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For Immediate Release:
February 26, 2010

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Holy Wisdom Monastery Named a 2009 Top Project

Hoffman LLC Project Recognized by Wisconsin Builder Magazine

APPLETON, Wis. – *Wisconsin Builder* magazine has announced that the Benedictine Women of Madison's Holy Wisdom Monastery has been named one of its Top Projects of 2009. The Top Project award program recognizes those Wisconsin projects that have displayed a commitment to sustainable construction, made a positive impact on the surrounding area and community, or introduced a new technique to the industry. Holy Wisdom Monastery will be honored at the Top Projects awards dinner April 21 in Waukesha, and will be featured in the May issue of *Wisconsin Builder* magazine.

The Benedictine Women of Madison partnered with Hoffman LLC, an Appleton-based firm that provided the project's planning, architecture, and construction management services, in the creation of the 34,000 square foot Holy Wisdom Monastery. Seeking to replace Benedictine House, their existing 60,000 square foot conference center, the Sisters set high expectations for Holy Wisdom Monastery. The monastery needed to:

- Embody the Sisters' mission of weaving prayer, hospitality, justice, and care for the earth into a shared way of life as an ecumenical Benedictine community.
- Portray an elegant simplicity central to the Sisters' monastic values.
- Provide a space ideal for both quiet, personal reflection as well as community gathering.
- Be designed and built sustainably, respectful of its natural environment, within a fiscally responsible budget.
- Achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Platinum rating.

"The goal in building Holy Wisdom Monastery was to create a smaller, energy-efficient building that would be in harmony with our surrounding acres of restored prairie," explained Sister Mary David Walgenbach, OSB, prioress of Benedictine Women of Madison at Holy Wisdom Monastery. "Hoffman worked with us to design a simple, hospitable building to reflect our monastic values, and compliment the beauty of the land. With every design decision, we asked, does it express our mission, is it the greenest option, and is it cost effective?"

Completed in August of 2009, Holy Wisdom Monastery was submitted to the United States Green Building Council in September, pursuing the highest LEED rating in the nation to date. Not only highly sustainable, the monastery boasts a total project cost of $241 per square foot, which includes all design, construction costs, demolition, commissioning, and LEED certification costs. This cost is well below comparable projects, including some that have earned Platinum.

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"Providing versatile, functional spaces ideal for community gathering and personal reflection, Holy Wisdom Monastery expresses the Sisters' mission and fully meets their fiscally responsible budget, demonstrating that a highly sustainable building can be affordable," said Paul J. Hoffman, Hoffman LLC Owner and President.

The two-story Holy Wisdom Monastery provides the Sisters and their community with spaces for worship, concerts, conferences, lectures, interfaith dialog, and both small and large group dining. Since the Sisters were striving for LEED Platinum certification from the early planning phases of the project, the monastery was designed and constructed with numerous sustainable features, highlighted by:

- Photovoltaic panels on the roof provide 13% of total energy cost. The system is expandable and the goal is to eventually provide 100% of the monastery's energy needs on a net basis from on-site, renewable sources—and a zero carbon footprint.
- Specially designed, high-performance Andersen® windows keep heat losses/gains to a minimal and provide abundant daylight and aesthetic prairie views.
- An efficient geothermal heating and cooling system uses 39 closed-loop wells, each 300 feet deep.
- A white, membrane roof, highly reflective pavers, and vegetated ("green") roofs help keep the surroundings cool.
- Barrels collect rain water for landscape irrigation.
- Bamboo, a rapidly renewable resource, was used for the Assembly Room floor and the ceilings of the Oratory and Meditation Chapel.

Prior to beginning work on Holy Wisdom, Hoffman responsibly deconstructed Benedictine House. Of the old building, 99.75% was diverted from landfills via recycling centers, reuse, and donations.

The monastery continues to accept donations toward the remaining $1 million of their $2 million campaign goal. For more information, visit www.benedictinewomen.org.

According to *Wisconsin Builder*, over 140 projects were submitted to this year's program—its highest entry total to date. Projects selected as 2009 Top Projects hail from a variety of markets, including health care, education, religious, commercial, residential, and infrastructure.

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*Hoffman LLC, based in Appleton, Wisconsin, is a planning, architectural, and construction management firm whose mission is to make a positive impact on people's lives and their environment by providing creative ideas and responsible solutions .**Total Project Management: Vision Taken to the Power of Green®** (TPMg), is Hoffman's exclusive process that integrates efficient, healthy, and cost-effective building solutions that respect the environment while enhancing a building's quality and value and reducing initial and long-term facility costs. Learn more at www.hoffman.net.*

Hoffman was the first commercial planning, architectural, and construction management firm in Wisconsin to be awarded membership in Green America's Green Business Network, the oldest association of socially and environmentally responsible businesses in the country.