

Reframing Their Story... The Benedictine Way

The Benedictine Sisters now enter a new chapter in their communal life as they relocate from Holy Name Monastery, to American House, an assisted living facility located in Zephyrhills, FL which is less than 7 miles from the monastery. This transition—tender, courageous, and deeply human—invites us to see their story with fresh eyes. It is not an ending. It is a reframing of the Benedictine way that has always shaped them and will continue to guide their steps.

Before their move, the Sisters gathered in prayer within the sacred space they have called home for twelve years. In that circle of remembrance, they shared gratitude for the chapel that held their silence, the corridors that carried their footsteps, the rooms that witnessed their conversations, and the grounds that nurtured their contemplation. They blessed the memories formed there—memories of community, stability, and conversion of heart. They blessed all those with whom they shared this sacred space and shared great stories of joys, sorrows, love and life experienced in those encounters. These remembrances now travel with them, not as nostalgia, but as living gifts that continue to shape who they are becoming.



Welcome sign for Sisters at American House

Their desire to remain in the local community has been central to this transition. Staying close allows them to maintain cherished connections with family, friends, oblates, and all who have woven themselves into the fabric of their lives. Remaining nearby honors the Benedictine value of stability—rootedness in place, in relationship, and in the ongoing story of the people around them. And in this new chapter, their community is expanding. New neighbors, fellow residents, and staff are becoming part of their circle of care, welcomed with the same warmth and hospitality that have long defined Benedictine life.

Over the decades, the Sisters have touched countless lives. Their prayers have steadied those in crisis. Their outreach has offered hope to the lonely and forgotten. Their hospitality has welcomed strangers into belonging. Their wisdom has guided seekers toward peace. Their presence—quiet, faithful, and unwavering—has been a source of healing in a world longing for gentleness.

And this Benedictine impact will continue.

The Benedictine way is not tied to a building. It is carried in the heart.

It is carried in the rhythm of prayer.

It is carried in the commitment to community.

It is carried in the vow to seek God in all things.

It is carried in the desire that in all things God may be glorified.

In their new living environment, the Sisters will continue to live this way with grace. They will listen with the ear of their heart to fellow residents, staff, and visitors. They will offer presence to those who long to be seen. They will share prayer and Eucharist, weaving sacred rhythm into the life of their new home. They will continue to practice hospitality, stability, and reverence for all people—core Benedictine values that naturally flow from their daily lives.

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Their ministry of healing will remain vibrant.
Not through grand programs, but through the quiet holiness of their being.
Not through formal outreach, but through the simple gift of presence.
Not through structured roles, but through the steady offering of prayer for the world.

The Benedictine way goes with them:

*the balance of ora et labora,
the commitment to peace,
the reverence for creation,
the love of community,
the humility that listens,
the stability that stays,
the hospitality that welcomes,
the hope that heals.*

With deep gratitude, we give thanks to all who have supported the Sisters throughout their years at the monastery—oblates, friends, benefactors, family, and all who have walked beside them. Your love has sustained their mission. Your generosity has strengthened their community. Your continued support will help them carry their Benedictine spirit forward with confidence and grace.

As the Sisters step into this new chapter, they do so with courage, hope, and trust. Their story is being reframed, but its essence remains unchanged: a life of prayer, presence, and healing offered for the good of the local community and the world.

This is the Benedictine way—ever ancient, ever new.

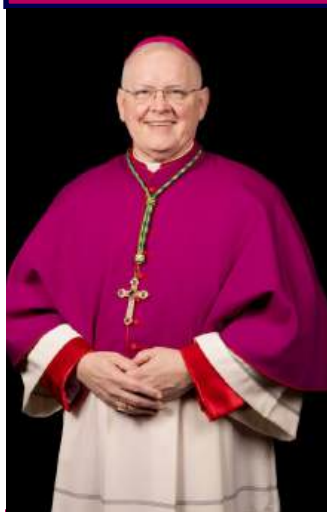
Sister Tonette Sperando, OSB, Canonical Administrator



Sisters enjoying Mass at American House with Fr. John McEvoy

Community Retreat

July 6-9, 2026



Bishop Godfrey Mullen, of the Diocese of Belleville, Illinois.

The Sisters welcomed Bishop Godfrey Mullen, OSB as retreat director for their annual retreat held July 6-9, 2026 at Holy Name Monastery. The title of the retreat was “Liturgy & Life: Our Benedictine Way.” During the course of the week, Bishop Mullen used words from the Eucharistic liturgy along with words from the Rule of St. Benedict to provide new understandings and insights in living the life God calls us to live as Benedictines. Bishop Mullen closed the retreat with words that spoke to the heart of the Sisters as they were preparing to transition to a new living environment. He shared Jesus’ words spoken to the disciples gathered in the Upper Room following his death:

“Go, they were told. And so are we. Too much remains to be done for the Body of Christ to rest turned in on itself. So go, people of God. Go and live the stories of salvation we’ve remembered. Go and be Christ’s great gift of peace to each one you meet. Go and be bread of life and cup of blessing. Go and make the world a place of unity and reconciliation. Go. Be Christ for the world. Go. Bring hope to the world. Go. Raise up the lowly and be attentive to the needy and proclaim a world made new. But go! Go in peace.”



The Sisters with Bishop Godfrey Mullen and Sister Tonette Sperando during their community retreat

Continuing a Ministry of Presence: Your Support Matters

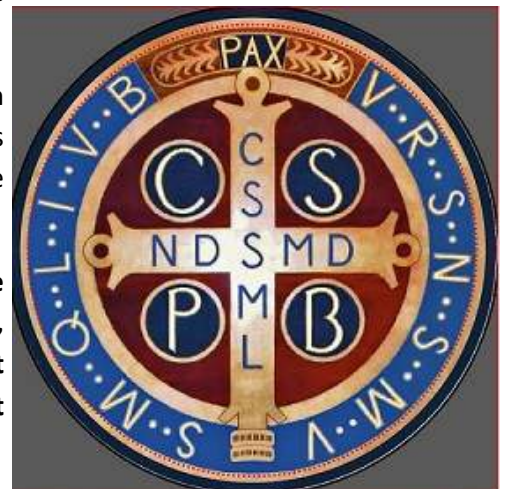
We remain deeply grateful for the generous support you continue to share with us. Your kindness has helped us take these first steps into a new chapter with confidence and hope. Because of you, our witness of prayer, peace, and service continues to flourish in new and exciting ways.

We invite you to join us in strengthening our ministry of presence as we continue settling into our new living space. Rooted in Benedictine spirituality, our new home is becoming a place where stability, hospitality, and daily conversion of heart quietly shape the rhythm of life. Our apartments—simple, prayerful, and intentionally arranged—reflect the Benedictine values of simplicity, peace, attentiveness, and reverence for the sacred in the everyday.

Your continued support will greatly assist us in establishing the kitchenettes and sitting areas for each Sister. In addition, your support will aid the Sisters in the participation of daily Eucharistic liturgies and communal prayer for them, as well as for the other residents at American House. Their presence brings a spiritual depth to the environment, transforming ordinary rooms into places where grace can be felt and shared.

Your generosity helps ensure that this sacred environment supports both their contemplative life and their outreach. By assisting with the furnishings and essentials they need, you help create a home where their Benedictine witness can continue to bless our wider community.

We appreciate your continued support. Your check made payable to the Benedictine Sisters of Florida may be mailed to P.O. Box 2450, St. Leo, Florida 33574 or you can donate on our website at Benedictinesistersoffl.org. Just click the Donate Now button at the top right and fill out the form.



Celebrating Sister Mary David's 60th Anniversary of Monastic Profession

With hearts full of gratitude and joy, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Monastic Profession of Sister Mary David, marking six decades of faithful commitment to God, the Church, and the Benedictine way of life. This Jubilee is a profound occasion to give thanks for a vocation that has been shaped by prayer, community, humility, and dedicated

service.

Sixty years ago, Sister Mary David answered God's call with courage and generosity, embracing the Rule of St. Benedict and committing herself to a life centered on the Benedictine values of prayer, hospitality,

stability, and service. Throughout these years, she has remained a steadfast witness to the Gospel, living out her vocation with grace, compassion, and unwavering faith.

As a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, Sister Mary David has embodied the spirit of *Ora et Labora*—"Pray and Work." Her ministry has reflected a deep love for God and a sincere concern for others. Whether serving in education, parish ministry, spiritual formation or community outreach, she has consistently shared Christ's love through her words, actions, and compassionate presence.

Those who have had the privilege of knowing Sister Mary David speak of her gentle spirit, quiet wisdom, and generous heart. She has been a source of encouragement to those seeking guidance, a compassionate listener to those in need, and a faithful companion to her sisters in community. Her life demonstrates that true discipleship is found in daily acts of love, fidelity, and service.

The Benedictine tradition teaches that every guest is to be welcomed as Christ, and Sister Mary David has faithfully lived this call throughout her religious life. Her welcoming spirit, commitment to community, and dedication to prayer have enriched the lives of countless people, leaving a lasting legacy of faith and hope.

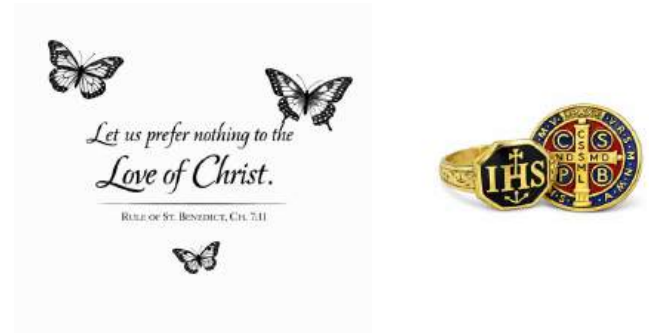
As the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, friends and oblates gather to honor this remarkable milestone, they also celebrate the countless blessings that have flowed through Sister Mary David's life of service.

Today, we offer our heartfelt congratulations to Sister Mary David and give thanks to God for the gift of her vocation. May the Lord continue to bless her with health, joy, and peace. May she remain a beacon of Benedictine hospitality, wisdom, and faithful service, inspiring all who encounter her to seek God in prayer, cherish community, and serve others with love.

As we celebrate Sister Mary David, we echo the words of the Psalmist: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end." With gratitude for the past, hope for the future, and confidence in God's unfailing grace, we rejoice in Sister Mary David's sixty years as a Benedictine Sister of Florida—a life beautifully lived in service to God and God's people.



Congratulations, Sister Mary David, on your Jubilee. May God continue to bless you abundantly as you faithfully walk in the footsteps of St. Benedict, bringing Christ's peace to all whose lives you touch.



In Memorium:



Rev. Msgr. Frank Mouch - April 16, 2026

John Roth - May 10, 2026

Louise Traeger ('32) Clift - May 12, 2026

2026 GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE MONASTIC CONGREGATION OF SAINT SCHOLASTICA



Sister Tonette Sperando and Sister Eileen Dunbar at General Chapter

Sisters Eileen Dunbar, OSB and Tonette Sperando, OSB were Holy Name Monastery's delegates to the 2026 General Chapter of the Congregation of Saint Scholastica. Also attending were 45 delegates from 16 other member monasteries. The Chapter took place at the Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland from June 25 to June 30, 2026. The theme of the gathering was "Courage to See, Freedom to Risk".

For the opening liturgy each community presented a photograph of a sister of their community that played a significant role in their history. The photographs of these sisters were on display in the meeting room during the Chapter proceedings. The delegates of Holy Name chose Sister de Chantal Ducuing, OSB, Prioress of Holy Name Monastery from 1958-1966, for this honor.

The delegates celebrated and thanked Sr. Lynn McKenzie, OSB for her twelve years as President of the Monastic Congregation. Sister Kimberly Porter, OSB was elected the new Monastic Congregation President for the next four years. Sister Kimberly is a member of Saint Walburg Monastery in Covington, Kentucky. The delegates also elected the members of the Congregation Council who would support and advise Sr. Kimberly during her term as president. Sisters Andrea Westkamp (St. Benedict Monastery, Bristow, VA)

Charlotte Zalot (Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania), Susan Quaintance (Benedictine Sisters of Chicago), Tonette Sperando (Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman AL) and Elaine Fischer (Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS) were elected to serve on the council for the next four years. Sister Tonette also serves as Canonical Administrator of Holy Name Monastery.

Poet Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer (wordwoman.com) was one of two guest speakers. The topic of her presentation, "Metaphors to Help Us Meet This Moment", showed the delegates how the use of poetic metaphors can help them "find connections...[and] see the world in a new way". Sr. Rosann Ocken OSB, Prioress General of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tützing, Germany, also presented on the topic of "evolving". She used the process through which a caterpillar becomes a butterfly to capture the sisters' imaginations, pointing out that the butterfly "gyrates" in its effort to leave the cocoon. She helped the sisters understand that "becoming", this is, embracing the future of Benedictine life, requires energy and the willingness to risk.

The sisters concluded the General Chapter with the words of Lady Julian of Norwich: "All shall be well. All shall be well, and all manner of thing, all manner of thing shall be well".

Sister Eileen Dunbar, OSB



Moving the Archives

The archives of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida were carefully relocated to Mount St. Scholastica to ensure their long-term preservation, accessibility, and stewardship. This move represents an important step in safeguarding the congregation's rich history, including records, photographs, manuscripts, and other materials that document decades of ministry, education, and service. By transferring the collection to Mount St. Scholastica, the sisters have entrusted these invaluable historical resources to a repository with the expertise and facilities necessary to preserve them for future generations while honoring the legacy and mission of the Benedictine Sisters of Florida.



Sister Roberta Bailey with Elaine Nadeau, archivist for the Monastic Congregation of Saint Scholastica and Mount St. Scholastica, and Micah Warren, Elaine's assistant



Elaine Nadeau and Micah Warren packing the archives room at the Benedictine Sisters of Florida



Archives on their way to Mount St. Scholastica

Evening Prayer of Gratitude and Remembrance

Prior to the Sisters beginning their transition from Holy Name Monastery to American House, Sister Tonette Sperando, their Canonical Administrator, led them in an evening prayer of gratitude and remembrance. It was an opportunity to honor the monastery and the women whose courage, creativity, and steadfast love breathed life into its outreach. It was an opportunity to remember the guests, oblates, and volunteers who found rest, guidance, purpose, and hope within the walls of the monastery. The Sisters acknowledged that this moment invites a new chapter: to take what has been entrusted to them, to carry forward its wisdom and beauty, and to reshape the story for the Sisters' future endeavors, so that the spirit of the monastery continues to live and grow in new forms of service, prayer, and community.

Excerpts from the Evening Prayer of Gratitude and Remembrance:

Living Space

We give thanks for this living space that has sheltered us through so many seasons of life. For the rooms that offered rest, for the hallways that carried quiet footsteps and gentle conversations, for the places of solitude that held prayer and reflection, and for the shared spaces where community deepened day by day— we offer our gratitude. We honor all the memories held here and we ask Your blessing on all who have lived, loved, and grown in this place. May the peace nurtured here continue to dwell within each of us and accompany us wherever we go.



Aquaponics

Creator of life and giver of every good gift, we pause in gratitude for aquaponics that has taught us how gently Your world grows when we tend it with patience and reverence.

We give thanks for the water that nourishes, for the fish that sustain the cycle, for the plants that rise toward light. Bless the learning this work has given us— the lessons in balance, the reminders of interdependence, the quiet joy of watching life flourish through care and cooperation. Teach us to carry forward the wisdom of this program: to honor creation, to cultivate what sustains life, and to trust the sacred rhythms You have woven into every living thing.



Multipurpose Room

With grateful hearts we remember this multipurpose room— a space that has welcomed meetings and discernment, held retreat guests in quiet hospitality, supported advancement work that strengthened our mission, and nurtured the careful labor of liturgy that shaped our prayer as a community. Bless the conversations, the creativity, the shared work and shared silence that have filled this room with purpose and grace. May the spirit of service, collaboration, play, and prayer that lived so fully in this space continue to accompany us still, guiding our steps and enlivening every place we are called.

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Holy Name Monastery

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CORPORATE COMMITMENT

In an effort to address contemporary local needs, we, the Benedictine Sisters of Florida, commit ourselves and our resources to respond with the compassion of Christ to the hungers of the People of God.

Editorial Team

Editors: Sister Eileen Dunbar and Development Staff

Writers: Benedictine Sisters

Web Master: Cheryl Chadick

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Dining Room

With grateful hearts we remember this dining room— a place where Sisters and guests have gathered for years, where meals of nourishment were shared, where conversations deepened friendships, and where celebrations and simple daily moments wove us together in community. May the hospitality and communion nurtured in this room continue to shape our hearts and accompany us wherever we gather.



Chapel

With deep gratitude we remember this chapel— the sacred heart of our days, where silence has held us, where the rhythm of prayer has shaped our lives, and where Your presence has steadied us through seasons of joy, labor, and longing. We give thanks for the Word proclaimed here, for the Eucharist that has fed us and guests alike, for the light that has risen in this space when hearts sought guidance, healing, or hope. May the grace poured out in this chapel continue to dwell within us and lead us ever deeper into Your love.

