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## Saint Ben's Statues

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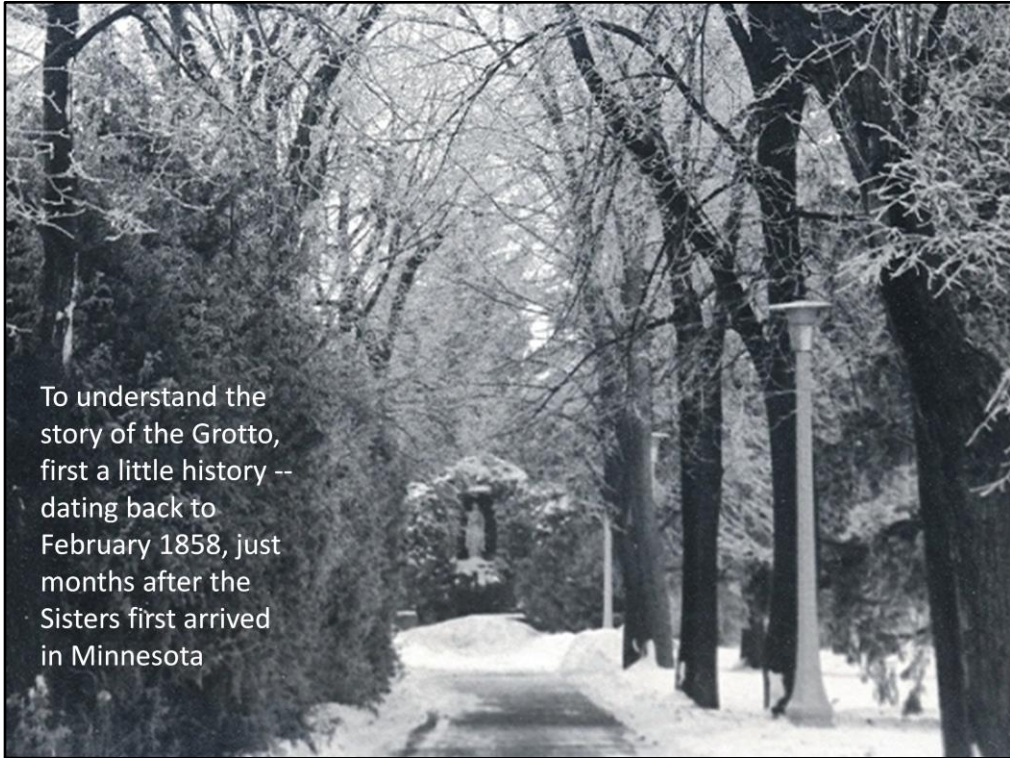
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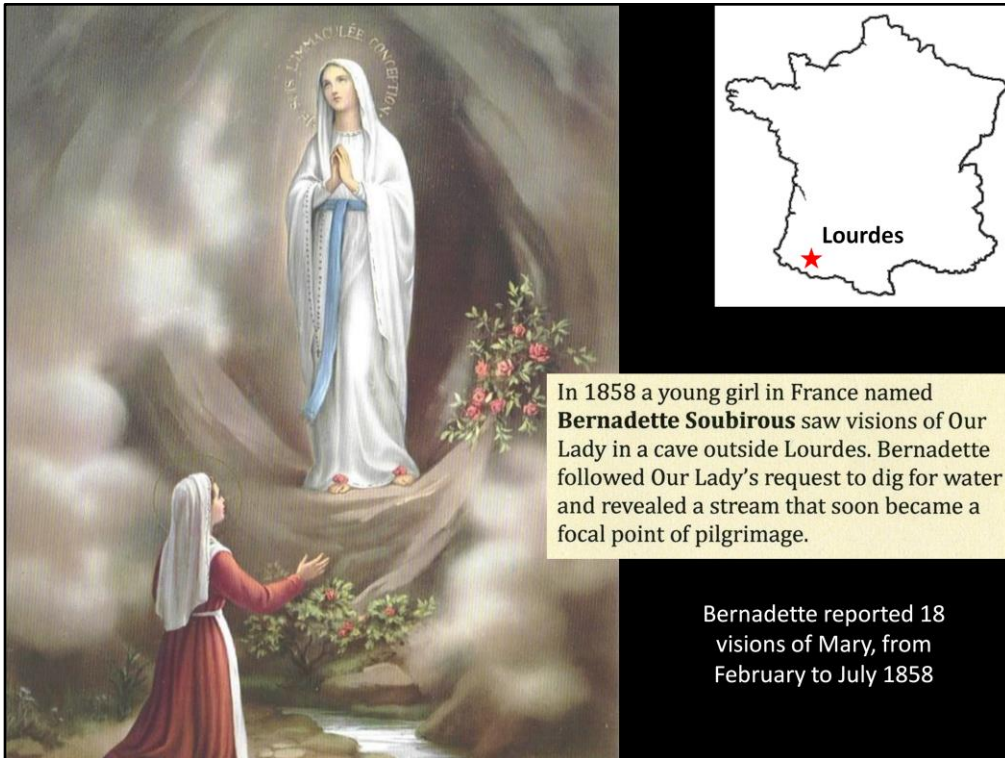
***St. Ben's Statues & Their Stories***





To understand the story of the Grotto, first a little history -- dating back to February 1858, just months after the Sisters first arrived in Minnesota

St. Ben's Grotto



Our Lady of Lourdes, France

Painting from <http://acatholicview.blogspot.com/2013/02/our-lady-of-lourdes.html>

Text snip from SBM brochure

In 1864, French sculptor Joseph-Hugues Fabisch was commissioned to create a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes based on Bernadette's descriptions.

The statue rests in the niche in Lourdes where the Virgin appeared to Bernadette.

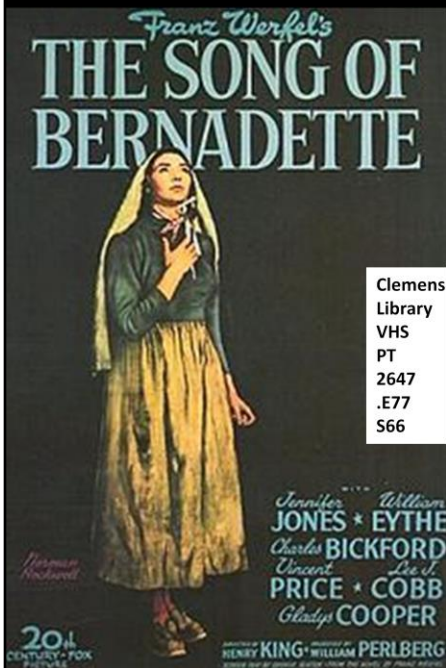
It has become an iconic symbol of Our Lady of Lourdes, although it depicts a figure which is not only older and taller than Bernadette's description, but also more in keeping with orthodox and traditional representations of the Virgin Mary.



In 1864, sculptor [Joseph-Hugues Fabisch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues_Fabisch) was commissioned to create a statue of [Our Lady of Lourdes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Lourdes).

Statue photo and text from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues Fabisch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues_Fabisch)

The miracle at Lourdes was depicted  
in a classic movie in 1943...



Statue photo from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues\\_Fabisch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues_Fabisch)

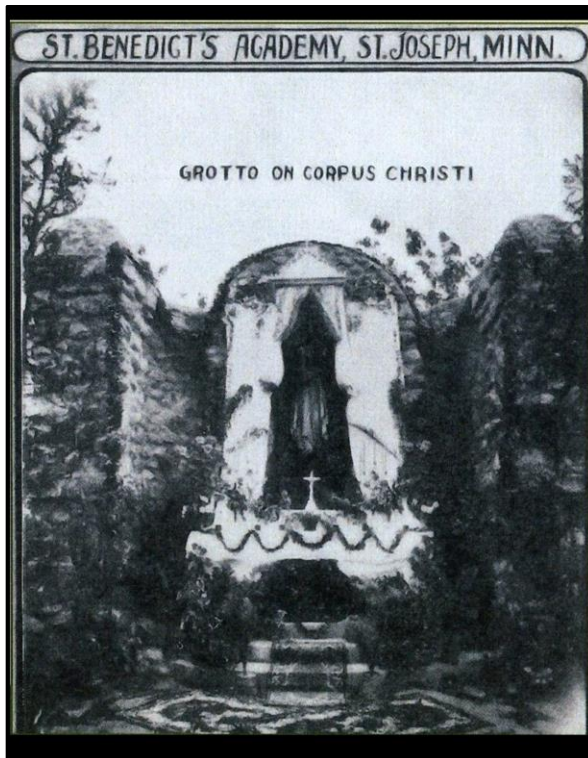


...and became a play that was enacted in many Catholic schools and colleges, including St. Ben's

After the attribution of miraculous cures at the site, Bernadette was beatified in 1925 and canonized in 1933, generating significant worldwide interest in the story.



“The Song of Bernadette” play was enacted in many places, including St. Ben's.  
Statue photo from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues\\_Fabisch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph-Hugues_Fabisch)  
Play photo from SBMA 391



50 years after Bernadette's visions, St. Ben's builds a grotto

"The grotto at the cemetery was erected at a cost of \$400 and the Blessed Virgin statue \$100. The walk was beautified and trees on both sides planted. This grotto was dedicated on the last day of May. It soon became a favorite place for private devotion and even a number of pious lay persons from the village went there frequently."

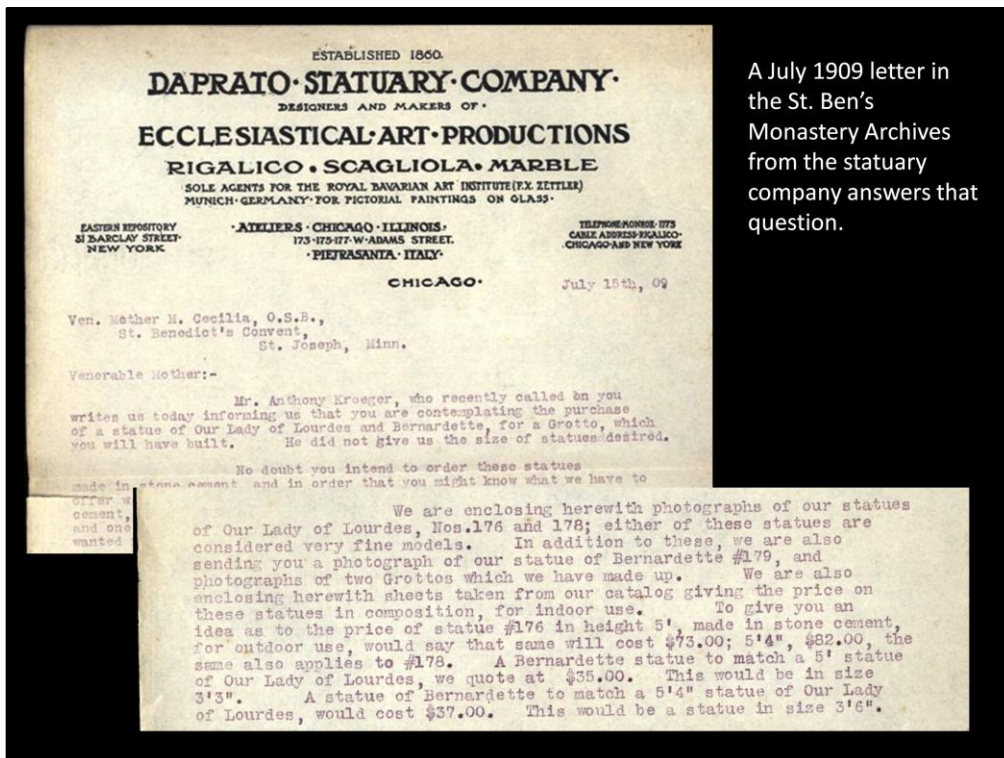
St. Benedict's Monastery's *Community Chronicles*, 1910?

Older pictures show that the 1910 grotto was smaller than the current version. The grotto was designed by **Raphael Knapp, OSB**, Saint John's Abbey, brother of **Felicitas and Justina Knapp, OSB**, Saint Benedict's Monastery. This earlier grotto, with a pair of flanking columns, was constructed of small, smooth field stones. Farm fields surrounded the grotto at that time.

*But was it a Lourdes Grotto?*

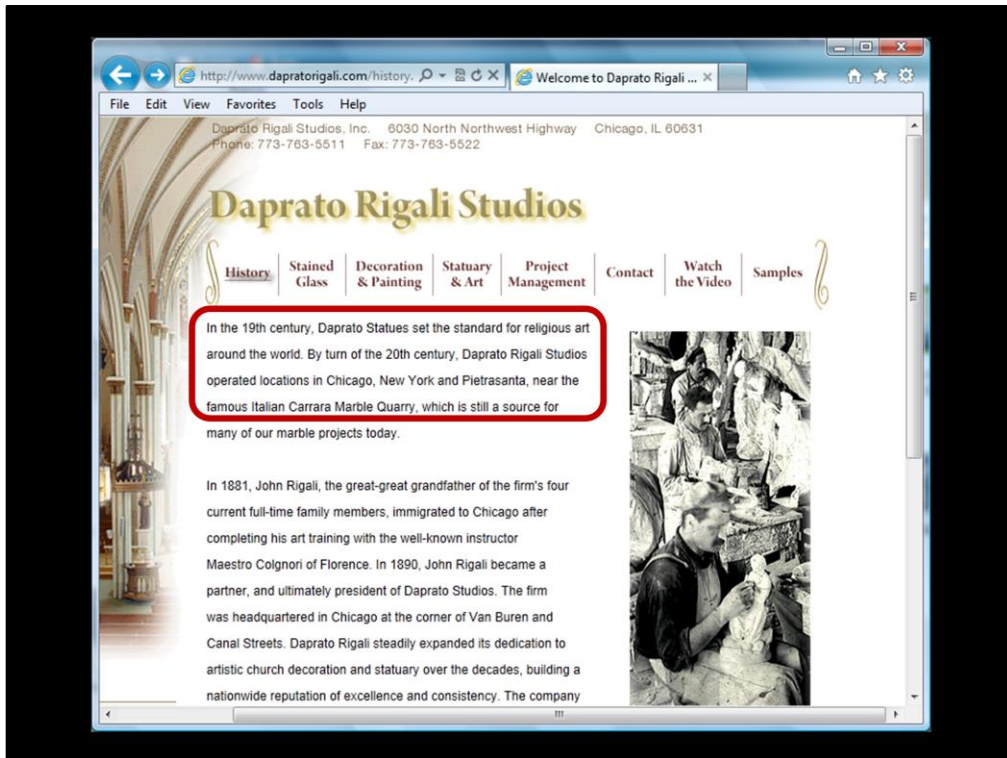
Quote from  
Earliest Grotto photo & text scan from SBM brochure



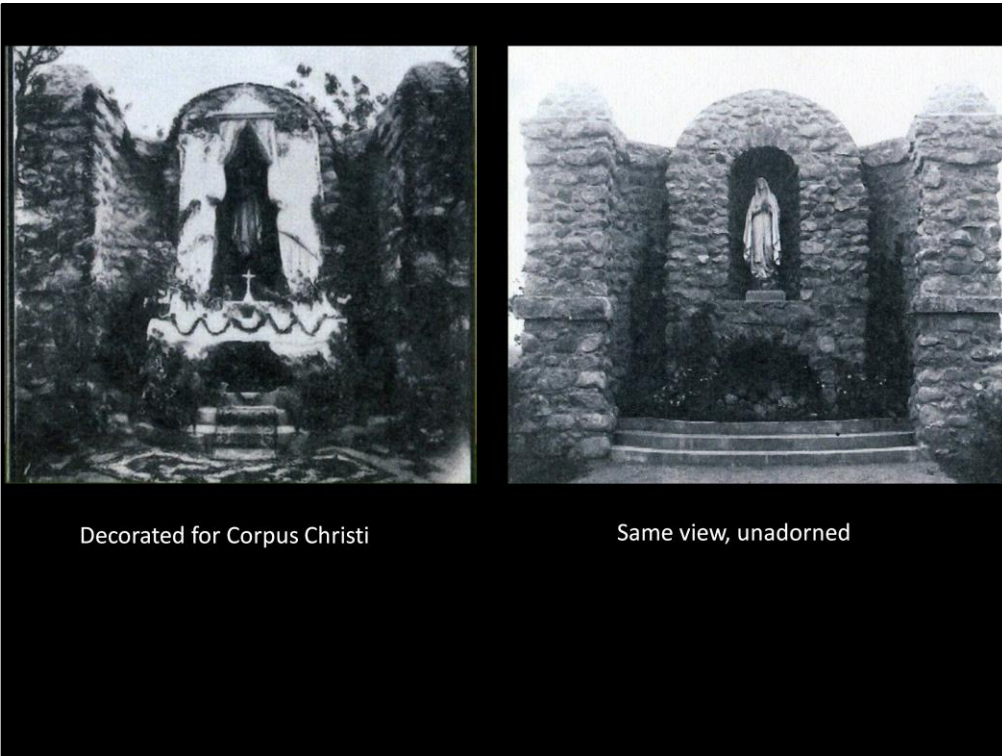


A July 1909 letter in the St. Ben's Monastery Archives from the statuary company answers that question.

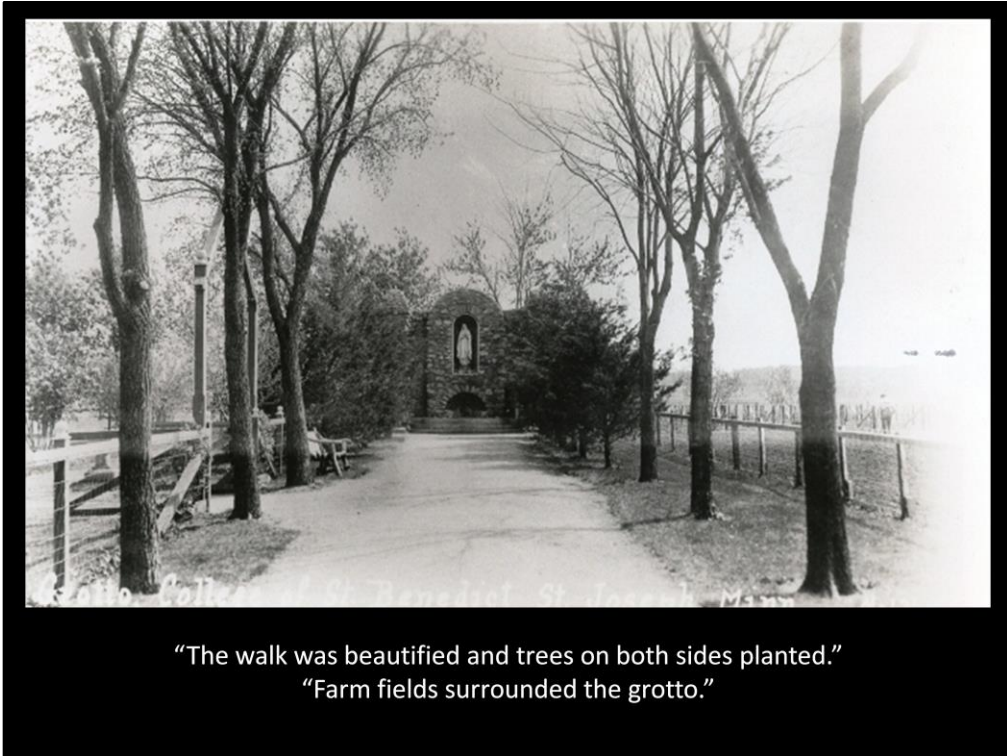
1909 July 15 Daprato Statuary letter (from SBMA, RG14-02-01)



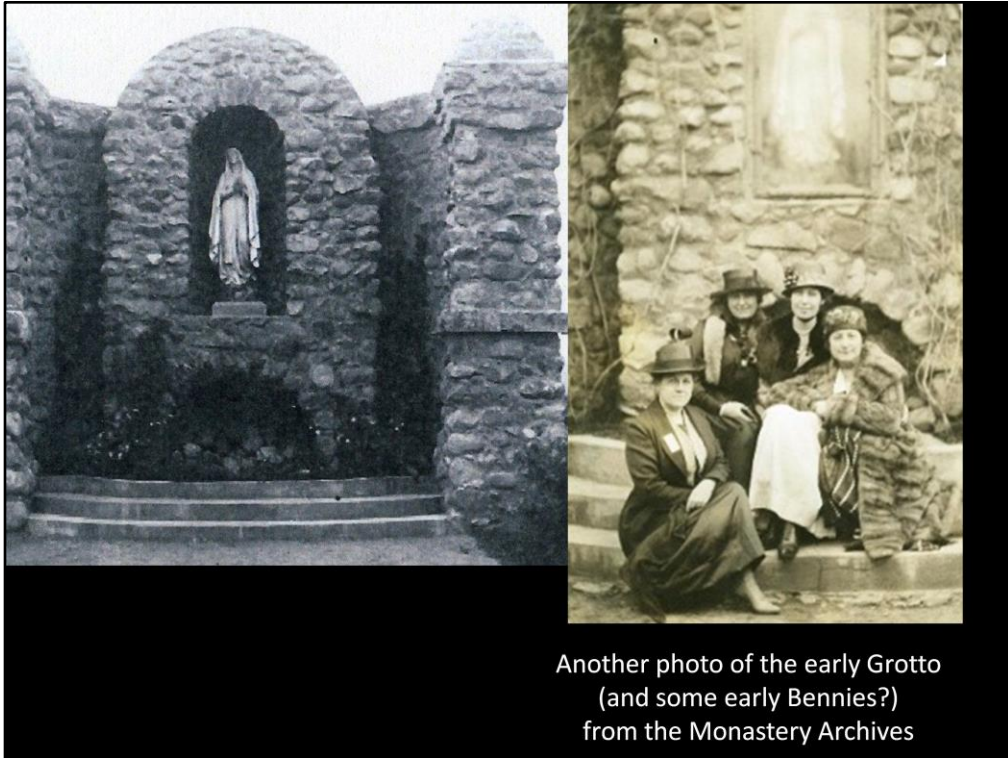
Daprato website April 21, 2013



Photos & text from SBM brochure

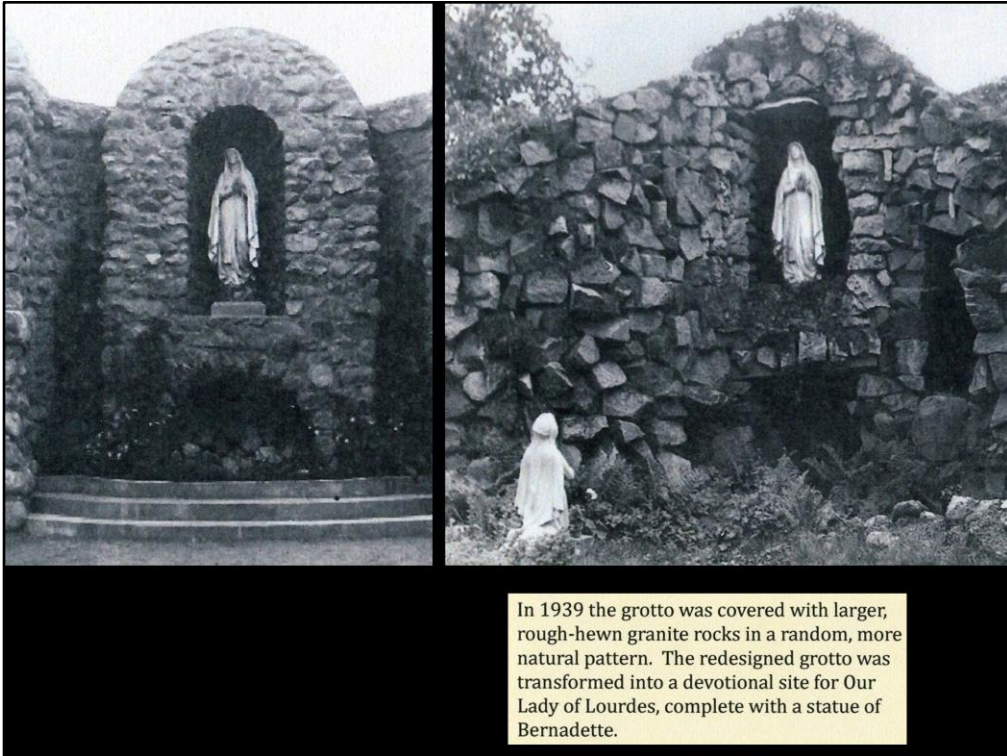


Quote from  
"Farm" text from SBM brochure. Photo: SBMA Grotto 003



Another photo of the early Grotto  
(and some early Bennies?)  
from the Monastery Archives

Yes, it was St. Ben's grotto  
SBM Grotto brochure & SBMA College collection photo 029



Photos & text from SBM brochure



1945 *Facula* yearbook

On Sodality Day Irene Buchl, last year's prefect, and Mary Martin, prefect this year, present flowers to Our Lady of Lourdes at the Grotto.

## Sodality Directs Yearly Program

Feast of the Ascension sodality activities were conducted Thursday under the direction of Donna Coyne, all-college president, and Sister Alfreda, sodality moderator. A living rosary made up of students formed a procession to Our Blessed Lady's grotto where Donna Coyne gave sodality authority to Ruth Nierengarten, all-college president elect.

Later in the day a resume of the year's sodality work was presented by committee members to the student body.

*The Benet* June 1946

Sodality Day at the Grotto: from 1945 *Facula* p. 41

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/3303/show/3282>

1945 June *Benet* p. 1 – Ruth Nierengarten



Looking for Bernadette  
photo from *These Gentle Communists*, p.3





1945 *Facula*



From an alum's scrapbook album, ca. 1945-1949

1945 *Facula* p. 5.

From an alum's scrapbook album, ca. 1945-1949

From O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\Album 1945-1949 Beatrice Johnson, mother of Lisa Moschkau – page 7



*With Lamps Burning*, 1957, p. 109

*The Benet* May 1958 p.3

"A procession to the grotto was made by the entire CSB community"

## Sodality Holds "Lourdes Day"

In honor of the Centenary of the appearance of Our Lady at Lourdes, the sodality held "Lourdes Day" on May 8. The theme: "Visit Lourdes in Spirit." A solemn High Mass opened the day's activities. Each hour during the day, volunteer sodalists made visits to the Lourdes grotto on campus.

During the regular convocation period, a public procession to the grotto was made by the entire CSB community during which time the Rosary was prayed. The prayer of Pius XII for the Lourdes Centennial was recited, followed by a sermon and the Priest's Blessing given by Father Jerome Docherty, OSB, chaplain. As the procession returned, each one blessed herself with water from the famed Lourdes shrine in France. At 5:30 May devotions were held and Benediction given in Sacred Heart chapel.

That evening the members of the Works of Mercy Committee had a dinner at the Children's Home in St. Cloud where they have been giving volunteer service all year. The day's activities concluded with a sodality meeting and a night of recollection for the sodalists.

Grotto photo from *With Lamps Burning*, p. 109 of the pdf  
*The Benet* v.23 n.5 1958 May p.3  
<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/1784>

**EXPRESS**  
 BENEDETTIN SCHOOL  
 1972  
 VOLUME XX  
 NUMBER

**The Grotto has always been honored and celebrated**

**Grotto Turns 100!**

Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto is having a centennial! The grotto is beloved by Sisters, students and the public as a setting for personal devotion, photographs, pranks and perhaps more than a few marriage proposals. Built in 1910 from a design by Raphael Knapp, OSB, a monk at Saint John's Abbey, the grotto has gone through quite a few changes. Originally it was smaller and more formal, with a pair of flanking columns.

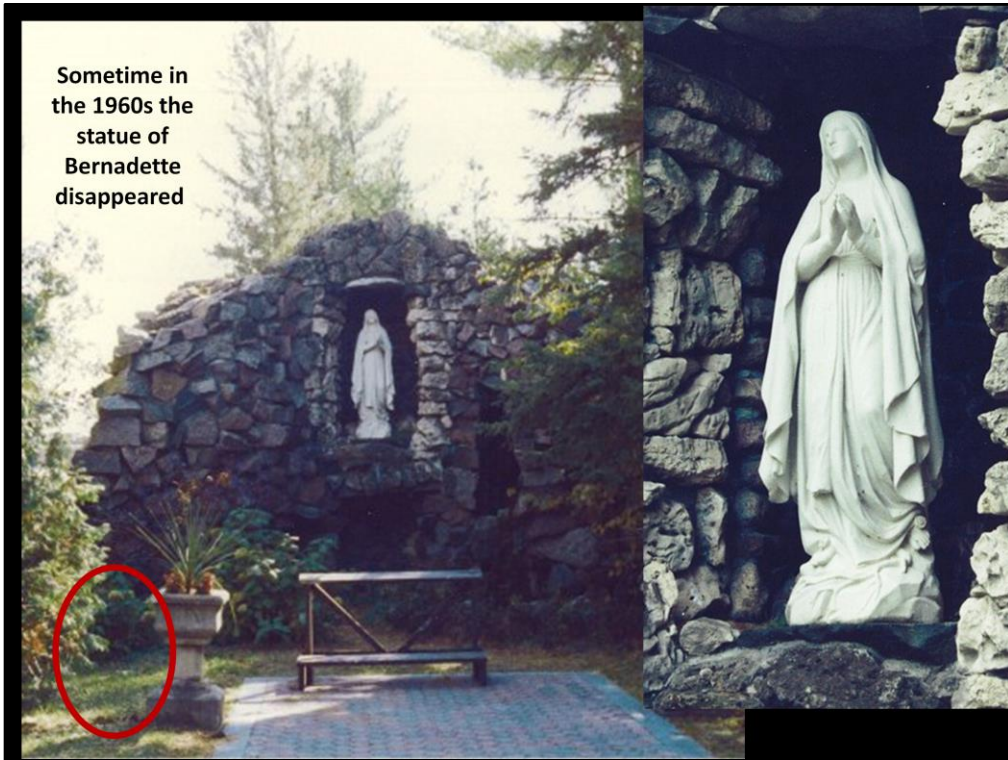
In 1939, it was covered with granite rocks to more closely resemble the cave at Lourdes. At that time there was great interest in St. Bernadette Soubirous, who was canonized in 1933. The grotto became a devotional site for Our Lady of Lourdes, complete with a statue of St. Bernadette and a water feature.

Sometime after the 1960s, the statue of Bernadette mysteriously disappeared. Concrete repairs in 2005-06 shored up the weakened structure, but also erased the design of the back side. Bookmarks and

*Benedictine Sisters & Friends, Winter 2010*

*Note that the monastery's grotto redesign emulates a rough cave with trickling water and a bubbling spring.*

Celebrations of the Grotto  
 Inset from *Benedictine Sisters & Friends* winter 2010



The Grotto  
Color photos from CSB Archives

In 2010, in honor of the 100th anniversary of the grotto, Oblates Lynn and John Crowley donated a statue of St. Bernadette for the grotto's centennial.

The statue arrived in Minneapolis from Rome on May 10.



St. Bernadette is now permanently in place at the grotto.

The Crowleys carefully put her on a truck for the trip to St. Joseph.



From the May 18, 2010 entry on the Sisters of Saint Benedict's Monastery blog, posted by Kathryn Casper, OSB

<http://stbensisters.blogspot.com/search?q=grotto>

Center photo by Linda Dusek OSB from SMB blog; others April 2013 by the archivist



May 12, 2010, Bernadette returns to the Grotto.

From the May 18, 2010 entry on the Sisters of Saint Benedict's Monastery blog, posted by Kathryn Casper, OSB. <http://stbensisters.blogspot.com/search?q=grotto>. Petitions photo by Linda Dusek OSB.



St. John's has its own  
Lady of Lourdes Grotto

...complete with a  
Bernadette



1954 *Sagatagan*

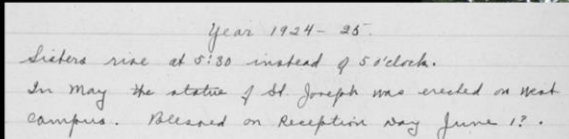
**St. Joseph:  
1924, 1925, or 1926?**

May 1924:

"The statue of St. Joseph was erected on West Campus. Blessed on Reception Day June 1."

*Chronicle* Grace McDonald  
SBMA RG 15-1-1

1924-25:



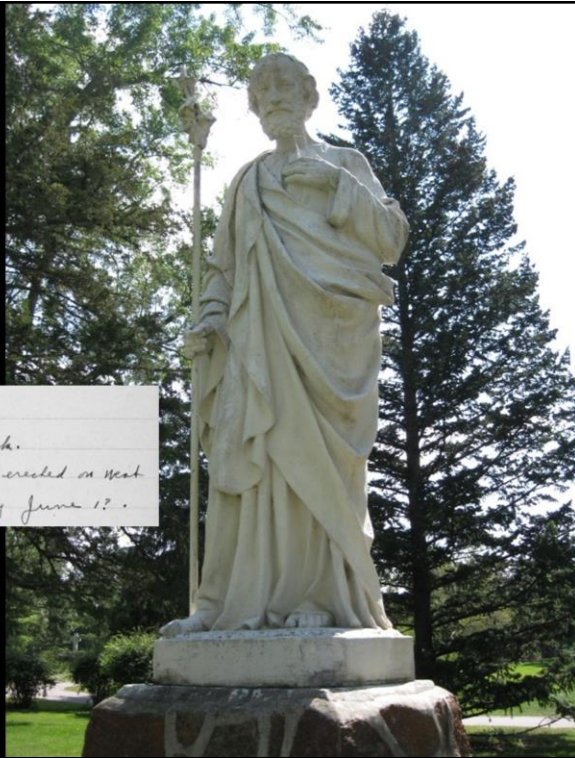
Year 1924-25.  
Lectures rise at 5:30 instead of 5 o'clock.  
In May the statue of St. Joseph was erected on West  
campus. Blessed on Reception Day June 1?

SBMA RG 15-01-01 f.7 p.98

1926:

"St. Joseph blessed 6/16/26 by  
Bishop Busch"

SBMA note cards RG 14-2-1 Box 3



St. Joseph statue erected in May – but which year?



May 16, 1962

"A practice of honouring St. Joseph on Wednesdays by gathering at his statue on the campus and singing a hymn in his honor ...was introduced today."

*Community Chronicle*

June 20, 1962

"During the summer and beginning today a weekly pilgrimage for vocations will be combined with the weekly pilgrimage to St. Joseph's statue. The pilgrimage includes the recitation of the Rosary, hymns sung at St. Joseph's statue and at the grotto, and silent prayer at the Crucifixion group in the cemetery."

*Community Chronicle*



"**1926** 6/16/26 St. Joseph blessed 6/16/26 by Bishop Busch" – from SBMA note cards [RG14-2-1 Box 3]

"During the year quite a number of improvements were made on the premises. A large statue of Our Holy Father St. Benedict was erected on the South Campus and a large Lily pond was built in at the South-west Side of the main building. A lifesize statue of Our Lady was procured for the park around the pavilion. The latter was paid for by donations received by the novices." 15-1-1 file 6 p.15, SBMA

## St. Benedict

ca. 1926-27  
photo ca. 1940s

“During the year quite a number of improvements were made on the premises. A large statue of Our Holy Father St. Benedict was erected on the South Campus and a large Lily pond was built...”

SBMA RG 15-01-01 f.6 p.94

(fate unknown)



Ca. 1926-27 St. Benedict statue at St. Ben's

Blessed 6/5/59 “on front lawn”; removed Fall 1990 – from SBMA note cards [RG14-2-1 Box 3]

photo from *These Gentle Communists*, p.3

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/6078/show/6069>

“During the year quite a number of improvements were made on the premises. A large statue of Our Holy Father St. Benedict was erected on the South Campus and a large Lily pond was built in at the South-west Side of the main building. A lifesize statue of Our Lady was procured for the park around the pavilion. The latter was paid for by donations received by the novices.” 15-1-1 f. 6 p.15, SBMA



Ca. 1926-27 St. Benedict statue at St. Ben's,  
near the parish cemetery

Ca. 1926-27 St. Benedict statue at St. Ben's

Blessed 6/5/59 "on front lawn"; removed Fall 1990 – from SBMA note cards [RG14-2-1 Box 3]

Ca. 1927 St. Benedict statue from SBMA

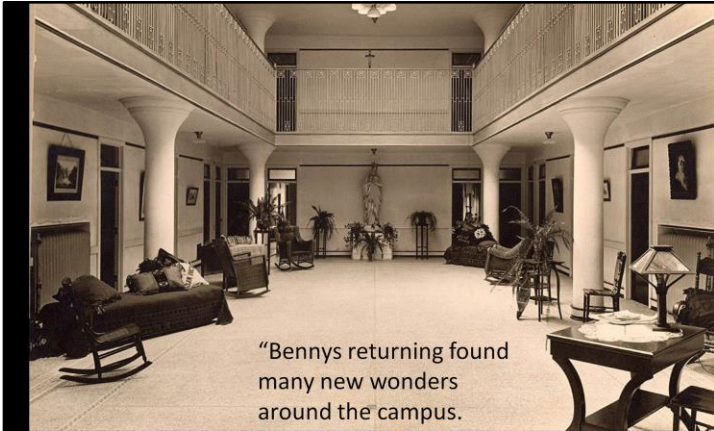


*The Handshake* Jan. 1937 p.3

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/1679>

Photo from Vivarium: SBM14b05\_\_Rotundaresidence

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/406>



“Bennys returning found many new wonders around the campus.

Most surprising was the reconversion of the fourth floor. Juniors and seniors have moved in and love it except for the five flights up from breakfast...

A notable change was the removal of the Blessed Virgin statue from the lower rotunda where it stood for many years to St. Gertrude's hall, near the Guardian Angel dormitory. In its place is hanging a new crucifix, which was blessed by Father Cassian October 14 at 8:00 p.m.”

*The Benet* October 1945 p. 1



Father Cassian blessing the crucifix.

### Renovations and Additions Great Returning Students

#### New Crucifix is Hung in Ro

Bennys returning found many new wonders around the campus. Most surprising was the reconversion of the fourth floor. Juniors and seniors have moved in and love it except for the five flights up from breakfast.

That's fine has its surprise too. The Guardian Angels have returned to the rotunda this year, while freshmen occupy the St. Anne's and St. Agnes' and Father Cassian directed.

High school students have returned almost off-campus to St. Mary's hall at the far end of the farm road. Sister Ferronella and her assistants not only renovated this new hall, but they also painted many of the rooms in the rotunda and dormitory.

A notable change was the removal of the Blessed Virgin statue from the lower rotunda where it stood for many years to St. Gertrude's hall, near the Guardian Angel dormitory. In its place is hanging a new crucifix, which was blessed by Father Cassian October 14 at 8:00 p.m. Fr.

On the anniversary of the great day, they found that it is a most happy to these happy words, "My I have the first mixer for students of St. October 22 in the Benny gymnasium, for a thorough "mixing" a real success of the evening in the search for the 2 Chairman, Cassian, Crew, who was instituted, promises that the summer and frequently. Many were by used the same assembly photograph they 1

#### First Mixer--on --Held in CSB C

#### Sheed Publishes Second Anthology

Our Father's House, a second anthology of short stories by Sister Marcella, was published this week.

1945 in the Rotunda: BVM statue replaced by new crucifix

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/1721>

Photo from Vivarium: SBM14b05\_\_Rotundaresidence

<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/SBM/id/406>



### Our Lady in the Park

1926-27

“During the year quite a number of improvements were made on the premises...

...A life-size statue of Our Lady was procured for the park around the pavilion...paid for by donations received by the novices.”

*SBMA Community Chronicles*

Statue of Our Lady, for the “Pavillion” [in the woods?]

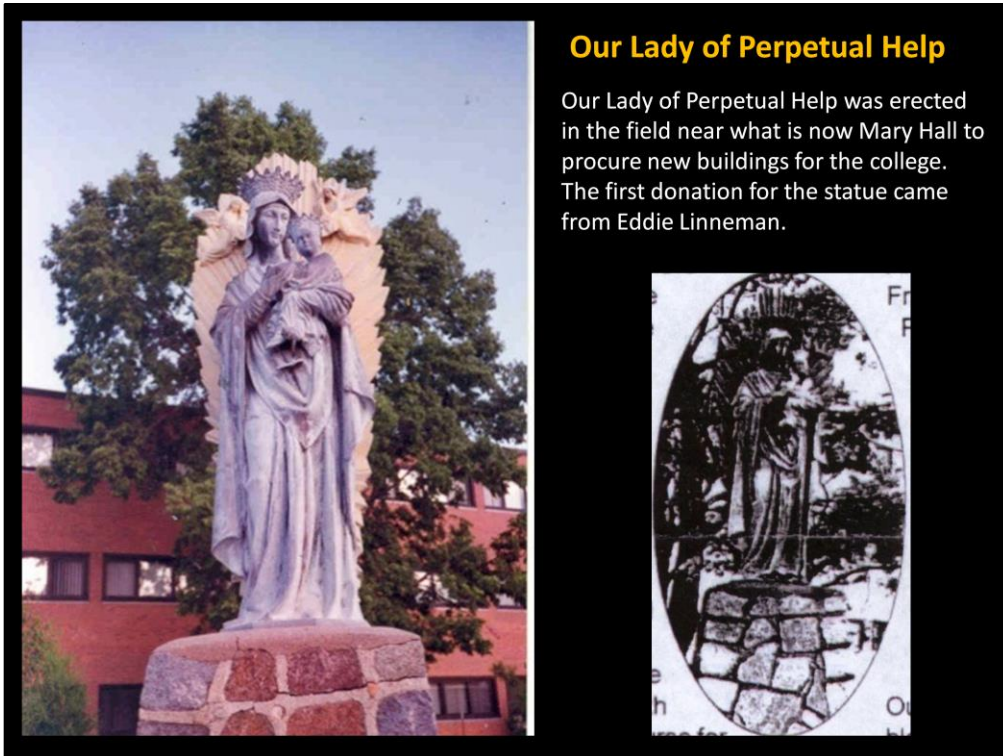
From an alum’s scrapbook album, ca. 1945-1949

From O:\Archives\csbarchives\Photos\Album 1945-1949 Beatrice Johnson, mother of Lisa Moschkau – p. 4

“During the year quite a number of improvements were made on the premises. A large statue of Our Holy Father St. Benedict was erected on the South Campus and a large Lily pond was built in at the South-west Side of the main building. A lifesize statue of Our Lady was procured for the park around the pavilion. The latter was paid for by donations received by the novices.” 15-1-1 file 6 p. 15 [and p.94?]



Our Lady in the Park  
Photos 2013 0422 by the archivist



### Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Our Lady of Perpetual Help was erected in the field near what is now Mary Hall to procure new buildings for the college. The first donation for the statue came from Eddie Linneman.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help outside Aurora Hall

Mary Commons and Aurora Hall opened in the fall of 1956

Inset from "Statues We Have Known And Loved, Part 1" by Owen Lindblad, OSB, Oct. 2004 *Community News*, St. Ben's Monastery

SBM.14c05b From Monastery PP record: "With donations from friends, Sister Leona Ryan had a statue in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help erected in the field (near what is now Mary Hall) to procure new buildings for the college. The first donation for the statue came from Eddie Linneman, The base of the statue enclosed papers with fervent petitions to Our Lady - mostly for blessings upon the future expansion of CSB. Twenty years later when Mary Hall was built (1955-57), Mr. Greene, the architect, fumed about the statue - it should be moved. There was reluctance to move that weather-battered statue under the pine trees even though no one remembered that Mary was placed there to procure new buildings."





### Statues We Have Known and Loved – Part 1

Owen Lindblad, OSB

Time was when Our Lady of Perpetual Help stood watch on our campus grounds amid a shrine of pines. Her bronze and beautiful presence was purchased through the efforts of Eddie Linnehan, a prominent St. Joe citizen, as a gift to Sister Rita Marschall, dean of the college from 1921 to 1925, and was erected by Sister Leona Ryan, president of the college from 1925 to 1927.

Into the base of the five-foot statue was placed a long list of petitions, many that Our Lady would procure new buildings and great blessings on the expansion of the College of Saint Benedict. Eddie had great confidence in Our Lady of Perpetual Help and a strong desire for a prosperous college.

Well, she stood there until in time a pale patina layered the bronze. But no new buildings appeared. Then one winter night in 1953-54, Eddie visited with Sister Enid Smith, OSB, college dean, and the all-college president, Marjorie Olson Lebrun, with an encouraging purse for Our Lady. He wished to have a Mass celebrated every month in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help so that new buildings would get underway.

A year later, construction began on Mary Hall. The architect, Mr. Curtis Greene, was not content with the statue, however. She should be moved. But no one could decide where, so she stayed but was turned slightly toward the new sidewalk to Mary Hall. In choosing the name Mary Hall, no one thought of Our Lady of Perpetual Help nor the litany of prayers for college expansion buried in her base. That is, almost no one.

On August 2, 1957, Sister Mary Patrick Murray, OSB, thought quite a lot about it. She placed a small metal tin (actually, a round typewriter ribbon case) under the statue containing 11 medals, a small silver statue of St. Theresa, and a letter in her own hand, sealed in an envelope. There were five Benedictine medals, one of St. Anne, one of St. Joseph, one of St. Francis Maria of Liguori, one of Pius X and two others.

Sister Mariella Gable told this story in a Homecoming address in 1964. She hoped that the third new dorm in the complex would be named Lady Hall, to join Regina and Aurora, in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Perpetual Help who had done so much for the college.

Our Lady continued her role of blessed surveillance until May 19, 1968, when she was dismantled during construction of the bookstore and student development offices. The tin container was opened and yielded its corroded medals, small statue and the petitions written so long ago. The letter written by Sister Mary Patrick was read. All the items were placed in the Monastery Heritage Museum.

What was the content of Sister's letter?

It was addressed to "Dear Mother" thanking Mary first for answering the earlier request for a building—Mary Hall. That done, Sister Mary Patrick reminded Mary of the subsequent growth of the college and how there was need of an auditorium, gymnasium and an off-campus recreational center. She thanked Our Lady for the college students who had answered a call to the religious life and asked for them and all the Sisters the "grace of perseverance." She requested continued assistance for students and instructors in modeling their lives on Our Lady's "in thought and word and act." Finally, she wrote, "We cannot name all our needs, dear Mother but, since you are Our Mother of Perpetual Help, we know that you will see our needs and fulfill them without our even asking."

We are told that the statue is still awaiting replacement on the college campus. A cleaning job ended up inadvertently with a professional painter who painted Mary in pinks and blues, not at all appropriate or even true to the metal and bronze finish. Now the question of removing the paint and bringing the statue back to its original beauty remains. We are assured that Our Lady of Perpetual Help will stand in the courtyard of Mary Hall, her presence amid the expanding, clustering college buildings, a sure sign of enduring endearment.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help outside Mary Commons  
 "Statues We Have Known And Loved, Part 1" by Owen Lindblad, OSB, Oct. 2004 *Community News*, St. Ben's Monastery



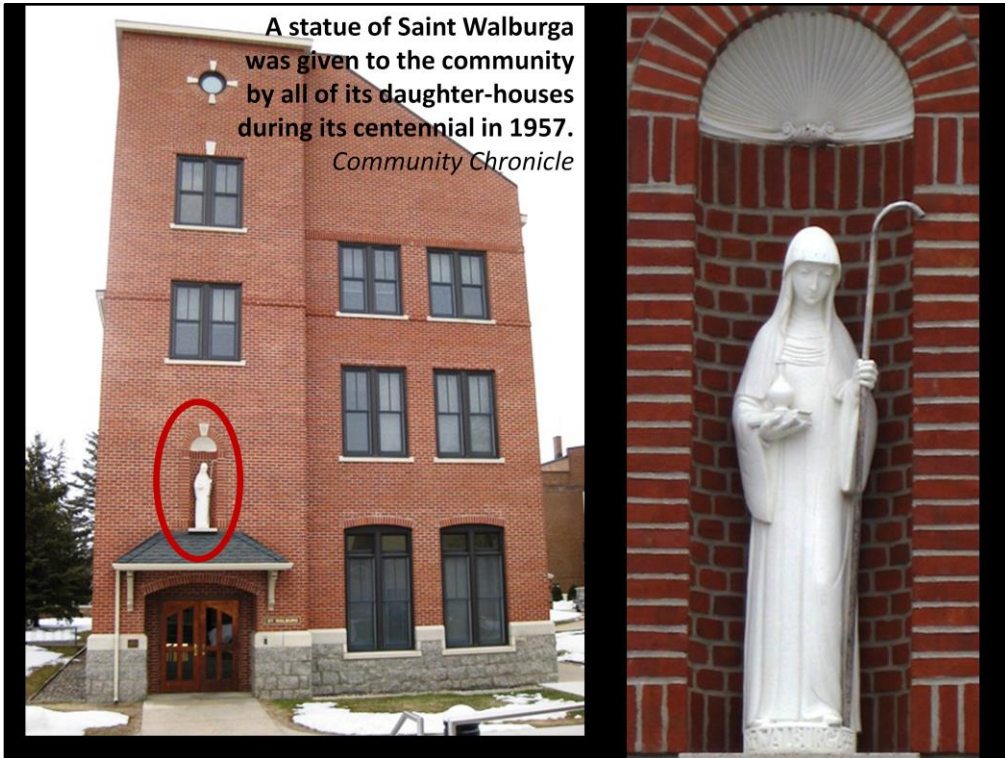
Our Lady of Perpetual Help was removed in May of 1998 when the bookstore addition was built onto Mary Commons.

In need of cleaning, "Some zealous workman took it to an 'artist' who painted it to look [outrageous]: pink, blue, gold, green..."

Now, the paint has been removed with difficulty and we plan to put the statue up on the south side of Mary Hall."

S. Colman O'Connell, March 2013

Our Lady of Perpetual Help and Aurora Hall

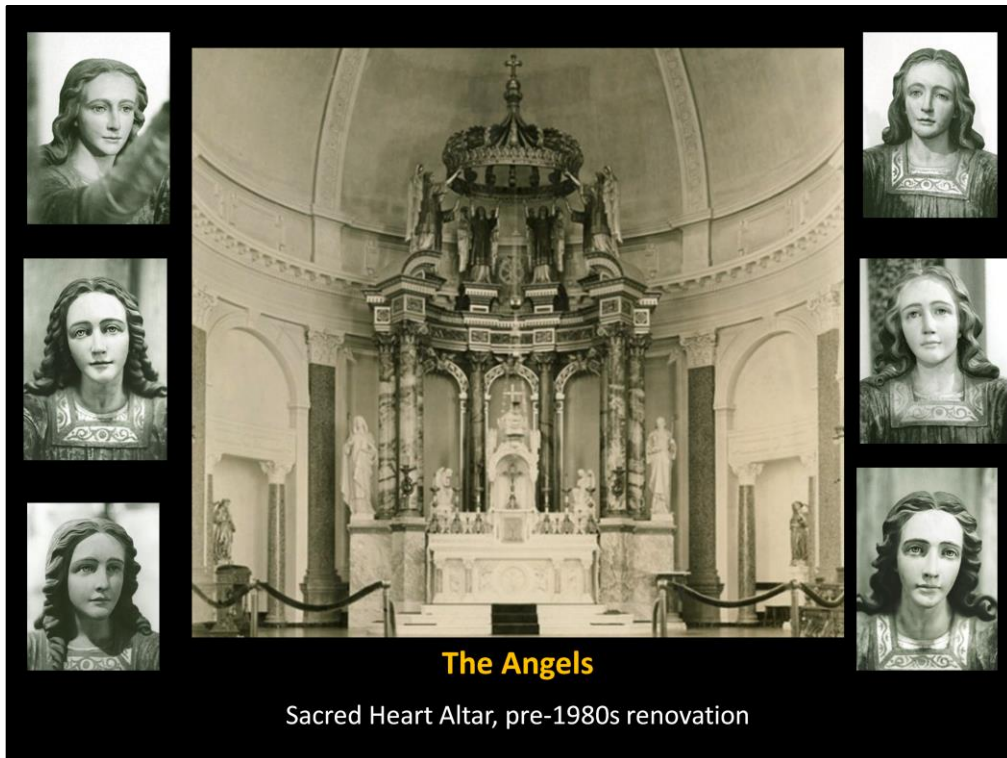


blissing of the statue of St. Walburga

From a file in RG 14 4-2-1 file 2 with notes about the statues, in SBMA

(The Walburga statue's original home was in a niche like this in the north cloister walk, which no longer exists.)





**The Angels**

Sacred Heart Altar, pre-1980s renovation

SBMA photo sbm11c01b



The Angels, post-1980s renovation:  
in St. Mary's Basilica, Minneapolis

SBM.12b05g St. Mary's Basilica in Minneapolis, MN, purchased the six angels and placed them in the choir nave of the Basilica.

SBM.12b06b The parish of St. Mary's Basilica in Minneapolis

These three stayed in the renovated Sacred Heart Chapel:



The Blessed Virgin Mary



St. Benedict



St. Scholastica

locate my father's cane.

The worse was yet to come. Three years later I took a group of students to London. Among them was Joe Bjorklund. His mother had been a student in the first class I taught when I came to Saint Ben's.

It was the first time I taught a student who was the child of a student. It hasn't been the last. Good stuff, this alumnae association.

Well, at least my colleagues will be kinder, I thought. Perish that thought. Three years ago we hired a new recruit in the English Department. I should have known. He had the same kind of dancing eyes I had seen before. He was just a little less overt.

He came to my office one day. His eyes were troubled. Naturally, I was solicitous. He began. Could I, he wanted to know, give him some advice. As a senior faculty member, what did I think of . . . I didn't hear the end of his sentence. "A senior faculty member." It had come to that.

I don't remember what advice he wanted or what I said. But I know what I resolved. Whatever day in March I heard that Joe Bjorklund was sending his daughter to Saint Benedict's I wasn't signing my contract. And so, I thought, welcome to the Alumnae Association.

Not everything goes around the same, though. Or at least the images that come up every cycle are set in a different environment. The faces may remain young, but the setting has changed, and so has the size of everything. When I graduated in 1957, I had 36 classmates. You have well over 400.

I knew everyone in school, seniors through freshmen. I knew every faculty member knew me. None of you can make that claim anymore. Neither can I.

All of the college was then under one roof. There was no Mary Hall until I was a senior. My class was the first to move into the first wing of a whole complex that lies around Mary Commons.

When I arrived as a freshman, every class was held either on first floor Main or second floor, except gym classes. I had moral theology on the same floor space where Jane Haugen now gives out financial aid. In a Dante class I traversed hell, purgatory and heaven where Therese Lohmann and Kathy Aueron and Tish Braun are

graduating. I learned philosophy in what is now the Business Office.

At the ends of those two academic halls on the stair landings were great pieces of statuary, gargantuan and allegorical figures designed to remind us at each turn of the value of some noble thought or good deed.

But it didn't take especially well — the thoughts and deeds, that is.



One figure, perhaps Saint Anthony, served as a particular temptation, for he eternally held out his arms to us — empty. When we could no longer bear it, we would untwist the nearby fire hose and give him 20 feet of canvas tubing to hold.

On the next landing was a massive plaster statue of Saint Joan. Whether it was the sheer ugliness of this figure or the pranks we pulled on Anthony and her other plaster kinsfolk, we didn't know. But one morning Saint Joan and Anthony and all that other tribe which had so clearly failed to save us — all disappeared. Vanished. Not even a plaster flake. Rumors abroad said that S. Colman and some of her other friends, all of them faculty who hated those statues, had come with a truck in the dead of night, had loaded Saint Joan and Saint Anthony and the other heavenly bodies into it and driven in the moonless dark to the woods and the edge of Lake Sarah, where they drowned the whole saintly company of statuary.

Perhaps the rumors were true. Legend has it that years later a scuba diver was found wandering in the woods, mumbling strange snatches about a vision he had had. It seems he found himself at the bottom of a watery wasteland.

Paring the growth to move forward, he discovered himself face to face with a pale, frozen woman who viewed him with unflinching gaze. As he struggled backward in terror, he was snatched at by her male companion of outstretched arms and a twenty-foot tentacle extending from them.\*

\*The accuracy of this report remains in doubt. Unlike its rival, Lake Superior, Lake Sarah is famous locally for its unbridled spirit and generosity of spirit. Once known as Paradise to missionary priests, Saragobuck to pemican Algonquians, and Unimindimindim to the In-Cornucopia dialect — Lake Sarah is also home to especially voracious fish. The food chain begins normally nowhere and ends. But the waters are then dominated by rapid-biting muskies, which in turn are a delicacy for a predatory giant trout, sometimes claimed to be edible during the fourth new moon of each year. It seems unlikely, then, that even in the best of available gear, a diver could stand long enough to explore the bottom of the lake.

## A tale of statues on the old stairway of St. Gertrude Hall

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<http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/4402/show/4370>



locate my father's cane.

The worse was yet to come. Three years later I took a group of students to London. Among them was Joe Bjorklund. His mother had been a student in the first class I taught when I came to Saint Ben's.

It was the first time I taught a student who was the child of a student. It hasn't been the last. Good stuff, this alumnae association.

Well, at least my colleagues will be kinder, I thought. Perish that thought. Three years ago we hired a new recruit in the English Department. I should have known. He had the same kind of dancing eyes I had seen before. He was just a little less overt.

He came to my office one day. His eyes were troubled. Naturally, I was solicitous. He began. Could I, he wanted to know, give him some advice. As a senior faculty member, what did I think of... I didn't hear the end of his sentence. "A senior faculty member." It had come to that.

I don't remember what advice he wanted or what I said. But I know what I resolved. Whatever day in March I heard that Joe Bjorklund was sending his daughter to Saint Benedict's I wasn't signing my contract. And so, I thought, welcome to the Alumnae Association.

Not everything goes around the same, though. Or at least the images that come up every cycle are set in a different environment. The faces may remain young, but the setting has changed, and so has the size of everything. When I graduated in 1957, I had 36 classmates. You have well over 400.

I knew everyone in school, seniors through freshmen. I knew every faculty member knew me. None of you can make that claim anymore. Neither can I.

All of the college was then under one roof. There was no Mary Hall until I was a senior. My class was the first to move into the first wing of a whole complex that lies around Mary Commons.

When I arrived as a freshman, every class was held either on first floor Main or second floor, except gym classes. I had moral theology on the same floor space where Jane Haugen now gives out financial aid. In a Dante class I traversed hell, purgatory and heaven where Therese Lohmann and Kathy Auron and Tish Braun are

graduating. I learned philosophy in what is now the Business Office.

At the ends of those two academic halls on the stair landings were great pieces of statuary, gargantuan and allegorical figures designed to remind us at each turn of the value of some noble thought or good deed.

But it didn't take especially well — the thoughts and deeds, that is.

*Rumors afterward said that S. Colman and some of her other friends, all of them faculty who hated those statues, had come with a truck in the dead of night, had loaded Saint Joan and Saint Anthony and the other heavenly bodies into it and driven in the moonless dark to the woods and the edge of Lake Sarah, where they drowned the whole saintly company of statuary.*

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\*The accuracy of this report remains to be seen. Unlike its rival, Lake Superior, Lake Sarah is famous locally for its unbridled spirit and generosity of spirit. Once known as Paradise to missionary priests, Saragobook to pioneer loggers, and Unconquered to its first fishermen, it is still a place of mystery and awe. The fish that swim in its waters are especially voracious. The food chain begins normally with the sun and ends with the fish. But the waters are also famous for their biting snakes, which in turn are a delicacy for a predatory great snail, sometimes claimed to be edible during the fourth year course of study. It seems unlikely, then, that even in the best of available gear, a diver could survive long enough to explore the bottom of the lake.

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Google Map of St. Ben's, ca. 2010



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Statues made a comeback on campus, especially when **Joe O'Connell's works**, commissioned by the Monastery, begin to grace the Gathering Place in the late 1980s



"Community"



"Work"



CSB's newest statue, "Breaking Free," installed in Clemens Library Feb. 4, 2013  
Installation photo by Jim Parsons; closeup by the archivist 2013 0422



Compiled in March & April 2013 from resources in the CSB, St. Ben's Monastery, SJU and St. John's Abbey Archives by Peggy Landwehr Roske, CSB/SJU Archivist.

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