

## **Feast of Benedict**

To discover one's vocation  
(and I am using this word in its broad meaning)  
is one of the most liberating experiences in human living.  
Of course, it is very seldom simple.  
I can be pretty sure about my gifts,  
what I am called to be and do,  
and still have a difficult time giving myself to my vocation.  
I recall a scene from the movie "Little Shop Around the Corner."  
The lead actor Tom Hanks and his rather snippy, cantankerous date  
are caught in a stalled elevator in the late evening.  
They can't do anything – there is no ear wash music playing,  
so the little group that is trapped there  
actually has a conversation.  
One of men, in his mid-30s, reflects,  
"You know what, I'm gonna ask my girlfriend to marry me.  
I don't know what I am waiting for.  
She is an incredible person,  
I want to spend the rest of my life with her –  
I don't know what I am waiting for."  
In that conversation he comes to a moment of vocational clarity.  
This is surely analogous to Jesus' metaphors for the reign of God:  
it is like a buried treasure – it is like a fine pearl –  
When you find that treasure, it is a call to decision and to action,  
to giving oneself to it wholeheartedly.

### **Readings:**

Wisdom 7.7-14  
Romans 12.1-2,9-18  
Mt. 13.44-46

Today we celebrate the grace of choosing monastic life  
that has been present to us in our jubilarians.  
Sixty, fifty, and twenty five years ago,  
our jubilarians professed their vows  
in the presence of God, the saints, the abbot and the community.  
We also celebrate the grace of God at work  
in our Brother Aelred who desires to make solemn vows.  
Truly, by the mercy of God,  
they have offered their bodies as a living sacrifice to God.

*Father Luke Steiner,*

you have been a veteran teacher of the Gospels and the Pauline and pastoral letters,  
director of many semester programs to Jerusalem for the School of Theology•Seminary  
so that the scriptures might come to life  
in a fresh and vital way for ministers and homilists.  
You have always been concerned  
with the integration of Scripture and life.  
In your later years you have become a seasoned pastor and chaplain,  
but always loving the scriptures and bringing them to life.  
Thank you, Father Luke, for your presence in

and service to our community and the Church.

*Father John Kulas,*

though you are not able to be physically present today for reasons of health,  
you have long been teacher and scholar of German,  
working on the basics of learning a language,  
the complexities of German grammar,  
as well as the richness of German literature.

Over all these decades, you have been for us a fine homilist,  
bringing new and fresh meanings from familiar texts.

A thoughtful participant and leader of countless task forces and committees,  
you have been the go-to guy for academic leaders and presidents.  
Father John, we celebrate your service and humane presence.

*Father Corwin Collins,*

far from your home in the Bronx,  
for many years a teacher, prefect, and hockey coach at Prep,  
you were known affectionately as “the Rock,”  
and one could search in vain for a better name for a prefect.  
You were headmaster of Benilde High School for a crucial two years  
and then co-principal of Benilde-Saint Margaret for three  
at the time of its life-giving merger.

It is now a flourishing Catholic high school in the metro area.

You then dedicated yourself to pastoral ministry,  
the longest span of years being 21 at Seven Dolors parish in Albany.  
In this July we welcome you home from a life of service.  
We are grateful for your quiet, steady presence among us.

*Father Stephen Beauclair,*

you have spent all of your monastic life in pastoral and missionary activity,  
for a brief time at San Antonio Abad,  
for three years at Saint Augustine’s in the Bahamas,  
and then serving as an associate pastor or pastor  
in the Dioceses of Saint Cloud, Crookston, New York or Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

To all of this work

you have brought a listening, welcoming, and caring presence.

Over the years you have grown in confidence and skilled leadership,  
even as you continue to study, read, and think about the Church and its future.

Father Steve, thank you for your generous service to the Church  
and your presence in our community.

*Brother Kenneth Kroeker,*

you came to monastic life on the prairies of central Canada,  
joining Our Lady of the Prairies Monastery in Manitoba.

After studying at the School of Theology  
you transferred your vows to this community in 1996.

You combined your love for mathematics and natural science with your care for people by obtaining a degree in nursing and then working in the first floor clinic for 13 years. At present you are in transition to new work in the business office, on the health care accounting side of things. Brother Ken, thank you for your skilled and welcoming presence in the health center and in the community and your well-developed sense of irony and humor.

Brother Aelred,  
today you make solemn vows to God and to this community. As you can see from the lives of these confreres, you can expect your life to take many unexpected turns. We are convinced that we have found a treasure, a pearl of great price in our monastic call, in the rich tradition that we have received. With Saint Paul, we rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, and persevere in prayer. We know that Christ will be with us to support and sustain us on this journey.

The promise of the reign of God is being fulfilled in our midst, though in ways we cannot either measure or imagine. Abundant blessings have been poured our lap because of the graced commitment of these men, who have preferred nothing to Christ. As we celebrate the Eucharist in this community of faith today, we trust that God's Spirit will bless all of us, our solemnly professed, our jubilarians, confreres, oblates, and guests, with a joyous and blessed Feast of Benedict.

Abbot John Klassen, OSB  
July 11, 2011