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 7th, 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 30th & 31st. 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!

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 19th.

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 21st. 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,

Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles

Priory of Our Lady of Ephesus
Gower, Missouri

Winter 2018

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-Bernard got a ride back to St. James in a Penske truck.

As Sr. Misericordia got another ride back to the gas station!

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In His Merciful Heart,

After the Ceremony (another true story!)

Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles

Priory of Our Lady of Ephesus
Gower, Missouri

Long live Christ the King!

A candlelight procession to His shrine on His feast.

H e commandeth the snow to go down upon the earth, and the winter rain, and the shower of His strength - Job 37:6

Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles

Priory of Our Lady of Ephesus
Gower, Missouri

Winter 2018

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!

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Solemn Profession of Sr. Sophia of the Holy Eucharist and Sr. Margaret Mary of the Hidden Life of the Sacred Heart
Sisters love saying their rosaries outside when there's snow.

We thoroughly enjoyed recreation with His Eminence.

“Our dear Sister fundraiser” finally elicits a large donation to the tune of “Feed the Birds” in the Novitiate skit…

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

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, benediclesmmary.org)

The consecration of the cemetery

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

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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.

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

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

An amazing super moon set next to the north façade.

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

March 19th-28th 2018
Enroll your families and friends at: 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.)