



Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration  
31970 State Highway P, Clyde, MO 64432  
(660) 944-2221

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Kelley Baldwin, (660) 562-7433 or [kelley@bspa.us](mailto:kelley@bspa.us).

**PHOTO:** Ten members of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration recently attended the 55 & Under seminar held last month. Pictured are (front row, from left) Sister Ruth Elaine Starman, OSB, Prioress General Sister Pat Nyquist, OSB and Sister Jane Heschmeyer; (second row, from left) Sister Colleen Maura McGrane, OSB, Sister Nancy Rose Gucwa, OSB, Sister Maria Victoria Cutaia, OSB and Sister Lucia Anne Le, OSB; (third row, from left) Sister Rebecca Leis, OSB, Sister Mary Sophia Becker, OSB and Sister Lynn Marie D'Souza, OSB.



Feb. 8, 2011

### **Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration attend 55 & Under national gathering**

**CLYDE, Mo.** - Benedictine Sisters across the nation who are leading the charge to carry monastic life through the 21st century and beyond gathered for the inaugural 55 & Under "United in Hope" seminar held Jan. 27-30 at Mount St. Scholastica in Atchison, Kan.

Almost 100 professed sisters age 55 and younger attended the seminar and represented the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and the Federations of St. Scholastica, St. Benedict and St. Gertrude.

Sisters spent the weekend getting to know others who share their monastic life, reuniting with friends, comparing challenges and sharing mutual support and thoughts on the future of monastic life. They listened to presentations on the Rule of St. Benedict and histories on the founders of all the Benedictine women's communities in America.

"We learned they all faced their share of hardships, struggles and opposition," Benedictine Sister Lynn Marie D'Souza, OSB said. "Yet they persevered. It gives us hope and courage to face this generation's difficulties."

Presenters included Sister Ephrem Hollermann, OSB of St. Benedict's Monastery and Sister Karen Joseph, OSB of the Sisters of St. Benedict, and panelists included peers who shared reflections.

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“I particularly enjoyed Sister Karen’s reflection on St. Benedict’s Rule to never lose hope in God’s mercy,” said Benedictine Sister Maria Victoria Cutaia, OSB, who made her first monastic profession in December. “It is a very important tool in our daily Benedictine life.”

Although there have been smaller regional meetings in the past, this is the first time such a nationwide gathering from all Benedictine monasteries has been held.

“The encouragement and support given to our younger sisters kindles great hope in me,” Sister Lynn said.

“It was an awesome experience, all of us standing firm in our resolve in facing the challenges of tomorrow together, united in hope and faith in God,” Benedictine Sister Mary Sophia Becker, OSB added. “I was struck at how God is using all of us in very different ways to share the gospel of humanity’s salvation. No one community can do it all. No one community can be all for the world. We each have part of the responsibility.”

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