





Priory of Our Lady  
of Ephesus  
Gower, Missouri

# At Ephesus

BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES

WINTER 2017

Dear Family, Friends and Benefactors,

The original artwork adorning the outside of this newsletter was painted especially for all of you, to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Blessed Mother's merciful visitation to us in Fatima, Portugal. As 70,000 people were witnessing the miracle of the sun, the three little shepherd children beheld a vision (the first of three) of the Holy Family, and both St. Joseph and the Christ Child blessed the crowd. Since this is so little known and rarely depicted in art, we thought it well to honor Jesus, Mary and Joseph in this way, and to share it with you, our extended family.

Throughout this extraordinary year, we are immersing ourselves in all that pertains to the events and messages of this most important apparition for our times, and striving to ever increase our loving devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our sure and loving refuge. For as Sister Lucia said, "the Most Holy Virgin is very sad because no one has paid any attention to her message, neither the good nor the bad. The good continue on their way but without giving any importance to her message. The bad, not seeing the punishment of God actually falling upon them, continue their life of sin without even caring about the message." When Our Mother makes a point to come to this poor earth of ours, giving us the remedy for all of our ills, both on a personal and global scale, how necessary it is that we listen to her as most loving and grateful children!



We encourage all of you, our dear family and friends, to unite with our community by learning more about Fatima, and saying often the prayers that were given to us from heaven, both by the Angel of Peace, and Our Lady herself. So many graces are attached to these prayers, and the Hearts of Jesus and Mary will be so consoled to have many more souls repeating them. You will find them on the next page.

We ourselves received an unexpected and unforgettable visit from Our Lady! In November, the custodians of the miraculous Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, currently touring the United States, made a short detour to Gower. We serenaded Our Mother upon arrival, kept watch with her all through the night, and sent her off with more song the next morning. It was a memorable and grace-filled night, one that we will keep in our hearts throughout this commemorative year.

November also saw Sr. Tarcisia's father ("Dad" Vil-lotti) leading his sons and a troop of young men from the local communities up to the Priory to construct a new cow shed for our ever-expanding herd. We are so grateful to them (as are the cows!) for their extra shelter and protection from the weather.

We were extraordinarily busy in the offices as we approached the blessed day of Our Lord's birth. Thanks to you and so many others, we sold over 10,000 copies of our new recording, *Caroling at Ephesus*, and also sold a great number of greeting cards - a new endeavor for us





## FATIMA PRAYERS

*Taught by the Angel:*

My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love Thee! I beg pardon for all those that do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love Thee.

O Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I adore Thee profoundly. I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences by which He is offended. By the infinite merits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary I beg the conversion of poor sinners.

*Taught by Our Lady:*

Most Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! My God, my God, I love Thee in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

O my Jesus, it is for love of Thee, for the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary. *(To be said when making a sacrifice.)*

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy. *(To be said after each decade of the Rosary.)*

### Words of Pope Paul VI at Fatima, May 13, 1967:

"The first intention is the Church: the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church. We wish to pray for her interior peace. The ecumenical council ...has called all of her children to a clearer conscience, and more intimate collaboration, a more lively apostolate. It pushes us so that this benefit and renewal will be conserved and will grow. What an evil it would be if an arbitrary interpretation, not authorized by the Magisterium of the Church, were to transform this spiritual renewal into a restlessness which dissolves the Church's traditional structure and constitution, substituting the theology of true and great teachings with new and partisan ideologies which aim to eliminate the norm of faith all that modern thought, often lacking the light of reason, does not understand nor accept, finally transforming the apostolic eagerness of redemptive charity into an acquiescence to the negative forms of the secular mentality and worldly customs. What a disillusionment, then, would our universal approach make if it did not offer our Christian brothers, still separated from us, and to men who do not possess our faith, in their sincere authenticity and their original beauty, the patrimony of truth and charity, of which the Church is depository and distributor!"

This thought carries our memory at this moment to those countries in which religious liberty is practically suppressed and where the denial of God is promoted... We declare: the world is in danger. Therefore we have come by foot to the feet of the Queen of Peace to ask for the gift that only God can give: peace.... Men, think of the gravity and the greatness of this hour, which could be decisive for the history of the present and future generation. The picture of the world and of its destiny presented here is immense and dramatic. It is the scene that the Madonna opens before us, the scene we contemplate with horrified eyes, but always trusting;... and we do promise - following the admonition that Madonna herself has given us; that of prayer and penance; wherefore God and desire that this picture of the world has no more to record the struggles, tragedies and catastrophes; but the achievements of the love and the victories of peace."

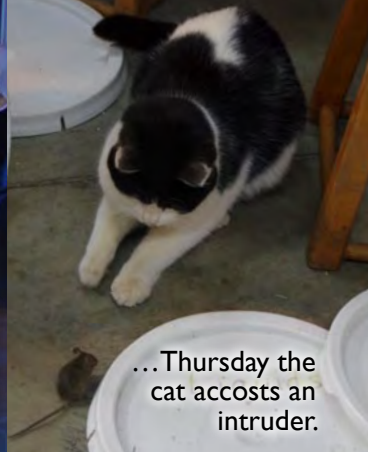
The Brown Scapular from the hands of the Pilgrim Virgin was left to adorn our own.







Fr. James Jackson, FSSP conducted our community retreat in November.



"Yea though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death..."

...Thursday the cat accosts an intruder.

this year. In fact, it was so successful, that we decided to continue selling them throughout the year. There is a wide assortment of non-Christmas cards to choose from, including a variety for Easter. The cards are available for purchase directly from our website. I am continually amazed by the array of artistic talents in our community, and this is one way to share a little bit of that with all of you!

Our Christmas was exceptionally lovely this year, and the 12 days were crowned by the reception of our five candidates on the Feast of Epiphany. The new postulants each received a Miraculous Medal at the end of Mass, and after I washed their feet and presented them with the Holy Rule of our Father St. Benedict, they were officially welcomed into the community. The older Sisters encouraged each of them with a hug and whisper of "perseverance!" Before the year is out, we have the potential to witness seven investitures in the habit, two first professions, and two solemn professions! May all be accomplished according to the will of our good God.

Our neighboring monks to the north at Conception Abbey have a new abbot, as Abbot Gregory Polan was elected to be the Abbot Primate for the entire Benedictine order. A few of the Sisters had the pleasure of attending the blessing of the new Abbot Benedict in January, and we are looking forward to his first visit to Ephesus.

We are also eagerly anticipating the ground breaking of our permanent church in April. God's providence continues to uphold us, as we *just* received news of a \$100,000 gift from a local family! We have now raised about \$1.6 million of our

\$5 million goal in less than a year. We are confident that Saint Joseph will continue to inspire many souls to assist with this beautiful project. We are indebted for your past support, and thank you in advance for your generous gifts in response to this newsletter. I can't wait to show you pictures of our soon-to-be construction site: your Lenten alms becoming a concrete (and stone!) reality.

We thank you *our dear family* for your goodness, and please always remember that we keep you tucked in our hearts and prayers, day and night~

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

*Mother Cecilia OSB*



Necessity is the mother of invention: Sister Tarcisia took up carpentry to accommodate more candidates, making kneelers for the oratory...



and stools for the refectory.



Thanks for your Christmas donations, Caroling CD and Christmas Card orders!



We were privileged to witness the First Communion of Miss Gertrude Russell just before Christmas.



Volunteers built a new cowshed, "all in a day's work."

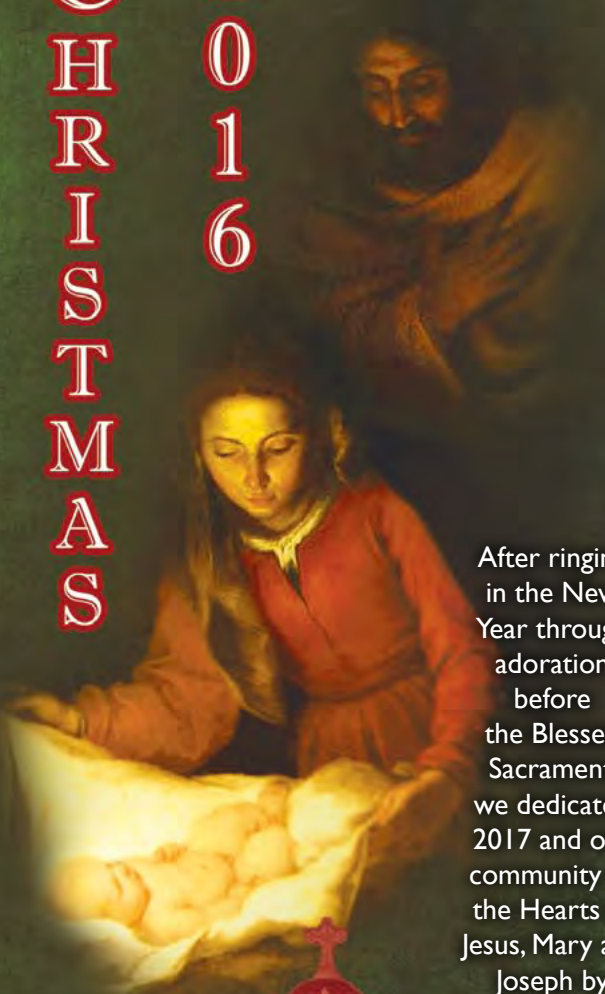


A bee-autiful first batch of honey from our hives!

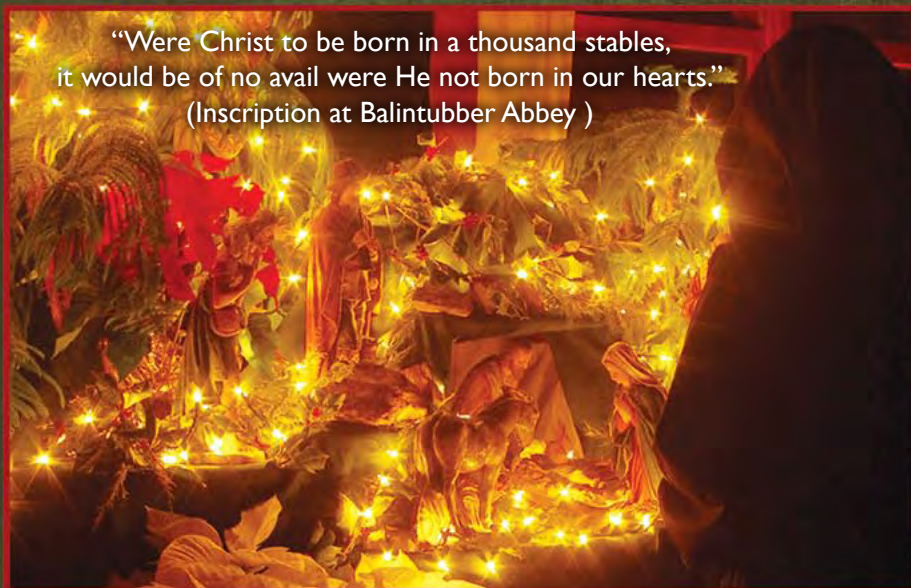




# C H R I S T M A S 2 0 1 6



After ringing in the New Year through adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, we dedicated 2017 and our community to the Hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph by formal acts of consecration.



"Were Christ to be born in a thousand stables, it would be of no avail were He not born in our hearts."  
(Inscription at Balintubber Abbey )



Opening gifts from family and friends on Christmas morning.





Caroling around the fire after Epiphany blessings.



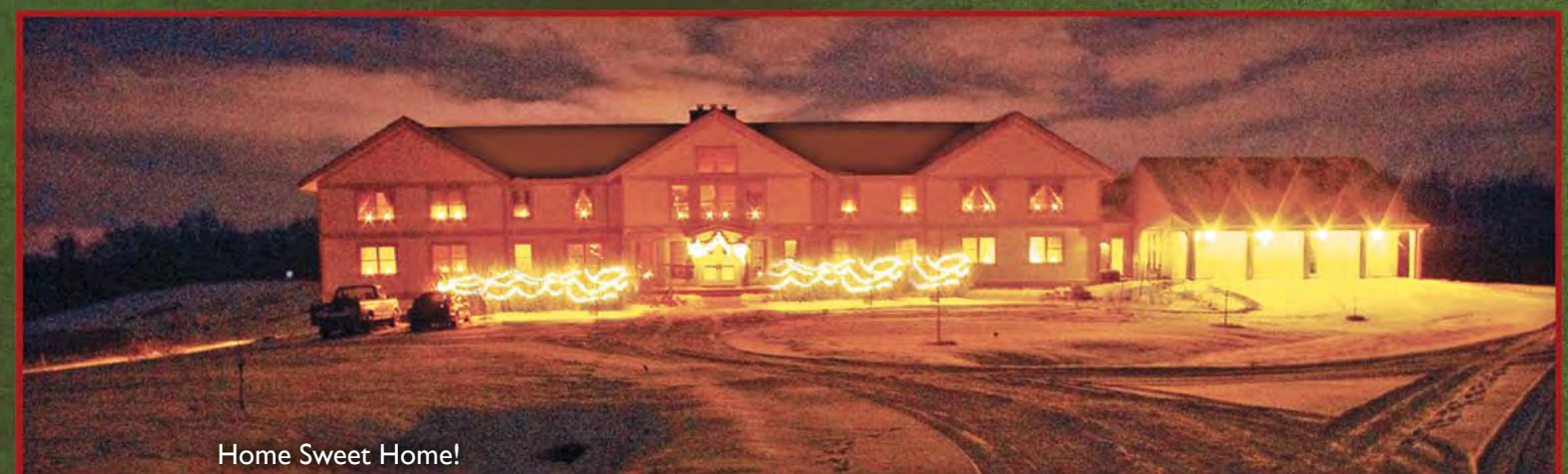
Our two postulants were joined by five more on the feast of the Epiphany, (left to right): Sister Maryam-Thomas, Sister Heidi, Sister Berdine, Sister Brooke, Sister Caroline, Sister Margaret, and Sister Kathleen. Pray for their perseverance!



On the feast of the Holy Innocents, the Novitiate presented Mother Mary Francis' *The Wolf of Gubbio*.



Postulants play Pictionary for the first time!



Home Sweet Home!





I AM THE PROTECTOR OF THE CHURCH AND THE HOME, AS I WAS THE PROTECTOR OF CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER WHILE I LIVED UPON EARTH. JESUS AND MARY DESIRE THAT MY PURE HEART, SO LONG HIDDEN AND UNKNOWN, BE NOW HONORED IN A SPECIAL WAY. LET MY CHILDREN HONOR MY MOST PURE HEART IN A SPECIAL MANNER ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH BY RECITING THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY IN MEMORY OF MY LIFE WITH JESUS AND MARY AND THE LOVE I BORE THEM, THE SORROW I SUFFERED WITH THEM.

LET THEM RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION IN UNION WITH THE LOVE WITH WHICH I RECEIVED THE SAVIOR FOR THE FIRST TIME AND EACH TIME I HELD HIM IN MY ARMS. THOSE WHO HONOR ME IN THIS WAY WILL BE CONSOLED BY MY PRESENCE AT THEIR DEATH, AND I MYSELF WILL CONDUCT THEM SAFELY INTO THE PRESENCE OF JESUS AND MARY.

—*SAINT JOSEPH TO SR. MARY EPHREM, IN THE APPROVED APPARITIONS OF OUR LADY OF AMERICA, 1958*





## IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

Out of almost 20,000 people who receive our newsletter, we hear back from only about 5000 throughout the entire year. To eliminate excess printing and mailing costs, **we humbly ask that you please return the enclosed response envelope if you would like to continue receiving our quarterly newsletters** - no matter if you are able to give a gift at this time or not. We will then trim down our mailing list to be sure printing and postage fees are not going to waste. Many thanks!!



### ENROLL FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN A NOVENA OF MASSES IN HONOR OF THE MOST PURE HEART OF SAINT JOSEPH, MARCH 19-27 AT [BENEDICTINESOFMARY.ORG](http://BENEDICTINESOFMARY.ORG)



MARY REJOICES EXCEEDINGLY WHEN SHE CAN ASSOCIATE HER PURE SPOUSE WITH HERSELF IN THE GLORY AND HONOUR PAID TO HER. HENCE, TO MANIFEST HER OWN LOVE, AND PROCURE HIM A GREATER NUMBER OF CLIENTS, AS WELL AS TO TESTIFY HER GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO WERE DEVOUT TO HIM, SHE HAS FREQUENTLY APPEARED IN COMPANY WITH HIM. -FR. EDWARD HEALY THOMPSON

If      donors gave           ,

2	\$20,000
5	\$10,000
10	\$5,000
20	\$1,000
30	\$500
100	\$250
250	\$100
500	\$50
1000	\$25
3300	\$10
5000	\$5

then we will have raised \$333,000 donated by 10,217 people, and enough in the bank to begin construction with confidence! This leaves almost 10,000 on our list not accounted for. But if these 10,000 souls could make their gift one of prayer to Almighty God through the Most Pure Heart of St. Joseph for the success of our project, the Lord will surely hear those prayers! For indeed, both spiritual and temporal support are necessary for this project to advance!





