



# Benedictine Bits

## Benedicta Riepp



Mother Benedicta Riepp, born Sybilla Riepp, entered St. Walburg Convent in Eichstätt, Bavaria, Germany in 1844 at the age of 19. As a young sister, she was thrown right to work among an aging community. Benedicta quickly became novice director after her own novice director passed away at completion of her first vows. Then in 1852, a request came from Abbot Boniface Wimmer to send sisters to teach the children of German immigrants that settled in Pennsylvania. At the age of 27, Benedicta volunteered to relocate to the United States to help educate German immigrants and to spread the Benedictine way of life. Despite financial hardship, substandard living conditions, and questioning of her authority, Benedicta was able to establish the first convent for Benedictine Sisters in North America. Thanks to Mother Benedicta Riepp's foresight, she is considered the founder of Benedictine women's communities in the United States. Under her leadership, three new Benedictine communities for women were founded across the country, including Saint Benedict's Monastery where she is buried in the monastic cemetery as pictured above.