



St. Placid Priory

Welcome to the forest where monastic life thrives, and you will thrive.

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

Fall—Winter

August, 2022

Resilience: What Cardio Rehab and Squirrels Have Taught Me

By Anna-Camille Wooden, OSB

Anyone who has tried to keep a squirrel out of their birdfeeder understands the connection to resilience. Patiently, tirelessly we have watched squirrels outwit our best attempts at keeping them on the ground and out of the feeder. While we have had temporary successes, eventually the squirrels figure out how to get around the latest roadblock. Despite being outmaneuvered by a rodent, I have a healthy respect for them. I have never seen a squirrel lose its temper or get discouraged because it didn't succeed. It just tries again.

or hanging on by your fingernails. It is about adapting, thriving, learning, accepting. It doesn't take away life's difficulties and it is not something that some people have, and others don't. It is learned, and like all things we set about learning, it takes practice.

I learned that there are 4 main aspects to resilience: making connections, staying well, healthy thinking, and finding meaning. The first three seem obvious. Stay connected to friends, families, and the communities you belong to, don't isolate. Taking care of our bodily, mental, and emotional health are foundational pieces in any plan for well-being. Healthy thinking is about mindfulness and avoiding negative ways of dealing with the stress of change.

with good humor, perseverance, and gratitude for all we have. Resilience acknowledges the difficult, the challenging, the suffering. Works through it and finds the solid ground, the blessing, the gift that our experiences give us.

Like everyone, our monastic community has been called to practice resilience these past 2 years. We have experienced illness, loss of loved ones and friends, and always we have prayed with and for you, our friends and extended community, through all the changes and challenges these years have given us. In the Benedictine life we are always invited to "look for the invitation" in each new experience. What are these changes inviting us to become, what is unfolding?

It is the last one that I think the Benedictine life speaks to most deeply: finding meaning. Trust in God, our life in community with others, our commitment to work and prayer gives our lives meaning and purpose. We know God cares for us ("*...and never despair of God's mercy.*" RB4:74), guides us (*...with the gospel as our guide...*" RB Prol:21), and provides for us (With his good gifts which are in us... RB Prol:6).

*"O God, come to my assistance,
And make haste to help me."
Psalm 70*

In his book *Spiritual Resilience*, Walter Wicks says "Spiritual resilience is not simply about recovering from adversity. It is about bouncing back in a way that deeper knowledge of God and self may result...during difficult times and periods of confusion, pain, and stress we have a unique opportunity to nurture our relationship with God and enable it to grow in surprising ways." For St. Benedict, all of life, including resilience is an ongoing development. We are to persevere and not despair or lose heart. "Always we begin again", in confidence of the possibilities and abilities given to us. If a squirrel can practice this, so can we.



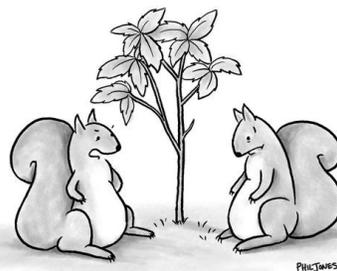
In preparing for our June Oblate retreat on the topic of resilience, I did a search on Amazon for books on the subject. There were 20,000. It isn't a surprise; these are times that call for resilience – not just in handling the ups and downs of our own personal lives, but the many challenges in our civic and global life as well.

After a cardiac procedure last fall, I needed to do 12 weeks of rehab: classes and monitored exercise. The classes were mostly what one would expect, we covered cholesterol, salt intake, portion size, and so on. And then one day the subject of class was resilience. I hadn't thought about resilience in my situation, but it made sense and I have been thinking about it ever since.

Those who study and write about resilience tell us that it is not just about surviving

And you're sure this was the last place you had it?

Our resilience continues to be formed in the experiences we have when we step out in faith, either because we choose to or are left with no other choice. As trust grows, so does resilience. And resilience is built through our daily work in the "ordinary," carrying out the work of everyday life





On Friday evening, January 14, our community met, with **Sister Angela Hoffman** zooming in from Portland, to discuss Ted Dunn’s work in *Graced Crossroads* and *The Inner Work of Transformation*. We decided to begin this book-study to help us prepare for our work of discernment and election of a prioress, due in March. We decided to focus on *The Inner Work of Transformation* for our weekly conversations.

Our accountant, **Karin Wallner Bickham**’s last day was January 28. She was sent off with a blessing and gratitude for the years she has worked with us, and good wishes for the future.

On February 12, **Sister Lucy Wynkoop** attended the webinar *Racial Justice* with **Dan Horan, OFM**. Father Dan invites us to actively address racism and become collaborators with our Black sisters and brothers as we work for racial justice in our society and Church.

Mariellen Carmichael, our receptionist, ended her employment with us on February 25. She and her son are moving to Montana, to be near her other son and his family. We appreciate the gifts Mariellen shared with us and wish her all the best.

On March 26, **Sister Maureen O’Larey** and **Postulant Paz Vital** participated in an Archdiocesan Vocations gathering at **St. Joseph Parish**, Issaquah, Washington.

Keith Underwood, our kitchen manager, left on March 31—after several years of providing us with attractive and tasty meals. Keith is retiring and moving to Georgia. We gathered to extend our blessings of gratitude and prayer.

Keith spent his last couple of weeks here orienting our new cook and kitchen manager, **Nicolas Koska**, to the kitchen and to our needs. We welcome Nico!

March 31 found **Sister Raphaela Cady** flying to **Our Lady of Grace Monastery**, Beech Grove, IN, for a gathering of the “Under 55” group of Benedictine Sisters. She returned April 4.

On Palm Sunday evening, April 10, **Sisters Monika Ellis, Laura Swan, and Anna-Camille Wooden**, with **Postulants Paz Vital and Sonja Weber**, as well as

Oblates Liz and Andrea Langeland sang as a schola at an ecumenical gathering at the local **Latter Day Saints Church**. We found this second time of celebrating with them delightful.

April 22, **Sister Laura Swan** with **Postulants Paz Vital and Sonja Weber** attended the Abbey Church Events, featuring **The Queen’s Six** (six of the twelve members of the personal schola for Queen Elizabeth). It was a stunning performance.

Sister Raphaela Cady and her partner for their senior project, **Tess Ashley Cole**, presented at **Scholars Day** at the **Western Psychological Association Convention**, April 27-30, at the Marriott Hotel in Portland, OR.

On May 1, **Postulants Sonja Weber and Paz Vital** entered the Novitiate at Evening Praise. We enjoyed a fun celebration afterward.



Novice Sonja Weber



Novice Paz Vital



Sister Angela Hoffman Sister Raphaela Cady

continued on page 3...

On Holy Friday, the Spirituality Center presented a retreat **Scriptural Stations of the Cross with The Seven Last Words**, by **St. Placid Oblate Roy DeLeon**. As an alternative to traditional stations, these were dedicated to all who suffer and all who have died in the war in Ukraine. Jesus said, *“whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me”*. For that reason, the prayers, accompanied by Roy’s artwork, reflected poignant scenes from news reports of the war. In the images, Roy shared that he chose to show Jesus Christ not as portrayed traditionally, but instead as the Christ, who is in and with everyone through their Christ-like actions: mothers and fathers, their children, old women and men, soldiers, firefighters, and volunteers. As a reminder that the Resurrection completes the Passion story, that Our Father “turned mourning into joyful dancing” (Psalm 30), he added a 15th Station: Jesus is Risen.

From Roy DeLeon’s Station of the Cross:
Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26:36-41) (1st Station)

Then, the Christ in her led her to a place filled with flowers and candles in support of peace in Ukraine. Her soul is “sorrowful even to death.”

She approached the impromptu altar, knelt and prayed: “O Compassionate One, if it is possible, let this war end now; yet, not as I will, but as you will.”

The Christ in her continued praying as she stood up, staying awake in Divine Love for both neighbors and enemy, ready to sacrifice everything for peace and justice for all.



“LORD, grant us your wisdom and strength for us to actively support our brothers and sisters experiencing the sorrow and devastation of this war.”

In May, **Sister Angela Hoffman, Ph.D.**, St. Martin's College Class of 1971, was awarded the honorary degree of *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa* from **St. Martin's University** at graduation on May 7. This degree honors Sister Angela's years of teaching, research, and mentoring of students as well as her leadership activities at the University of Portland and in various professional societies. Congratulations, Sister Angela!

On May 11, **Sister Maureen O'Larey** attended the regional **Catholic Woman's Club** luncheon on our behalf. The Tacoma/Pierce County Catholic Woman's Club has faithfully supported our Benedictine community for many years.

Sister Kerry O'Reilly, President of the **Federation of St. Benedict**, and **Sister Aileen Bankemper**, Prioress of **St. Walburg Monastery**, Covington, KY, arrived on June 8 to begin our process of Discernment and Election of Prioress June 9-11. Sister Aileen was our facilitator.



Sr. Aileen Bankemper Sr. Kerry O'Reilly

On June 10, **Sister Angela Hoffman** was called forth to serve as Prioress. On June 12, Trinity Sunday, Sister Angela was installed as Prioress by Sister Kerry, to the great joy of our community.



Sister Angela Hoffman

As we began our annual community retreat on June 13, **Sister Raphaela Cady**

took **Sisters Kerry O'Reilly** and **Aileen Bankemper** up to Paradise at Mount Rainier, to show them a bit of our lovely state.

On June 25, a lovely, sunny day, many of our friends joined us in front of our Priory building and in the parking lot for an outdoor sale. Artwork by **Sister Monika Ellis** and **Oblate Roy DeLeon** along with woodwork by **Volunteer Jerry Haupt** lined the sidewalks and pavement. It was wonderful to see and talk to our friends, and your support is much appreciated!



June 27-July 1, **Sister Maureen O'Larey** attended the **33rd Monastic Institute** at **St. John's School of Theology and Seminary**, Collegeville, MN. The 2022 theme was *"Humility: Paradoxical Pathway to Union with God"*. Presenters were **Father Luke Dysinger, OSB**, **Sister Manuela Scheiba, OSB** and **Father Michael Casey, OCSO**. It was a very fruitful week.

Our **Federation Chapter** was held July 19-25 at **St. Benedict's Monastery**, St. Joseph, MN. St. Placid Priory was represented by **Sisters Monika Ellis** and **Raphaela Cady**.

On July 20th **Interfaith Works** held a special event in conjunction with **Meaningful Movies** and the **Olympia Film Society**. It was a showing of the documentary *"Mission: Joy"* about the friendship between the **Dalai Lama** and **Bishop Desmond Tutu**. Even more, it was about the joy each man carried and how they sustained that hopeful joy amidst all the suffering they had seen and endured. After the movie, **Corey Passons, MDiv.**, of Interfaith Relations facilitated a 2-person panel composed of regional Tibetan Buddhist teacher **Geshe Jamyang Tsultrim**

(founder of The Nalanda Institute in Olympia) and **Anna-Camille Wooden, OSB**. During this time the audience was able to ask them questions about the practices of their traditions. It was a lovely evening of shared joy, hope and reflection, a perfect evening in fact for these challenging times.



Corey Passons, MDiv.,
Geshe Jamyang Tsultrim,
Anna-Camille Wooden, OSB

Rest in Peace

Thomas Robert Hoffman, d. Jan 16, 2022
(Sister Angela's brother)

Hugh Joseph Cleary, d. Jan 23, 2022
(Sister Julian's father)

— Benedictine Practices — *Lectio Divina*

Lectio Divina is an opportunity to take a short piece of Scripture and see what the Spirit is saying to me. I try to be fully present to the moment, become conscious of the life-giving presence of the Holy. The scripture passage I am using is Mark 4:37-39:

"A violent storm came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, 'Teacher do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still.'"

After reading this scripture a couple of times, out loud or silently, with the aid of the Spirit I listen to how my heart is directing me to choose a word or phrase. My word is "storm." I savor the word "storm" and begin to meditate by repeating the word, tasting it, allowing the word to stir images, feelings, and memories; by being open to the way the word is working in my heart; by listening to my how my body responds, or awakens my imagination.

The word "storm" feels frightening, and my body reacts violently to the variety of storms going on in me personally, in my community, and in our world. I hear "Can I be still in the storms that surround me?"

The question leads me to respond in prayer by paying attention to all that has happened in my savoring and meditating. My longing is to respond to the question and hear Jesus saying to me, “Peace, be still.” I will take this question and keep responding as my lectio overflows into my day and the storms of my life. As I feel peace, I move into contemplation by releasing the word, images, thoughts, and feelings and just rest in God. I end my Lectio with a prayer of gratitude.

—Lucy Wynkoop, OSB



FROM THE ARCHIVES Keeping Our History Alive

In May I was asked to give a presentation at a local Cub Scout meeting. They wanted me to tell the kids a little about the life of a vowed religious. All I could think of was what could an older sister have to say that could interest 9- and 10-year-old children. Then I thought of all the artifacts we have in our archives, and I had a plan: Life in a Monastery in 10 Objects. I picked out 10 items, some easy to identify (a set of bells used to call the sisters to prayers), and others not so easy (a wooden darning egg), some with an obvious connection (a doll dressed in a pre-Vatican II habit), and some less obvious (a diorama of a samurai taking tea). And I took the harmonica in the picture. It belonged to the Sisters who used it to teach music at Holy Rosary. We have a small collection of them. The presentation went well – I believe both the scouts and I had a good time. Once again I was grateful for our archives and the treasures it holds.

— Anna-Camille Wooden, OSB



OBLATES

The Oblate community closed its 2021-22 year with new Oblate and new candidate ceremonies on June 26th. The St. Placid community welcomed new Oblates **Maria Slizys, Robin Harwood, and Catherine Taylor**.



Two of last year’s guests became candidates: **Laura Lasworth and Marcia McLaughlin**.



We welcome them with joy and as always, are grateful for our vibrant Oblate community.

For this coming year, the community has decided to study the mystics, beginning the year with a retreat day in September on the desert mystics presented by **Sister Laura Swan**.

We are hoping to begin meeting in person again at the Spirituality Center, though we will continue to use a hybrid format. One of the gifts of this lockdown time has been connecting with people from all over the country and the world, as our “Oblate map” continues to grow.

GOINGS ON AT THE CENTER

St. Placid Spirituality Center is a place for solitude and reflection. It offers an experience of stepping away from our worldly, daily concerns and getting in touch with what really matters. Making a retreat has been an important part of religious tradition since the middle ages, and our retreat house is open and ready to receive guests. All who are needing a dose of peace and rejuvenation of mind, body and spirit will find it here on the grounds of St. Placid. Programs on Zoom are still available and keep our lines of communication

open. We are looking forward to using a hybrid system which will join participants together from near and far. Looking to the future and maintaining the past.

— Janice Ariza, Center Coordinator

The Spirituality Center provides a space for a quiet contemplative retreat. A place where I can have the kind of complete solitude without the interruptions that I experience at home. I have made several retreats here and enjoyed the quiet and tranquility of nature. When I do need to get away, I enjoy immersing myself in the spiritual atmosphere, and come away refreshed and ready to face the challenges of a busy family life. It has been very beneficial to have a peaceful environment for making decisions that are pressing, and to be filled with God's love and compassion. Whether it was a group retreat, a directed retreat, or a private individual retreat, I have always come to a resting place in my heart and soul. Setting aside the time is the first step, and it is well worth it.

— Katie Callahan

I have enjoyed the **Oasis** program at the Priory for about six years now. This means I’ve experienced it both in-person and virtually. I’ve enjoyed it both ways. The three aspects of the Oasis retreat day are a group session, a spiritual direction session, and some personal retreat time, that is time spent alone. For the group time, it’s nice to be together in person. Yet, sometimes I find I can shake off my shyness a bit more when attending via Zoom. And, of course, with Zoom, there is the flexibility of participating from anywhere, as long as that place has an internet connection.

The spiritual direction session I prefer in person, but it has worked just fine via Zoom. Either way, it is enriching and one of my favorite parts of Oasis.

The bulk of our Oasis retreat day is our personal time. And although I love being at the Priory, when I have my Oasis retreat day at home, I get to avoid the drive between Tacoma and Lacey. This means more time for my retreat. And when I am home, I have all my arts and crafts materials at-the-ready, making it easier to use my personal retreat time being creative while reflecting and praying.

— Teresa Enslin

Oasis 2022-2023 offers 2 options: attending in person or doing a hybrid zoom (spiritual direction, retreat at home, and a Zoom presentation).

Going into **Listening with the Spirit (LWS)** has been a “game-changer” for me in profound ways. Prior to LWS, my primary understanding of my role in life was limited to what Christian service I could provide, what helpful function I could perform, or what comfort I could give to others – all without full participation in the reciprocity of relationship. LWS helped me to realize that this way of feeling and thinking was out of balance and encouraged me to seek something closer to the genuine vulnerability that Christ calls us to in community with one another. LWS has given me people with whom to explore this deeper connection by being present with them, with God, and with myself, all at the same time. I am astounded by the sudden possibilities and am encouraged to continue exploring them. In spiritual direction we engage in the present moment, being open to what is in the here and now, regardless of how we got here, or where we might be going next. This provides a clarity and comfort that is essential to my understanding of how I can be with myself, God, and others. It allows me to reflect on where I have been and where God might be calling me next.

To say that time spent in Listening with the Spirit has profoundly changed my life for the better would not begin to express all that has happened for me.

—Karen Nelson

Interviews for **LWS 2023-2025** will begin in February 2023. Watch the website for announcements.

Exploring the Enneagram: Priory Programs found a wonderful presenter for the work we do with the Enneagram. **Jeffrey King** has a natural and insightful style that engages people to look at the type they lead with and go outside the box. The programs are offered every two to three months and cover topics like how to make relationships better by understanding others, looking at the variety of unconscious responses to situations, and the multi-faceted complexity of who God made us to be.

Jeff provides materials along with his own notes to all participants for personal study purposes. He encourages lots of sharing and creates a wonderful group dynamic for discovering the best in all.

—Janice Ariza

The **Modern Mystics Book Group** just finished reading John Phillip Newell’s *Sacred Earth Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening to What Our Souls Know and Healing the World*. We

had some great heartfelt discussions on Celtic spirituality and wisdom, and on seeing and experiencing the divine and sacred in nature and within one another.

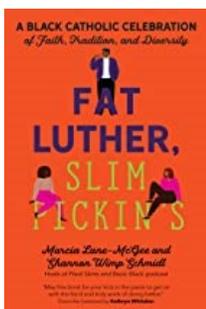
We hope to start our next session and book for Fall quarter in mid-September. We will be selecting our next book in August, so be on the lookout on the Priory’s website for the book we select, schedule, and for Fall registration. Also, this fall we are planning on having combined in-person/Zoom meetings. The meetings will be held at the Priory Spirituality Center and you will be able to attend by Zoom if preferred.

— Carlos Herrera

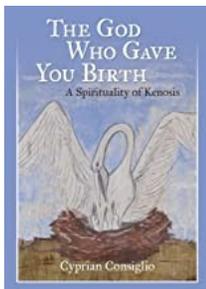


Sister Laura’s Scriptorium: Books that Merit Attention

Fat Luther, Slim Pickin’s. A Black Catholic Celebration of Faith, Tradition, and Diversity, by Marcia Lane-McGee and Shannon Wimp Schmidt, Ave Maria Press, 2022. Hosts of the *Plaid Skirts and Basic Black* podcast share faith and reflections on the liturgical year that honors the Black Catholic experience. You might know a 20-or 30-something who would relate to this fun but meaningful read. This senior citizen (me) thoroughly enjoyed it.



The God Who Gave You Birth. A Spirituality of Kenosis, Cyprian Consiglio, OSB Cam, Liturgical Press, 2021. This short book is dynamite. Kenosis was the early desert concept of self-emptying in order to draw close to the Divine and to be yeast to the world. Consiglio weaves sources from many faith traditions, spirituality, and psychology in a format that reads more like the fruit of *lectio divina*.



While Covid-19 is still of concern, we are offering all of our programs and retreats via **Zoom**. Please register on our website at stplacid.org It’s pretty easy, but if you have trouble, you may call Janice Ariza at (360) 438-2595 for help, or email:

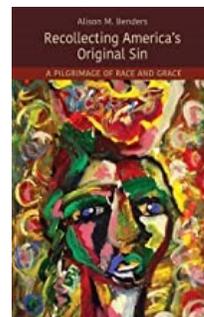
spiritualityctr@stplacid.org

Find a list of programs and retreats at this web address:

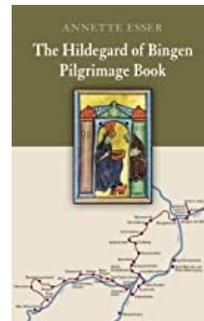
stplacid.org/spirituality-center/weekend-programs

To read a color version of our newsletter, please look online at stplacid.org under the menu item **News**.

Recollecting America’s Original Sin. A Pilgrimage of Race and Grace, by Alison M. Benders, Liturgical Press, 2022. Benders had planned on making a Civil Rights pilgrimage when COVID hit. Instead she took herself on a virtual pilgrimage, using her journals and memories, insights of scholars and poets – using the format of an Ignatian retreat (4 weeks with 7 movements in each). Thoughtful, intriguing, and prayerful.



The Hildegard of Bingen Pilgrimage Book, by Anette Esser, Liturgical Press, 2022. Our guide is Esser, the initiator of the Hildegard of Bingen Pilgrimage Way in Germany & the editor of the 59 tableaux along the way. This is a literal tour, through the texts of Hildegard with color images of her visions, color photos of pilgrimage sites, and space for writing one’s reflections. This is simply a beautiful book.





Benedictine Sisters
St. Placid Priory
The Spirituality Center
The Conference Center
The Priory Store
500 College St. NE
Lacey, WA 98516-5339

Fall—Winter
August 2022

Non-Profit Org
US Postage
Paid
Tacoma WA
Permit # 317

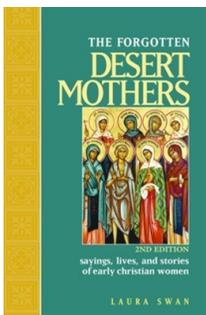
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Please help us keep our mailing list current.
Return this with mailing label attached

- New address
- Please add my name
- Please remove my name
- Receiving more than one copy



Explore **The Priory Arts Shop** online at stplacid.org/shop where Sisters and our friends create beautiful things—for your enjoyment and inspiration, for giving as gifts, and to help support our ministries.



Sister Laura Swan's revised edition of *The Forgotten Desert Mothers* was published in May this year and now is available through bookstores. Look for the green cover.

Women played a significant role in the early Christian movement as leaders, seekers, and teachers. In an expanded and revised edition *The Forgotten Desert Mothers* introduces readers to the sayings, lives, stories, and spirituality of women in the desert and monastic movement.

The *History of St. Placid Priory* is now on our website. You can read it by going to the menu item HOME and scroll down, or by entering in your address bar stplacid.org/history

Spirituality Center Staff

Janice Ariza—Center Coordinator
Lucy Wynkoop, OSB—Program Coordinator
Monika Ellis, OSB—Staff

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

Coming North on I-5

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

The physical **Priory Store** remains closed for the present due to the pandemic.

We continue to accept telephone orders for books and religious articles. Please call **Sister Maureen** at **(360) 438-1771** to order. The Store welcomes VISA & MasterCard.