that there is an unusual number of people very busy caring for the grounds, the retreat center, the bookstore, or anywhere you go. This unbelievably large number of people is the famous St. Emma volunteers. They, too, listen to you and your needs; they actually listen to one another. In Communication 101, we learned the most important part of communication is listening.

We know God not only listens to us, but even knows our needs before we know our own needs. It is each one of us who must learn how to listen to God's daily message to us. We may hear it at Mass or reading Scripture, saying the rosary or hearing the plea from a neighbor or friend. Often the message God is speaking to us is through another person. How we listen and how we react is strictly up to us and our willingness to accept or reject what God is telling us at that moment.

Each volunteer whom I have met at St. Emma wants to be helpful and makes each guest feel very welcome and special. This is truly what God is calling us to do in our daily life – to love Him and love one another. When you truly love a person, communication occurs. As Mike Vance said, "Communications are hookups without hang-ups"; our hang-ups cause incomplete communications resulting in incorrect assumptions and poor decisions. When you read the *Rule of Saint Benedict*, the first advice he gives to his monks is: "Listen, my Brothers". This is the comfort we gain when we listen to the Word of the Lord... and keep it.

Come to this Monastery and be open to this wonderful and sacred space to see how God will speak to you in the silence of your heart. Take time to Listen, to make a retreat, to enjoy the God-centeredness of the grounds, or to volunteer. We also invite young women to Come and Listen to God in regard to your vocation – and especially to the possibility of entering our monastic community.

Probably you will arrive – weary and full of concerns. You will leave – refreshed, renewed and more open to God's presence for you in your life.



**The Robertshaw
Country House
Bed & Breakfast**
www.robertshawcountryhouse.com

The Greensburg Garden Center Welcomes you to our 7th Annual

Christmas Showcase Home Featuring **The Robertshaw Country House Bed & Breakfast**

(St. Emma Monastery, Greensburg, PA)

On Saturday November 19, 2011
3 P.M. – 7 P.M.

(Join nuns for Vespers at 3:30)

*The Garden Club
will decorate the
Fatima Chapel,
lounge, retreat
dining room, and
the St. Benedict
Conference room
with many beautiful
crèches (nativity
sets from various
countries.*

Area florists and interior designers have each chosen an area of the house to decorate!

This includes:

- ☼ the outside of the house ☼ every room downstairs ☼ the bedrooms upstairs
- ☼ the Fatima Chapel ☼ the lounge,
- ☼ retreat dining room that many crèches will also adorn.
- ☼ In the decorated St. Benedict Conference Room guests will enjoy
cheese, crackers, cookies, punch and wine.

Musical Performances 
3:30, 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30 P.M. in the lounge.

Door prizes. 

Tickets: \$20

For reservations (and to choose time slot),
call Greensburg Garden Center
724-837-0245

Benedictine Nuns of St. Emma Monastery

De Olde

Christmas Shoppe



Nov. 10 Thursday 5 pm — 8 pm

~Early Elf Sale \$5/person admission ~

Nov. 11 Friday 11 am — 7 pm

Nov. 12 Saturday 10 am — 4 pm

Food and Baked Goods (flavored by Benedictine hospitality)

Eat in or take out



- ◆ Great selection of wonderful gifts for all occasions!
- ◆ Great low prices!
- ◆ And yes, we will wish you a *Merry Christmas!*

If you have: "gently loved from Christmas past" or "I have no idea what to do with this" items, your donations of "regifiable" items are always welcome.

Thank you for your support of St. Emma Monastery!



Photos with St. Nicholas

(not Santa Claus)

Saturday, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Each child receives a treat from St. Nicholas!



*Please remember us when revising
or making your will.*

*Our legal name is:
The Sisters of Saint Benedict
of Westmoreland County*

Our Federal ID-# is: 25-1017575



*Join us for the
Blessing of this
Last Supper devotional
on Sunday October 23, 2011
2:30 p.m.
Refreshments following*

*Please RSVP to benedictinenuns@stemma.org
or call (724) 834-3060*

*Coming home for the holidays and
need a separate place to stay?*

*Consider the
Robertshaw Bed and Breakfast.*

www.robertshawbedandbreakfast.com



2011– 2012 Calendar of Retreats

- Oct. 21-23** Legion of Mary, Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB, \$145
Oct. 29 Day of Recollection for Third Order Carmelites, Rev. James Hess, O Carm, \$29
Oct. 28-30 Married Couples Retreat, Rev. Ed Litavec, \$280
Nov. 4-6 Married Couples Retreat, Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy, OFMCap, \$280
Dec. 1 Evening of Recollection, \$20
 Rev. Jean-Luc Zadoga, OSB
Dec. 3 Day of Recollection, Rev. James Hess, O Carm, \$28
- 2012**
- February 24-26** Silent Lenten Retreat for Men/Women, Rev. Bill Kiel, \$150
March 2-4 Silent Lenten Retreat for Men/Women, Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy, OFMCap, \$150
March 9-11 Men's Retreat at the Retreat House, \$150
March 11 Day of Recollection, Third Order Carmelites, \$30
March 16-18 Silent Lenten Retreat for Men/Women, Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB, \$150
March 29 Lenten Evening of Recollection, \$22
March 31 Lenten Day of Recollection, \$30
April 13-15 Silent Retreat for Third Order Carmelites, Fr. James Hess, O Carm, \$150

Prayer Requests & Intentions

*Please use the enclosed envelope
to send us your prayer requests and intentions.*

Opportunities for Priests!

R&R (Rest and Renewal!) January 2-6

Looking for a sacred space in which to unwind from Christmas and re-wind for the coming year? Consider this relaxing and renewing time at the Monastic Guest House

Mass and one conference will be offered each day—the rest of the time is yours to schedule. Of course you will enjoy home-cooked meals flavored by Benedictine hospitality!

Monastic Guest House: \$300 • Retreat House: \$265

Silent Guided Retreat February 12 -17

This annual Silent, guided retreat offers Mass and homily with one conference each conference daily in the atmosphere of silence. Opportunity for sharing at dinner and at the evening guided discussion. *Monastic Guest House: \$365 • Retreat House: \$330*

Pro-Life Prayer Vigil

Wednesday, January 18, 2012 • 2:30 – 8:00 p.m.



The Benedictine Nuns invite you to join them for their annual Pro-Life Prayer Vigil. Light refreshments available.

You are our guest – there is NO fee.