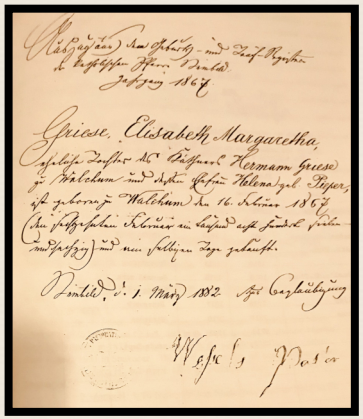
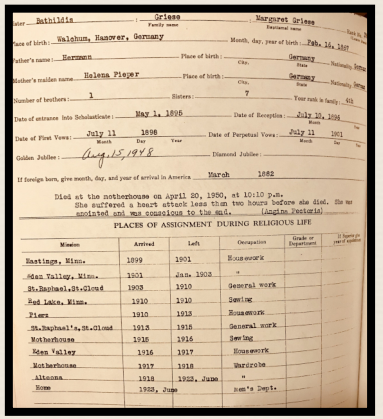




Elisabeth Margaretha Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B.was the only sibling that has information about her past, thanks to the research at St. Benedict's monastery in St. Joseph, Minnesota.



Elisabeth Margaretha Griese was born February 16, 1867, the fourth of nine children born to Helena Pieper and Hermann Griese of Walchum, Germany. Her siblings included seven sisters and one brother.

Elisabeth and her parents arrived to America in March of 1882.

Elisabeth professed as Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B. on July 11, 1901. Bathildis became a saint and is commemorated on January 30. Elisabeth was named after this saint.

Bathildis was born circa 626-627. She was beautiful, intelligent, modest, and attentive to the needs of others. Bathildis was sold into slavery as a young girl and served in the household of Erchinoald, the mayor of the palace of Neustria to Clovis.

Erchinoald, whose wife had died, was attracted to Bathildis and wanted to marry her, but she did not want to marry him. She hid herself away and waited until Erchinoald had remarried. Later, possibly because of Erchinoald, Clovis noticed her and asked for her hand in marriage.

Even as queen, Bathildis remained humble and modest. She is famous for her charitable service and generous donations.

Because of her donations, the abbeys of Corbie and Chelles were founded; it is likely that others such as Jumièges, Jouarre, and Luxeuil were also founded by the queen. She supported Claudius of Besançon and his abbey in the Jura Mountains.

Bathildis bore Clovis three children, all of whom became kings: Clotaire, Childeric, and Theuderic.

When Clovis died (between 655 and 658), his eldest son Clotaire succeeded the throne. Bathildis acted as the queen regent. As queen, she was a capable stateswoman. She abolished the practice of trading Christian slaves and strove to free children who had been sold into slavery. Bathildis and Eligius, according to Dado, "worked together on their favorite charity, the buying and freeing of slaves." After a power struggle with mayor Ebroin, Bathildis withdrew to her favorite Abbey of Chelles near Paris.

Bathildis died on January 30, 680 and was buried at the Abbey of Chelles, east of Paris. She was canonized by Pope Nicholas I, around 200 years after her death.

Elisabeth became Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B., and had several assignments during her religious life. Starting in 1899, she was a house worker in Hastings and Eden Valley. In 1903 she did general work in St. Cloud until 1910. Sister Bathildis then worked sewing garments, was a house worker, and a general worker in Red Lake, Pier, St. Cloud, and at the motherhouse in St. Joseph from 1910-1916. She then worked at Eden Valley and the motherhouse in St. Joseph from 1916-1918.

Sister Bathildis worked in wardrobe in Altoona in 1918, and then at the men's



Elisabeth Margaretha Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B. was named after St. Bathildis.

department at St. Joseph starting in 1923.

Her Golden Jubilee was August 15, 1948.

Elisabeth Margaretha Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B. died April 20, 1950, at 10:10 pm. She had suffered a heart attack less than two hours before she died. She was anointed and was conscious until the end.

She was buried at St. Benedict Convent in St. Joseph, Minnesota.



The Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota are a monastic community of women who seek God in our daily lives according to the Gospel and the Rule of Benedict. Through our ministry of prayer, work and community living, we listen and respond to the needs of the Church and the world.

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Elisabeth Margaretha Sister Bathildis Griese, O.S.B.

1866-1950

Compiled and written by David R. Schleper, Shakopee Heritage Society © 2024