



St. Placid Priory

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The Priory Spirituality Center ♦ The Conference Center ♦ The Priory Store ♦ www.stplacid.org

Spring—Summer

February 2016

Opening the Door: *Lectio* on the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy

Quotes are from the letter of Pope Francis about the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

Pope Francis is calling us/me to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Door. As I read his letter of invitation I notice how thrilled I feel. My enthusiasm grows as I imagine Francis opening the Holy Doors in Rome, throwing them wide open so that *all* can enter, *all* can experience welcome, *all* can open themselves to conversion. It reminds me of Pope St. John XXIII who opened the windows so that the fresh air of the Spirit could blow through the Second Vatican Council.

As I sit with the image of the Holy Door, I envision the door of my heart. What will happen if I opened that door? Will I be flooded or overwhelmed by something scary? I feel fear at the thought of opening the door of my heart. Yet, that is what Pope Francis is asking of me. I go to the Holy Door “as a sign of the deep desire for true conversion.”

I continue to reflect on the image of the Holy Door. With St. Catherine of Genoa I believe that God is my very center, that God resides in my heart. What

could possibly happen to me if I open the door of my heart and find God there? God is Love Itself. God is Mercy. I need have no fear. I begin this pilgrimage with courage and trust in the mercy of God.

This **Extraordinary Jubilee Year** calls me to examine how my living is merciful. Pope Francis asks me to



“rediscover the richness encompassed by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.” I ask myself, “How do I live out the works of mercy?” The Pope's challenge is to “personally perform one or more of these actions...” He wants me to be

Incarnational. He wants me to embody the Gospel, the Good News. I take a look at the list of actions which includes: feed the hungry, comfort the sorrowing, and bear wrongs patiently. A complete list can be found at www.loyolapress.com/corporal-and-spiritual-works-of-mercy.

I notice my heart softening. Hmm... I take a look at the door of my heart, my own Holy Door. Parts glow with joy; parts look battered and worn. I am moved to extend mercy to my own being. I listen to my heart's center, to God who lives within me. It seems God is inviting me to extend mercy, to approach life with acceptance and respect, to do whatever I can to alleviate suffering.

I end my *lectio* with a prayer of gratitude. Loving God, thank You for Pope Francis. I pray for him as he asks me to do in this Jubilee Year. Protect him and surround him with Your grace of wisdom and compassion. I pray this in the name of Jesus – our Way, our Truth and our Life.

This *lectio divina* format, reading and re-reading something, reflecting, listening for the invitation and then giving thanks, is a rich way of praying. What will happen to your heart when you take up Pope Francis' letter in a reflective reading of it? Will you let it change you? What does your heart's Holy Door look like? How will mercy expand in your life when

you step over your heart's Holy Door threshold?

Sister Monika Ellis

God is inviting me to extend mercy, to approach life with acceptance and respect, to do whatever I can to alleviate suffering.



From the Priory

Our friends from the **Tacoma Serra Club** came to St. Placid Priory for Mass and lunch with the Sisters and a brief business meeting on August 19, 2015. **Novice Molly Cady** shared her vocation story with them, and they left us a generous donation.



Sr. Lucy, Joe Betz of the Serra Club, and Sr. Sharon.

Our Oblate and former employee **Liz Langeland** left in early August 2015 to do a pilgrimage on the **Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain**. Liz sent us messages when she could along with many photographs, arriving in Santiago de Compostela on October 12. She spent another three days walking to Finisterre.



Jill Heine, who had volunteered occasionally at the Priory, moved in with us on September 12 as a live-in volunteer for three months. Jill prayed with the community and did many kinds of work while she was here at the Center, at the Priory and outdoors. We appreciated her quiet presence and willingness to help.



Sister Kerry O'Reilly, the new president of the Federation of St. Benedict, arrived at St. Placid on Friday, September 11 for a visit, in

response to our invitation. We enjoyed getting to know Sister Kerry during several gatherings and activities, and look forward to seeing her again.

Sisters Laura Swan, Maureen O'Larey and Mary Giles Mailhot with **Lee Miller and Jill Heine**

took part in a vigil addressing Climate Change on September 24 from Noon to 1 pm. The vigil was outside Lacey City Hall where Congressman Denny Heck has his office, just after Pope Francis addressed the US Congress on climate change. After the vigil, the group presented Congressman Heck with a letter urging him to take action on this matter.



Sisters Laura Swan and Mary Giles Mailhot at the climate vigil.

The evening of September 29, **Sisters Lucy Wynkoop and Laura Swan, Novice Molly Cady and Oblate Barbara Robertson** attended a community forum convened by **Interfaith Works** of Thurston County at St. John's Episcopal Church. The event was titled *A Changing Climate: A Pope's Call to Action*. The gathering watched a video of Pope Francis's September 24 speech to Congress, and discus-

sion followed, led by leaders from Seattle-based Earth Ministry, along with local organizations working on climate change issues.

Many interested people came on October 4 and enjoyed the documentary film *The Many Storeys and Last Days of Thomas Merton*. Filmmaker **Morgan Atkinson** was present to talk about Trappist monk Thomas Merton and the film, and took questions afterward. Thank you to all who supported the Sisters in this fundraising effort for our community and ministries. We happily considered the day a success all around.



Filmmaker Morgan Atkinson with Sister Lucy.

On October 17, **Sisters Maureen O'Larey, Lucy Wynkoop and Novice Molly Cady** attended a talk in Burien by Franciscan Sister and theologian **Ilia Delio, OSF**, who specializes in science and religion. The presentation, called *Catholicity and Conscious Evolution: The Vision of Pope Francis*, was sponsored by the **Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center** in partnership with **Seattle University Institute for Catholic Thought & Culture** and the **Seattle Archdiocese Missions Office**.



Novice Molly, Sister Ilia Delio, OSF, Sisters Lucy and Maureen.

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The October 911 **Schafer Meadows Fiber Fest** and **Olympia High School's BEARzaar** on November 21 were big successes for the **Priory Knitters & Spinners**. Thanks to everyone who purchased our fiber gifts, and to all the Knitters & Spinners who spend the year creating new things that make these fund-raising efforts possible. Proceeds support our community and ministries.



Trees have been an important symbol of St. Placid's environment, a call

to spiritual growth and stewardship of the land. When a handful of unsafe, sick and dying Douglas firs on Priory grounds had to be removed in November it was done with great care and respect for the lost trees.

Lee Miller and many friends of the Priory attended the 40th Annual **Holiday Peace Vigil** in downtown Olympia, sponsored by the **Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation**, on December 19. A wide mix of community members from local churches, and peace groups attended the vigil and enjoyed a soup potluck gathering that followed.



On January 3, our **annual Epiphany Party** after Mass was a wonderful chance to visit with friends, meet some new people, and to enjoy music, entertainment and refreshments. Thanks to all who attended to begin the New Year with us.



Oblates

From July 10th through the 15th I had the opportunity to be part of the North American Association of Benedictine Oblate Directors' (NAABOD) national conference in Arkansas at Subiaco Abbey. Oblates and oblate directors from around the country came together to learn, worship, celebrate and connect. Subiaco Abbey is nestled in the Ozarks: rolling hills covered with trees, pasture and fields, small streams, rivers and waterfalls—something beautiful wherever you looked. The oblates and monks of Subiaco welcomed us with gracious, loving hospitality as did the sisters of St. Scholastica in Fort Smith, about an hour away. This conference gave me a newer, wider vision of what it means to be a Benedictine oblate - the faith, commitment and integrity of my fellow oblates and the sisters, brothers and priests who direct us was inspiring. I experienced more deeply than ever the bond that unites us in the Body of Christ. And, if there was one thing I heard again and again, it was that this experience is to be shared with everyone, that it offers hope, peace and renewal to a world that sorely needs it.

Oblate Camille Wooden



Ann Cacciari became an Oblate Candidate on October 11, 2015

Discernment Opportunities for Single Catholic Women

The Sisters of St. Placid Priory are offering a **Benedictine Vocation Discernment** retreat the weekend of February 6 - 7. See Program pages for more information.

Viva! is offered by the **Seattle Archdiocesan Vocation Directors** at **The Priory Spirituality Center** on May 14 - 15. Sisters from various communities will facilitate the experience and offer women ages 20-40 an opportunity to learn about their way of life.

If you'd like to come to either or both of these retreats, please contact **Sister Lucy** at 360.438.2595.



Goings on at the Center

Oasis

I'm grateful to be participating in Oasis, one of the Spirituality Center's long-term retreat programs in which participants meet monthly October through May. I love being in community with ten other participants in a formation program guided by the Sisters and designed to deepen one's spirituality. I've found it life-changing—the contemplative time, the readings and teachings the Sisters share, the loving openness of the other participants, and the spiritual direction. And that's in just two sessions! I'm not kidding. I love the Spirituality Center, and the St. Placid Sisters who hold for all of us a profound and beautiful sacred space.

—Marilyn Freeman,
Oblate Candidate

Opening in Presence

What a pleasure it was to return to a chair in this circle of women; "where the focus is nothing is needing-fixing." All is right in love. As this supported contemplation retreat begins the search for my own inner and divine being, it seems God watches from within me as I experience my Universally guided tour through breath and pause, creating a journal of the heart. These are lessons to take me beyond fear of abandonment, and the outside world is nowhere within. Thank you, Jamie Deering. The next several months are to be blessings of the heart. —Kathy Marshall

Listening with the Spirit

"Listening with the Spirit" is more than a spiritual director formation program, it is a community. Each week I feel challenged by the subjects of study, and each week I begin my studies wondering if I will be

able to "measure up" to the expectations of the teachers and the group, and each week I find myself stretched beyond my own abilities, gently led into the realm of possibilities, and fed by the listening hearts that surround me. The community creates a safe place for us all to work together to explore the meaning and purpose of God's love, our love for each other, and how we can take that love out into the world. —Sister Magdala Casey



Listening with the Spirit 2015-2016

Retreats

About three times a year I wake up in the morning with the knowing that it is time to go to the Priory again. I call Janice, put two or three nights on the calendar and send in a deposit check. The day comes and my retreat begins. Over the years I have learned to keep the radio off and drive alertly but meditatively so I arrive calm and ready. I bring my e-reader with the intent to read only spiritual literature. The retreat house and Priory libraries are full of resources for living a spiritual life right where I am. This fall I found a book on grace and forgiveness, good topics for this stage of my journey. I am silent in the retreat house and grounds, but I do love meals with the sisters, oblates, staff and retreatants. Coming during the week is a blessing. I may weigh a

few ounces more when I leave after enjoying the delicious food prepared by loving hands, yet I know the true gain is in my soul and my heart.

—Sheila Holtgrieve

Volunteers

The Priory Spirituality Center would appreciate regular, especially weekly, volunteer help for computer entry, copying, Center preparation for retreats and programs, being a receptionist, etc. If you are interested,

please call Janice at 360-438-2595.

Spiritual Direction

Several years ago a friend suggested I might find a spiritual director at St. Placid Priory. I was hesitant to reach out to a Roman Catholic place. My protestant background did not include popes, rosaries or crucifixes. I wasn't sure I'd be comfortable in such a setting. I decided to venture out of my comfort zone, found the number

on line, and called for an appointment. The beautiful grounds welcomed me, as did my Sister director. She prayed with me and listened to my concerns. I felt nurtured by our time together. She suggested things I might like to try: Centering Prayer, a book or article to read or a workshop at the Center. When I shared that I struggled to be faithful to daily Centering Prayer she suggested I might like it better in a group. I invited two friends to join me and we now meet every Friday morning. My monthly spiritual direction always includes following up on concerns, looking to see what has worked and what hasn't. I continue to grow spiritually as a pair of loving eyes, listening ears and an understanding heart encourage me to be open to God at work in my life.

—Barbara Williams

Retreat and Program Information

Our retreats include the opportunity to join the Sisters for Eucharist, meals, and the Liturgy of the Hours. Spiritual Direction may be available on retreat for an additional fee. Please request an appointment when you register. For information about our presenters, go to our website www.stplacid.org and look under Spirituality Center, Programs and Retreats.

Discerning Life Choices for Women

January 22-24
Friday, 7:15PM –
Sunday, 12:00 Noon



In silence and stillness, allow yourself to become soft clay in the Hands of the Potter asking what is God's plan for your life. We'll open with prayer and guided meditation and close with group sharing and a closing prayer and ritual.

Register by prior Friday: \$160
with spiritual direction \$195
Minimum 3, Maximum 10
Therese Gonneville, OSB

Bless the Work of Our Hands

January 23
Saturday 9:00AM - 3:00PM



Enjoy a day of prayer, reflection, and creating with the hand craft of your choice. Hand crafting can be ways of touching God and letting God touch you. Learn to bless each stitch and pass on these blessings through the work of your hands. Come and celebrate your God-given talents!

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 12
Monika Ellis, OSB

One-ing: Entering through the Mystics' Gate

January 30
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Poets, saints and mystics tell us only one thing is needed: moment-by-moment connection to the divine. Why then is it so hard to release our anxious, muttering little selves, to enter the serenity and joy of divine Self? This practical workshop explores the spiritual practice and

experience that Julian of Norwich called "one-ing."

Register by prior Friday \$50
Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum 5, Maximum 15
Jodi Kilcup, Ph.D

Journaling for Meaning Making and Wellness

February 6
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Discover the healthy (and fun!) benefits of journaling for improved self-care and an enriched spiritual practice. Together we will create collaged journals and then explore creative ideas to inspire and support a daily journaling practice.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 12
Melissa Layer, M.A

Benedictine Vocation Discernment

February 67
Saturday 9:00AM-
Sunday 12:30PM



Come join the Sisters to listen to your call from Scripture, and hear about Benedictine community from the Prologue of the Rule of Benedict. Experience being with the Sisters for reflection time, prayer, dialogue, work and leisure. If you are a Catholic single woman discerning whether you have a vocation to the Benedictine way of life, this is a wonderful opportunity to share in community life with the Sisters of St. Placid Priory.

Register by prior Friday No fee
Benedictine Sisters- Contact
Sister Lucy Wynkoop at
lucywynkoop@gmail.com or call
360-438-2595

Meditation for Beginners

February 13
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



We will learn basic traditional and contemporary meditation techniques as practiced in Christianity and other major world spiritual traditions. There will be time for practice, discussion, journaling, and sharing. No meditation experience necessary.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch, journal and prayer shawls, prayer benches, and/or cushion if you have any.
Minimum: 6, Maximum: 20
Roy DeLeon

Lenten Journey: Desert Beginning

February 19-21
Friday 7:15PM-Sunday 12:00 Noon



Follow Jesus into the desert for greater solitude and deepen your spiritual journey in silence during Lent. We'll open with prayer, relaxation and materials for possible use during the retreat and close with group prayer and sharing. A spiritual director will be available, if desired, to listen with you as you discern the actions of God in your life.

Register by prior Friday: \$150
with spiritual direction \$185
Minimum 3, Maximum 10
Therese Gonneville, OSB."

Seek and You Will Find

February 20
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Jesus asks, "What are you looking for?" (Jn 1:38) An excellent question. This retreat will explore ideas for seeking and finding. It will give you

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time to ponder your longings. Have you found anything? How is God speaking to you? Come: seek and find.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch and a journal (optional.)

Minimum: 6, Maximum: 20

Jan Alkire

Spiritual “Facelift” for Women

February 27
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Do you love who you see when you look in the mirror? Is it time to put on a new face and see your true self in a new light? Come, seek, and find spiritual refreshment to restore, refresh, renew and breathe new life into the beautiful self that God has made you to be.

Register by prior Friday: \$60
Bring a sack lunch and a journal.

Minimum: 6, Maximum: 16

Linda Chandler Smith MS

Say Yes to Life

March 5
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



From Moses to Jesus to Paul, we have been called to a life of fullness and freedom. We will use Scripture and our personal experiences to understand the obstacles and learn how to increase and deepen our “Yes” to the Divine invitation.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch and Bible.

Minimum: 5

Jim Morris

Exploring the Rosary through Movement and Sound

March 12
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Pope Francis has called the rosary a school of prayer and faith. Moving our bodies and lifting our voices, we will uncover more authentic interactions with the mysteries, overcome dryness in our prayer life and celebrate this wonder-

ful prayer that links heaven to earth. No singing or dance experience necessary.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch, journal, Bible, rosary (if you have one), and wear comfortable clothing.

Minimum: 8, Maximum: 20

LaVon Hardison
Roy DeLeon

Silent Centering Prayer Retreat

March 18-20
 Friday 7:15PM-
 Sunday 1:30PM



Take your relationship with God and your Centering Prayer practice deeper on this weekend silent retreat. Retreat includes periods of Centering Prayer and time for solitude within the intentional silence observed throughout the entire retreat. Intended for those with at least 6 months of daily Centering Prayer practice.

Register by prior Friday: \$180
 Minimum: 8, Maximum: 10

Kay Kukowski and Mary Solberg

The Art of Lettering

March 19
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Learn 26 ways to use lettering in your journals adding new meaning to any prayerful page. From calligraphy to collage, stamping to stencils, this workshop will give you dozens of new techniques. We'll spend time in meditation and prayer while writing, drawing and using mixed media in our journals. No art experience necessary.

Register by prior Friday: \$50 + \$20 for materials. Bring a sack lunch, favorite journals, pens & other mark-making tools, scissors, ruler, paintbrushes, apron, and ott light if you have one.

Minimum: 5, Maximum: 20

Celeste Douville



Journey to Easter: Triduum Retreat



March 24-27
 Thursday 3:00PM-
 Sunday 12:00 Noon

Travel the road to Calvary with Jesus in the silence of this retreat. You'll join the Sisters for a special meal on Holy Thursday and share in the liturgies of each day on the journey to Easter. Celebrate new life with Eucharist on Easter Sunday followed by breakfast with the community. Spiritual Direction is available on Thursday **before** the retreat begins.

Register by prior Friday: \$190
with spiritual direction \$225

Minimum 3, Maximum 10

Therese Gonneville, OSB

Opening Doorways to the Soul



April 2
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM

Come for renewal to look deeper into your spiritual soul. Using timeless wisdom tales from around the world, the stories will be explored using meditation, reflection, journaling and expressive art form. For those who are seeking to discover the universal power of “Once upon a time.....”

Register by prior Friday: \$60
Bring a sack lunch and a journal.

Minimum: 6, Maximum: 25

Amelia Carroll

Art of Self-Compassion and Mindful Meditation



April 9
 Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM

The art of self-compassion promotes compassion to oneself and hence, compassion for all living beings in the world we share. Discover through reflection and meditation how this practice can help you honor and accept your humanness, enhance interpersonal relationships and promote care of the spirit.

Register by prior Friday: \$60
Bring a sack lunch, journal, walking shoes and rain coat.

Minimum 8, Maximum 12

Jane Fleming, MPM

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Expressing the Beautiful Struggle

April 16
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



This day of reflection, prayer and exploration of our daily struggle has the goal of creating something beautiful out of the struggle itself. Needle felting is the creative medium. No prior experience necessary. No need to bring anything but yourself and your sense of adventure.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 12
Monika Ellis, OSB

Making Sense of Life's Changes

April 23
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Change can be difficult or a doorway to transformation. Every new beginning means an ending of something, whether attitude or a relationship. Learn a new way to navigate life's changes. The books *Finding Yourself in Transition* by Rev. Robert Brumet and *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*, by William Bridges are the background for this workshop.

Register by prior Friday: \$50
Bring a sack lunch, an object that represents change to you, Bible, journal and prayer shawl.
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 15
Janet Rhodes

Celtic Knots in Illuminations

April 30
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Celtic Knots were used in Iona and Lindisfarne for Illuminated Scripture manuscripts. The day will consist of learning how to make Celtic Knots. Two or three transparent grids and two pens will be provided for you along with worksheets to assist in the making of the Celtic Knots.

Register by prior Friday: \$50+
\$10 for materials. Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum: 5
Pamela Hunter

Listening into our Struggle, Opening it in God

May 7
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



We might see our struggles as burdens to be avoided, pushed through, and separating us from God. We will explore conflict and resistance as openings for God's unfolding love. Through contemplative practice, we explore what is transformed when walls become meeting places in Love. Recommended pre-program reading: *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor.

Register by prior Friday: \$60
Bring a sack lunch and a journal (optional).
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 20
Jamie Deering

The Write Remedy: Healing Through Writing

May 14
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Do you long to heal an emotionally challenging experience? Join in this spiritually-based, interactive workshop. We will examine writing as a therapeutic tool for deepening your understanding and feelings about painful life events. Centered in Spirit, we go within to learn techniques to find peace about life's wounds.

Register by prior Friday: \$60
Bring a sack lunch, tablet and pencil or pen
Minimum 5: Maximum 15
Kathleen P. Perkins, PhD

The Art of Creation

May 21
Saturday 9:00AM-3:00PM



Art is a powerful way to learn, explore and experience God's Creation. We will use the richness of the St. Placid grounds and simple forms of art to broaden awareness of God's Creation and deepen our connection with the Master Creator. Absolutely no art experience is required!

Register by prior Friday: \$60

Bring a sack lunch.
Minimum: 5, Maximum: 12
Cathy Raymond

God the Artist: We the Co-Creators

July 16
Saturday 9:00AM-3:30PM



God is the artist of our soul. This retreat will stimulate our creative souls. We will focus on our Potter God, using clay materials. We will meet at The Priory Spirituality Center and drive to Walter and Renata Siegl's clay studio in Shelton. They will aid us with our creations. All of us are artists, so come to play and pray! The pieces will be glazed by Walter and Renata and you may pick them up at The Priory Spirituality Center after they are glazed.

Register by prior Friday: \$60
+ \$15 glazing. Bring a sack lunch.
(Minimum 5, Maximum 10)
Lucy Wynkoop, OSB,
Renata Siegl, Walter Siegl

Abide, a Silent Retreat

July 24 Sunday 3:30pm- July 30,
Saturday 3:30pm

Abide will focus on *lectio divina* Scriptural reflections Macrina Wiederkehr invites you to do on your own, and then to read her poetic summary, reflection questions and prayers. Each morning a Sister will engage you in a group session on a topic. The rest of the day is silent. *Lectio* times will be optional. Two sessions of spiritual direction will be provided with Sister directors.

Register by prior Friday: \$590
Please purchase Macrina Wiederkehr's *Abide*.
If you wish more than two spiritual direction sessions, the sliding scale is \$35-60.

Sister Laura Swan, Sister Therese Gonneville, Sister Monika Ellis, Sister Lucy Wynkoop



For This We Give Thanks!

"I am the Vine, you are the Branches." John 15:5

We live in an interdependent world.
We are all connected.

God, we know that You are abiding with us and we know that this abiding is eternal.

We know that our beloved deceased are among us in the Communion of the Saints:

+ Maureen Acuff
+ Ann Burris
+ Peter Gerard
+ René Herrera
+ Kathleen Knelleken
+ Ruth Leingang
+ Jeannette Sturn
+ Rheta Heine
+ Leota Johnson

We give thanks for these who now intercede, seeking grace for us!

We give thanks for a recent **connection** to our monastic roots in Nonnberg Abbey in Salzburg, Austria, our great-grandmother house from which our profession ring also comes. It is also the actual Abbey that sheltered **Maria Von Trapp** and her family during World War II. In

1965, this Abbey was also used to film the "**The Sound of Music.**"

In October, **Sister Laura Swan** was asked to be a consultant to Seattle's **5th Avenue Theater** production of the play "The Sound of Music." She spoke extensively with **director David Bennett**, and met with the cast in Seattle. Sister Laura answered questions around culture, character motivation and the historical context of the play. She told us, "They were very kind and gracious and interested. I appreciated the respect they had for who we are and what we do."

The beauty of music added delight to our **January 3 Epiphany party**. Sister Monika Ellis's niece Clare sang the *Ave Maria* to a hushed crowd. And Sister Monika and Candidate Maureen Cleary led the caroling, with Sister Monika on recorder and Candidate Maureen at the piano. We thank God for Music and for gifted musicians.

Another unique connection to our past surfaced in October.

Darlene Brooker of Olympia called to tell us that her 102 year old mother-in-law Julie Brooker had died.

Darlene then related a beautiful story to us of how each time the family would drive by Holy Rosary church in Tacoma, her mother-in-law would point and say, "That is where I grew up." When Julie was three years old her mother brought her to the Sisters of St. Benedict who lived at the Holy Rosary convent and school. Julie lived with the Sisters until she was 13 years old. We here had never heard of this compassionate and loving story!

We give thanks for these Benedictine women and for Julie Brooker's resilient and beautiful life.

Currently, we at the monastery, and all in America, are aware as never before of our connection with our *global neighbors*. We here at St. Placid have been in contact with Yanola Crecelius who is a Humanitarian Aid worker. Yanola has been serving in Mexico, but in September she wrote, "I'm being sent to the Syrian border. *How can I not go?*" We give thanks for her example which encourages us to open the door of our own hearts to be ever more loving, forgiving and active in works of justice.

Some Benedictine Feast Days to celebrate

Jan 15: **Feast of St. Placid**

February 10: **Feast of St. Scholastica**, twin sister of St. Benedict

February 25: **Feast of St. Walburga**, Abbess and healer

March 21: **Feast of St. Benedict**, Patriarch of Western monasticism

June 28: **Feast of Mother Benedicta Riepp**, first Superior of Benedictine women in the U.S.

July 11: **Solemnity of St. Benedict**

Sept. 17: **Feast of St. Hildegard of Bingen**, 12th century abbess & Doctor of the Church



St. Placid

We, the Benedictine Sisters of St. Placid Priory, a monastic community, cultivate a contemplative spirit that leads to hospitality and works of justice. We witness Gospel values in building community. We are committed to nurturing spiritual growth in ourselves and others, collaborative leadership, stewardship of the environment, and taking risks in following God's call.

The Priory Spirituality Center is an ecumenical Christian ministry that encourages people of all faiths to seek and discern the voice of God in their lives and in the world. We offer a peaceful and contemplative setting for personal reflection. We encourage and challenge people to know the presence of God in their lives through classes, workshops, retreats and individual spiritual direction.

The Priory Spirituality Center is a ministry of St. Placid Priory and reflects the Benedictine values of peace, hospitality, community, learning and prayerful discernment.

Registration: You may use this form to register for a day program, a retreat program or a private retreat. **The Center is open for private retreats unless a programmed retreat is scheduled.** For more information, call 360-438-2595, FAX 360-438-9236 or Email spiritualityctr@stplacid.org Please make checks payable to: **The Priory Spirituality Center / 500 College St. NE / Lacey, WA**

Please register me for the following program/s and/or retreat/s:

Program _____

Program Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Day Tel. _____ Eve. Tel. _____

E-mail _____

Commuter? Overnight? Willing to share a double room if necessary? Yes No

*Spiritual Direction available by appointment.
Please call 360-438-2595.*

We request half the registration fee as a non-refundable deposit for a program or retreat at the time of registration to confirm space. Any donation you make above program costs will be used for scholarships.

Full Payment enclosed \$ _____

Deposit enclosed \$ _____

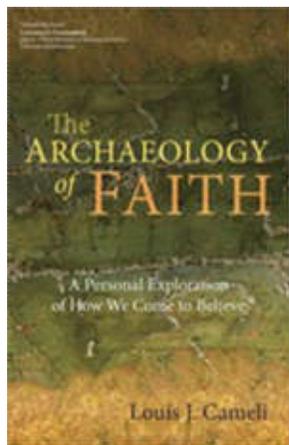


Sr. Laura's Scriptorium

Books that Merit Attention

Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home. Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis, 2015. Addressed to all of humanity, Pope Francis is challenging us toward a "bold cultural revolution" in regard to technological progress and economic growth. The Holy Father is frank, thoughtful, and hope-filled. A great resource for small group discussion.

The Archaeology of Faith: A Personal Exploration of How We Come to Believe, by Louis J. Cameli, Ave Maria Press, 2015. This is a wonderful journey through the "stuff" that creates, informs, and sustains our spirituality. Cameli explores his own family history for the religious evidence that shaped his own spirituality, always with an eye to inviting his readers to



explore their own spiritual heritage. This is a delight.

Benedictine Daily Prayer: A Short Breviary, ed. Maxwell E. Johnson and the Monks of Saint John's Abbey, Liturgical Press, 2015. This newly-revised and user-friendly breviary contains Sunday and weekday readings, and a four-week cycle of the full Liturgy of the Hours with hymns and prayers. This is a great resource for your personal prayer.

Stand Your Ground: Black Bodies and the Justice of God, by Kelly Brown Douglas, Orbis Books, 2015. Faith communities have been facing into issues of economic injustice, environmental devastation, and racism through the lens of our sacred texts



and traditions. Douglas takes us through a careful and faith-filled exploration of recent racial injustice. "Stand Your Ground" has become the new lynching tree. I recommend this for those who want a more mature spirituality.

Short Stories by Jesus, by Amy-Jill Levine, Harper One, 2014. Levine is a scholar of the New Testament and an observant Conservative Jew. She treats the parables (short stories) of Jesus with great respect while reminding us that these parables are first Jewish stories that challenge us to look into unseen aspects of our values. Parables are meant to leave us disturbed and thrust us out of our comfort zones. This is a thoughtful and enjoyable read.



Benedictine Sisters
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February 2016

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Directions

Coming South on I-5

Take Exit 109
 Right turn onto Martin Way
 Right at next light onto College St. NE
 Second Right turn is our driveway

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