

BENEDICTINES
OF MARY, QUEEN
OF APOSTLES

At Ephesus



Dear Family, Friends and Benefactors,

It is a little difficult to know where to start, as there is so much to tell you! Practice and recording sessions for our two new CDs took place at the same time as plans were being firmed up to begin a house in Evansville, Indiana. We have been overcrowded here at the Abbey, and even after the completion of the Ava monastery, we will continue to face the problem of space. We are still receiving daily vocation inquiries, so we simply could not turn down the invitation of Bishop Siegel to come and make use of a fully furnished, unused Poor Clare Monastery. So we agreed to settle some Sisters in an eastern direction, not realizing the curve ball that was coming...

Our Dutch Sister Helena was refused a Green Card, and our attempt at an appeal was turned down. We realized all other options were closed to us. On top of that, the recent backlog for immigration form I-360 has wreaked havoc for religious workers across the country, especially contemplative women religious, causing them to lose their status. Sister Philippa, the blood sister of Sister Helena, needed to depart the country by March 23rd, while awaiting documents to resume her status here. So we sent the two of them, along with Sister Emmanuel as a companion, to none other than Our Lady's Dowry. Our Sisters in exile were welcomed by the Jordans, the English family that has given all of their children to God's service, with their four daughters here at the Abbey, and their son in seminary. Left with an empty nest, they were able to house our Sisters in a beautiful, secluded section of their converted barns complex with its own "cloister" in Gunstone, Staffordshire. They also have a lovely chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

We informed the local Ordinary, Archbishop Longley, about the Sisters soon-to-be in exile in his diocese and we certainly were not expecting an invitation to stay, but that is exactly what happened! His Excellency has welcomed us most graciously to remain in the Diocese of Birmingham, even offering us a building for a more permanent home, which we had to decline, owing to its urban location. But since the Sisters have arrived, we have discovered that just 15 miles from the Jordans' home is the historic St. Mary's Abbey at Colwich, and it is actually *for sale*.



One last photo together before
our Sisters shoved off for England.



The open house at the Monastery of Saint Joseph on March 19th was a phenomenal success! An estimated 1000 visitors were greeted by the Sisters and enjoyed tours, hot dogs, cotton candy (with the machine manned by Sister Vayla, above) best wishes and fellowship. Please pray for the swift completion of the monastery so as to be able to serve these good people from Southern Missouri and offer them a permanent place of prayer!

Colwich Abbey was founded by Saint Thomas More's great-great-granddaughter, with nuns once exiled from England during the Elizabethan persecution, and exiled back there during the French Revolution. As I write this, I will be traveling to England tomorrow to visit our Sisters, and to see about the possible purchase of Colwich Abbey as a place of expansion, especially for future foreign vocations to our community. The buildings will need some work, but are certainly liveable as they stand. What a grace it would be to save these beautiful buildings for their intended purpose and historical value. I will be bringing our Sister Katarina from Lithuania with me as a fourth member for our little English band.

So we are indeed financially strapped at this time, and we humbly ask you to do whatsoever you can to help us with the final months of construction bills at Ava, as well as for our needs at our new locations. Please don't forget to stream our music, which can carry on in the background throughout the day and night! Physical copies of our two latest recordings are now available, one in honor of the martyrs and the other in honor of Sister Wilhelmina. You will find them listed on the enclosed response envelope.

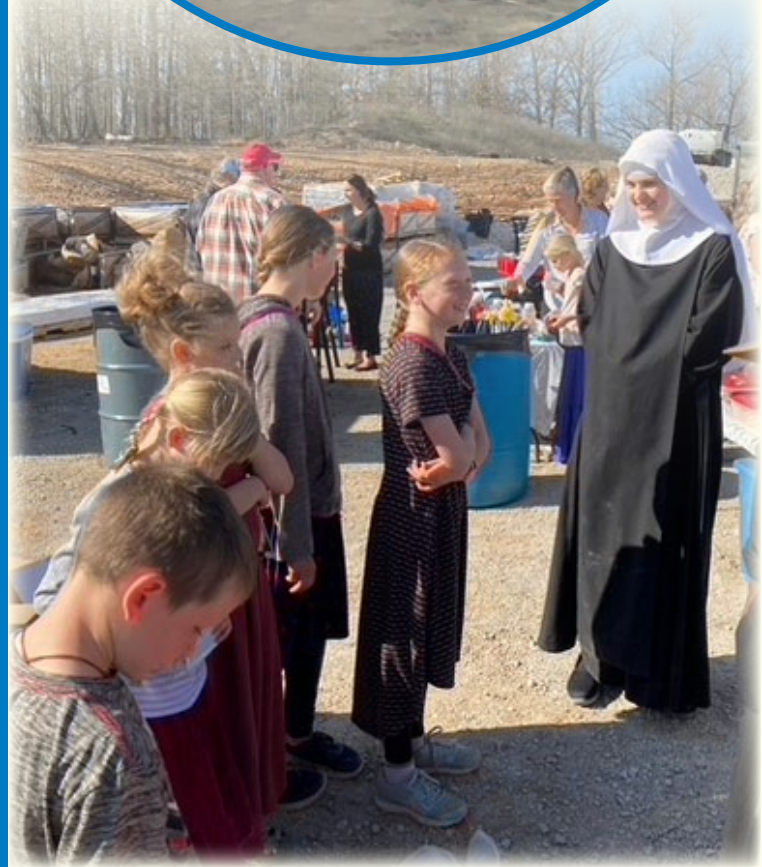
We hope and pray that we are part of something much bigger in all of this, conforming to God's master plan. He certainly is the Master of all, knowing how to draw great good out of difficult situations, (aka making lemonade when life throws you lemons!) and Who teaches us to do the same! May God reward of you for all of your support.

In Jesus, Mary & Joseph,

Mother Cecilia, OSB



Open House at Ava





EASTER 2024



Triduum (left and below) and the Easter Vigil at Gower (above and left.)

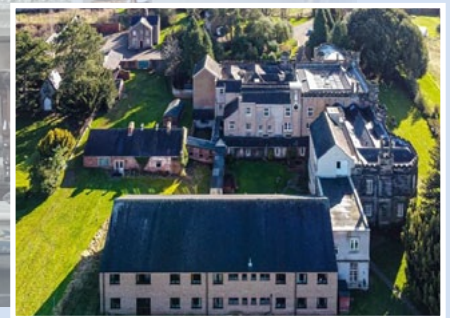




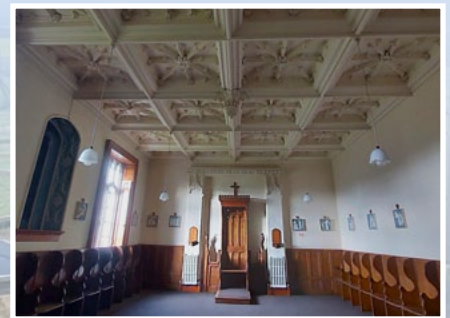
Tenebrae (right) and the Easter Vigil at Ava (above and below)



The Sisters began their English venture with a rosary in London.



The blessing of new lambs for which Sisters now care at their temporary home in Shropshire. Right and opposite: photos of Colwich Abbey.



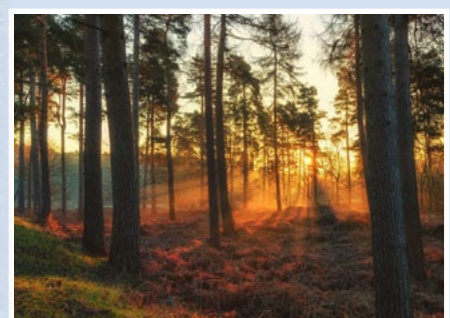
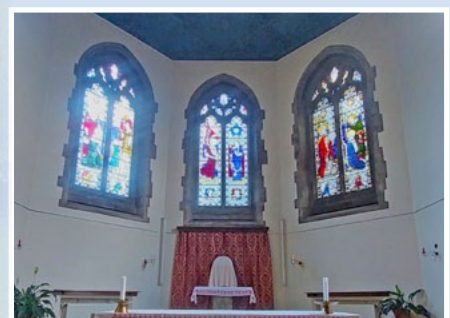


The Sisters are blessed with daily Mass in the beautiful private chapel through the kindness of the Archbishop, and carry on the Work of God across the sea.

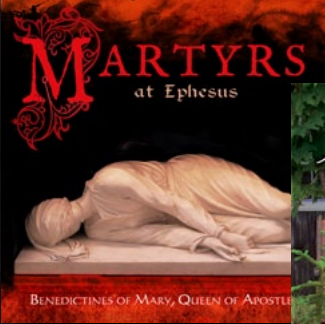
In Our Lady's Dowry



The Sisters tour Colwich (below and right) situated at the edge of the Cannock Chase, a beautiful forest (lower right corner.)



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8005 NW 316th Street
Gower, MO 64454



2 NEW CDs!

