

Sister Barbara Rinehart: Welcome Address

On behalf of the Benedictine Sisters, I welcome all of you who have come to help us celebrate our 50-year Anniversary of the House of Bread Monastery. We know there are some who would like to be here today but for various reasons are not able to attend and we include them in our welcome.

There are some people I would like to name specifically who are with us today, including Bishop Gary, bishop of the Diocese of Victoria, and Valerie Smith representing Faith and Sharing, a group that has blessed the Centre with their presence for so many years.

We are saddened that Sister Jean Ann, a co-founder of the House of Bread, is not able to be with us. Many of you know that Sister Jean Ann was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and is now residing at Eden Gardens Memory Care. We miss her presence at the Monastery. We knew it would be too overwhelming for her to think of bringing her here today. Anyone who knows Jean Anne will know that if she were here, she would be hugging everyone, so consider yourself hugged by Sister Jean Ann.

Our prayer liturgy today has many references to the Rule of Benedict and that's for a reason. Benedict's Rule is based squarely on the gospels. Benedict was wise in spiritual matters as well as community matters and following his Rule has made it possible for women and men monastics, as well as Associates and Oblates and many other to be shaped into person-in-community using the Rule as their guide for fruitful living.

The songs we will be singing to open and close our liturgy will be ones most of you are very familiar with so I know we can expect very robust and resounding singing. I will conclude my welcome with Bishop Gary's word so often heard in St. Andrew's Cathedral, "Take it away, Linda!"