

Priory of Our Lady  
of Ephesus  
GOWER, MISSOURI

Long live Christ the King!  
A candlelight procession  
to His shrine on His feast.

# At Ephesus

BENEDICTINES OF MARY, QUEEN OF APOSTLES

Dear Family, Friends, and Benefactors,

God's blessings on each one of you in this New Year! We hope and pray it will be a year of great grace, just as this past year has been here at Ephesus. Since our last newsletter, two more Sisters have joined the ranks of the Solemn Professed, as we witnessed the final vows of Sr. Sophia and Sr. Margaret Mary on October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of the Holy Rosary. After the ceremony and reception, Bishop Finn consecrated our bells, Robertus and Petrus, which were lifted by crane into the bell tower of our church just three days later.

Several neighbors had the opportunity to tell us how much they look forward to hearing these bells ring when attending our Caroling at Ephesus Live open house event, which took place on December 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>. We are thankful to all of the many people who braved the frigid temperatures to be with us for this somewhat impromptu fundraiser! The generosity shown that weekend was truly amazing, as we raised \$22,000 toward our church construction!

The phone call that started it all:  
Fr. Devillers and Sr. Wilhelmina  
reminisced about the foundation  
of the community.

That figure helped us get closer towards the \$777,000 goal we set in our last newsletter, but was not quite enough to reach it. When I just now tallied up all of our income since early November to the end of the year (including CD and vestment sales) we still fell short by \$274,250. But our faith is still firm! No doubt, St. Joseph simply wants us to exercise it all the more. So we are confidently asking him to somehow round up this remaining amount before his Feast on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

In November, we had the great honor of welcoming His Eminence, Cardinal Burke, for our annual retreat. It was a time of great grace for our community, especially as all of the professed

Sisters renewed their vows on the last day of the retreat - the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, November 21<sup>st</sup>. We all chanted once again the beautiful verse we sang at our profession from Psalm 118: *Receive me, O Lord, according to thy word, and I shall live: and let me not be confounded in my expectation.* Truly, the Lord can never disappoint us when we place all of our trust in Him and in His loving providence, which overlooks nothing. May we all enter this New Year with profound and ever deepening trust in His love and care for us. And we ask Him to reward and bless you all for your continued love and care for your Sisters at Ephesus.

In His Merciful Heart,

AFTER THE CEREMONY (another true story!)

Mother Cecilia OSB

On October 7th, Sister Sophia of the Holy Eucharist (right) and Sister Margaret Mary of the Hidden Life of the Sacred Heart (left) made their Solemn Profession at St. James Church in St. Joseph. This parish has hosted us for many ceremonies over the past seven years, due to the small amount of space in our temporary chapel. Hoping (with deep gratitude to all at St. James) this will have been the last time!

Around the corner from St. James... Sisters got rides with friends headed to the Priory reception. Our hero, Dad Villotti arrived to restart the car... right when Sr. Misericordia and Sr. Marie-Bernarde got a ride back to St. James in a Penske truck.

At the stop light, Mother doesn't see the Sisters in tow. Mother, that truck is honking! HONK! HONK! Must be happy to see nuns!

Sr. Marie-Bernarde gave Mother a shock! KNOCK! KNOCK! MOTHER!! GASP! The car broke down, Sr. Misericordia went to get help.

Meantime the car broke down on Dad Villotti just as we got back to St. James where seminarians were still gathered... Oh Great! Gentlemen, can I get some help pushing? THUB THUB THUB BOOM CHHHA

as Sr. Misericordia got another ride back to the gas station! TOO LATE! Thanks so much, now we just need to get the Sisters at the gas station. I'm not kidding, they were JUST HERE!

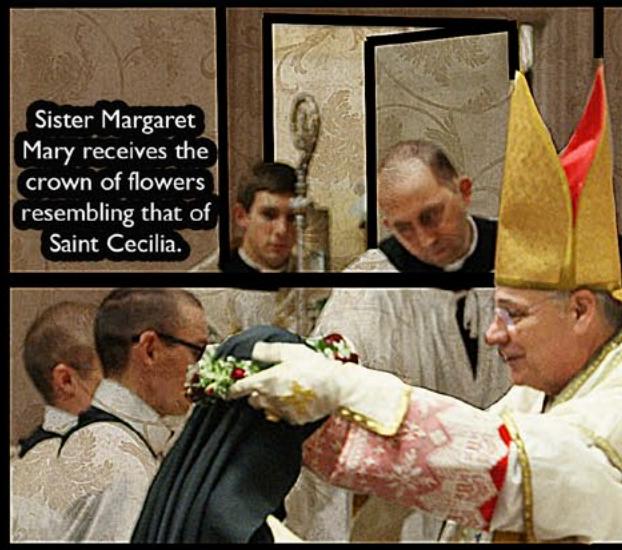




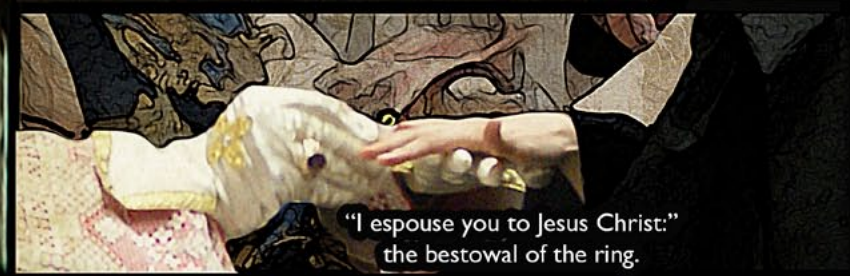
The chanting of the Suscipe, dating back to St. Benedict himself. The professed sing three times with a gesture of offering themselves to God.



Sister Sophia signs her profession chart on the altar.



Sister Margaret Mary receives the crown of flowers resembling that of Saint Cecilia.



"I espouse you to Jesus Christ:" the bestowal of the ring.



Another amazing cake donated by Anna Araque of Regina Caeli Cakes, this time depicting the fifteen mysteries and Our Lady of the Rosary on whose feast our Sisters made their profession.



At the reception, Bishop Finn consecrated our two bells, and Mother and the two newly professed gave them a ceremonial ring.

Solemn Profession of Sr. Sophia of the Holy Eucharist and Sr. Margaret Mary of the Hidden Life of the Sacred Heart





The consecration of the cemetery



Enthronement of the Sacred Heart

Annual  
*Retreat*  
led by Cardinal  
Burke



We thoroughly enjoyed recreation with His Eminence.



Inspired by our Clear Creek brethren, a chain of white handkerchiefs bade farewell to the Cardinal.



Christmas Eve: God willing, the last Christmas Martyrology in our temporary chapel!



Opening Christmas gifts amidst an ever expanding circle around the fire. At the right, Sr. Wilhelmina examines our first calendar.



The Novitiate prayed for snow and GOT IT on Christmas Eve! It was perfect timing as it did not stop construction progress. With the workmen gone, we went out into the snowy courtyard to "Wish You a Merry Christmas." (See video on our home page, [benedictinesofmary.org](http://benedictinesofmary.org))

*Christmas*  
2017



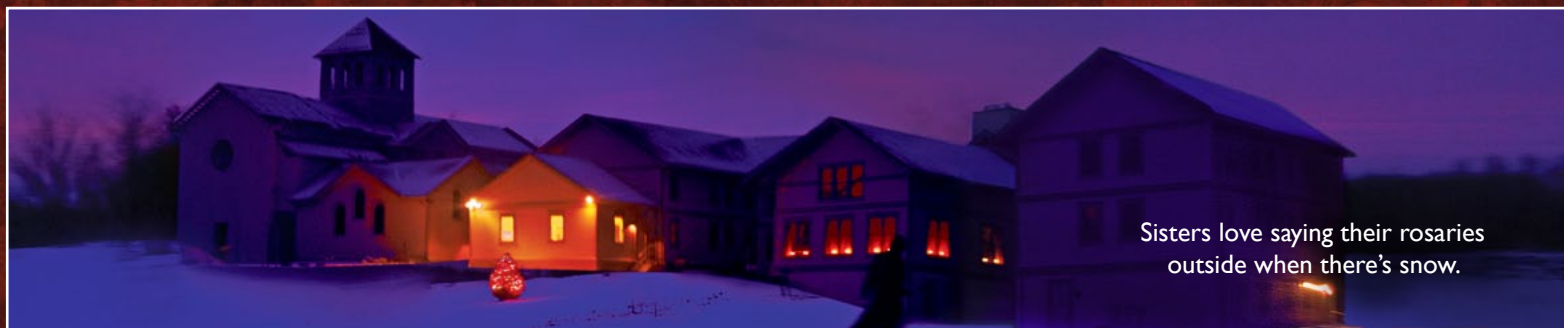
Compline on Christmas Night



"Our dear Sister fundraiser" finally elicits a large donation to the tune of "Feed the Birds" in the Novitiate skit...



...part of many antics prepared for the professed on Holy Innocents' Day.



Sisters love saying their rosaries outside when there's snow.



Epiphany Blessing: Fr. Bartulica marks the door from the porch to the new church.



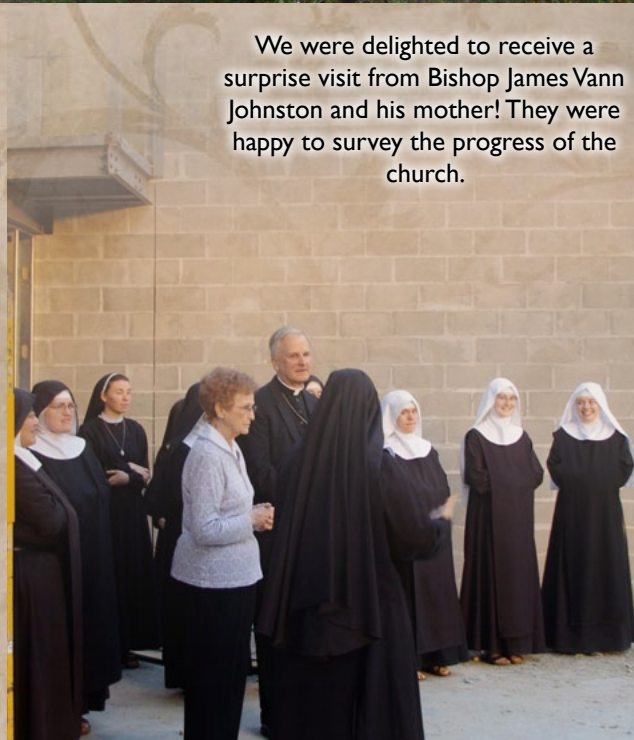
Southwest view of progress from the basement to the bell tower!



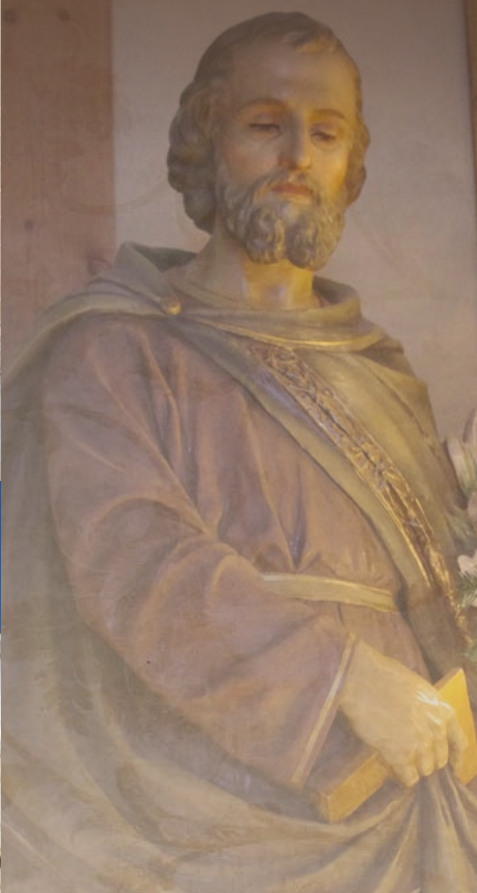
An amazing super moon set next to the north façade.



We were delighted to receive a surprise visit from Bishop James Vann Johnston and his mother! They were happy to survey the progress of the church.



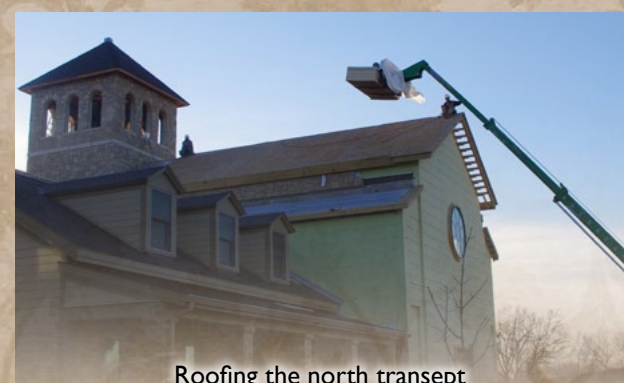
## Novena of Masses In honor of the Most Pure Heart of Saint Joseph



March 19<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> 2018  
Enroll your families  
and friends at:  
[benedictinesofmary.org](http://benedictinesofmary.org)



Northwest stonework



Roofing the north transept



The steel frame stands ready in the apse (below) for our wood-carved baldachin with replicas of the Twelve Apostle statues from St. John Lateran (above.)

Standing in the places of our future choir stalls in the nave!

