



Merry Christmas

FROM OUR LADY'S HOUSE TO YOURS

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BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES  
 Priory of Our Lady of Ephesus  
 1400 NE 42nd Terrace  
 Kansas City, MO 64116



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CHRISTMAS 2008

# At Ephesus

THE BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES

Dear Family, Friends and Benefactors,

As the excited hush of Advent comes to a close, we prepare our hearth and hearts even more readily for the coming of Our Saviour. Indeed, *we need a Saviour*. And *how* He loves us to tell Him so! Each little sister in our community strives to listen to, accept and embrace the gentle urgings of the loving Heart of our Divine Spouse, Who so mysteriously and in countless ways sollicit her gift of self, so that He, in turn can give Himself more fully. Our close community life, (literally getting more tight as I write, because of the many vocations coming to the Priory), provides an amazing wealth of occasions for each member to realize how much she must desperately rely on the Saviour, personally, communally, ecclesially.



Our Divine Office, chanted in Latin "seven times a day and once in the night", is the sweet and mystical colloquy between the soul and this much-needed Saviour. Our Holy Father the Pope, in his recent work, "Jesus of Nazareth" (*trans. Adrian J. Walker, Doubleday: New York, 2007*) tells the world the secret of our psalmody:

**"In his Rule, Saint Benedict coined the formula: *Mens nostra concordet voci nostrae*—our mind must be in accord with our voice. (Rule, 19:7). Normally, thought precedes word, it seeks and formulates the word. But praying the Psalms and liturgical prayer in general is exactly the other way around: the word, the voice, goes ahead of us,**

and our mind must adapt to it. For on our own we human beings do not "know how to pray as we ought" (Rom 8:26). We are too far removed from God, He is too mysterious and too great for us. And so God has to come to our aid: He Himself provides the words of our prayer and teaches us to pray. Through the prayers that come from Him, He enables us to set out toward Him; by praying together with the brothers and sisters He has given us, we gradually come to know Him and draw closer to Him."

You, dear families, whom God ordained to form, foster and prepare each of us for this consecrated, monastic life; friends, who have encouraged and supported each of our nuns or our endeavors undertaken for His glory; benefactors, whom the Saviour has chosen to exercise His providential care over our fledgling community and our Priory; lastly, those of you who, knowing we "have Our Lord's ear", have entrusted to us your prayer intentions; **all of you, each and every one of you, will be remembered in a special way during the Divine Office and three Masses of Christmas—midnight, dawn and in the day.**



**The kind pastor and parish of St. Patrick's across the street have encouraged us to put in a garden next Summer. Since we need to get back the balance lost in the city of hard, manual labor in our life of contemplative prayer, I jumped at the opportunity. When the ground warmed-up enough, the sod was plowed to break down over the Winter.**

Everyone, I am sure, wants to know about the progress of the construction of our permanent Priory in Gower, MO. Besides the Good News of the Birth of Our Saviour, we have the good news to share that, at a time when the economy couldn't be worse, the response to our appeal has been so generous, positive and steady, just from the smaller donations of a great many people, that we cherish a certain hope and desire to be able to break ground this Spring. Are there sufficient grounds for this hope? Yes! Does that get us to Gower? Not right away. Projected building time for the first phase is approximately 18 months. With so many vocations coming in, will we have outgrown the proposed buildings of the first phase? Probably. What a wonderful problem to have! What will we do? Pray, wait, and expect. That is, after all, what we have been doing, especially this Advent. And "when the fullness of time has come" a time, we hope, will be even sooner than we anticipate, we will be ready. That is where our efforts are now: fine-tuning the documents for construction, felling the trees in the way, settling the financial plans, expanding our base of generous lay supporters, and—most importantly—striving to accept all difficult circumstances sent from the Beloved Saviour as opportunities to grow and expand in the virtues He desires to see in us. In these small ways, Our Lord will establish His house of prayer in the Heart of the Church in America, where His chosen brides will become more fit vessels to receive His love and life for the sanctification of His priests.

What can you do? It is not everyday you can be part of a new foundation for God's glory "from the ground up". Pray with us and for us. Pray especially for the community as we experience growing pains, so very crowded in a city convent built for sisters meant to be out of the house to teach all day, not Benedictine nuns who need space and solitude to pray and land to sustain themselves. Pray for the perseverance of all four of our postulants who will take the habit on January 6, and for our novice, Sr. Grace, who will make her first profession of vows the same day. Pray for the holiness and perseverance of all here who are trying their hardest to live faithfully in such trying housing circumstances. Pray for the growing group of young women joining us in the Spring, and for the dozen or so discerning with us. We would hate to turn anyone away due to space limitations! Continue to help us with your donations, in

any size. Do spread the word to as many as you can. Ask us to send you literature and CDs for you to pass on to individuals who might like to be part of this work for God. May you be richly blessed!



In Corde Mariae,

*Sr. Therese, o.s.b., Prioress  
of Our Lady of Ephesus*

Sr. Therese, o.s.b.,  
Prioress of Our Lady of Ephesus,  
and Sisters



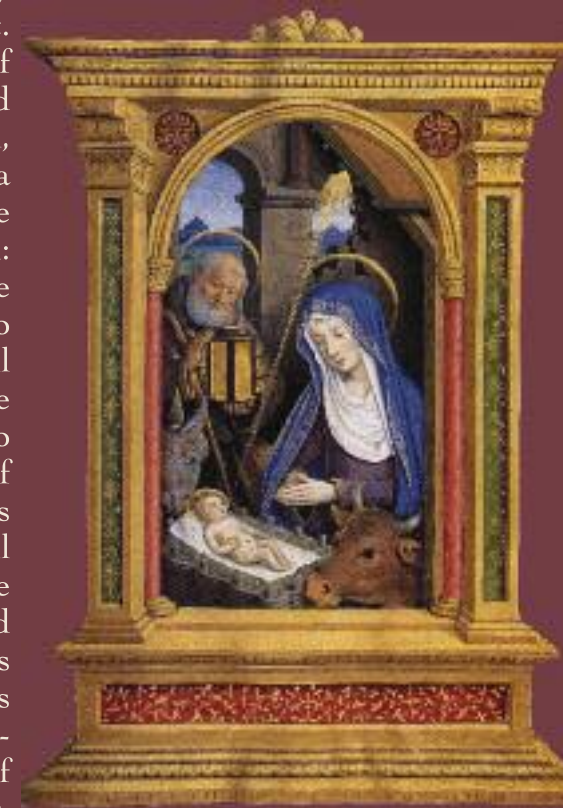
#### Cellarer's Wish List

- Hand power drill
- Bench grinder
- Cheap, black watches
- Pius X Hymnals
- Jumper cables
- Restaurant meat/cheese slicer
- Fresh green garlands for decorating
- Black shoe polish, daubers and brushes

There are getting to be so many of us now that whenever or wherever we work together, we make a veritable mob, as at this shoe-shine recreation. You should see the kitchen, which is even tighter. There's a definite feeling we will fill up our new buildings in Gower as soon as we get them up!

### The conclusion of "Mary's Conformity to the Will of God," from *The Virtues of Mary* by Fr. L. Lanzoni

The will of God is ever holy and perfect, and yet St. Paul distinguishes a kind of gradation in its acts and speaks of one of these as good, of another as better, and of a third as best. Not that there are really gradations in God: but the will of God is like the sun whose light increases to our view from dawn to full daylight and thence to the splendour of noon. Even so there are different degrees of heavenly light, inasmuch as our souls know God's will more or less clearly. But the Mother of God always beheld the light of God's will in its meridian splendour, and as she knew it well, so she fulfilled it well. And surely, if ever anyone, after Christ,



penetrated into the mind of God, it was Mary. She not only possessed in its fulness the gift of knowledge of divine things and the gift of wisdom, that is, the love of the truth, a love which proves itself by deeds, but more than all this, she was the tabernacle and abode of Incarnate Wisdom, which dwelt for nine months in her womb. The Divine Word, the Holy Ghost, the angels, illumined Mary's soul with such brilliant light to know God's will, that she, lost in the abyss of her own nothingness, could not but live a life of adoration and of love, with these words ever on her lips: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word."