



# BENEDICTINE TOUCHSTONE



Summer 2014

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

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# Prioress' Reflection

By Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB



"In my 50+ years as a member of St. Emma Monastery, we celebrated a number of 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup>

Jubilees of our Sisters. I was always privileged to be part of the preparation and decorating group of Sisters for these Sisters who were after all, "old."

You can well imagine my surprise when my name was on the Jubilee Booklet for 50 years of Monastic Profession and no "old" Sister was around so I had to walk up the chapel aisle!

Since I entered the fall after I graduated from high school, most people ask how did I know that I had a vocation and how did I know so young? The last is easy to answer: I did know that I was so young!

Growing up I wanted to marry, have a large family (we were 8 so large was more than 8 children!) and to be a nurse.

At the end of my sophomore year in high school, several people asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a Sister – this was in a two week period. When I answered in the negative, one especially suggested that I pray to the Holy Spirit – not that I would become a Sister – just that I would be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as to what God's will in my life would be.

Within a year I was amazed to think that God might be calling me to be a Sister! Then was the question as to what community. I of course thought at first of the community who had taught me.

My uncle, Father Giles Nealen, OSB, a monk of St. Vincent Archabbey, Latrobe, PA asked if I had thought about the Sisters at St. Vincent. I responded, "No, what was there to think about?" just to let you know that I was not just "jumping into this!" Father Giles asked if I would consider spending a week at St. Emma's that summer.

The summer of 1961 was the first summer that any of our Sisters had visited Germany since they first came to the United States – averaging between 23 and 27 years! Since I did not want anyone to know that I was even thinking about becoming

a Sister, I said I was coming to help the Sisters for a week since some were visiting their families.

The question people ask the most is "How did you know?" I remember distinctly asking the same question: how would I know that I was called to religious life and how would I know what community? The answer, "You will just know" did not seem like much of an answer! But that is also my answer: *You will know. There will seem to be a certain rightness, a certain fit, a draw to give oneself to Christ so strong, that one cannot know peace unless one tries it.*

Thus I entered St. Emma Monastery on the feast of St. Matthew, September 21, 1962 and I have lived my entire life here at St. Emma Monastery (except for several visits to our Motherhouse of Abtei Sankt Walburg, Eichstaett, Bavaria) in the daily round of prayer and work within our community for nearly 52 years! For jubilees, we count from first vows which I professed on Pentecost Sunday 1964.

I can only encourage all – especially the young – to think of your lives in terms of vocation. The most common vocation is to marriage, but how many people think of marriage as the best way to fulfill God's will for them is through the sacrament of Matrimony and a family?

How many people think that they might be called to love and serve God as a single person? And how many parents point out to their children the possibility of serving God as a religious woman or man or a priest?

Children have every chance for sport camps, activities, and to travel. Do we give them the precious information that they are put here on earth to make the place better than they found it, that they are an incarnation of God that is a one time only,

that they can do something on earth that reflects God that no one else has ever done or can ever do?

Oh, yes, and my desire to have a large family and to be a nurse? When I was elected Prioress, I had 27 adult daughters and since that time, thousands of others have also called me

"Mother."

As for my desire to be a nurse, I have been able to accompany many Sisters to doctor appointments, to sit by their bed-sides, and take them to the emergency room. At one point, I mentioned to the ER doctor that I seemed to be spending the same amount of time as he was in the ER

(three times in seven days!) and wondered where I should clock in.

Indeed I know the hundred-fold (in my biological family) and in my spiritual family.

May you also be richly blessed in your vocation as I have been.

May God bless you.

*Mother Mary Anne Noll, OSB*

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## Remarks by Mother Mary Anne OSB at the End of Her Jubilee Masses

Fifty years of vows! Me! During my decades as a nun, I was privileged to help prepare the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of many of our Sisters but they were all “old”! I am surprised that my name is on the cover of this program and that I am walking down this aisle!

I am so blessed! My prayer card expresses this. “I will praise you; I will recount your wonderful deeds”—maybe not each one right now!

I am so blessed to be called to this monastic community at St. Emma and to have known all but the first five Sisters who died before I entered. It is such an honor to inherit the legacy of the life of prayer and work that our Sisters lived at St. Vincent and here at St. Emma -- yet alone to sign my name as Prioress on the same lines that Mother Leonarda Fritz OSB, Mother Emmanuel Drey OSB and Mother Agnes Regensburger OSB did.

My Benedictine family also includes Archabbot Douglas and my brothers at St. Vincent who truly have been brothers to us during our Sisters’ 56 years there from 1931 through 1987 – until this very day. Thank you, Archabbot Douglas for being



**Mother Mary Anne OSB, in the monastery garden, October 1962.**

the celebrant of this Mass and your kind words.

Jesus promises a hundred-fold of brothers and sisters to those who leave mother and father for His sake. This is such a wonderful example of a “blended



**Mother Mary Anne OSB and Sister Scholastica at her Silver Profession.**

family”: I am so blessed that all seven of my siblings are here, some of my 26 nieces and nephews, and some of my nearly 60 great nieces and nephews.

The family of the person who enters also receives a hundred-fold. My brothers and sisters have visited St. Emma’s for 52 years. They grew up with Mother Agnes, Sr. Walburga, Sr. Gabriel, Sr. Wiltrud and our other Sisters. And my family is related to you because you are part of St. Emma.

Our Sisters lived dedication to God expressed in prayer and their work showing their love of God and others and persevering day in and day out. I thank my parents, Leo and Clare Noll, who showed me these values in my home by loving us, cherishing the Catholic faith, and being concerned about the larger community around them.

God bless you. You show God’s love to me and I am grateful.

### Jubilee Customs – Jubilee Patronal Saints

This close-up of my profession candle shows the red initials “MAN” (Mary Anne Noll) painted on the candle when I made Final Vows. The silver letter “J” (John the Baptist) came with my Silver Anniversary and the recent gold “W” (Walburga) comes with my Golden Anniversary of Monastic Vows.

The tradition of taking a patronal saint for Silver and yet another for Golden stems from our founding Abbey of Saint Walburg, in Eichstaett, Germany.

John was the bridge between the Old and the New Testament. Since I was one of the first few American women to enter our Community, I am a bridge between our founding Sisters and the American born; a bridge between monasticism as lived in Germany and as living it still more deeply in the American culture.

Born in 710 in England, the Benedictine Nun Walburga was called to Germany by her uncle Boniface to help evangelize the German tribes. Her task was to implant the Benedictine values as lived in England and express them in a culture that was pagan. For us, we live in what has been a “Christian” culture and that is now being paganized. Walburga, please help me and our community live our monastic values in a way that is a “Christ leaven” in our times.



### Monastic Vocations Weekends

Nov. 28-30

**2015**

January 2 - 4

March 28 - 29

April 1 - 5

June 6 - 7



Please call for more information.  
(724) 834-3060

# Golden Jubilee of Monastic Profession

Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB ♦ May 18, 1964 – May 18, 2014



Procession into chapel, Mother Mary Anne, Fr. Meinrad Miller OSB, Deacon Raymond Zazilko, and Archabbot Douglas Nowicki, OSB.



Archabbot Douglas leading the applause.



Mother Mary Anne reads her vows.



View of altar and tabernacle.



Mother Mary Anne's reflection. (See page 3.)

Right: Mother Mary Anne's great-niece, Rosalita Bobby exclaiming, "She is how many years in vows?!"







Archabbot Douglas, Mother Mary Anne, Deacon Raymond



All of Mother Mary Anne's siblings were able to attend the celebration. They are from left: Ken Noll, Charlie Noll, Theresa Lysic, Cliff Noll, Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB, Ron Noll, Kathy Thomas and Ann Sutton.

# May 24 Celebration of Golden Jubilee



The Celebrant, Reverend Jim Hess, O. Carm., invites the community to encircle Mother Mary Anne as she renews her vows.



Deacon Larry Sutton proclaiming the Gospel.



Mother Mary Anne welcomes the dinner guests, including several retreatants who had made retreats for nearly 50 years, (such as Nunzio Galletta on left).



Mother Mary Anne rejoicing in God's goodness for 50 years.



*This depiction of St. Walburga shows how God's grace is manifested in each of us uniquely and that our lives touch not only those in our own life time but also affect people long after we live. My family has been the source of my blessings; this photo shows the importance of family and those who love and support us.*

*The men upholding the Abbey both built and endowed this Abbey in 1035; we are the heirs of continuous benefactions during these many centuries since. My life has been so enriched by the many, many people God brings to St. Emma Monastery; people who come for retreat, who support us by their prayer, their friendship, their generous support of time in volunteering, and their treasure.*

## May Crownings



Some of us still remember the May Crownings in our parish churches with us students in procession. Some of us remember the corners in our classrooms and homes adorned with the flowers we found in the woods and the blue and white crepe paper streamers. Thus as children we showed our devotion to Mary who expressed the perfect relationship with God by saying, "I am the Handmaid of the Lord."

This year the Homeschoolers who meet here three times a month held their second May Crowning on May 7. Last year they went from shrine to shrine of our Lady outside and inside. This year the pattern was similar but rain kept the procession indoors. At each statue children placed flowers in a vase and Mother Mary Anne shared a reflection on the Mystery of the Rosary. Everyone recited the decade of the rosary and processed to the next statue.

For several years, the Junior Legion of Mary with Rev. Joseph Sredzinski as their chaplain, held their May Crowning here. On May 14, beginning in the Fatima Chapel, Fr. Joseph led the rosary and the procession to our Lady of Fatima Shrine outside where each of the young and the old placed a carnation in the vase. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament concluded the evening.





### 9th Annual Fundraising Dinner

*"... and a good time was had by all..." This familiar descriptive line sums up our 9th Annual Fundraising Dinner on May 3, 2014. From the guests who joined us for Vespers to the guests who could only arrive at the beginning of the meal, everyone welcomed everyone else, enjoyed the nuns' singing, and the delicious food. The baskets this year were even "bigger and better"—hard to imagine that concept! We are so grateful to the women who worked so long and hard on making the baskets, to the donors, the volunteers who carried, moved, placed and replaced tables, set the tables, those who donated baked goods or helped bake them here and the volunteers who helped in the many background positions. We are so very grateful to all of these and you guests.*

*May God Bless You Abundantly!*



**PLEASE MARK YOUR 2015 CALENDAR: APRIL 18.**

*"This event was a family reunion disguised as an auction/dinner. The familiarity and friendship, the conversation and fellowship made evident the people's love, appreciation and affection for the gift of St. Emma's." – Dinner Guest*



**CHRISTMAS SHOPPE:****NOV. 13-15**

All items ranked as Re-Giftables  
Buy beautiful Christmas gifts and items  
for all seasons at very low prices.

Missed the spring clean-up? Another opportunity awaits you to simplify, "redd-up," downsize, or hand things on to someone else who will use them, by donating them to St. Emma's. \$5 early admission on Thursday, Nov. 13

**Robertshaw Bed and Breakfast**

Coming to the Greensburg area for a graduation, wedding, special event or to get away? Planning your next year's Christmas trip?



**Make the Robertshaw Country House Bed and Breakfast your home away from home.**

[www.robertshawbedandbreakfast.com](http://www.robertshawbedandbreakfast.com)

**Mother Mary Anne's Surprise 70th Birthday Party**

Yes, the party was a surprise and I was surprised that I was 70! Riding a firetruck was not even on my bucket list. At this stage in my life, I am adding buckets to my list.

Thanks to the Sisters and all who made it such a happy, memorable occasion.

**Calendar of Retreats**

<b>Sept. 12-14</b>	<b>Silent</b> (men/women) Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB
<b>Sept. 26-28</b>	Women, Rev. Donald Breier
<b>Oct. 17-19</b>	Married Couples, Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy, OFM Cap
<b>Oct. 24-26</b>	Legion of Mary (men/women) TBA
<b>2015</b>	
<b>Feb. 20-22</b>	Silent Lenten (men/women) Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB
<b>Feb. 27-3/1</b>	Silent Lenten (men/women) Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB
<b>March 6-8</b>	Lenten (men/women) TBA
<b>March 13-15</b>	Silent Lenten (men/women), Rev. Bill Kiel

2014 fees: Weekends \$160 • Couple \$310

**Busy Moms' Retreat**

August 1 – 2, 2014

Not possible to be away the whole weekend? This retreat is for you! Dinner is at 6 p.m. with reflection and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament following.



Saturday's schedule includes morning Mass with the Benedictine Nuns, Confessions, reflections/sharing an personal time. Fee: \$85

4:00 p.m. Mass for Sunday.  
Have your families join you for Mass and pizza afterwards. Pizza meal \$5 per person.

**Save the Date!**

**4th Annual Tee Time for a Nun  
September 8 (Monday) • \$100 Player**

Golf at Hannastown Golf Course • Dine at St. Emma Retreat House

**Silent Auction items include framed plaques:**

- 1791 Isaac Collins Bible Page with George Washington quote
- #13 Augusta w/ Ball Marker and Scripture
- **History of the Pittsburgh Pirates**
- **History of the Pittsburgh Steelers**
- **The Passion**
- Palmer & Gleason, "And Away We Go"
- **Farmers**
- **History of the Penguins**
- Big Three
- 7-night Orlando golf vacation includes: One bedroom resort, 6 rounds of golf with cart, on your choice of over 70 PGA Championship courses, \$2,000 value



*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*