



# H O R I Z O N S

Vol. 49, No. 2

St. SCHOLASTICA MONASTERY, Fort Smith, AR

June, 2020

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
a gentle Father and the God of all consolation,  
who comforts us in all our sorrows.*

*Thus, we can offer others, in their sorrows,  
the consolation that we ourselves have received from God.*

*Indeed, as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us,  
so, through Christ, does our consolation overflow.*

*When we are made to suffer,  
it is for your consolation and salvation.*

*If we are encouraged, it is for your encouragement  
which enables you to endure the same sufferings that we suffer.*

*Our hope for you is firm,  
for we know that, as you share in the sufferings,  
you also share in the encouragement.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Simply Benedictine

# Message from the Prioress-Elect



*Sister Kimberly Prohaska,  
Monastery Prioress-Elect*

It is pretty simple: life changes. Haven't we seen it from the moment we are born to the moment we have now? Life changes, and changes make life. Somehow in a moment, everything can change and change how we live and look at life. I wonder about Jesus as He walked alongside the disciples heading toward the lake to get a moment to himself. As Jesus would step into Peter's boat and start to cross the water, did He let his feet dangle over the side of the vessel? Did the water refresh the dust-laden heel and tired toes that bore the brunt of humanity's ways?

Covid-19 slammed the world, stopping humanity in her tracks. We have ended up in this unknown space, this looming ever-holding pattern that seems to land us nowhere and everywhere all at once.

When we were planning to build the monastery, we met with the sisters and multiple trusted lay advisors, professionals, and friends about what we needed to do to bring the new monastery to completion. It took much time and energy to see it through. We were in a middle space of unknowing for months. In the midst of those changes, I remember the wise phrase of our Sister Jeremy Molett during one of our meetings when we were lamenting and unsure about the building process. Sister Jeremy said, "Well, our feet are planted firmly in mid-air." How right she was. Somehow we think we have everything lined out and ready to go. Plan, prepare, practice due diligence, get the job done. But our feet are planted in mid-air, and this brings us to begin to understand hope.

Pope Francis said, "This is what Christian hope is, having the certainty that I am walking toward something that is, not something I hope, may be."

When we find ourselves with our feet in mid-air and nothing to hold on to, it takes us to a sense of hope. Even as we see death and destruction from a disease that we cannot contain, to the heartbreak of humanity distrusting and harming another because we feel justified to do so, we need to hold on to hope. Hope knows that every human person needs to be respected by love, especially when our feet are planted in mid-air.

Because Covid-19 has inserted itself into every place in the world, we need hope more than ever. Hope is present to us if we pay attention to her.

Companioning our Sisters, and most recently, Sister Macrina, teaches us the importance of being present to each person, in good or ill health, or the in-between of things. Covid-19 gives a letting go lesson unlike we have ever known. Pandemics are unkind, but we do not have to be.

We cannot hold a hand, celebrate a jubilee, sponsor a retreat, or conference, visit our Sisters at Chapel Ridge, Hesychia, or at our Fayetteville mission. We are unable to enjoy monthly gatherings with the Oblates or see our Alumnae and some employees and volunteers. But with our feet planted in mid-air, we remain deeply connected. We experience a world full of hurt and catastrophe and companion the pain the world carries. We pray. We hope. We care. We journey on together even as our feet continue to be firmly planted in mid-air. We are with all of our loved ones near and far. We are holding all of you gently with masks upon our smiles and embracing each soul like never before. We tread lightly into summer and lean toward the crispness of the autumn season in whatever our new normal may bring us. We celebrate the life we have with you. We honor the hope of the ordinary moment alongside the unexpected and extraordinary of each day, wearing the shoes of the feet that are planted firmly in mid-air.

*Sister Kimberly Prohaska*



# Message from the Development Office

The canticle of 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (see cover) that we recited each Friday for Evening Praise during the Easter season seems especially fitting for the times we are experiencing. Sorrows, consolation, sufferings, encouragement surround us as we strive to restrain the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Many changes became a part of our lives quickly. As we were preparing the last issue of *Horizons* the beginning of March, we didn't dream of the events about to unfold. Instead of sharing an office with Jennifer Burchett, Communications Director, and Joseph Cahill, IT Director, I now work in the office alone. Both Jennifer and Joseph, as well as other employees, are working from home. In order to protect our older Sisters, we do not have visitors to the monastery and planned events have been canceled.

We are aware of the blessings we enjoy amid the sorrows and suffering. For the most part our life has continued as usual. Our chaplain continues celebrating Mass with us and our prayer and meal schedule continue as usual. We live in a beautiful new monastery surrounded by beautiful grounds. Our Benedictine promise of stability has prepared us well.



*Sister Elise Forst,  
Development Director*

We take seriously our role as pray-ers for the Church and world, conscious of all those who are suffering in many ways: those with the virus; those with loved ones hospitalized with no way to be with them; those living in fear; those with no job and no way to provide for themselves and their families; workers who put themselves in danger in order to provide essential services for the rest of us; families cooped up in small spaces; teachers, students, and parents adapting to a new way of teaching; children and teenagers missing their friends and usual activities; those missing their usual church community; those who are missing planned celebrations and events. One suffering that we share with many is the inability to visit loved ones in nursing homes.

Our prayer is also a litany of thanksgiving for the consolation and encouragement we receive from stories of healthcare workers and others putting themselves at risk to bring healing and comfort to the sick; neighbors and friends providing food and comfort to those in need; nursing home personnel going beyond the call of duty to ease the loneliness of the residents; teachers showing extra concern for their students; those finding new ways to be a domestic church; those who are finding creative ways to celebrate special events. All are held in our hearts in our daily prayer.

Not knowing how long the restrictions may be necessary, some changes have been made in the way Jennifer works with us. She will continue working from home as a contractor, being paid for each project instead of as a full-time employee. Hopefully this arrangement will meet her needs as the mother of three young children and also provide the service we need. As with many other people, we feel like we are in a time of transition without knowing to what we are transitioning. We take each day as it unfolds, thanking God for the consolation and encouragement that come our way and asking for strength and wisdom to alleviate the sorrows and sufferings in our own lives and in the world around us.

*Our hope for you is firm,  
for we know that, as you share in the sufferings,  
you also share in the encouragement.*

2 Corinthians 1:7

Sister Elise Forst



*Sister Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB*

*July 28, 1939 - April 24, 2020*







It is said that when someone you love dies, they never truly leave you; that they remain with you until the end of your days. That's a consoling thought, yet incomplete, for it only feels like half the truth. Because if part of Sister Macrina lives in me, then perhaps part of me passed with her.

Sister Macrina always said to lean into the pain, to lean into life's grief. Sorrow is nothing to be scared of, and is instead something to embrace and learn from. It is a season, perhaps our fourth favorite season (something Sister said with a disgruntled smile when referring to winter). It is the natural course of life. And just as it is only by falling into sleep that one relieves the weight of tiredness, it is only to embrace death that we are lifted to life once again. To run from sleep makes dark nights longer.

Anybody who knows Sister Macrina knows of her poetry, the depth of her spirit, and the bridge that she was for so many people, connecting us to a spiritual realm of God and Christ Jesus. Indeed, her life itself was a work of art that speaks to so many people.



*Martha Wiederkehr as a postulant*





*Sister Macrina with her sister Mary Lou Bennet, Niece Laura Cox, and friend Karen Ewan*

Martha Ann was born in Altus, Arkansas on July 28, 1939 to Henry and Marion Wiederkehr. As the youngest surviving child, Martha Ann was the last to leave home and did so when she entered St. Scholastica Monastery on August 31, 1956. When she became a novice, she chose the name Macrina after Saint Macrina the Younger.

Sister Macrina was educated in elementary education and received her bachelor's degree from Mount Angel College in Oregon. Later, Sister Macrina received her master's degree in religious education from St. Thomas University in Houston. And for many years, Sister Macrina was an educator.



*Sister Macrina with Sister Kimberly Prohaska*

While teaching in Catholic elementary schools across Arkansas and working in parish and campus ministry, Sister Macrina continually developed a deep sense of spirituality with God, the Church, and the natural world. In 1991, she published her first book, *Seasons of Your Heart*.

*Writing is a ministry. It is a way of facilitating and supporting the gift of life in others. It is a gathering of words that help readers see new horizons and find fresh hope in moments of discouragement. It is also a way of revealing truths that are sometimes difficult to face. A writer cares deeply about life and wants to draw forth that care in others. The writer points us toward the joy and pain of being human, teaches us to find truth in blessing and adversities. He or she is captivated by the passionate flow and wants us to experience the grace that can be found in each moment.* (Written by Sister Macrina and posted on her website: <http://macrinawiederkehr.com/books>)



*Sister Macrina with Sister Joyce Rupp*

There is a grace to the many moments of Macrina's life. From the way she cared for her friends, to her admiration and examination of nature, to the way she embraced the medical diagnosis that ultimately took her life, Sister Macrina carried Christ and her spirituality until her last breath.

Throughout her time at St. Scholastica, Sister Macrina served in various capacities including vocation director, retreat director, spiritual director, and coffee maker extraordinaire. She loved cats and cups, and was miraculously good at filling cups when a person was in need of counsel or company.

Knowing Macrina is a gift. She is the gift to whom we never need say goodbye, we never need leave her, and who still acts as a holy bridge. If she is with us, then we are with her. Perhaps, with her passing, all our hearts have been filled with the Spirit as a result of the bridge she creates. May our cups be full, and the journey across the valley of our hearts be made with courage. Eventually the sleepiness will wane, and a new season of our hearts will emerge, ever-present with Macrina, and with Christ and the Holy Spirit.

We have not been able to come together and mourn the passing of our sister. We have been denied the human customs of a wake and funeral Mass. In our distance, we cannot hug. We cannot embrace. We cannot look into each other's eyes as we share our favorite 'Macrina' stories. But with a ministry of words, may we mourn faithfully and fully our friend, dear Sister Macrina.

Sister Macrina is survived by one brother, Joseph Wiederkehr, two sisters, Edna O'Neill and Mary Lou Bennett, and many loving nieces and nephews. The Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery will have Mass for a Christian Burial at a later date.



*Sister Macrina with her sister Mary Lou Bennett*

Macrina's latest book, *The Flowing Grace of Now* (Ave Maria Press), was recently awarded second place in the prayer category by the Association of Catholic Publishers.





We think we get over things.  
 We don't get over things.  
 Or say, we get over the measles,  
 But not a broken heart.  
 We need to make that distinction.  
 The things that become part of our experience  
 Never become less a part of our experience.  
 How can I say it?  
 The way to "get over" a life is to die.  
 Short of that, you move with it,  
 let the pain be pain,  
 not in the hope that it will vanish  
 But in the faith that it will fit in,  
 find its place in the shape of things  
 and be then not any less pain but true to form.  
 Because anything natural has an inherent shape and will flow towards it.  
 And a life is as natural as a leaf.  
 That's what we're looking for: not the end of a thing but the shape of it.  
 Wisdom is seeing the shape of your life without obliterating (getting over) a single instant of it.

*The Cure*

By Albert Huffstickler



*Pictures left to right: Macrina with her parents; Macrina stands with a student; Macrina with others in aspirancy; Macrina (left) with Sister Francis Ann Duer (Helen Hays).*



# Around the Monastery



*Sisters Dolores Vincent and Maria put out the food for dinner.*



*Sisters gather in the chapel for community prayer.*



*Sister Agatha has fun putting together a puzzle during evening recreation.*



*Sisters Barbara and Pierre playing Pitch.*

Sisters Barbara Bock and Cecelia Brickell, both registered nurses, have been integral in the monastery's implementation of new safety standards to protect against the coronavirus. With the help of three staff, Debbie Williams (LPN), Cathy Blankenship (CNA), and Perolyn Salada (CNA), the team of medical professionals labors with the most vital goal in mind: protecting the community of sisters, whose median age is in the 80's. Together, they work under very specific guidelines that are all designed to promote the sisters' physical health, as well as their mental and emotional well-being.

Every day each sister reports to the healthcare office. Her temperature is taken and she is assessed regarding symptoms, specifically those that correspond to the coronavirus. It is up to the discretion of the sister as to when they report to the nurse's station, but typically evaluations have been completed for the day shortly after breakfast. If a sister were to have a fever or report symptoms synonymous with the coronavirus, she must be isolated immediately.

Likewise, every employee who continues to work within the monastery building must do so with a face covering and immediately report to the nurse's station upon entering the building for a temperature check. If anybody has a fever, they are required leave the building immediately.

Only one sister from the monastery is allowed to leave the building to collect mail or perform any other essential functions in the broader community. Sister Pat leaves the building once per week to collect mail from the post office.

Not being able to leave the monastery puts a mental and emotional strain on the sisters, just as it does many people around the globe. There is no denying that these are times of heightened anxiety for people of every creed. For this reason, the medical staff identified the need to promote mental and emotional health. Sisters are encouraged to take walks around the monastery grounds. The fresh air and sunshine decreases stress and anxiety. Sister Marcella, 99, is frequently taken outside in her wheelchair by Sister Barbara Bock or one of the nurses.

Another way the medical team helps support the sisters' mental and emotional well-being is to make sure the sisters have their meals and make it to evening recreation. Looking after one another is a common practice at St. Scholastica. However, increased stress means this practice needs increased focus.



*Above: Jennifer Pitts, CNA, organizes pills. Across: Sister Rosalie, Novice Faustina, and Sister Adrian participate in Evening Prayer with the rest of the St. Scholastica community.*



Sister Agatha, 98, loves to play Scrabble with her fellow sisters. Sister Marcella is a fan of 9-Hole Golf, a card game. They, along with many other sisters, play games in the community room most evenings. Puzzles, pitch, and dominoes are games that many of the sisters enjoy. Playing together helps maintain the mental and emotional health of the community.

Another change that has taken place since the implementation of new health and safety guidelines is the admittance of guests into the monastery. Until further notice no family or friends may visit any of the sisters. Only essential personnel are allowed to enter the premises. All vacations, business trips, and meetings have been canceled. Sisters on mission remain on mission. Hesychia House of Prayer does not currently accept visitors. All Oblate meetings have been cancelled until further notice. The Spirituality Program continues to operate though only in a virtual capacity.

Since employees have been reduced to essential personnel only, the sisters have had to work together to perform the duties left undone by missing employees. In the morning, Sisters Dolores Vincent and Maria prepare the food, and in

the evening they set the line from food prepared by staff. After dinner, sisters work together to clean the dining room, wash the dishes, and roll silverware. Though these tasks may be trying for some of our dear sisters, they all perform their respective tasks with smiles and joy.

Much has changed; yet even more has stayed the same. St. Scholastica continues to be a monastic community of Benedictine women who truly love one another and the world around them. Community prayer is still held with the same reverence as before. And together, the sisters fulfill their calling to be examples of Christ. Their sacrifices are examples of their love.

All of these little changes amount to big protections for the sisters against the coronavirus. The proactive steps taken on behalf of the sisters are a great act of love for our community and the world. Together, the sisters carry this burden with grace. Join us in praying for our world, for medical workers, for experts on the front and back lines, for elected officials, and our brothers and sisters everywhere.





# Sister Pierre's 80th Jubilee



*Sister Pierre Vorster*

When the Vorster family moved to Logan County in 1878 it was known as “the land rich in honey”. At that time, many German Catholic families and communities from all over the country moved to the area, including Benedictine monks and sisters from Indiana, who started Subiaco Abbey and St. Benedict Parish. As the Vorster family settled two-and-a-half miles away from the monks, their life became synonymous with the Benedictine community who would teach Sister Pierre and her siblings, and, for their part, guide her into monastic life.

Catherine Vorster was born on March 18, 1922 in Subiaco, Arkansas. As the eldest of six children, she quickly grew accustomed to the responsibilities of family and faith, both of which were deeply interconnected with the Benedictine monks. Catherine's grandfather, Joseph, worked at St. Scholastica in Shoal Creek, and her father, Dan, worked on the family farm and spent much time at the Abbey in Subiaco. Her Aunt Catherine, after whom she was named, was a sister at St. Scholastica Monastery.

“I grew up in the shadow of Subiaco,” Sister Pierre shares. “Everything we did was done with or around the Abbey.”

It was the summons of the 7 AM Abbey bells that started her and her brothers' daily trek to St. Benedict's School. It was the Abbey Park that gave recreation to the teenage girls of the 1930's. And it was only to attend Mass on Sunday's that her family drove their only car, a Model T that they purchased in 1927. Pierre remembers it vividly.

Catherine was 15 when she entered St. Scholastica Monastery in 1937. “We were in a depression,” describes Sister Pierre. “At the monastery we grew our own food, though did not have much to go around. Becoming a Sister was natural, like moving from one home to another. I knew I was going to become a Sister all my life.”

Catherine took the name Pierre after Saint Peter. Her first mission was to teach as a substitute for two weeks at Shoal Creek. But after a fire that destroyed most of the property structures, her assignment turned into a six year mission to rebuild Shoal Creek.

Until Sister Pierre was in her 40s, she was a teacher. Then, after Vatican II, she and the other Sisters were given more say over their work and vocation. Sister Pierre naturally gravitated toward community work, advocacy, health, and government. “I awakened to the larger world outside and I became very active in community work, especially with healthcare, Project Compassion, Area Agency on Aging, and was very involved in public works.”

The capacities in which Sister Pierre served are numerous, just as the lives she touched were enriched. Anybody will tell you that she is strong, smart, stubborn, and one of the loveliest people you'll ever meet.

To the women who are considering monastic life, Sister Pierre says this, “You must be open to change, open to giving up your own will, and open to living in a community of other people and women. God walks with me all the time. And I try to walk with him. I feel like God worked in me. And I feel that more so now than ever.”

We thank God for Sister Pierre, and this year, her 80th Jubilee!

# Sister Regina's 60th Jubilee

Olivia Schroeder was born in Windthorst, Texas on March 18, 1942 to Ben and Sophia Schroeder, exactly twenty years after Sister Pierre was born. She was the seventh of ten children born into a very tight-knit Catholic family.

“From a very young age I was surrounded by strong faith and family life in prayer. That gave me reason to be attracted to Benedictine life, which was very community oriented, expressed prayer, and had a deep seeded love for one another,” shares Sister Regina.

As a child, the Schroeder family took frequent trips to St. Scholastica Monastery, where her aunt, Sister Anacletus (Olivia), and three older sisters had entered. St. Scholastica Monastery was always an option for her vocation, though in her adolescent years briefly considered motherhood.

In 1960, at the age of 18, Olivia made first profession and took the name Sister Regina. At that time, St. Scholastica Monastery was a community of more than 350 women, most of whom lived in parishes across Arkansas, Texas, and Missouri. Most of the women were either teachers or healthcare professionals. As a child, it was the call to become a teacher that attracted Sister Regina to monastic life with the Benedictines.



*Sister Regina Schroeder*

Sister Regina taught for many years. According to her vocation story on the monastery website, she loved recess and was often the first teacher outside to play with the kids. As a naturally athletic woman, Sister Regina loved to play sports with the children.

Over the years her vocation transitioned, and Sister Regina began pastoral work as an associate pastor, worked with troubled marriages, had opportunities in the diocese, developed RCIA programs, and worked with developmentally disabled adults between the ages of 16 and 40. But one of her most rewarding opportunities came when she and her sister cared for their mother while on mission in Missouri for five years.

“God used that event to help me realize that to see God is not about acquiring something, but about making progress towards God on total dependence of His grace,” shares Sister Regina.

“I hope to be remembered as a leader, teacher, lover of prayer and Benedictine life, and as a pastoral person. I love community life, and I hope that I was able to be an instrument in helping others through the many roles I had as a sister. To any woman discerning monastic life as an option, one must be ready to pray, wait, and listen. Listen to God and trust your heart. Open up to the grace that comes during that time and allow God to nurture you as you transform and commit to following Him.”

We thank God for Sister Regina, and this year, her 60th Jubilee!



# Reflection by Sister Rachel



The editor of Horizons asked if I would be willing to share with our readers how we have faced and dealt with the challenges of being isolated in our monastery. After much prayer and reflection, I agreed to share how it was/is for me and hope this speaks to some of you, our readers.

Experiencing a pandemic of this magnitude is very much like dealing with the fallout of the sudden death of a loved one. There is the shock of the news, then catching your breath and attempting to breathe normally again. This is closely followed by the pain of the loss, and all the feelings of sadness, loneliness, anxiety, and helplessness, even anger that the event has happened. I found myself asking: So now what do I do with all these feelings (even resentment) that it has happened...to me!

It is true that we, the Sisters, live fairly separated from society in our monastery, but I have discovered how much it has meant to have all our employees around most days, the joy to see them arriving and getting into routine. The absence of the volunteers for the gift shop and the customers left a big hole for me. Visitors always seemed to drop by and it was fun to have a chat about what was going

on for them. The lock-down came and all of that ceased instantly – it seemed. I suddenly felt confined to my room, even though the basic schedule of prayers, work, meetings, and the duties and expectations of an ordinary day, were still in place. As trite as this may sound, one of my first thoughts was: “But I need to exchange those lamp shades that I bought! I need them to fix up my new office in the ministries building!” Oh my, what an insignificant issue at a time like this. It’s called DENIAL. On some level I just wanted to deny what was happening.

To add to the pandemic shut-down, we were also in the process of walking Sr. Macrina on her journey to eternal life. Before the lock down, a steady stream of friends and relations were dropping in everyday to spend some time with her. It was such a joy and testament to her spirit to see them come and go, and to catch a few moments of conversation with those whom I knew. Suddenly, that stopped! We visited with her a little more frequently as she too was feeling the loss.

Facing the shut-down, for me, was remembering all the things I did to help myself cope when the last of my

siblings died. I journaled about our relationship, cried, and was a little angry at him for leaving me all alone in this big world. He died! My job was to accept and adjust to life without him. Not easy, but doable.

That was my challenge with this situation as well. I wanted to think the pandemic would be over in a week or so, but it only got worse, and we are still discovering ways to take care of ourselves. By keeping a positive disposition, I can be attentive to others who may be struggling with anger and acceptance about the whole deal. I noticed articles on the internet that gave great suggestions and made time to read some of them that I knew would help me. I wrote down my feelings of anger that I was not able to do my own shopping for personal items. For safety reasons, one person in the community was given that job and she did it with great caution. When I feel down-in-the dumps, I have a novel in progress and spend time reading, or I work a word puzzle. Often there is a spontaneous sharing among several of us. Just knowing others feel as I did helps. Sharing how we are coping in our different ways is energizing; I have built-in help in community. No matter, I still feel the isolation of not having the freedom to come and go.

As the weeks have unfolded, we keep doing different things that help lower anxiety. One Sunday afternoon several of us played games of Swedish Bridge, sometimes known as “O Hell.” It is high in excitement and makes one forget that leaving the monastery is prohibited. Some Sisters like to color. Not only does it give them a good way to use their time, but it also stimulates their creativity and some lovely works of art appear.

A jigsaw puzzle is always in process in the community room. Depending on how difficult the piece is, several different puzzles are created in just a few days. If you are looking for something to do, a puzzle is in progress, just waiting for someone to find a few more pieces toward completion. Now that it is warmer outside, those who are into flower beds and beautiful lawns have made our grounds look a little like paradise.

The pandemic is not over. In fact, it may be making a come-back. I hope all families and friends have discovered many different ways to creatively use their time while staying home. It is the creativity and new ideas that stimulate each person’s ability to use their time in a constructive way. Acceptance is the best answer to all our problems. Until the pandemic is over, we should keep ourselves constructively

occupied and know that out of all the confusion and fear, a creative way of living and relating can emerge.



*Sister Rachel Dietz is the director of St. Scholastica Monastery's Spirituality Program, and is a certified Spiritual Director.*



# Novice Faustina Makes Masks for Sisters and Community

*Photo: Novice Faustina holds two styles of masks that she makes.*

Since April, Novice Faustina has spent countless hours making two styles of face masks for her fellow sisters and their friends and loved ones. With over 90 masks having been made so far, Novice Faustina is just beginning, and plans to make even more for people outside St. Scholastica Monastery. People are even starting to make requests, which she happily accepts and obliges.

The process of making the two styles of masks involves cutting, sewing, and in the case of the more intensive style, ironing. In total, the masks take anywhere from 15 to 20 minutes to make.

"I value every minute of my work. I love it; to serve others," shares Novice Faustina.

Novice Faustina is no stranger to work. Also on her current list of work is finishing the monastery's Book of Necrology, which documents in calligraphy the name and date of death for each passing Sister.

Novice Faustina joined the Monastery in the fall of 2018 and will make her first profession in June of 2021.



*Above: Novice Faustina sews a face mask  
Below: Stack of cloth pieces that will soon be used to  
make masks.*





# Gift Shop Open for Online Orders



St. Scholastica Monastery's Gift Shop is currently closed to in-person shoppers due to the coronavirus pandemic and the increased safety measures the Sisters have taken. Patrons are able to make online purchases via the gift shop website or by calling Sister Pat. Supply is limited for online purchases, in which case shoppers are encouraged to give us a call and we will talk you through items that are available at the monastery.

People who place an order from our online store can expect their items to be delivered via the postal service.

For purchases made over the telephone, items may be shipped or picked up from the Monastery at a time scheduled and coordinated with Sister Pat. Though patrons are not allowed inside the Monastery, Sister Pat will bring the item to your car as you pull under the monastery awning.

Available items include children's items, rosaries, homemade jellies and jams by Sisters Maria and Madeline, embroidered cloth by Sister Barbara, books and bibles, and much more.

(479)-783-4147

[www.Stscho.org/secure/giftshop](http://www.Stscho.org/secure/giftshop)







## St. Scholastica Monastery

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*Pictured Left: Maria Isabel works on school assignments from her home.*

# A G.E.M. Account About Guatemala & Covid

Hello. My name is Maria Isabel from Esquipulas and I am going to tell you a little about how life is here in my country. Everything is different since the virus came to Guatemala. My life has changed alot. We practice social distancing and now the mask usage is mandatory all the time everywhere, and we are living under some restrictions. Now during the week we can only be outdoors from 5 am to 5 pm and on weekends we must stay inside. We cannot go outside for anything. Stores are only open during the morning... Everything has changed and many people have lost their jobs...

If people place a white flag outside their house, they want to say they have no resources to eat and the people who see them and want to help may end up leaving groceries... I have seen many of them (flags) in different communities... I have been volunteering with some others to collect different things to help people.

Public and private schools are closed but the education is still present. My school, Colegio San Benito, is closed. Teachers are giving classes by using some "APPS" like Zoom. Also we use Google Classroom that allows us as students to do homework and tests. Also, we can use What's App to be in communication with teachers. We have classes from 12:30 to 6:30 everyday. Now everything is different and sometimes it is hard but with God's help we are trying to move through all of this and we keep working and learning.

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