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Quad 136

Local Talent

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Local Talent

If you are interested in learning more about life in Collegeville, St. Joseph and the environs, let me suggest two things you might add to your reading list.

- A weekly blog by Fr. Eric Hollas, OSB: [A Monk's Chronicle](#).

Many of you know Fr. Eric, I am sure, but for those who do not, Fr. Eric is a Ph.D historian and raconteur who currently works for SJU's Institutional Advancement as a Senior Development Officer. He has also directed the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML), and is one of the prime movers behind *The Saint John's Bible*. He is also a [Knight of Malta](#).

Each Monday he posts some trenchant and thought-provoking observations about the world. Recent topics have included Temptation, Thanksgiving and multitasking. It is easy to subscribe and you can't beat the price. You won't be disappointed.

- A new book by CSB/SJU history faculty member Annette Atkins, *Challenging Women Since 1913: The College of Saint Benedict*.

I recently finished reading Annette's engaging book. While it obviously focuses on the history of the College of Saint Benedict, it is also part social history of the Catholic Church before and after Vatican II and a social history of the women's movement. While both of these epochal changes affected all Catholic institutions, the impacts on CSB were profound and deeply moving.

The book is filled with amazing women, including Mother Benedicta Riepp and Sister Claire Lynch, two prime candidates for Catholic bio-pics, if such a genre existed. There are also surprising tidbits even for those who think they know something of the history of both CSB and SJU. For example, Holden Caulfield, more specifically *A Catcher in the Rye*, sadly got two nuns exiled from CSB in the late 1950s. Also, CSB and SJU came within a hairsbreadth of merging into a single institution in the late 1960s. Fascinating stuff. If you are looking for a Christmas present for someone who loves the College of Saint Benedict, you could do a lot worse. Annette might even inscribe it for you. Available at the campus bookstores and [online](#).

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Michael Hemesath is the 13th president of Saint John's University. A 1981 SJU graduate, Hemesath is the first layperson appointed to a full presidential term at SJU. You can find him on Twitter [at] [PrezHemesath](#).