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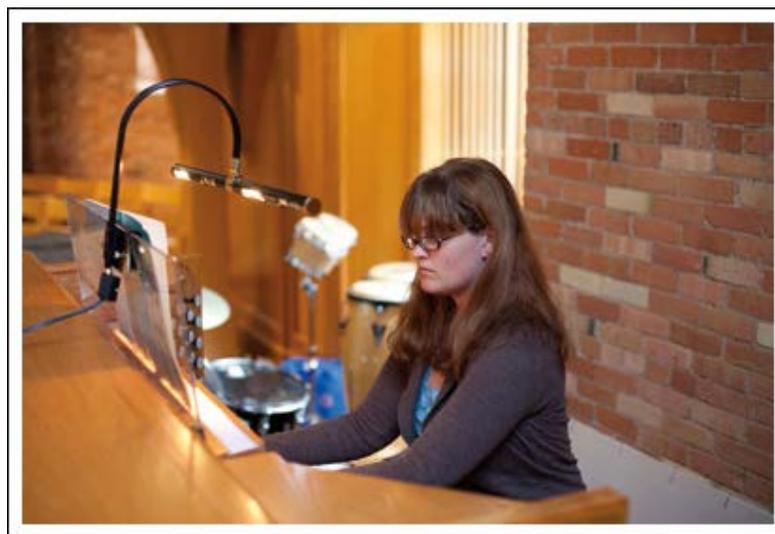
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Student revives organ music at Sunday Mass



Emily Bielinski '12

Emily Bielinski '12 did not set out on a mission to reintegrate the organ into worship music, but that's precisely what she does every Sunday at Old St. Joseph Church. The results, according to music ministry coordinator **Jennifer McAllister '94**, are beautiful.

When Bielinski arrived at St. Norbert, she enrolled in organ lessons not only to continue her progress on the instrument but also to meet other people who were interested in the organ. "It was hard in high school," Bielinski says, "because I had nobody to share that passion with."

Since then, she's not only found other students and professors who share her enthusiasm, but also works toward cultivating the same love for organ music in those around her. The music ministry at Old St. Joseph Church provides a weekly outlet for her to do just that.

"Many Catholic churches do not even have organs anymore," says Bielinski. "Old St. Joseph Church has a beautiful instrument in our space, and I fully believe that it needs to be used."

Bielinski certainly seizes the opportunity to incorporate the organ into Mass.

"Emily is not shy about her love of organ," says McAllister. "She often has me listen to a piece that I am not sure will work on organ, but more often than not, it works beautifully."



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Teach me your ways

Retired educator the **Rev. Gery Meehan, O.Praem., '57** remembers **Abbot Bernard**

Bielinski admits that the process of reintegrating organ music into Masses has been gradual. "I started slow, playing only the traditional songs such as 'Now Thank We All Our God.' The more I got to know Jennifer, the more she began to trust me to try new pieces on the organ. I started to introduce more contemporary songs on the organ, such as 'City of God.'"

"Most importantly," Bielinski states, "we both try to find something that works for Old St. Joe's, that fits liturgically, yet is musically interesting to the parish."

Bielinski's weekly organ lessons with **Jeff Verkuilen** (Music) give her the basis she needs to play well each Sunday.

"Emily's skills and confidence have improved considerably as a leader and accompanist of congregation and solo singing," says Verkuilen.

When Bielinski holds her senior recital on Nov. 11 at St. Norbert Abbey, she will demonstrate not only her technical ability but also her training in leading congregational music, as she directs the audience in a hymn.

Office of Communications

Phone: (920) 403-3557

Fax: (920) 403-4010

E-mail:

communications@snc.edu

Pennings – founder of both abbey and college.

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