



The novices are as anxiously looking forward to our move to the country in December as the rest of us. There will possibly be as many as twenty-five or more of us by then.



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



Working and praying for the holiness of priests

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At Ephesus

THE BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES

LENT 2009

Dear Family, Friends and Benefactors,

Since we last communicated before Christmas, we have witnessed the dedication of five young women of our community to the service of God and His Church. Sister Maria Concordia of the Heart of Jesus professed her first vows as a Benedictine, and four postulants were invested in the habit and began their novitiate: Sr. Assumpta, Sr. Jean-Marie (named for the Cure of Ars during this Year of the Priest), Sr. Columba (named for Blessed Columba Marmion, OSB) and Sr. Philomena (the favorite saint of St. Jean-Marie Vianney).



And now we are all preparing spiritually and materially for the profession of perpetual vows of the founding nuns who came to the

Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocese from Pennsylvania. This significant and blessed day is almost upon us: the feast of Mary, Queen of Apostles, Saturday after the Ascension, May 15, 2010. The Solemn Pontifical Mass will be celebrated at 10:00 AM by none other than Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, D.D. in the church cared for by the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, Old St. Patrick Oratory, on 9th and Cherry, Kansas City, MO. The visiting choir and organists are seminarians studying in St. Louis and the ministers in the sanctuary for the most part are monks from various monasteries.

As we make the total, definitive and perpetual gift of our bodies and souls to Christ, our bishop—in His Person—will seal the covenant first by placing wedding bands on our fingers. Then he will clothe us with the traditional mantle, a garment evolved from the first religious garb, the

melota, given to one who separated himself from the world to live a solitary life consecrated and dedicated to seeking union with God. It resembles the cowl worn by men, but without the hood. Our heads will be covered with a choir veil, unique to our community, symbolizing our aspiration to emulate the Virgin Mother of God as she stands beneath the Cross in the red of virgins and blue of mothers. Lastly, we will be commissioned by the Church to carry on the praises of God for the rest, by being handed the Divine Office.

All are welcome to attend this happy occasion and we will do our best to fit everyone in the church. We first gave notice of this historical profession—the first for our community—in past newsletters. Concerned that our families and close friends would not get a place close to their daughters and sisters, we sent printed invitations before Christmas with a little card to show at the door for that purpose. Unfortunately, some who did not receive the card interpreted it as a ticket to attend, and felt they could not come. We apologize for the confusion. **Everyone is invited.**

However, as there are already almost 400 RSVPs for the reception, if you do plan to come, please be sure to let us know via email: event@benedictinesofmary.org or fax: 816-455-2063. Due to all the confusion, we have extended the RSVP date to March 15. There's much to prepare, so do let us know if you are coming to celebrate with us.



The newly professed presents her candle to the bishop as a sign of her obedience.

If you would like to take advantage of a special rate for accommodations, for families and friends coming in from out of town we have set aside a block of rooms at *The Hampton Inn*: \$59+ taxes (816-464-5454) and *Four Points by Sheraton*: \$65+ taxes (816-464-2345). Please mention the Benedictines of Mary when making your reservation to ensure you get the negotiated rate. Reservations should be made no later than April 16th.

Everyone should know that there is a large baseball tournament in town that same weekend, which is eating up many of the rooms in the area. There will be up to 75 rooms available each night at the hotels above-mentioned. In other words, the sooner you make your reservations, the better.

No doubt everyone will welcome some news this Lent about our building project. Work has begun, and our construction manager tells us that we can hang our hats on a pre-Christmas 2010 move-in. The scheduled date is December 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe, but having become true Missourians at last, and after taking so long getting to this point, we say, "Show me"!

In all truth, not a few good people from lay advisors to clerics have been working very hard and devotedly to help us raise the first building of our monastery project from the ground up. For example, a local group of home-schooled children were inspired at the ground breaking to do a fundraiser for us. They chose the play, "A Man for All Seasons", and were they ever good! Three hours long was the program, and they kept the audience spell-bound with their perfectly memorized parts, excellent period costumes and precisely coordinated acts, complete with music and props. With the help of one of their fathers who has a degree in theatre, the performers, whose ages ranged from 10-19, raised \$1,800.



We happily received into our midst Most Reverend Giuseppe Bernini, Archbishop Emeritus of Izmir (Ancient Smyrna) in whose care and jurisdiction for so long was Our Lady's House at Ephesus. To his right is Vincentian Father Carl Schulte, who just finished writing the life story of Sr. Marie, Daughter of Charity, who was so very instrumental in the discovery of the ruins of Our Lady's House. Erin Von Uffel, who works hard to promote the cause of Sr. Marie is seated to the left of Mother Prioress.

Very soon, our front gate will read 8005 NW 316th Street, Starfield, MO 64454. We don't have our own post office in Starfield, so Gower delivers to our area, which beyond Gower's city boundaries. You will notice that the envelope we have included for your Lenten alms has our new mailing address on it! We go back and forth to Starfield quite frequently.

By the time we move to our country monastery, the community will most likely be at least 25 in number. Do you realize what that means? The 25,500 square foot future guesthouse/temporary monastery won't take very long to be filled! Already we are measuring all our furnishings and vestment making equipment, and cutting pieces of paper to scale as representations to arrange on the floor plans, because every inch of space will have to be accounted for. But much better than our current closeness, we will not have to be sleeping in large closets or sharing small rooms as we do here. The rooms of the guesthouse were designed in such a way, so as to allow a window for each nun if the rooms need to be divided in the future.

Above all, we look forward to the hard work on the farm, the fresh air, fertile soil and stillness of the countryside. We will see the sun rise with the *Benedictus* canticle of Lauds, and watch it set to the *Magnificat* of Vespers in the evening. We will be able to count longer than ten seconds between vehicles passing when rising in the night to sing the praises of God. And we will see the stars once more. We will be home. May God be known and loved more and more!

May our benefactors be blessed. Not only all of you: but especially the anonymous benefactors of the property in Starfield where we will soon be, where we will welcome many a soul-weary priest, where we will pray, where we will be buried. (That is, unless we outgrow the 58 maximum capacity of the next building, at which time we make another foundation elsewhere). Pray for their family and all their special intentions, and pray for those with whom you are united by your common care of us. We are one, big family, it seems, and we love and pray for you all every day. Thank you for the multitude of acts of kindness, from deliveries on the porch of milk and bread, to Wish List items and money to pay the builders. We are so grateful to all of you!

May God reward you, in advance, for remembering us in your Lenten alms-giving.

In Corde Mariae,

*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

- Large kitchen stockpots
- cider press
- paper cutter
- three-hole punch

You can see how happy our Cellarer was to receive your gifts from her wish list! may you be abundantly blessed for your charity.



Having employed extra closet space, our growing community is now out of room.

The Conclusion of "Mary's Gratitude" from *The Virtues of Mary* by Fr. L. Lanzoni

But a grateful heart is shown, better than by words, by the good use of the gifts bestowed. On the other hand, the wasting of the gift betrays an ungrateful mind. Now Mary, pure and sanctified from the first instant of her conception, was all her life long accumulating new treasures of sanctity. Thus she is a luminous example of the gratitude with which the creature should employ the Creator's gift. Indeed our Blessed Lady, being full of grace from the outset and free from any incentive to sin, ascended without difficulty the path of virtue, passing from strength to strength. Nay, at every instant, she doubled her treasure of grace. We know for certain that she was pure from all taint of sin and that she was always doing what was right, and therefore that she never left unused, even for one short hour, the precious talent that



God every moment added to her store. Our Lady therefore doubled by her second act the merit of her first, and thus becoming richer in grace, she doubled by a third act the merit of the second, and so on, until she amassed a treasure of sanctity such as created intelligence cannot conceive. I will not go through the elaborate calculations attempted by some writers of this prodigious multiplication of grace during Our Lady's long sojourn upon earth. I will only add that Mary was praised by Jesus Christ Himself for her use of the gifts of God. He praised her publicly, not for being the Mother of God, but for receiving lovingly every word or grace of God and making good use thereof. "Nay rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it". (St. Luke 11:28) These words of Our Lord had special reference to Mary.