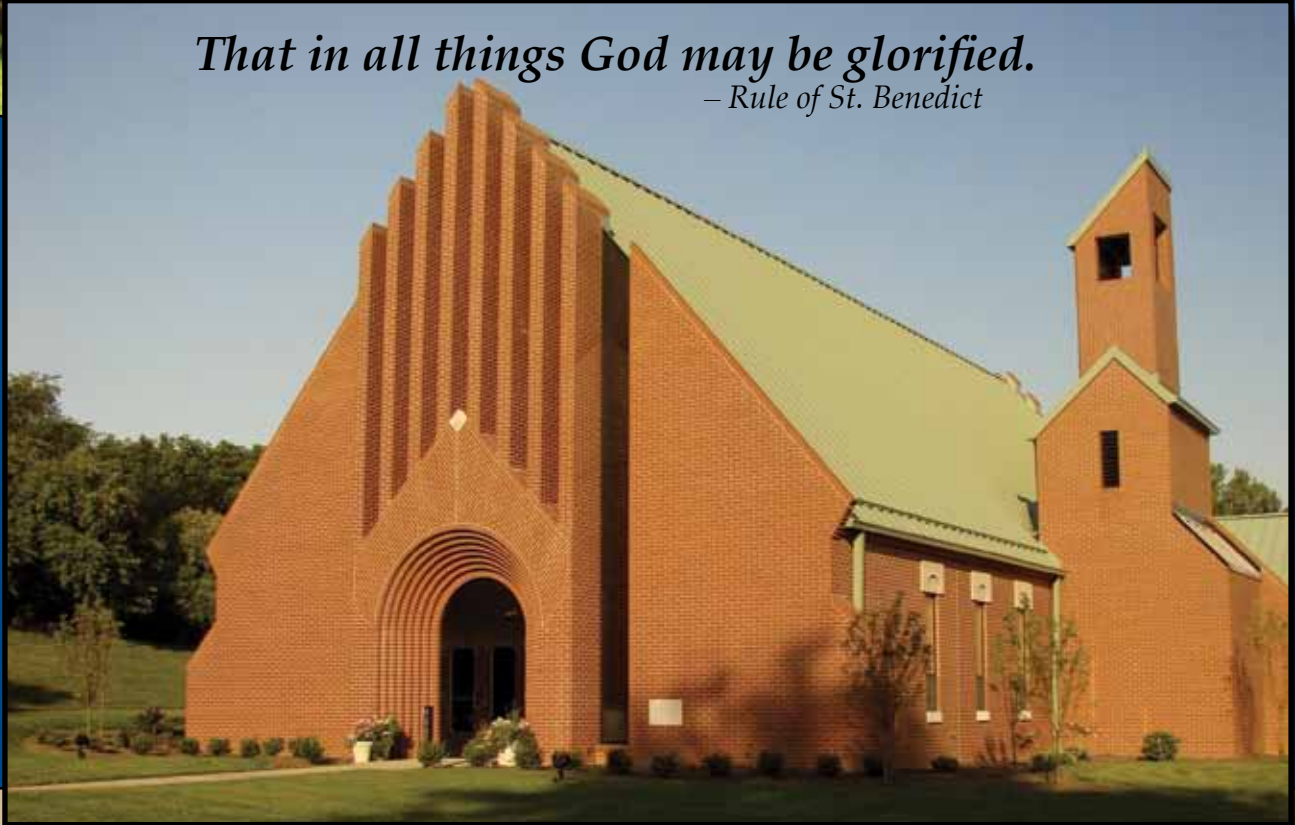




That in all things God may be glorified.

– Rule of St. Benedict



Benedictine Touchstone • Fall 2009

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

Prioress' Reflection

By Mother Mary Anne Noll OSB



This issue of the *Benedictine Touchstone* features the visible fruits of your generous gifts, the generous hands and hearts of our

volunteers, and, ultimately, God's generous heart and divine providence that you manifest to us.

The visible fruits of your generosity include the completed and paid for "window project" that literally redeemed the outside of our refectory (monastic dining room) and chapter room (formal community meeting room) that had decided many years ago to no longer hold paint. Enjoy the transformation on page 6. Thank you very much!

Your generous response to our "landscaping the Cor Jesu Chapel" appeal this spring produced this beautiful enhancement of our Chapel shown on the front cover and permitted some much needed landscaping by the retreat house. Enjoy the beauty of this completed landscaping on page 6. Thank you very much!

Thank you also for your wonderful response to our Parking Lot Extension Appeal! We will keep you informed on the progress of this project.

The photos on the cover and the facing page only begin to capture some of the generous embodied hearts known lovingly as volunteers "at work" on the many and various jobs at St. Emma. They alone can share the exciting life of a volunteer at

St. Emma – and how varied and endless these jobs are! Besides, as one volunteer confessed, "We really come here because of the food"!

Again this year we share our wonderful experience of having had 15 participants from the Catholic Heart Work Camp—see article on page 5. God's exquisite timing brings them here the Monday following the Flea Market!

The above examples of generous hearts bring me back to God's unbelievably generous heart. Only LOVE could create such an incredible universe that we are only beginning to glimpse the magnitude of it.

Only LOVE gives life. We find death to be an affront – both regarding our loved ones and ourselves. Since animals do not have grief support groups or place memorials, human experience of death must be very different.

Is this desire to live forever perhaps the evidence of our immortal soul that LIFE and LOVE have created so that we might be partakers of LIFE and LOVE eternally?

What LOVE God had for us humans that He sent His only Son into our world taking on our human nature to sanctify us and redeem us from the inside out. How else would we have such traits as generosity, compassion, selfless giving,

thoughtfulness, forgiveness, and grieving for the loss of a loved one?

These are the genetic traits that show we come from LOVE for we are made in the image and likeness of God. These traits differentiate us humans from the animal kingdom for we are made in the image and likeness of God.

Our Cor Jesu (heart of Jesus) monastic chapel, the center of the cover page and the physical center of our lives, is the beautiful, sacred space wherein we gather 6 times a day (and for

daily Mass) to worship God. We are the visible praying Church and include all of your needs, hopes, and thanksgiving and all the needs of the world.

This "heart of Jesus" was pierced by the lance. That opening allows the obvious access for our broken hearts to enter into His loving heart just as our broken hearts often become the access for Jesus to enter into our hearts and our lives.

Thank you for sharing your generous hearts with us and letting us catch personal glimpses of the incredible Heart of God.

Mother Mary Anne Noll, OSB



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*

The Touchstone is published by the Benedictine Sisters of Westmoreland County for our friends and benefactors:

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Mother Mary Anne Noll, O.S.B.
Development Director
Robert J. Allen
Graphic Arts and Design
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1001 Harvey Avenue
Greensburg, PA 15601-1494
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Email: benedictinenuns@stemma.org



Each year we remind you of the incredible Providence of God that inspires such generous volunteers to help us—and His timing is exquisite! These volunteers make St. Emma’s unique—for we have no hired help in a place this size! Whether these volunteers come weekly or more often, frequently, for special events, or to complete service hours, these volunteers form an integral part of St. Emma Monastery.



When a new volunteer calls, I explain that we only have the “real” jobs that need to be done – just like around a home – and what an essential difference a volunteer makes! They are an extension of our monastery. It is also wonderful to see the friendships that occur between the volunteers as they work or eat together. We are so grateful to each volunteer, to all of them – and to God Who originated Generosity!



Are you single, between ages 16-40 and trying to discern what path to follow as God's will for you?

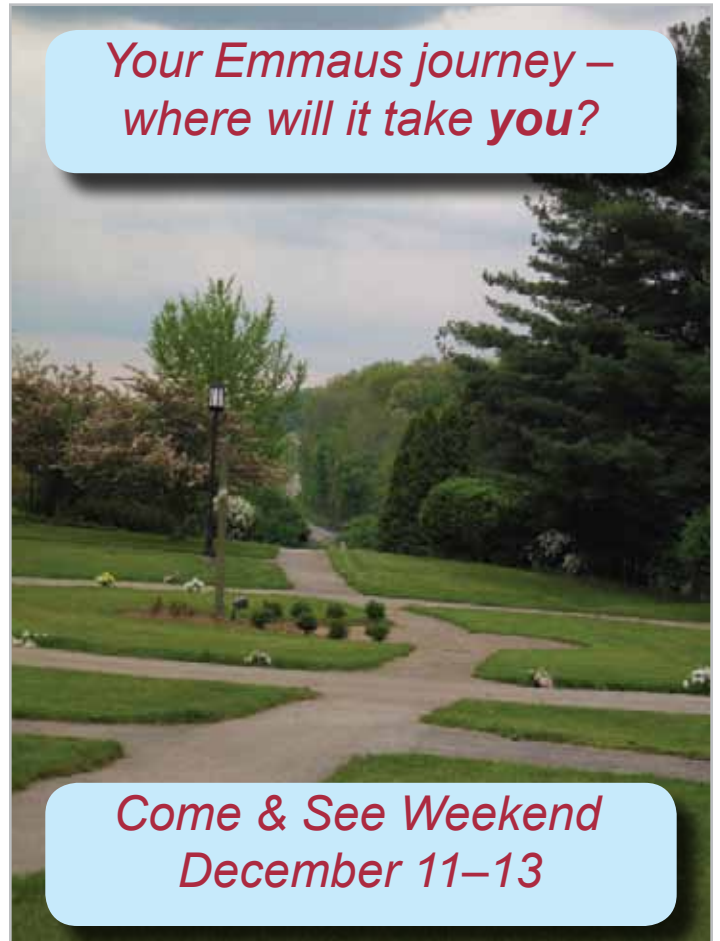
Has Jesus become so real for you that you wonder if you might be called to the religious life?

Do you wonder how you would know if you had a vocation?

Are you looking for a community whose daily life is structured around the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours? Whose ministry is their monastic life? Who seek God in community? For whom work expresses their love of God and others?

We invite you to contact us so that we might discern together if your vocation is "Emma & us." For more information, call 724-834-3060 or e-mail vocations@stemma.org.

*Your Emmaus journey –
where will it take you?*



*Come & See Weekend
December 11–13*



Corpus Christi Procession

Although we have always celebrated the awesome feast of Corpus Christi (Body and Blood of Christ) in the Mass, The Liturgy of the Hours and a period of Adoration, this year our chaplain suggested a procession.

The glorious day itself celebrated this great feast, we repeated and repeated the hymn, "Christ Jesus Ruler, Christ Jesus victor," as we processed around our beautiful grounds. Thanks to the modern inventions of wheelchair, scooter and golf cart, each of our Sisters was able to participate. I think a new tradition has been born!



Catholic Heart Work Camp.com

What generous hearts the 275 young people and accompanying adults had to pay \$400 and bring sleeping bags to Bishop Bosco Center, Irwin, PA, a site they selected out of 55 cities, to provide various services to individuals and agencies. We welcomed them for the third time to St. Emma.

In just four days, our fourteen volunteers housecleaned the 54 rooms in the retreat house: washed widows inside (more than 230!) scrubbed the floors, moved furniture, waxed the floors and moved furniture back!

They also cleaned after the Flea Market: carried many boxes, moved furniture,

mopped floors in the large rooms, removed and washed covers from the radiator, and thoroughly cleaned all the equipment in the retreat kitchen – including the inside of the ovens and refrigerators. When these major jobs were finished, they weeded the flower gardens and beautified our cemetery!

These wonderful volunteers from two parishes in Michigan participated fully in our Noonday Prayer. They also absorbed the information about our community and about *lectio divina* (prayerful reading – especially of the Scriptures) May God bless them.



The teens watch – perhaps with a hint of surprise? – as Mother Mary Anne checks her cell phone.



Flea Market a Grand Success

Our Annual Flea Market of June 19 & 20 was a wonderful event and successful in every way! Blessings on the many wonderful volunteers who sorted, carried, and arranged the items both inside and outside under “the big tent” (furniture) or the smaller tents for the books, CDs etc. Others cooked, served, sold the items, did the final sorting and packing, returned the borrowed tables -- helped in every aspect.

Many people said they had never attended a Flea Market like ours! The items were clean – and beautifully displayed as if in a store. The volunteers also welcomed the guests them so warmly, the Sisters were present, the food delicious – and the fleas were great.

Thanks, too, for all those who donated items; without them we have no fleas to sell!



Landscaping Brightens Cor Jesu



Your generous response to our Landscaping Appeal this spring allowed this beautiful enhancement to our Cor Jesu Chapel from all sides. We nuns enjoyed each step of the process and enjoy each blossom and bloom. The retreatants and guests who have seen it all remark how the landscaping really sets off the “gem” that is our monastic Chapel. It is always wonderful when donors are pleased with the outcome of a project!

As for landscaping by the retreat house, you just need to come, see and enjoy in person!



Thank you!

Monastic Refectory Windows Transformed

Your generous response to our spring 2008 Window Appeal brought about this wonderful transformation. Drivit (synthetic stucco with special seal) gives this end of our monastery a new lease on life and a dignity that is fitting to our monastic refectory (dining room) and chapter room (where community meets in a formal way to discuss things concerning our monastic life).

Receiving More Than One?

If the answer is yes, we again ask the favor that you notify us whether by email benedictinenuns@stemma.org OR snail mail using the form below.

Because postage is so expensive and occasionally we would like to share something special about our monastery or events or retreats, we kindly ask that you give us your email address. You are so special to us that we would never share or sell your address – whether email or snail mail!

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip

E-mail:

Memorial Contributions

We thank the following people who mentioned us in their wills. May they rest in peace.

Margaret Bott, Harrisburg, PA died June 2009.

Margaret Anderson, Pittsburgh, PA died January 2007.

+++

We thank the family of **Gerald F. Yanity** who suggested in his obituary that instead of flowers, people send memorial donations to St. Emma Monastery. We extend our sympathy and prayer to his loving family. May he rest in peace.

I am receiving more than one newsletter. (Please enclose copies of addresses and mark the correct one.)

Please remove my name from your mailing list.

Annual Appeal Helps Maintain “Visible Center of Prayer and Spirituality”

By Robert J. Allen

This Annual Appeal has far greater dimensions than just another appeal for money for a particular cause – and there are so many worthy causes. Why would you want to support a monastery? Is not a monastery “just about those nuns”? This appeal deals with helping maintain both a visible center of prayer and spirituality – a light in the darkness -- and the importance of such centers in making this world essentially a better place in which to live.

Each year in this Annual Appeal article that I write, I note that St. Emma Monastery is the only one that I know that relies solely on volunteers. I have met most of them and they are indeed very generous people.

When you support this annual appeal by a monetary gift, just think how far these volunteers stretch your dollars: just imagine only having to pay for “parts” and for NO labor!

This monastery of prayer and consecrated life touches those seeking spiritual renewal and those also seeking support in their problems through prayer and our reassurance. Such

When you support this annual appeal by a monetary gift, just think how far these volunteers stretch your dollars: just imagine only having to pay for “parts” and for NO labor!

intentions arrive through email, snail mail, personal visits or phone. Each one of us has stories of how the Sisters and many others prayed for a situation that was beyond human help and how God somehow managed a change.

This Annual Appeal helps towards the ongoing expenses of St. Emma’s and all that this includes.

You know how much your bills are around your home for just the utilities, the routine maintenance, the cost of cutting the grass, roof leaks, replacing an appliance -- and multiply those expenses by the size of the monastery.

So many of us are concerned that many in our society seem to have lost their moral compass, others are caught up in what they have to buy.

Why support St. Emma with a gift or pledge? This is your decision, but we are also reminded that you can’t keep it, unless you give it away. So, in a spirit of love, please consider this Annual Appeal as a way to be a sojourner with the Benedictine Nuns of Saint Emma Monastery.



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*

Benedictine Sisters Catholic Gift & Book Shop

**Regular Hours:
Monday – Saturday, 10 a.m – 4 p.m.**

Crafts and Boutique Gifts through Dec. 22

**Visit online anytime:
www.stemma.org**

IRA Tax Free Giving Available Again This Year

- The IRA owner must be at least 70 1/2 years-old
- Charitable gifts must be completed by December 31, 2009
- Gifts must be made in an outright manner – gifts to fund gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts do not qualify
- A maximum of \$100,000 per donor may be given
- The distribution must be made directly from the trustee of the IRA to the charitable recipient
- A gift from your IRA counts toward your minimum annual distribution requirement

Source: Internal Revenue Service

NEW LEAF PAPER® ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

of using post-consumer waste fiber vs. virgin fiber

St. Emma saved the following resources by using New Leaf Sakura Silk, made with 100% de-inked recycled fiber and 90% post-consumer waste, processed chlorine free, and manufactured with electricity that is offset with Green-e® certified renewable energy certificates:

trees	water	energy	solid waste	greenhouse gases
5 fully grown	2,471 gallons	3 million Btu	231 pounds	574 pounds

Calculations based on research by Environmental Defense Fund and other members of the Paper Task Force.

www.newleafpaper.com



*For the young-at-heart and the young shopper
looking for beautiful, inexpensive gifts.*

Christmas Boutique

Many, many new items • Many nearly new

& Craft Sale

Many one of a kind!

Food: Eat in or take out



Unique Christmas Wreaths
and items for all seasons!

Craft Corner for the kids
to make gifts for the
lucky people on their
Gift List. Face painting,
cookie decorating, and so
much more!

We invite you to join us!

Friday, November 13 • 3:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 14 • 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sunday, November 15 • 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

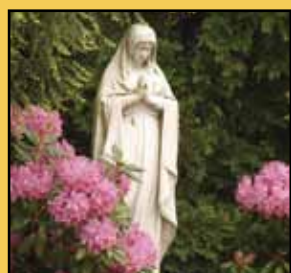
Friday: Fish sandwiches, Pierogies and Halupki
Saturday: Halupki, Pierogies, and Pizza
Sunday: Spaghetti dinner (\$6.00 adults, \$4.00 children
under 12, free to children under 4)

Donations gratefully appreciated!

Do you have: gifts that you will not use? Items that are
“new”? Crafts to donate?

Also, if you have an interest in making crafts, we have
lots of materials! Just call or email us! THANKS!

Please call for additional information. (724) 834-3060, ext. 139.



Prayer Requests & Intentions

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

2009 Retreat Programs

For additional information on any of these retreats or to make
reservations, please visit www.stemma.org – thank you!

- Oct. 23-25** The Legion of Mary (Many openings)
Rev. Brian Welding, \$140
- Nov. 6-8** **Married Couples**
Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap
Theme: Angels to Your Children; Christ to Each
Other, \$270
- Feb 19-21** **SILENT** *Rev. Lester Knoll, OFM Cap*
- Feb. 26-28** **SILENT** *Rev. Bill Kiel*
- March 12-14** **Men** *Rev. Barry O'Leary*
- March 19-21** **SILENT** *Rev. Boniface Hicks, OSB*
- Dates for the summer 6-day silent retreat to be announced.*

Encounter with Silence

- July 23-30, 2010** *Rev. John Mary Tompkins, OSB Retreat
House \$425, Monastery Guest House \$475*

Day and Evening Programs:

- Dec. 3, 2009** Advent Evening of Recollection
(Thursday) *Rev. Msgr. Larry Kiniry 3:45-9:00 p.m., \$20*
- Dec. 5, 2009** Advent Day of Recollection
(Saturday) Lay and Religious,
Theme: Repent! Rejoice! Rehearse!
Rev. Bill Kiel, 8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., \$28
- Jan 2010** Pro-life Prayer Vigil – date to be announced

Reserve the Date! • August 20-21, 2010

Retreat for Busy Moms

Rev. Angelus Shaughnessy OFM Cap

“It was such a spiritual renewal.” “Just what I needed.” “First
time I had been away from my family in 14 years – I would not even
have considered it if it had been a whole weekend.”

These quotes from three of the 23 women who made the first Re-
treat for Busy Mom’s August 28-29, captured the basic sentiments
of these participants. About a dozen Moms were joined by their
families for the anticipated Mass of Sunday and pizza afterwards.
What beautiful families!

A Spirituality for the Year of the Priest

January 24-29, 2010 • Rev. Mark Begly

Pope Benedict writes, “There is no doubt that the historical and
the social conditions in which the Cure d’Ars lived have changed
and it is right to wonder how priests in today’s globalized societies
can imitate him by identifying with him in their own ministries.”

In our retreat together we will try to do just that: wonder what in
means to capture the spirit of St. John Vianney in our own time, in
our own situations, and in our own circumstances. We will con-
sider our own unique 21st century challenges, and how we, too, can
become men of prayer who, like the Cure, envision our priesthood
as “the love of the heart of Jesus.”

**Accommodations at Retreat House \$325 (many openings);
Guest House \$360 (waiting list);**