

**ONE HEART
ONE SOUL**



**Benedictine Sisters
Sacred Heart Monastery
Yankton, South Dakota
2012**

OUR CHARISM

We are Benedictine women of
Yankton, South Dakota, sharing
our gift of seeking God through
prayer, work, study, and
community life.

ONE HEART AND ONE SOUL

INTRODUCTION

Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel, in stone, glass and wood, represents the charism and values of Sacred Heart Monastery's Benedictine Sisters. Our foundress, Mother Gertrude Leupi (1848-1904), and her companions from the new Benedictine convent of Maria Rickenbach in Switzerland, established our Yankton community in Maryville, MO on November 17, 1880. From there, some of the pioneer Sisters ministered at Fort Yates, ND on Standing Rock Reservation. Later the Sisters moved the motherhouse to Zell, SD and in 1889 to Yankton. From 1897 to 1908 the motherhouse re-located to Vermillion, SD so the Yankton convent building could serve as the first Sacred Heart Hospital until funds would be available for building a new hospital structure.

PRAYER LIFE

The motto of the Rule of St. Benedict, which we Sisters strive to keep, is PRAYER and WORK. From the beginning of the community, the Sisters spent long hours in the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The liturgical prayer of the church, the Liturgy of the Hours, and the Eucharistic celebration became ever more important in their prayer life. When the community increased in numbers, the need for more worship space became imperative. Mother Xavier Fischlin (1850-1925) included an adequate chapel in the 1908 addition to the convent building. With the help of our chaplain Father Ignatius Forester, OSB (1875-1943) and the contributions of many benefactors, she led the way in the construction of the first Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel, dedicated in 1919. Thirty-one years later Mother Jerome Schmitt (1899-1983) realized her and our dream of building a house of prayer that reflects the lives

and hopes of all our sisters. At the same time the chapel memorializes Bishop Martin Marty, the first bishop of the Dakotas and formerly the Abbot of St. Meinrad's Abbey in Indiana. The modified gothic structure, consecrated in 1950, stands etched in stone as a magnificent expression of our dedication to prayer.

Factual Data about Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel

Architect: Edward J. Schulte, Cincinnati, OH
 Stained Glass Windows: Erhard Soettner,
 T.C. Esser Co., Milwaukee, WI
 Contractor: W. A. Klinger, Sioux City, IA
 Materials: Exterior: Lannon Stone (Wisconsin)
 Bedford Stone (Indiana)
Interior: Sandstone (St. Meinrad, IN)
 Wood: White Oak
 Windows: Stained Glass
 Square Footages: Upper Chapel: 10,640 sq. feet
Peace Chapel: 9,266 sq. feet
 Height of Chapel: (from ground to tip of cross) 187 ½ feet
 Height of Bronze Cross: -----12 ½ feet
 Seating capacity: ----- 600
 Completed and consecrated in 1950
 Cost of construction: approximately \$1.1 million dollars

The anniversary of the dedication of the chapel is celebrated annually on July 27th.

Description of the Chapel

Chapel East Entrance

- ◆ Benedictine Saints depicted over the portal of the front door (left to right): Gertrude the Great, Lioba, Scholastica, Benedict, Gregory, Anselm and Bede.

- ◆ At the back of the Upper Chapel a plaque on the east wall commemorates the loving memory of the deceased Sisters of the Benedictine Convent of the Sacred Heart.
- ◆ The Bishop Martyr room contains his throne and crucifix, materials in the glass case, a stained glass window illustrating various places of his missionary work and his coat of arms. An inscription on the east wall gives the date of his death.

Within the Sanctuary

High Altar: golden reredos and baldachin surmounted by five angels of contemporary design. Altar table is made of green Italian marble with a semi-circular tester with carved symbols of seven sacraments and peacocks symbolizing immortality.

Crucifix: suspended inside the baldachin, carved of white oak with a symbol of an evangelist at each end of the crossbeams.

Curtains of Damask: Colors are changed to fit each liturgical season.

Carved Screens: made of white oak flanking the sanctuary on either side and bearing symbols of the twelve apostles.

North Windows (from west to east)

Upper sections depict scenes from the Gospel and lower sections scenes from the life of St. Benedict)

1. Our Lord and St. Benedict as Good Shepherds.
2. Both Jesus and Benedict are tempted by the devil and emerge victorious.
3. Jesus with the son of the Widow of Nain; Benedict with the son of a peasant.
4. Centurion asked Jesus to heal his servant; Benedict confronted by Totila, ruler of the Goths.

5. Peter sent to teach all nations; Gregory the Great sent Augustine to England.
6. The Holy Family; Maurus listening in obedience.
7. Peter drawn from the water by Jesus; Placidus drawn from the water by Maurus through the blessing of Benedict.
8. Parable of wise and foolish virgins; St. Gertrude, Benedictine mystic and patroness of our Federation.
9. Martha and Mary; St. Scholastica, a woman of deep faith and prayer.
10. The death of Jesus; the death of Benedict.

Benedictine Sisters' Window (*high east wall*)

A gift of Mt. Marty alumnae, this masterpiece tells the story of our Sisters as we have lived and worked here on the Mount. The Benedictine motto is shown in the two symbols above the 20 panels (*from left to right*) PRAYER, a candle; WORK, a shovel. The 20 panels are divided into 5 tiers (*beginning from the top, left to right*):

1st Tier: Liturgical (music/adoration/conference/night vigil)

2nd Tier: Contemplative (meditation/holy reading/crafts/pilgrims)

3rd Tier: Cultural (new members/scriptorium/embroidery/painting)

4th Tier: Ministry (child care/recreation/teaching/nursing)

5th Tier: Daily Manual Labor (farming/cooking/gardening/building)

South Windows

These windows portray the *Liturgy of the Hours*, called the *Work of God* in the Rule of St. Benedict.

The windows portray the seven day hours and one night hour traditional to monastic communities: Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline, and Matins.

Today, because of their work schedules, the sisters pray Morning Prayer (Lauds), Noon Prayer (Sext), Evening Prayer (Vespers), and Compline, in addition to celebrating Eucharist together daily.

Our Lady's Chapel (*transept*) is a replica of Our Lady's Chapel in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, where the statue known as the Black Madonna is found. The window to the left tells the story of this statue and of St. Meinrad.

The window on the east wall near the organ commemorates three important events in the life of Mary: (*top to bottom*) the Annunciation, the Visitation and the Nativity. At the bottom, a patriotic emblem covering her monogram proclaims Mary as the Patroness of the United States.

Peace Chapel (*lower level*) is the worship space used by the Sisters to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours and Mass on weekdays, and by the MMC students as their chapel. The décor reflects a Native American motif with the painted geometric designs on the side aisle ceiling and the brilliant colors of the windows. By transferring the Stations of the Cross from the 1919 chapel to this chapel, the Sisters emphasized the continuity of their prayer space. After some renovations in the 1980s, this chapel is adorned with colorful tapestries on the west wall, new carpets and sturdy chairs. It provides a quiet place for prayer and reflection.

Museum: The artifacts and memorabilia of the 130-plus years of the monastery's existence are displayed in the museums located behind the Peace Chapel. These museums were opened as part of the centennial celebrations of the diocese of Sioux Falls and statehood of South Dakota (1989).

EDUCATION

The Sisters have continued the tradition of Benedictines worldwide and of their Maria Rickenbach fore-mothers by in various engaging in various educational pursuits. In Missouri the sisters instructed the German immigrants. The sisters also taught for many years on the Indian reservations and in parochial schools in South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska and Colorado. In order to provide higher education for the novices and young sisters, Mother Hilda Mirau (1884-1923), opened Mount Marty Academy in 1922. By 1936 the community, under the leadership of Mother Jerome Schmitt, added a junior college which became a four-year baccalaureate college in 1951. Mount Marty has expanded from Bede Hall to include Whitby Hall, Marian Auditorium, Roncalli Student Center, Corbey Hall, the former Mt. Marty High School building, the Laddie Cimpl Sports arena, and the Scholastica Learning Center as resources for students. The college offers select Masters' programs and numerous majors leading to BA or BS degrees on its main campus here in Yankton, and at satellite campuses in Sioux Falls and Watertown.

HEALTH CARE

Encouraged by Bishop Thomas O'Gorman (1896-1921), Mother Mathilda Cattani (1843-1918) guided the establishment of Sacred Heart Hospital in the former convent building. The hospital received its first patient in November 1897, by which time several Sisters had received brief training as nurses. Over the years the community has sponsored a number of hospitals and nursing homes in the Midwest. In partnership with the Presentation Sisters of Aberdeen, SD the Benedictine Sisters currently sponsor Avera Health System. Avera facilities in Yankton include Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, Avera Majestic Bluffs, and Avera Yankton Care Center. Through the Avera System,

the sisters continue to foster the healing ministry of Christ in the five-state region of North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska.

OTHER WORKS

Work is an important aspect of our lives as Benedictine women, and our Sisters have served in many ways during our 130-plus year history. We have cared for orphans, made liturgical vestments and produced altar breads. We farmed, raised vegetables and fruit, and still cultivate a garden and orchard. Today we labor as teachers, nurses, social workers, parish ministers, hospital chaplains, marriage/family/student counselors, and interpreters for the local Hispanic population. We also serve through many civic organizations. Our promise of Benedictine stability commits us to enrich the locality where we live. In turn, we are truly blessed by the persons with whom we live and work.

MONASTERY CAMPUS

The majestic chapel steeple towering over Yankton is the landmark which alerts people to the monastery adjacent to it. The monastery is comprised of three adjoining buildings with a magnificent view of the Missouri River. The 1961 structure provides a home for the 110 members of the community. In 2001 a new monastery building was dedicated which provides a gathering space at the entrance to the Bishop Marty Chapel, administrative offices, meeting and conference rooms, guest quarters, and a retreat center. Marty House, the home on the south end of the 2001 building, was built by Bishop Marty in 1882. A residence for the Sisters for many years, it was restored more closely to its original condition in 1999.

SORROWFUL WAY AND THE CEMETERY

Our Sisters, under the direction of Father Placidus Hoenerbach, OSB (1867-1955), chaplain from 1906-1915, landscaped the area west of the monastery buildings. A new cemetery was laid out in 1910; the concrete, cruciform headstones bear the names and the years of the births and deaths of the Sisters. A bronze crucifix on the southern edge of the bluff adds to the sense of peace that pervades the area. A scenic walkway leading to the cemetery is beautified by old Black Hills pine, tall lilac bushes, young hackberry trees, and the Stations of the Cross. Three shrines grace the area: the Immaculate Conception (1921), Sorrowful Mother (1925), and St. Joseph (1937) shrines. To celebrate the millennium, the bronze statues of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica were commissioned through the generosity of a friend of the monastic community.

TOWER BELLS AND CLOCK

In 1927 Mother Frances Zweifel (1872-1959) added the final touch of beauty to the original monastery. A clock and a set of four bells—named St. Joseph, St. Benedict, Ave Maria and Gabriel—were blessed and installed in the old tower. Today the clock and bells, which chime each quarter hour and to announce the hours of prayer, are installed in the new clock-tower. Just as the bells have rung out over Yankton for the past 85 years, so they continue to proclaim to the Yankton Community the Benedictine Sisters' commitment to following Christ in the third millennium.

OUR MISSION

**Rooted in our rural heritage and
growing in relationship with God
and with one another in
monastic community,
we live a life of
prayer, work and *lectio*
by which we serve God and God's people
in our time and place.**

