



# Benedictine Bits

## Stella Maris Chapel



In 1872 the monks of Saint John's built a small, picturesque chapel across the waters of Lake Sagatagan to honor Mary, the Mother of God. To transport the necessary building materials, items had to be brought over the frozen lake by sled in the winter and by horse-drawn wagon in the summer. The original gothic style structure of red brick was named Stella Maris, meaning *Star of the Sea*, in tribute to the Virgin Mary. This picturesque chapel has undergone various renovations through the years prompted by fire, vandalism, and neglect. The first rebuild was needed after a lightning strike in 1903 burned the chapel down to the foundation, but reconstruction had to wait until 1915. The resurrected structure was designed by Saint John's monk, Gilbert Winkelmann, in a larger Romanesque-style that featured a wooden altar, steeple, and statue of the Blessed Mother. Then in 1943, the stolen cornerstone was replaced, walls were reinforced, and stained-glass windows were installed. Age also played a factor in the chapel's run-down appearance and in 1989, general upkeep required the installation of a new roof, wall repair, and new altar. The structure we see today out on Chapel Island was last renovated in 2007 as part of the 150-year anniversary of Saint John's. Don Hall, Saint John's Prep class of 1955, financed the large-scale remodel breathing new life into our "Star of the Sea."