The Benedictine Sisters in Clyde, Mo., won’t break ground on their deconstruction project until July 1, but many changes have already taken place.

The Sisters have temporarily closed their Adoration Chapel, Relic Chapel and Heritage Room to the public due to the Sacred Stones, Sacred Stories project, which includes the renovation of the monastery’s main house.

“Currently we are moving Sisters into other living areas, creating temporary office space, packing and getting ready for the first phase to begin soon,” Clyde Prioress Sister Sean Douglas, OSB said. “There will be a lot of heavy equipment on site. To ensure everyone’s safety during the construction process, the chapels will be closed to the public.”

The multimillion-dollar project will preserve the Clyde monastery’s historical presence as a place dedicated to prayer and the Eucharist. The project will include the addition of new heating and cooling systems, an elevator, bedrooms and baths, a new entrance and additional hospitality areas for visitors and guests.

“The principles guiding our efforts are that the monastery will be a place of prayer, community and contemplative life, which fosters our relationship with Christ,” Prioress General Sister Pat Nyquist, OSB said.

The original motherhouse was constructed during the early 1880s and has since been expanded and renovated. The driving factor behind those changes was the desire to meet the evolving needs of the Congregation, including fluctuating membership, diverse works and environmental stewardship. While modifying the motherhouse to improve the quality of life for the Sisters is important, they are determined to conduct the project with great care to the environment.

Con’t page 8
In April, Sister Mary Dolores Dowling celebrated 60 years of professed monastic life during a quiet celebration with her Tucson, Ariz., community.

“Over the last 60 years I have seen our community tackle problems of change and grow together,” Sister Mary Dolores said. “I have seen us emerge from a European form of monasticism to a more American style, which includes praying in our own language rather than Latin and having more time for personal prayer.”

A native of Ontario, Canada, Sister Mary Dolores felt a call to religious life while in high school.

“We lived only a block from our church, so we attended Mass daily,” she said. However, she decided to start college before actively discerning the call.

While attending Ottawa University, she began inquiring about different monastic orders.

“I knew I wanted a contemplative life,” she said. “I wrote to groups in Maryland and New York and also to the Benedictine Sisters in Clyde. Looking back, it was a case of ‘You did not choose me, but I chose you.’”

Graduating with a degree in English and philosophy, she entered the Benedictine Sisters on the Feast of the Sacred Heart on June 3, 1948. She made her first monastic profession on April 13, 1950. Her first assignment turned out to be a long one, as a member of the editorial staff of the Congregation’s magazine.

In the ensuing years, she was twice elected to serve on the Sisters’ General Council and was prioress of the San Diego and Tucson communities. She also earned a master’s degree in theological studies and wrote “In Your Midst,” a history of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration’s founding and growth in America.

Now she is at home in Tucson, selecting the Scripture readings for Lauds and readings for Vespers.

“Among my fondest memories are my brother’s first Mass at our monastery in Clyde, bird watching in the spring, hermit days on the beach at our San Diego monastery and gatherings on the patio porch here in Tucson for community holidays,” she said. †

A trio of Clyde, Mo., Sisters celebrated their 60th jubilee of monastic profession during a small ceremony on April 8 in the community’s Adoration Chapel.

Sister Marietta Crahan, OSB, Sister Mary Audrey Jones, OSB and Sister Mary Regina Arnold, OSB made their first monastic professions in 1950. †
Members of the Knights of Columbus of St. Margaret Parish performed beautiful work transforming the Ave Maria shrine (above) located on the grounds of the Benedictine Sisters’ monastery in Tucson.

Ladies of Corpus Christi donate to heritage campaign

Spouses of the Knights of Columbus presented a $550 check to the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for the Tucson, Ariz., monastery’s Preserving Our Heritage renovation campaign.

They represented the Ladies of Corpus Christi who raised the funds by creating 15 gorgeous baskets to raffle at a luncheon event.

Pictured are (from left) Lynn Lingrel, Joyce Fleck, Tucson Prioress Sister Ramona Varela, OSB and Sister Lupita Barajas, OSB.

The Ladies Luncheon was a team effort supported by Marci Kingman, wife of Michael Kingman, Arizona District Master.†

Knights of Columbus renovate shrine

April Harmony Page 3
Sister Sarah shares lessons on the Scriptures

For two hours every Tuesday, Sister Sarah Schwartzberg, OSB, opens the doors of the San Benito Monastery in Dayton, Wyo., to several lay people eager to study the Scriptures.

Since last year, Sister Sarah and her students have examined the Pentateuch, which are the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). Pentateuch is derived from the Greek “pent teuchos,” meaning five-volumed (book).

“Last year we spent the entire time on the Book of Genesis,” Sister Sarah said. “This year we began with Exodus and have moved up to the Book of Numbers.”

The class is casual, welcoming people of all faiths, and participants enjoy time spent together learning about the Bible.

“After we finish the Pentateuch, we’ll have to decide what to do next,” Sister Sarah said. “We may continue with the historical books, beginning with the Book of Joshua. We’ve also talked about a series on Samuel, Saul and David.”

For more information about Sister Sarah’s Scripture class, please e-mail schwartzberg@juno.com. Class is not held during the summer months. †

Clyde Sisters run for charity

Sisters from the Clyde, Mo., community participated in the 15th Annual Abbey Trails 5K Run/3M Walk on April 17.

The event benefits Conception Seminary College’s wellness program, which was created in 1987 to support positive health practices in the seminary and surrounding communities by teaching the skills needed for physical, emotional and spiritual well being. The program is open to the public.

Pictured are (from left) Sister Nancy Rose Gucwa, OSB, Sister Ruth Elaine Starman, OSB, Sister Pat Nyquist, OSB, and a friend of the community. †
Sharing our skills

Sister Mary Jane leads Mexican retreat

It’s one thing for an American nun to give a retreat on the Rule of Benedict. Quite another to make the presentation in another language in a foreign country.

But that’s just what Benedictine Sister Mary Jane Romero, OSB did. And loved it!

In March, Sister Mary Jane traveled to San Benito Monastery in Mexico City to present a retreat on Benedictine themes such as lectio, prayer, St. Benedict’s love for the cross and the Eucharist.

“The prioress of the Benedictine Sisters there invited me,” Sister Mary Jane said. “With everything being in Spanish, it was a real challenge. I initially wrote my presentation in English. Then with the help of two fellow sisters was able to translate it into Spanish.”

While in Mexico City, Sister Mary Jane visited Our Lady of Guadalupe Basilica and to the chapel built at Tepeyac where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego in 1531.

“There are large pilgrimages each day,” Sister Mary Jane said. “It was truly inspiring to see such faith and devotion on part of the people.”

Make new friends but keep the old: Scouts visit soap shop

Daisy Girl Scouts from Maryville, Mo., visited Sister Cathleen Marie Timberlake, OSB in the soap shop last month to learn about the wonders of soap-making. Sister Cathleen Marie demonstrated how to make lip balm and soap, including her tip about adding a drop of holy water to each batch of soap. The scouts were a great help and even got to take home samples.†

Sister Cathleen Marie (above, center) enjoyed sharing her soap-making skills with a troop of Daisy Girl Scouts who also enjoyed the sweet-smelling adventure (left).
Elizabeth Scott, a retired voice teacher, has been helping the Tucson, Ariz., community refine their singing voices.

“Elizabeth came for Day Hour and listened to us sing part of the psalmody with a St. Meinrad mode and part with a two-line chant melody, which we have been using on Sundays,” Sister Kathleen Gorman, OSB said.

The community has enjoyed singing lessons with her each Tuesday, along with individual and schola sessions. †

Several members of the Red Hat Society (below) recently visited the Tucson, Ariz., community’s liturgical vestment department to learn more about the Sisters’ valuable ministry. †

Friends took part in the annual late winter harvest of the Tucson, Ariz., community’s orchard.

“All our oranges were picked in one day by our faithful Knights of Columbus and their wives,” Sister Kathleen Gorman, OSB said. “We spent an additional day turning the fruit into juice.” The result was 90 gallons of orange juice, 4 gallons of lemon juice and 8 gallons of tangelos juice. †
The oratory (above) located in the Marian Wing of the Clyde monastery’s motherhouse has been emptied. It, along with the rest of the house’s southern wing, will be deconstructed beginning in July as part of the Sacred Stones, Sacred Stories renovation.

“The Benedictines have a tradition of good stewardship of the earth’s resources,” Sister Sean said. “We will recycle all the building materials we can such as windows, doors, cabinets, shelving, roofing, woodwork, masonry, plumbing and electrical. For items we are unable to use, we try to sell, donate and recycle rather than send to a landfill. Some things we’ll save for future use.”

Even though the main project has yet to begin, the Sisters have already recycled wood into new display cases and walls for their Relic Chapel.

What you’ll see on the Sacred Stones, Sacred Stories blog

Follow the renovations on the blog at http://www.clydemonastery.org/StoneStories/.

Con’t from page 1

“In April, the Clyde, Mo., community held a Ritual of Gratitude and Remembrance with Abbot Gregory from Conception Abbey presiding. The ritual, held in the oratory (right) gave the Sisters an opportunity to give thanks for the activities that took place in that part of the building and for all who walked the halls or worked or lived in the rooms.

Then, taking two bricks, they chanted a litany of their history as they walked to the main chapel. They placed the bricks in the sanctuary, knowing it was the last Mass in the chapel until the renovations are finished.

Abbot Gregory said, “Sisters, today we take leave of the chapel during the time the monastery will be renovated. We are God’s pilgrim people, never fully at home in this world until we reach our lasting home in heaven.”

Sacred Stones, Sacred Stories

Ritual of Gratitude and Remembrance

In April, the Clyde, Mo., community held a Ritual of Gratitude and Remembrance with Abbot Gregory from Conception Abbey presiding. The ritual, held in the oratory (right) gave the Sisters an opportunity to give thanks for the activities that took place in that part of the building and for all who walked the halls or worked or lived in the rooms.

Then, taking two bricks, they chanted a litany of their history as they walked to the main chapel. They placed the bricks in the sanctuary, knowing it was the last Mass in the chapel until the renovations are finished.

Abbot Gregory said, “Sisters, today we take leave of the chapel during the time the monastery will be renovated. We are God’s pilgrim people, never fully at home in this world until we reach our lasting home in heaven.”

Con’t from page 1

“The Benedictines have a tradition of good stewardship of the earth’s resources,” Sister Sean said. “We will recycle all the building materials we can such as windows, doors, cabinets, shelving, roofing, woodwork, masonry, plumbing and electrical. For items we are unable to use, we try to sell, donate and recycle rather than send to a landfill. Some things we’ll save for future use.”

Even though the main project has yet to begin, the Sisters have already recycled wood into new display cases and walls for their Relic Chapel.

What you’ll see on the Sacred Stones, Sacred Stories blog

Follow the renovations on the blog at http://www.clydemonastery.org/StoneStories/.
A concert recorded in the hallowed Adoration Chapel aired on National Public Radio in March. “Some Aspects of Bliss” was originally performed by Northwest Missouri State University’s Tower Choir in November and later aired on KXCV, a NPR affiliate that broadcasts in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa.

The 48-member choral ensemble was joined by accompanist Dr. Charles Badami and soprano Dr. Pamela Shannon. The program’s theme encompassed the happiest aspects of life such as love, music, conquering fear and knowing of heaven.

Under the direction of Dr. Stephen Town, the Northwest Tower Choir performs nationwide at high schools, colleges and universities, churches and other organizations. Tower Choir has also worked with nine nationally-known choral conductors and has produced one CD, titled “Caritas et Amor: The Best of the Tower Choir 1999-2003.”

The exquisite acoustics of the Benedictine Sisters’ Adoration Chapel have made it a treasured site for music recording, offering a sacred space for singers to perform.

The Dayton, Wyo., community hosted the Wyoming Council of Catholic Women retreat, which was led by Father Rob Spaulding. Twenty women attended the annual retreat and enjoyed fellowship with other Christians.

The Wyoming CCW servers as a means through which the Catholic women of the diocese of Cheyenne acts in cooperation with the National CCW to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. WCCW programs respond with gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world (Mission Statement).

In February, the Tucson, Ariz., community hosted a discernment weekend (below). The six participants spent the weekend in sessions that covered topics such as adoration, the Eucharist and mindfulness.

“Each of them expressed much gratitude and appreciated the input they received as being very helpful in their discernment,” Vocation Director Sister Lupita Barajas, OSB said.

In April, the Wyoming Council of Catholic Women hosted Monastic Weekend at the Benedictine Sisters’ Adoration Chapel.
Tucson oblates enjoy variety of presentations

Oblates with the Tucson, Ariz., community have been busy the past few months with a variety of wonderful meetings.

Tucson oblate Patty Williams (right) shared her experiences as a delegate to the second Benedictine Oblates’ World Congress during a presentation in January. The conference was held last fall in Rome.

“Her presentation was wonderful, complete with enthusiastic commentary,” Tucson Oblate Director Sister Lenora Black, OSB said. “It was the next best thing to being there.”

In February, about 40 people attended a meeting, which centered on the theme of holiness. Oblates Roger Pierce and Mila Aroskar gave excellent talks.

More than 30 oblates gathered to learn more about the Rule of Benedict during the traditional date in March commemorating his death.

Participants were invited to share insights of what the Rule has to teach about Benedict himself and qualities of his life that can guide oblates as they live out the Rule in their daily lives.†

Join us on the Web!

www.facebook.com/BenedictineSis
Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc.

Twitter us @BenedictineSis

Follow our Sisters’ blogs at www.benedictinesisters.org

We are awed by the response we’ve received through various social media outlets. In April, we reached another milestone: 1,000 followers on Twitter, joining more than 500 fans on our Facebook page. It’s a pleasure and a blessing to make connections around the world with people we may have never met otherwise.

What are they saying?

Genover: Your singing and accompaniment are quite soothing and peaceful.

15thnJstpauls: Bless all of my sisters in Christ. Your ministry is beautiful. Soul of Christ sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me.

Rachel: I want to say thank you very much for all your prayers and the words of wisdom from Sr. Dawn. I have found much peace. You are doing good work for our Lord.