

# TIDINGS

## *Saint Bede Monastery and Center*

A Newsletter from The Sisters of Saint Benedict  
VOL. 21 NO. 2

Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
SUMMER 2008

### *Community Celebrates the Installation of Sister Michaela Hedican as Prioress*

Sister Michaela Hedican on Sunday, June 8, was formally installed as the sixth prioress of Saint Bede Monastery, a Benedictine community founded in Eau Claire in 1948. Sister Michaela, who was professed in 1964, succeeds Sister Margaret Michaud who has served a record 20 years as prioress.

The installation of Sister Michaela, current president of the Federation of Saint Benedict, was presided over by Sister Nancy Bauer. She is prioress of St. Benedict's Monastery at St. Joseph, MN and vice president of the federation, an association of 12 monasteries in the U.S. and abroad.

Sister Margaret, a widely known Biblical expert and teacher, in late July will join Sister Michaela's team as coordinator of the Sisters' Clairemont unit. She also will direct the monastery's Benedictine Lay Associates and continue on the faculty of the Diocesan School of Biblical Studies. **(See Administrative Team, page 4)**

"Sister Michaela will be wonderful," said Sister Margaret, who referred to her friend and colleague's talents as a creative and spiritual and organizational leader. "She is greatly loved and respected by her associates and our religious and lay friends."

A native of Virginia, MN, Sister Michaela is a 1963 graduate of Eau Claire's Regis High School. She has a degree from the College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN, a master's degree in religious education from Seattle (WA) University and a master's in monastic studies from St. John's University, Collegeville, MN.

Sister Michaela has taught middle school religion and science, provided religion classes and spiritual direction for adults, served as Sub-prioress and is co-founder and a former director of Saint Bede's retreat and conference center.

Since her election as Federation President in 2003, Sister Michaela has traveled widely, working with eight Benedictine monasteries in the U.S. and four others in the Bahamas, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. She said members of the Federation's council and colleagues at Saint Bede, current site of the association's office, will assist her as she completes her six-year term as president and begins her term as prioress.

Asked about the changes facing this community grown older and fewer – one planning to sell its property and

relocate to a more manageable site -- Sister Michaela said, "God is always with us. Prayer has always been the medium through which God guides us in meeting new challenges."

Sister said she takes joy in the 1,500-year traditions of Benedictine monasticism -- daily gatherings for prayer, meals and friendship, and the community's spirit of hospitality.

At age seven, Sister Michaela, added, she already knew that God was calling her to Benedictine life. Inspiration came first from teachers at Duluth's St. Scholastica grade school, later from the Saint Bede Sisters who taught her at Regis High School. Her family, which includes two brothers and two sisters, had moved to Eau Claire when her father began a new job here. While completing high school, Sister Michaela joined the Benedictines at age 16, living with the Sisters at their former motherhouse on Wilson Street. She recalls watching construction of today's Saint Bede Monastery, which opened in 1964.

Her high school homeroom teacher then was Sister Monica Mai, a former prioress here who serves on the chaplaincy staff of Eau Claire's Sacred Heart Hospital.

"I already saw her skill at organizing many activities and being involved with her whole heart and soul," Sister Monica told a local newspaper reporter in 1989. "She's a team player. She very much likes to see things succeed. She sees human nature, both weaknesses and strengths...and sees how human beings relate to the God she believes in."



*(Left) Sisters Michaela Hedican, Nancy Bauer (prioress at St. Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, MN) & Margaret Michaud*



**Sister Michaela Hedican,**  
**OSB Prioress**

## TIDINGS

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# Reflections of A Newly Called Monastic Leader

— Sister Michaela Hedican, OSB

Rooted in the Benedictine tradition of listening, the calling forth of a monastic leader stands in sharp contrast to what our culture experiences at the time of a political election. The desire to win, the need to look better than one's opponent, the currying favor with those who can assist you in prevailing are all foreign to electing a leader in a monastic community.

For months, we sisters of Saint Bede Monastery have prayed, studied, discussed, shared and listened as we sought to identify the person who is to lead and journey with the community through transition into the future with hope and new life." (Focus Statement)

The fruition of these months culminated on March 1, 2008 as we gathered in chapel to elect a prioress. As I realized my sisters were calling me, I experienced a profound sense of humble gratitude tinged with a bit of apprehension. For forty six years, since I was 16, I have lived with these, my sisters. They have educated, encouraged, challenged and supported me and now I have been called forth to serve them with the gifts they have cultivated and honed.

Inspired by their example and dedication to our Benedictine way of life I have the opportunity through the ministry of leadership to "arrange all things that the strong will have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from" (*Rule of Benedict*, Chapter 64, vs.19). Saint Benedict is clear that the prioress is "to serve her sisters rather than preside over them." (ibid vs. 15). Feeling a degree of apprehension as I contemplate the implications of Benedict's mandate seems natural. Looking to the witness of those prioresses who have served before me gives me courage, hope and the treasured gift of learning from those who have lived the Benedictine way longer than I.

Together, my sisters and I face an unknown future as we look to selling our monastery and relocating. Our desire to move into this future together, to continue seeking God and serving God's people is central to what our future will hold. Wherever we are, we will remain dedicated to following the way of Benedict, and will pray and work together as we extend the Benedictine charism of hospitality, peace, and reverence for all creation.

Benedictine sisters first came to Eau Claire in 1892. In 1948 we established an independent monastery. Steeped in that history, and grateful for those who have led the way, we strive to listen to our God who continues to lead us today.

## Renewals, Program Planning Mark Lay Associates Meeting

**Sister Michaela Hedican**, the community's newly elected prioress, on March 30 led Lay Associates in a prayer for peace at the group's meeting at Saint Bede Monastery. **Sister Margaret Michaud**, who has completed 20 years as prioress, discussed the spiritual aspects of humility as described in Chapter 7 of the *Rule of Saint Benedict*. She said the *Rule* uses the imagery of a ladder to outline the steps of spiritual practice leading to one's growth in virtue.

Future meetings, the Associates noted, will include discussion of the following suggestions for future programs:

- A bus trip to Saint John's Abbey or another Benedictine house.
- Research into the Benedictine Oblate Program
- Communications about Associate activities in church bulletins.

During Evening Praise, the Sisters and members offered blessings during the three-year renewal ceremony for Associates **Midge Blumhardt**, sponsored by **Sister Michaela**, and **Sue Zabel**, sponsored by **Sister Mary Pattison**.

Lay Associates  
Sue Zabel (left) &  
Midge Blumhardt



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# Reaching Out

— Sister Dale Wollum, OSB



Sister Petronelle Marthaler

□ **Sister Petronelle Marthaler** who was professed in 1943 and served as a caregiver and Licensed Practical Nurse, officially retired in 1993. But Sister never really quit working. She later served for many years as a special nurse for the late mother of Sisters Bridget and Mary Jo Donaldson, and Fr. Tom Donaldson. Today she is part-time caregiver for Mrs. Lucille Burke, a Benedictine Lay Associate and long-time friend of the Sisters.



Sister Helenette Baltés

□ **Sister Helenette Baltés**, who celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in 1996, continues to play the organ in Saint Bede Chapel and participate on the monastery's liturgy team. For the past ten years Sister also has been volunteering to collate and file records in the Rehabilitation Department of Sacred Heart Hospital.

□ **Sister Judy Kramer** again will serve as a Spanish translator for the Sisters of the Congregation of St. Agnes when they gather during July 15-18 in Fond du Lac, WI for their summer Chapter meetings. The order includes members from Latin America who are expected to participate in the meetings. Sister Judy said the religious order is progressing toward their goal of becoming bilingual.

□ **Sister Lucy Miller** has combed the monastery's archives as part of preparations for a display highlighting the Benedictines' 60 years as an independent monastery in the Chippewa Valley. Those exhibits can be viewed all summer by visitors to Saint Bede Center. The public celebration marking the anniversary begins at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, June 15, with a prayer service in Saint Bede Chapel, followed by a reception in the Center.



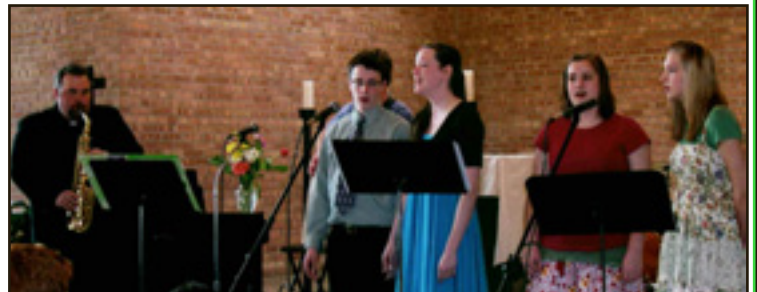
Sister Lucy Miller

## Salve Regina Concert a Grand Success

Thanks to **Regis High senior Clare Bohrer**, her family and friends, a Salve Regina Concert on Sunday, April 27 benefited the Sisters' Retirement Fund from free-will donations totaling nearly \$2,000. The concert, held in Saint Bede Chapel, was organized as Clare's National Honor Society Project. At Regis, she is a standout student-athlete and a leader in other activities. The event featured the compositions of **Fr. James Kurzynski**, a Regis faculty member who was accompanied on saxophone by **Amy Gleason**. Other performances included the **Regis High Choir** and music by the **local band, "Somebody Else."** Approximately 200 people joined the Sisters for a lively afternoon of music and later refreshments in the Center. Attendees also joined the Benedictines in a brief ceremony honoring the Blessed Mother on the monastery grounds. For all those who touched the lives of the Sisters and participated in a wonderful musical program for a gifted student, **Deo Gratias!**



Regis Singers entertain at Saint Bede Chapel



Father Kurzynski & Regis High Singers



Sisters Margaret Michaud and Michaela Hedican with Clare Bohrer

## Book Talk

— Dr. Ronald Warloski

I first heard the name of Henri Nouwen from my wife, Johanna, who had been a student in Graduate Psychology at the Catholic University in Nijmegen, Holland at the same time he was a student. Then I met him when he came to Eau Claire to give a talk at St. Patrick's.

I remember unkempt hair, thick glasses and an intense gaze, the last of which was a bit unnerving. I know that I did not realize what a major figure he had become in the American Catholic Church (he left Holland because the then staid Dutch did not accept his style). My curiosity about him remained strong.

After searching through an extensive bibliography, I decided on a biography by Michael Ford, *Wounded Prophet: A Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen* (Doubleday, 1999). I chose this book because the author did an authentic scholarly study, which means he ransacked Nouwen's writings, interviewed hundreds of people touched by him, but still tried to maintain objectivity, rather than become a hero-worshipper. It's a model biography.

Who was Henri Nouwen? A very complex, talented, brilliant man who was a priest from the 1960's through the 1990's (he died in 1996). He had very different (for then) ideas about spirituality, religion and life in the church. He struggled constantly to find a spiritual rest where he could touch and be touched by the finger of God. His strategy is succinctly stated by Michael Ford:

*"Through acts of devotion and adoration, Christian ministers had to learn to keep listening to the divine voice of love and find within it the wisdom and courage to address contemporary issues. Only then would it be possible for them to remain flexible without being relativistic, convinced without being rigid, willing to confront without being offensive, gentle and forgiving without being soft, true witnesses without being manipulators."*

It was a challenging agenda. He tried to live all of those traits by using reason (psychology) in the service of emotional religious experience. His energy source was constant prayer. It was not an easy path and its pursuit ground him down again and again. It led him on a peripatetic path from studying psychology at the University of Nijmegen in Holland and at the Meninger Foundation in Topeka, KS. He taught at the Yale Divinity School, the North American College in Rome and Harvard Divinity School. He spent time in Central and South America. He went on retreat at the Abbey of the Genesee in New York. He then found the place where he finally found his "home," L'Arche Daybreak in Ontario, Canada, which was a home for the "psychological and physiological challenged."

Through it all, his search to fulfill his mission and for his place in God's plan was an exhilarating experience, followed always by depression and despair. He was a good teacher. His students at Yale and Harvard divinity schools adored him. He didn't teach and preach a life of the spirit, he lived it. He appealed to persons from all religious backgrounds and those who got to him thought him wonderful. Also, his emphasis on being Catholic by experiencing emotional catharsis appealed to many.

He was a gentle and inspiring counselor. people from all over the world came to speak with him, most of the time coming away with deep peace. He was a writer – a prodigious writer. The reviews of his 40-plus books were mostly rave reviews.

He crammed a lot of living, learning and being into his 62 years on earth. But he was never content or happy for any length of time. For reasons of which I'm not sure, the title of a poem by Hillaire Belloc, *The Hound of Heaven*, popped into my head and stayed there. I think it's because I'm persuaded that Nouwen was a "Hound of Heaven," hunting God through the mine-fields of emotional experience. He kept doggedly reaching for a level of emotional fulfillment and spiritual rest that I don't think is possible in this lifetime. His desperate searches are what make him the tragic figure he is. However that tragic figure is also the priest who left an enormous legacy to the Catholic Church in America. Whenever you hear a sermon in which preachers use him/her self – their weaknesses, their struggles, their failures – as the organizational focus of the sermon, you are hearing the influence of Henri Nouwen, this being just one of the many ways his ideals and practices are very much with us.

### Sister Michaela Introduces:

#### Administrative Team:

- Sister Ruth Feeney, Sub-prioress and Secretary
- Sister Karen Streveler, Treasurer-Archivist
- Sister Monica Mai, Internal Auditor
- Sister Margaret Michaud, Clairemont Coordinator and Director of Lay Associates
- Sister Judy Kramer, Procurator-Plant Manager
- Sister Mary Maves, House Coordinator

#### Other Assignments:

- Sister Mary Frances Gebhard, continues as Director of the Justice & Peace Ministry.
- Sister Marjorie Hill serves as Vocation Director of Correspondence. She continues as Director of Religious Education at St. Raymond's Parish.
- Sister Dale Wollum is the community's (daily) Chronicler.
- Sister Karen Streveler, recently retired from teaching at Immaculate Conception School, is Formation Director. She continues in her photography/card ministry.

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## Three Benedictines Celebrate Jubilees

### Sister Lorayne Andre, OSB

In the weeks leading up to the celebration of her 60th anniversary, Sister Lorayne Andre recalled impressions of her first visit to Saint Benedict's Convent at St. Joseph, MN.

"I was struck by the beauty of the liturgy, especially the chant and the psalms," she said. "It stirred me like nothing I had ever heard before and I knew it would have to be part of my life from that moment on."

Sister's pre-Benedictine years included three years teaching in public schools. One of four children of Michael and Marie Andre, the La Crosse native attended Aquinas High School. She recalls being impressed by her Franciscan teachers who encouraged her to consider a religious vocation.

Her spiritual explorations, she said, drew both kidding from friends and a thoughtful gift -- a book "about a man named Benedict whose words and works seemed ready made for heaven and beyond."

Sister Lorayne was professed in 1948 and was among the 83 Sisters who that year founded the Saint Bede community in Eau Claire. She taught English and journalism at St. Patrick/Regis high schools there and later joined the faculty of Saint Bede Academy. She also taught and served as assistant librarian at St. Scholastica College, Duluth, MN.

Sister Lorayne earned a bachelor's degree in English/Education from La Crosse State (now UW-L). She later added a MA in English from Marquette University, Milwaukee, where she also studied journalism, and a MLS degree from UW-Oshkosh.

Now living at Clairemont, Sister fondly recalls her three years at Cretin High School in St. Paul, MN where her work under a grant led to the establishment of a Religion Resource Center. A stylish writer and voracious reader, Sister Lorayne has served as Saint Bede secretary, librarian/archivist, and book reviewer for *Tidings*. She also is a past secretary of the Federation of Saint Benedict.

Asked what advice she would give a woman seeking happiness and God's eternal love, Sister said the key question is what that person is seeking.

"I would say, put aside what is superfluous and distracting -- extreme or self-effacing -- and concentrate on family values. Choose communal living, sharing good and bad; prefer prayer and reflection. Look for the joy to be found among confreres and associates who, like you, seek peace and pursue it in the Benedictine way of life."



Sister Lorayne  
Andre, OSB

### Sister Mary Pattison, OSB

Sister Mary Pattison, one of eight children of Francis and Theresa Pattison, grew up on the family farm near Durand, WI. She entered St. Benedict's Convent, and in 1948, with the founding of Saint Bede Priory in Eau Claire, she volunteered to return to Wisconsin.

Sister Mary prefers to "round off" her years of service in groups of 10's and 20's. Her first 20 years were spent teaching music at the former St. Thomas More School in La Crosse and at St. Mary School in Richland Center. She also gave private lessons, taught classroom music and directed choirs for children and adults. Another ten years was given to community service -- eight years as Sub-prioress and two as Director of Saint Bede's retreat and conference center. She devoted the next 20 years to pastoral ministry at St. Olaf Parish in Eau Claire and St. Matthew Parish in Wausau.

During the 1980's, while in Eau Claire, Sister Mary helped newly-arrived Hmong refugee families adjust to their new lives in the United States. She continued this work on a limited scale in Wausau.

"Becoming acquainted with these gentle and appreciative families was very enriching and rewarding," she said.

Sister Mary also has pursued a long and personal interest in ecumenical activities. She has served on the La Crosse Diocese's Ecumenical Commission and the statewide LARCUM (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, United Methodist) Organization. Unfortunately, she noted, both groups are currently inactive.

Eight years ago Sister returned to Saint Bede Monastery where she assists with the community liturgy.

"Liturgy, in fact, has been at the heart of all my study and work through the years as organist and work with choirs and worship committees," she said. "After all, "liturgy is central to the life of every Christian, certainly for Benedictines."



Sister Mary  
Pattison, OSB

-Continued on Page 6



## Three Benedictines Celebrate Jubilees *-Continued from Page 5*

### Sister Mary Jackle, OSB

For Sister Mary Jackle, celebrating 50 years as a Benedictine Sister, spirituality is a hallmark of her varied roles in healthcare, education and as a volunteer for others in need.

The daughter of parents Marian and John, Sister Mary grew up in Milwaukee with siblings Joan and John. Since 2001 she has held leadership positions at Christus Santa Rosa Healthcare at San Antonio, TX where she currently serves as education coordinator. Sister Mary has lived in the city since 1986. For many years she shared a residence with **Sister Denis Smith**, a former Saint Bede prioress.

Sister Mary continues to see new facets of Benedictine life, especially “being part of a long line of committed women who make the world better by their prayer and work.” She also spoke of “the good example of the older Sisters and how this life produces remarkable people.”

Sister Mary holds a doctorate in Educational Administration-Adult Education from the University of Texas. She earned RN credentials from St. Cloud (MN) Hospital School of Nursing and graduated *summa cum laude* with a BS in biology from Viterbo University, La Crosse.

Sister Mary has an enviable record of scholarly publications, presentations and professional and other memberships. Typically, she downplays those activities to talk about her joy in volunteer work, especially the opportunity to help others in the aftermath of Hurricanes Rita and Katrina which devastated the Gulf Coast. Her contributions ranged from staffing a Red Cross phone bank to sorting donated shoes at a local warehouse to helping reunite a seriously ill man with his daughter. Sister also has worked with a free clinic for the poor and served as a tutor for the local Literacy Council.

Sister Mary, quick to laugh at a good story, enjoys mystery novels, spotting the hand of God in music and art, pets, and, she hopes, the coming season of the Green Bay Packers.



Sister Mary Jackle, OSB



Anne Hoover  
New Orleans Volunteer with  
one of her quilts.

## Anne Hoover Joins Volunteers On Post-Katrina Aid Mission

Anne Hoover, dining manager for Chartwell's, the Sisters' food service, is not one to turn down an adventure — or doing a good turn for others. Anne, who began working at the monastery — briefly as a part-time cook and for more than nine years as manager — is known for the colorful quilts she donates for Celebrity Banquet auctions and the special foods she prepares for the Sisters and guests. In late January she extended her good works to those made homeless in New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina.

That role evolved from a sister-in-law's invitation to family and friends to celebrate her 60th birthday in New Orleans.

“She felt that since Katrina had demolished the great city, it would be wonderful if while we were there we donated some of our vacation to helping in the recovery effort,” Hoover said. “We all agreed and she made arrangements with On Site Relief.”

That Florida-based agency continues to play a major role in finding homes for storm victims living on the streets or otherwise made homeless since Katrina's arrival on September 29, 2005.

Hoover said the Wisconsin volunteers journeyed to Louisiana, first by bus to Chicago, then by a 19-hour Amtrak ride. The group spent their first night in a hotel.

Next morning the travelers were met by On-Site's relief workers.

“Some of our group went to the Lower 9th District which was the worst hit by Katrina,” Hoover said. “They cleaned up garbage, scraped paint off a house and made brackets for street signs. The group I was with went with a police officer who worked with Unity (a group that finds and equips shelters for those made homeless by the storm).”

Using a borrowed truck, Anne's group delivered sofa-sleepers, linens and other items donated by a local hotel to those placed in apartments.

“These people had nothing but air mattresses on the floor to sleep on,” she said. The other items, Hoover added, were trucked to a gutted church being used as a warehouse. Other volunteers later would deliver the stored items to newly sheltered families.

From their police escort, “Officer Sam,” the Wisconsin volunteers gained new perspectives on a devastated city and those determined to rebuild it. Hoover said their police friend shared his vivid memories of the city before and after Katrina.

“It was very interesting to hear first-hand from someone who was there,” Anne said. “We got to see a lot of the city. The recovery from Katrina will take years to complete and I feel very blessed that I was able to do something to help in that process. If anyone is planning a trip to the “Big Easy” donating some of your time to help is greatly appreciated by the people of the city.”

# Developments

— James A. Schwartz, Director of Development

With this Jubilee issue, we are reminded that Benedictines never really retire. Today, only 13 Sisters hold salaried ministries, full or part-time. Others attend to spiritual, leadership or other services at the monastery as their talents dictate. All play a role in the community's decisions and reach out to others in prayer and welcoming hospitality.

Sixty years have passed since 83 Sisters from Saint Benedict's convent volunteered to establish a Benedictine motherhouse. Most then worked in schools, parishes and health care facilities locally and elsewhere in the state.

It wasn't long before the Benedictines outgrew their quarters on Wilson Street as vocations swelled their numbers. By 1964, now with more than 100 members built and opened their current monastery. They opened schools there and at nearby Altoona and also briefly operated a small hospital at Durand.

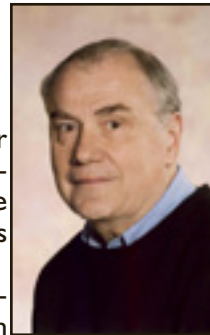
Meanwhile, the Sisters were moving farther afield with their ministries – in Wisconsin and, gradually, to several other states. They also accepted assignments in a number of foreign countries, Mexico, Chile, Jamaica and elsewhere.

This community is still evolving. More than a response to the realities of their fewer, older numbers, the Sisters are determined to continue together in this area. They will lament the eventual sale of their distinctive monastery and retreat/conference center. But, as one Sister reminded, "The monastery is not dependent upon buildings, but wherever we are living in community."

With this in mind, the Sisters again shared the joy of three Jubilarians whose devotion to God and service to others in Benedictine life total 170 years. Later, on June 8, they participated in the installation of their new prioress, Sister Michaela Hedican.

This 34-member community also has prepared a public "thank you" for lay and religious friends – the June 15 celebration of their 60th year of their establishment of an independent Benedictine community in Eau Claire. We hope you can attend.

That evening the Sisters will begin their retreat. On Saturday, June 21, they will gather at nearby St. Patrick's Cemetery to pray for their deceased members. In all ways possible, they remain a vibrant community.



James A. Schwartz  
Director of  
Development

Briefly items..

Thanks to all those who responded to the Sisters' Futures Fund solicitation in April. Please join them in prayers in their quest for an appropriate buyer of their property and new home for this monastic community.

Auction items are welcomed for the Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009 Celebrity Banquet. For information about articles for the live and/or silent auctions, please contact Linda Dekan at the Development Office (715-834-7130).

### 60th Anniversary celebration of the founding of the Monastery

Sunday, June 15th  
Starts at 2:30 p.m.

Prayer Service of Gratitude and Thanksgiving in the Monastery Chapel.

Reception will follow. A historical time line of pictures and other reflections of the Sisters' 60 years in the diocese will be displayed in Saint Bede Center throughout the summer.

## Scenes from the Election of Prioress Michaela Hedican



Sisters Michaela Hedican and Margaret Michaud



Participants in the election included (from left) Sisters Benard Heit, Dale Wollum, Mary Frances Gebhard, Colleen Haggerty (facilitator from St. Benedict's Monastery) and Lucy Miller.

## UPCOMING CENTER EVENTS

As an ecumenical retreat and conference center, Saint Bede Center offers a variety of religious, spiritual, cultural and educational programs. Listed below are some of the up coming events which might be of interest to you.

- **June 15: 60th Anniversary celebration of the founding of the Monastery** Bulletin board features and displays of the sixty year history of Saint Bede Monastery can be visited in Saint Bede Center all summer!
- **August 19: Diocesan Teacher Formation**
- **September 16: Faith Enrichment Day - celebrating 25 years! Featured speaker - Tom Thibodeau**
- **October 18: Singing Meditation Retreat**  
- sponsored by Ruth Rosauer
- **October 24-26: Marriage Encounter Weekend**

Are you part of an organization, committee or support group looking for a place to hold your meetings, workshops or retreats? Consider Saint Bede Center - peaceful, private accommodations in a natural setting - perfect for accomplishing the task at hand. Let us be your host. **Call us at 715-834-8642**

## TIDINGS

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A Newsletter from The Sisters of Saint Bede Monastery

SUMMER 2008

## BITS AND CENTER PIECES

– Sister Judith Kramer, OSB



Serious study and prayer resulted from the 2008 Lenten Series at Saint Bede Center. Over 100 people joined in one or more of the Tuesday evening sessions. I tapped willing staff members and friends to present timely Lenten themes from February 12 through

March 17. Good fortune brought Father John Heagle to us for the final presentation on the Triduum.

In spite of our cruel winter and hard fought arrival of spring, the weather was never a deterrent for the 7-8 p.m. Tuesday presentations. Several people could boast of perfect attendance for the six weeks. Sisters Margaret Michaud, Michaela Hedican and I gave presentations and Fathers John Hogan (our chaplain) and John Heagle offered wonderful insights in their own unique styles. Though Sister Monica was unable to do her planned presentation, we did consider her topic of forgiveness by viewing the award winning DVD, *The Power of*

*Forgiveness* by Kenneth Briggs (published by Fortress Press).

A trusted colleague, Sister Lucy Miller, handled the weekly registrations. Team work and the spirit of the people of God observing Lent bound participants and staff together as community.

This kind of team work plus the work of the staff at Saint Bede Center keeps events and programs gathering and succeeding. Our professional staff includes: Mary Traynor, our business, booking, billing and gift shop manager; Jean Ahlm, who sees to the catering, coffee, some cleaning and furniture arrangements, and Charlie Edson, who cleans and helps arrange furniture. Together we will continue to offer service to our guests here at Saint Bede Center.

The pending sale of the monastery buildings and grounds is a ponderous and complicated operation which will likely take many months, if not years. In the meantime, we offer our facilities, trails, grounds and prayerful surroundings to you, your staff, family and friends as we celebrate hospitality on the hill.