

***"There are many doors to enter Holy Wisdom Monastery.***
***One need only find the door that suits one best."***

*- Sister Joanne Kollasch, OSB*

# Holy Wisdom Monastery

Dear Friend,

As part of a recent project to improve accessibility and security at the monastery, the front doors to the Retreat and Guest House had to be replaced. The following is a creative interpretation of what – perhaps – the old doors had to say to the new ones, as they were being installed.



*"Ah, thanks be to God! I overheard Toby say you were coming. Well worth the wait I'd say – quite fine work. A chip off the old block, even. Here, let me step out of the way as I orient you to this place.*

*"Listen – you are now an integral part of Holy Wisdom Monastery. The humans here are Benedictines, and doors are very important to them. For more than 70 years, the sisters here have worked to create a haven of hospitality. Look around, see how Lost Lake welcomes the migrating Bufflehead, how the oak savanna cares for little bluestem.*

*"Most importantly for you, young door, observe how this refuge affects the human guest. Notice the difference between how they come, and how they leave. Slower breathing, a softer posture. Laughter, tears and conversation all flow more freely after just a brief time spent here.*

*"My advice? You can learn a lot about how to be a good door from these Benedictines. We have a lot in common. You must open easily and graciously to all guests. You will do this best if you remain steadfast in your place – no going off your hinges! Listen more than you speak (easy for us doors). And around the sisters, you will see the guests unburden themselves. What they carry, they put down. What they protect themselves with, they remove. Inside their welcome, good Benedictines and good doors both allow this.*

*"Your privilege is to safeguard the threshold to a space of transformation. As I heard it said by a good Benedictine inside these walls, 'The primary task of the Benedictine is to create safe spaces to discover our joys and sorrows and find ourselves as belonging to the same human family. A safe space is one where people are listened to with understanding, learn from one another, and can deconstruct and reconstruct their beliefs without judgment.'*

*"These Benedictines will take good care of you – that's what they do. But we each have our own lifespans, and I am at my end. The best doors, after many years of welcoming guests, become a bit porous – swelling too much here and there, and jamming at inconvenient times. This is normal. That time will come for you, too. Then, the humans will be different humans. But you are safe in knowing that they will still be Benedictines."*

Sister Joanne Kollasch, OSB, liked to say, "There are many doors to enter Holy Wisdom Monastery. One need only find the door that suits one best." Whether you found your way here through a retreat, program, Sunday Assembly, Friends of Wisdom Prairie, or your own unique path, we want you to know that you are an integral part of Holy Wisdom Monastery. And whether you identify more with the doors or with the guest in the story, you play an important role in the living tradition of Benedictine community, ensuring that this transformative space remains vibrant for generations to come.

**Would you consider becoming a monthly steward or pledging your annual support for 2027?** Your pledge allows us to plan into the future and continue to offer the wide range of programs, retreats and sanctuary space that our fragile and depleted world so desperately needs.

[OVER]

**Benedictine Women of Madison** · 4200 County Road M · Middleton, WI 53562
608-836-1631, x101 · www.holywisdommonastery.org

## PLEDGE YOUR SUPPORT IN 2027 BY OCTOBER 25, 2026

Thank you for your ongoing support – we depend on it!

Please fill out and return the enclosed response card or go to holywisdommonastery.org/stewardship today and choose from 3 ways to pledge your support for 2027.

1. Set up a monthly gift via automated bank transaction, or ACH. This allows both you and the monastery to avoid credit card fees.
2. Set up a monthly gift via credit card.
3. Pledge your annual giving for 2027 via other means (e.g. personal check, IRA distribution).

SCAN ME

## LEARN MORE

If you have questions or need help setting up your gift online, please contact Signe Lee, office manager, by emailing blf@holywisdommonastery.org or calling 608-836-1631, x101.

Any gift helps sustain the monastery for the long term. If you're able, please consider increasing your support. Our expenses are expected to rise in 2027 along with costs across the country. We promise to steward your gift with intention and care, investing it in this land and in the community that gathers here.

If you would like to learn more about how donations are used, **please join us for the Holy Wisdom Monastery Annual Meeting, virtually or in-person, on October 18, 2026.** More information is on the enclosed card. Thank you for your consideration and generosity.

Lynne W. Smith, OSB

Sister Lynne Smith, OSB Prioress

Erin R Trondson

Erin Trondson, Executive Director