

Abbey of
Our Lady of Ephesus
GOWER, MISSOURI

At Ephesus



Dear Family, Friends and Benefactors,

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts! We have a great deal of good news to share with you from these beautiful months of summer. Our Lord blesses us each year through the marathon of feasts, Corpus Christi, the Nativity of John the Baptist, the Sacred Heart,

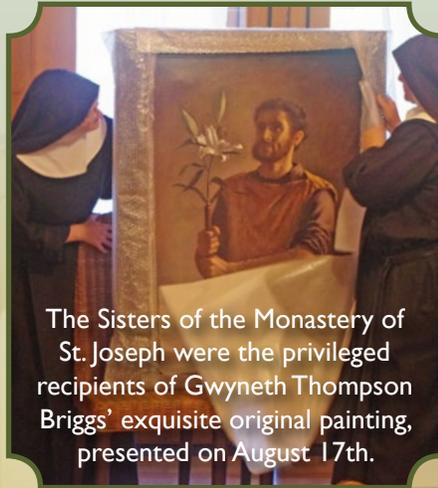


Above and below: our Corpus Christi Procession

the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul following one another, and this year in quick succession! All were beautiful spiritual impetus to persevere in “ora et labora,” which seems as intense as the feast and the summer heat of the season!

Our dear Pioneer Sisters in Ava have mirrored us in our prayers, works, joys and sufferings of these days, and we were all so happy to be reunited once more for our ceremonies on August 17. Sr. Maria Battista joined up with classmates Sr. Helena, Sr. Marie Madeleine and Sr. Francesca to pronounce first profession in the presence of Father Abbot of Clear Creek, and our own Bishop Johnston. Five postulants also received the habit: Sr. Sarah is now Sr. Maria Dolora, Sr. Joëlle is now Sr. Philippa, Sr. Cicely is Sr. Imelda, Sr. Charis is Sr. Mary Elizabeth, and Sr.

Veronica Anne is Sr. Zelie Marie. They are all still radiant! Our Ava Sisters bid us farewell, and resumed their moving preparations. The day after their arrival at the new Monastery of St. Joseph, on the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, the Sisters were invited to lunch at nearby Assumption Abbey, also in Ava. It turned out that a building on their property that was occupied during our initial scouting trips had become vacant. It was an equally large house that had already been converted to a monastery by Franciscans, with beautifully cultivated grounds and gardens. The Franciscans had named it, of all things, THE MONASTERY OF ST. JOSEPH! The Trappist monks quickly offered the house to us as soon as they realized it was an eminently more suitable building, taking the time, worry and expense of adaptation away from our pioneers. “I feel like we won the lottery,” Sr. Bernadette said. The house of the original calling will continue to be maintained, and the grounds reserved for possible future construction as more vocations join. Our Ava Sisters will be receiving two of their own postulants this fall, while we will be welcoming six to the Abbey.



The Sisters of the Monastery of St. Joseph were the privileged recipients of Gwyneth Thompson Briggs’ exquisite original painting, presented on August 17th.

Thank you so much for your continued support of our two houses, which has been such a tremendous blessing, especially as are just over the halfway point in reaching the donations needed by November for the \$500,000 matching gift. May God bless and reward you as only He can, and may He always keep us united in His love.

In Corde Mariae,



Mother Abbess and Sisters

First Professions

SR. HELENA
SR. MARIA BATTISTA
SR. MARIE MADELEINE
SR. FRANCESCA

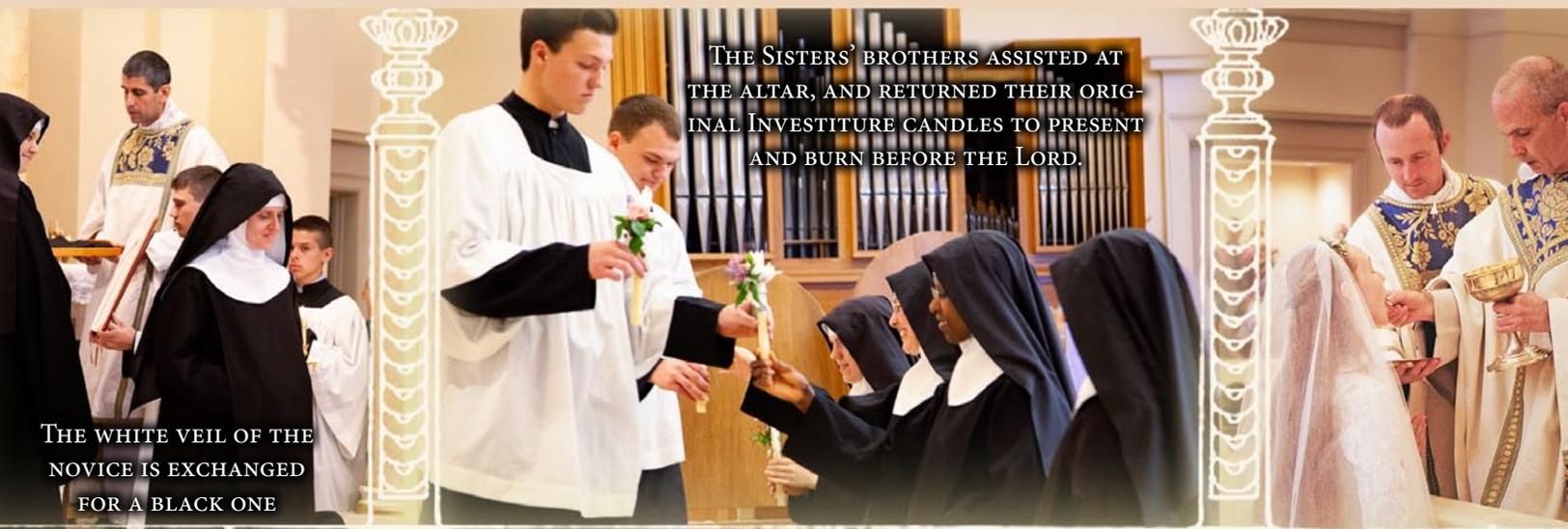
THE SISTERS SIGNED THEIR PROFESSION CHARTS ON THE ALTAR, THEN PRESENTED THEM TO THE ABBOT, THE BISHOP, AND MOTHER ABBESS. THEN THEY PLACED THEIR HANDS IN HERS TO PLEDGE OBEDIENCE, AND THEIR CHARTS WERE PLACED BENEATH THE CORPORAL FOR THE REMAINDER OF HOLY MASS.



SR. MARIA DOLORA
SR. PHILIPPA, SR. IMELDA
SR. MARY ELIZABETH
SR. ZELIE MARIE

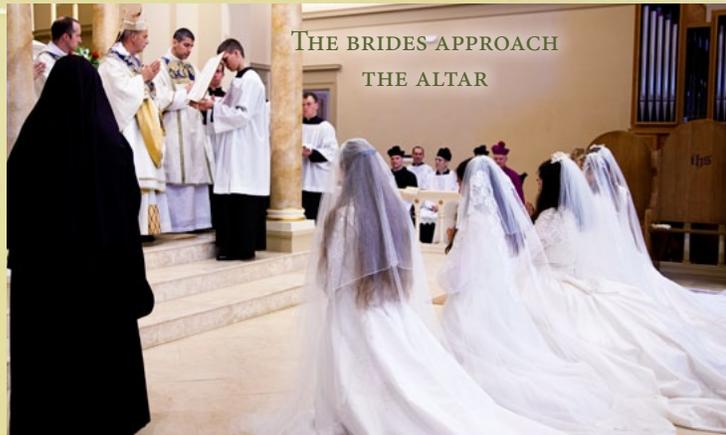
And Investitures August 17th

THE BRIDES EAGERLY AWAIT THEIR INVESTITURE DURING THE MOST ANCIENT PART OF THE VOW CEREMONY, THE CHANTING OF THE "SUSCIPE." (RIGHT)



THE SISTERS' BROTHERS ASSISTED AT THE ALTAR, AND RETURNED THEIR ORIGINAL INVESTITURE CANDLES TO PRESENT AND BURN BEFORE THE LORD.

THE WHITE VEIL OF THE NOVICE IS EXCHANGED FOR A BLACK ONE



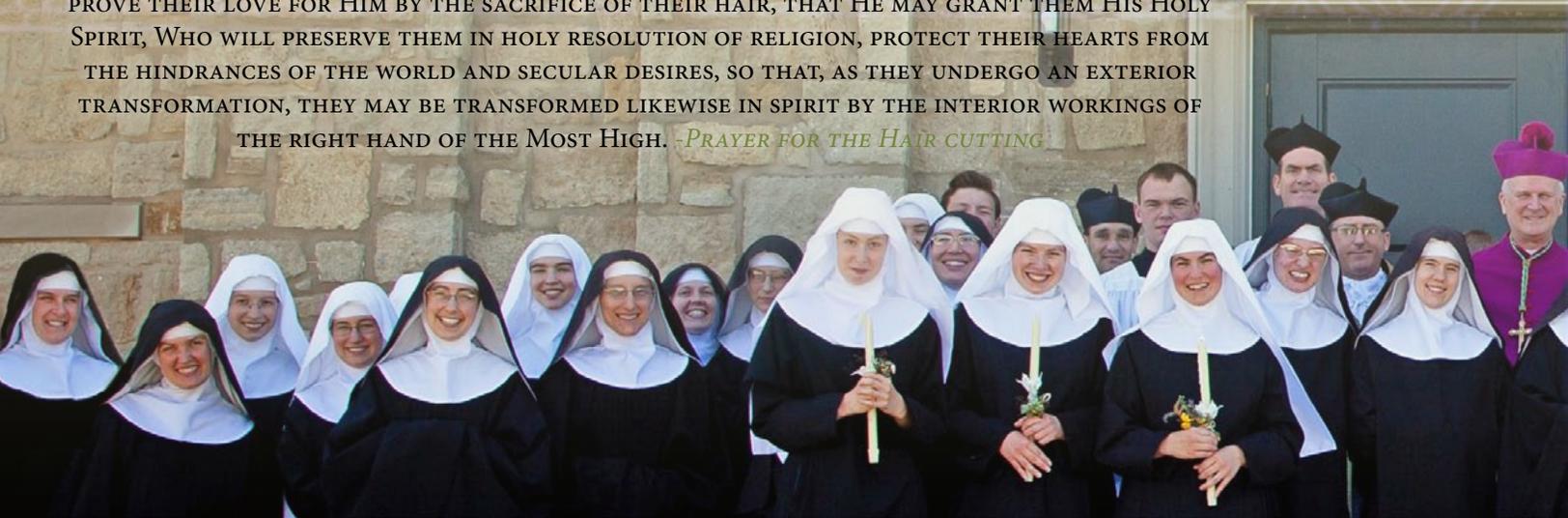
THE BRIDES APPROACH THE ALTAR





SINCERE
AND HUMBLE THANKS
TO ABBOT PHILIP ANDERSON
OF CLEAR CREEK ABBEY AND
OUR OWN BISHOP JAMES VANN
JOHNSTON FOR THEIR PRESENCE
AT THE CEREMONY, AND TO OUR
PHOTOGRAPHERS ELIZABETH
MILLER AND SUZANNA DOWLER

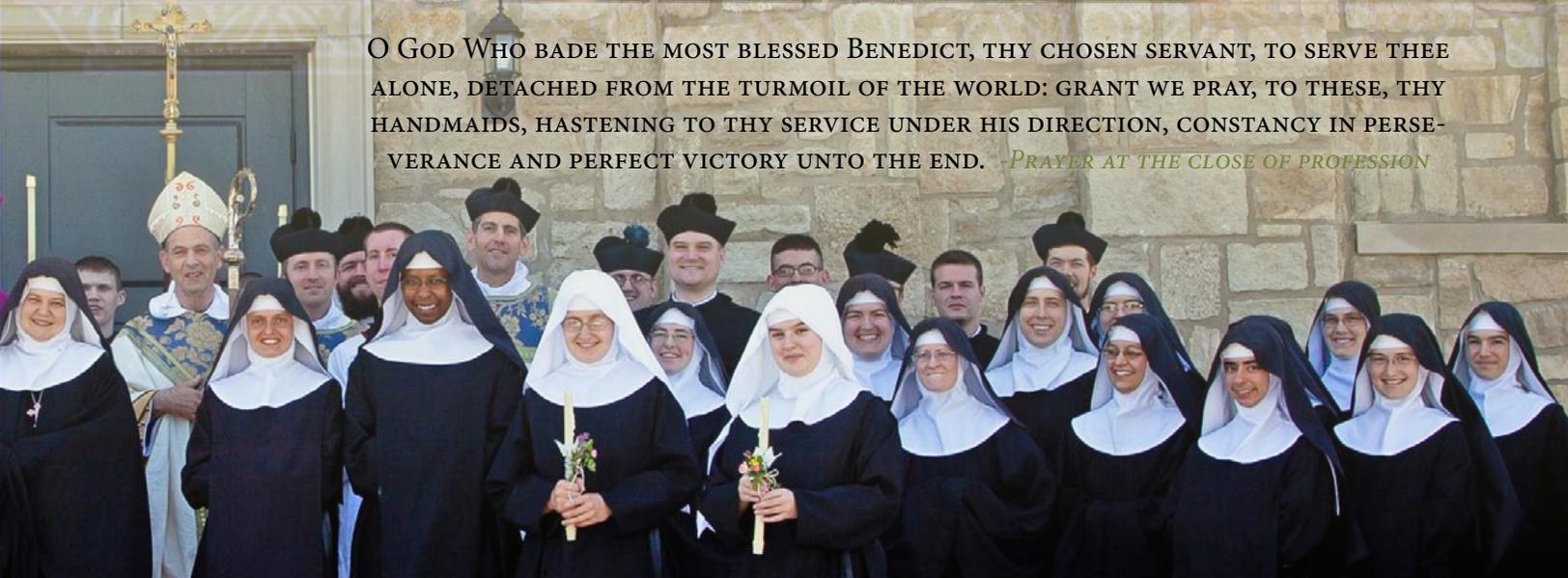
LET US PRAY, BRETHREN, TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST FOR THESE HIS HANDMAIDS WHO HASTEN TO PROVE THEIR LOVE FOR HIM BY THE SACRIFICE OF THEIR HAIR, THAT HE MAY GRANT THEM HIS HOLY SPIRIT, WHO WILL PRESERVE THEM IN HOLY RESOLUTION OF RELIGION, PROTECT THEIR HEARTS FROM THE HINDRANCES OF THE WORLD AND SECULAR DESIRES, SO THAT, AS THEY UNDERGO AN EXTERIOR TRANSFORMATION, THEY MAY BE TRANSFORMED LIKEWISE IN SPIRIT BY THE INTERIOR WORKINGS OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MOST HIGH. *-PRAYER FOR THE HAIR CUTTING*





SISTERS RECEIVED CONGRATULATIONS FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS (AND EACH OTHER) FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY, AND THE BRIDES CUT ANOTHER AMAZING CAKE BY ANNA ARAQUE AT THE RECEPTION.

O GOD WHO BADE THE MOST BLESSED BENEDICT, THY CHOSEN SERVANT, TO SERVE THEE ALONE, DETACHED FROM THE TURMOIL OF THE WORLD: GRANT WE PRAY, TO THESE, THY HANDMAIDS, HASTENING TO THY SERVICE UNDER HIS DIRECTION, CONSTANCY IN PERSEVERANCE AND PERFECT VICTORY UNTO THE END. *-PRAYER AT THE CLOSE OF PROFESSION*



In greener pastures He hath settled me...
NEWS FROM OUR AVA PIONEERS



The "new" Monastery of Saint Joseph in Ava!



Here, the altar is unloaded and brought to the roomier former chapel of the Franciscans (lower left)



Sister Veronica surveys the spacious new sewing room.



The Sisters were so grateful to receive so much moving help from local volunteers!

We are so blessed by God in the beautiful surroundings we have both in Gower (below) and in Ava! May St. Benedict intercede for us and for you all.



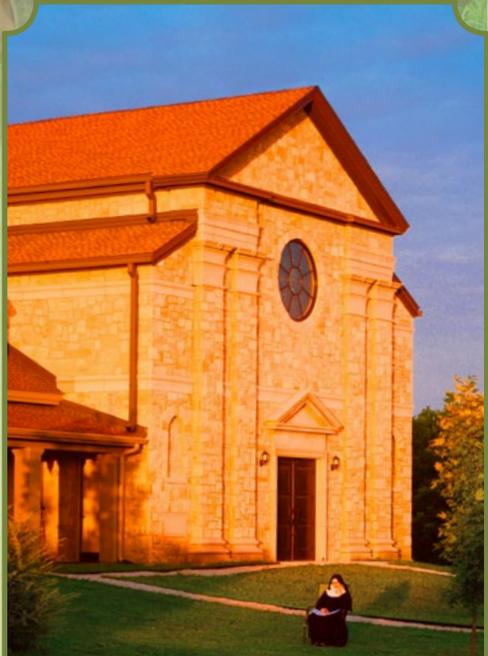
The sweltering heat did not prevent our intrepid band of Sisters from bringing in the alfalfa, but they did not decline rides to the barn!

A reminder that all gifts given between now and November will be doubled through a matching gift of \$500,00!



Little Bella is turning out to be an armchair window washer!

Camp Mater Dei (below) and many other groups of visitors this summer have underscored the need for the lay guest retreat house! Plans are now underway with hopes to begin construction this fall.

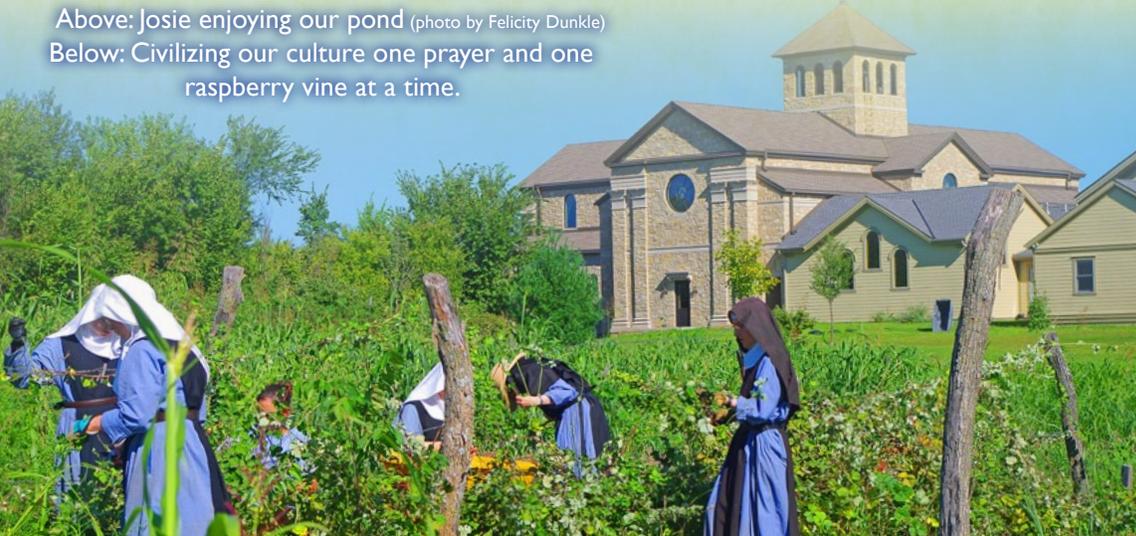


A game of Bocce at an outdoor recreation.



Sisters take advantage of the cooler mornings to take their *Lectio Divina* outdoors and watch the sunrise.

Above: Josie enjoying our pond (photo by Felicity Dunkle)
Below: Civilizing our culture one prayer and one raspberry vine at a time.



Bringing in the beans



1618
2019



ord, according to thy promise that the Gospel should be preached throughout the whole world, raise up men fit for such work. The Apostles were but soft and yielding clay till they were baked hard by the fire of the Holy Ghost. So, good Lord, do now in like manner with thy Church militant, change and make the soft and slippery earth into hard stones. Set in thy Church strong and mighty pillars that may suffer and endure great labours – watching, poverty, thirst, hunger, cold and heat – which also shall not fear the threatenings of princes, persecution, neither death, but always persuade and think with themselves to suffer with a good will, slanders, shame, and all kinds of torments, for the glory and laud of thy Holy Name. By this manner, good Lord, the truth of thy Gospel shall be preached throughout the world. Therefore, merciful Lord, exercise thy mercy, show it indeed upon thy Church. Amen.

-ST. JOHN FISHER