

Priory of
Our Lady of Ephesus
1400 NE 42ND TERRACE
KANSAS CITY, MO
64116

LENT 2008

At Ephesus

THE BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES

Dear Family, Friends
and Benefactors,

*A Time to Feast and a
Time to Fast*

In our day, where 'grazing' is popular and family dinners are too rare, eating has become a rather casual affair. In Our Lord's day, however, dining together was a sign of great intimacy. Indeed, it was in the context of a meal, the Last Supper, that He gave Himself to His Apostles in the Holy Eucharist. After the Resurrection, His disciples "knew Him in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:35).

In the present-day as well, we know Him "in the breaking of the bread." When we feast, we feast with Our Lord Who is present in grace. When we fast, we fast because He is not yet present in glory. (cf. Mark 2:19-20) Our fasting is a prayer for His Kingdom to come!

Of course,
Our Lord is present



*Our entire community
wishes to assure all you
who have been so good
to us this past year of a
special remembrance
during the Holy
Mysteries of our
Salvation about to be
renewed at our altar
during this holy time!*

After Midnight Mass by candle light, our youngest placed the Baby Jesus in the arms of His Blessed Mother in the creche to the sound of carols. Then we all headed for the common room for good things to eat.

not only in the Liturgy but also in all the circumstances of our lives. As a community, we have many reasons to feast, rejoicing in Our Lord's presence.

On the weekend of Epiphany, pianist and vocalist, Carlos Ibay, blind from birth and popular with the crowds, performed two benefit concerts. These concerts inaugurated the public phase of our "New Shoot from Sacred Roots" campaign to raise funds for our permanent priory. With the Kings from the Orient, we prostrated ourselves before Our Infant King, imploring His blessing on our building project.

In the spirit of Christmas, we also rejoice in the new life that

is being poured into our community, a sure sign of God's presence among us. On May 3, Feast of Our Lady, Queen of Apostles, Most Rev. Robert W. Finn will clothe Sr. Crystal in the habit and she will receive a new name. For this occasion, His Excellency will offer Mass in the Extraordinary Form for his second time.





One year later Bishop Finn fulfilled his promise to the Little King, that if He gave him money for the installation of confessionals and Stations in our cathedral, he would get Him a red tie like bishops wear, for the hand-crafted lace alb we made last Christmas.

In the course of that same Mass, he will receive two young women into our community. Two more postulants will join them on June 11, the Feast of the Apostle, St. Barnabas. We prepare for their entrance as a family prepares to receive a new child. Already we are imagining how our lives will change when we are eighteen instead of fourteen! And then there are the other aspirants discerning a possible vocation to our life....

This year, Septuagesima Sunday occurred immediately after the Octave of Our Lord's Baptism. As a consequence, the Pre-Lenten season cut short the Christmas season—and with it, the feasting. It is as though Our Infant King simply could not wait to achieve the end for which He was sent: to fast, not to feast; to suffer and die for us on the Cross. Indeed, after St. John the Baptist baptized Our Lord, the Spirit led Him into the desert, and “He ate

nothing those days” (Luke 4:2). So it is with us in this unusual liturgical year: we began our fast shortly after commemorating Our Lord's Baptism.

During Advent, we fast because we are waiting for the King. With the wise virgins, we fill our lamps with the oil of Divine Charity so as to be prepared for His coming (Matt. 25). During Lent, however, we fast because the Bridegroom is not yet fully present in ourselves and in our world.

As Benedictines, one of our three vows is to live a life of continuous conversion. The Catechism describes religious life as “an unfolding of baptismal grace”. We are, as it were, perpetual catechumens, ever seeking to enter more deeply into the baptismal grace that first espoused us to Christ. As we prepare to profess our solemn vows in 2010, we are especially imbued with this catechumen spirit, following a formal program of prayerful studies, overseen by a Benedictine professor. This year on May 17, the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, we will be renewing our triennial vows.

We have many reasons to fast, imploring God to pour out His Mercy and Grace upon us in greater measure. Our vision of the future must deepen each day in union with His vision for us. We must grow evermore in that humility of



Carlos Ibay stole the hearts of our supporters in St. Joseph and Kansas City at two benefit concerts on Epiphany weekend.

heart which is a joyful, interior submission to His Will for us. We fast with our Bridegroom in the desert, as He prepares us to die with Him on Good Friday so that we may rise with Him on Easter. We fast with Our Lady, awaiting the Descent of the Holy Ghost, Who gives new life to the Church through His Apostles. We fast for our priests, that they may be transformed into Christ, present among us. Finally, we fast with you and for you, our dear friends and benefactors, because you benefit from the sanctification of our priests.

Our “New Shoot from Sacred Roots” building campaign is steadily progressing. We know from experience that what is good, takes time and costs much. We so depend on the providence of God shown to us through the generosity of friends. We humbly ask you to continue on with your charity, even making additional sacrifices to help us build our permanent Priory soon. It won't be long before we fill to capacity this city convent!

Hopefully, with our next newsletter, we can tell you exactly where we stand with respect to our monetary goal.

On another note, you may be wondering what happened to the blogspot on our website, www.benedictinesofmary.org. It has been discontinued in order to provide a more efficiently updated news section.



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

Our sincere apologies to all our seminarians who have been expecting fudge this year. Due to the overwhelming work demanded from our capital campaign, we were unable to make fudge. Please be assured, however, of our redoubled prayers and sacrifices in spiritual support of your formation!

Students from St. Gabriel's, a local Catholic school, came for a tour of the Priory and to help us prepare a mailing with which even our chaplain, Rev. David Phillipson, assisted.



The Cellarer's Wish List

- *Oxford Book of Carols*
ISBN 0-19-353315-4
- *Novello Book of Carols*
ISBN 0-85360-127-5
- *Trapp Family Book of Christmas Songs*
ISBN 0394-81763-X
- *Rhyming Dictionary*
- *Large Tupperware*
- *Stamps*

Double Trouble

Our watch dogs in puppy form explore their future territory in Gower. Rosie and Sunny arrived on Rose Sunday in Advent, hence their names.



“Mary’s Conformity to the Will of God,” from *The Virtues of Mary* by Fr. L. Lanzoni

To love God infinitely would not be to love Him too much. But God alone is capable of infinite love. Man must be content with loving Him as much as he can by the aid of divine grace, with all his powers of mind, will and feeling. A man loves God with his will when he brings all his desires in conformity with the divine will. He loves God with his understanding when it rises to Him on the wings of contemplation and prayer. He loves God with his sensitive nature when he burns with the zeal for God’s glory. These three forms of charity toward God we will consider one by one as they are found in our Blessed Lady.

It is by doing God’s will that a created will gains sanctity and merit. Apart from this, there can be no true solid virtue. From this we can understand why Our Lord Jesus Christ never praised His mother except for one thing only, namely, for receiving the word of God and keeping it. This eulogy He publicly pronounced on her when a woman in the crowd, lifting up her voice, cried out: “Blessed is the womb that bore Thee.” Jesus replied: “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it. The word

of God is not merely His written word or the spoken word of the preachers. Every sign of the divine will is a word of God, no matter how that will be signified, by means of things or of men or of angels, by some secret whisper to the heart, or through outward circumstances. Mary observed carefully every indication of God’s will, whatever it might be, treasured it and obeyed. Jesus, therefore, without disparagement to the glory which accrued to Mary from her divine maternity and her loving care of His infancy, wished to teach us that she is worthy of praise and glory incomparable, not so much because she is His mother as for the devoted love wherewith she did the will of God. Hence St. Augustine tells us that her “maternity would have profited her nothing had she not borne Christ more truly in her heart than in her womb.” What a lesson to the vanity of men! If the title Mother of God would have availed Mary nothing, had she been devoid of virtue befitting her office, what can nobility of birth or worldly titles profit men without goodness of life?

