



FROM THE CENTER

A Newsletter For Friends and Benefactors of Saint Benedict Center Across The Country

Solemn Vespers

On the first Sunday of Advent Father Neil Roy introduced Solemn Vespers to IHM Chapel. While Vespers has been chanted regularly on Sundays at the chapel, this ancient custom adds more solemnity as the Brothers and Father, wearing a cope, process into the sanctuary. From there they chant antiphonally with the Sisters who are in the chapel. The altar is radiant with copious candles, ready for Benediction. Father leads the ceremony which concludes with the incensing of the altar during the singing of the Magnificat followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The beautiful pageantry befitting a king certainly does honour to the King of Kings Who is really present among us in the Blessed Sacrament. The public is welcome to join in our prayers every Sunday at 5:00 PM at IHM Chapel, 282 Still River Road, Still River, MA.



Father, Brothers and cross bearer process from the sanctuary after Solemn Vespers on Christmas.



A beautiful statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe is displayed in the sanctuary on her feastday.

Guadalupe Roses

On the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, Halia Michael, former Spanish teacher at IHM now residing in New Mexico, sent 15 dozen roses to the chapel in honor of the patroness of her beloved Mexico. The vibrant colors of the roses made a magnificent display of devotion reminding us of the miracle on Tepeyac Hill to Juan Diego, over 500 years ago. Decking the altar, the bouquets spilled out into the shrines and flanked a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Mexico. The whole sanctuary was alive with a heavenly scent and beautiful colors. After school, students were invited back into the chapel, where they

recited the Litany of Loreto before Father blessed the roses, distributing them, asking Our Lady's love and protection for those who received them. The flowers were then brought home by the students to remind them of our Heavenly Mother's loving care for us.

Our Lady of Guadalupe pray for us, and bless our generous donor!



Father Roy distributes the blessed roses to students after school on the feast.

Christmas Joy

As the celebration of a central religious holy day receives opposition in society, here at Saint Benedict Center it is celebrated with great love and joy. The season begins in November with the IHM Band marching in a competition parade in the town of Quincy, a suburb of Boston, called the "Christmas Parade," an event complete with floats and bands. The streets are lined with viewers who support and enjoy the celebrating of Christmas. Our band placed #2nd in our division, receiving a trophy.

Then on December 5, Saint Nicholas came to the school. Unequaled in his devotion to the children, the memories of his visit never fade in the minds of those who sat on his lap and whispered their list of toys to him. Thank you, Tom Noonan of Stoneham, MA, for driving the sled!

Anticipation mounts as the Christmas draws near and the school performance at Nashoba High auditorium signals the beginning of Christmas break. The school divides into three performances. First grade through third re-enact the Nativity story. The innocence of the actors contributes to the success of the play as they ad-lib gems that adults could not have written. Next comes the fourth through sixth grades who entertain the audience with songs and dance, dressed as angels, interspersed with moving pieces of



Saint Nicholas took time out of his busy schedule to stop by IHM School again this year! Some students didn't lose any time in asking for his autograph! What a great souvenir!

IHM Band, directed by Brother Peter Mary, MICM and Brother Anthony Marie, MICM performed a fantastic concert during the Christmas Program!

poetry. Completing the night of fun is the concert by the IHM Band. Challenging pieces and arrangements include solos and a special performance of the percussion line. Wind instruments directed by Cheri Fill also focus on some special carol.

Days later, the final and most moving moment arrives with Midnight Mass on Christmas. The Chapel is packed to standing room only and warmly shrouded in a glow of candles, evergreens and poinsettias. Beautiful carols are sung from the choir loft, before and after the sung High Mass, which is celebrated in all the pomp and majesty of the night.

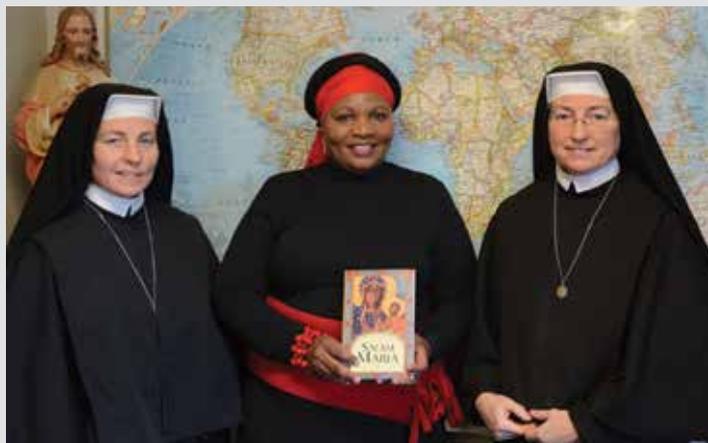
Afterwards, families line up to pay homage to the Little King in the manger at the altar rail. The line is long, but no one notices and soon it is well past 2:00 in the morning as they gather for coffee and donuts before the drive home to celebrate the birth of Christ.



The IHM Christmas Program took place at a local auditorium hopefully for the last time this year, as we look forward to having it in MacIsaac Hall next year!



“Salam Maria” Goes to Africa



The “Mama Maria” project is on its way to reality! After fund raising for the “Mama Maria” Center in Kenya, Grace Gikura is finally beginning to see her dream come true as she sent the PDF files of the Center’s “The Hail Mary Book” so it can be printed in Africa, saving hundreds of dollars. The book was renamed in Swahili “Salam Maria”—for distribution in Kenya. Sister Marie-Bernard, who designed the cover exclusively for its African distribution, stands with Grace along with Sister Katherine Maria, who helped see the project through. Sister Christopher Margaret, the typesetter is behind the camera! We are thrilled to help spread devotion to Mary in Africa!



Sister Miriam Teresa, MICM stands in front of the portrait of her newly beatified patroness.

New Jersey Blessed

A memorable day in the annals of Catholic American history, October 4, 2014, saw the first beatification on United States soil take place in Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark, New Jersey. Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, presided over the glorious ceremony, during which his Eminence read the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis, formally declaring that Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, native of Bayonne, New Jersey, “should henceforth be called ‘Blessed’ forever” in the Holy Catholic Church.

Four of the Sisters and two Brothers were privileged to be present at this awesome event. The ceremony opened with a beautiful procession of cardinals, bishops, priests, deacons, Knights of Columbus, and Sisters of Charity. The official Declaration of Beatification preceded the Solemn High Mass, after which a relic of Blessed Miriam Teresa was placed before her image at the front of the Basilica. Leading the short procession and carrying the relic was Mr. Michael Mencer, whose cure from bilateral macular degeneration in 1963, through Blessed Miriam Teresa’s intercession, was accepted as the authentic miracle in the beatification process.

Giving for God

Every day we pray for the benefactors that make our work possible here at Saint Benedict Center. We know that sacrifices, big or small, accompany each donation and because they are not given to us, but to God for His honor and glory, we know that God will bless and reward each and every one...

This fall, two tremendous donations were given and very much appreciated and needed. Richard L. Manganello, from “Pure Water for the World” non-profit organization, donated his own John Deere tractor, with attachments for use at Montfort Retreat in the summer and the Center in the winter. With the 30 inches of snow in one storm, the snow blower was a welcome sight this January! A tractor on sight at the camp all summer will be an invaluable asset beyond words.



In November, Randy Orbeck and his family in Minnesota donated a generator large enough to service all the buildings at Montfort Retreat, along with a box truck to transport it and for use at the monastery. Now if we have a power outage, as we usually do during camp season, the water will continue to run and the food will not spoil! Not only do we thank you, but hundreds of campers will be singing your praises! Thank you both so much for your generosity. May God bless you abundantly.

First Responders

On November 21-22, 2014, eight Sisters and two Brothers were certified in Wilderness Survival and Remote First Aid offered by the Red Cross Association.

Throughout the 16 hour course the group learned first-hand experience on how to respond to accidents and casualties when professional medical assistance is not immediately available. They practiced various methods of bandaging, and splinting, along with wound care, and how to treat cases of hypothermia using minimal materials in the wilderness.

Instructors Rick, Dan and Jim made the course memorable with their demonstrations and guiding techniques; the



At the March for Life the Sisters were honored to meet the National President of the LAOH, Mary Hogan (left) and LAOH Catholic Action officer, Mary Ann Labinsky.



group split into teams to practice different scenarios and how to resolve them. The instructors also explained and illustrated how important good planning is and how proper preparations are essential to keeping environments fun and safe. This training was invaluable especially for our use in our camp programs during the summer.

We were able to take this course through the help of Project Saint Patrick sponsored by The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOH). We express our sincere thanks to the LAOH, the AOH who gave us the grant that enabled us to further our ability to help others. May God bless Project Saint Patrick and all those who made it possible.

MacIsaac Hall

Since our last update, a lot of progress has been made in the new MacIsaac Hall. The wiring is complete, sheet rock is installed, new stairway framed out, and the classrooms are taking shape. Now we move on to plastering and painting, floor installation and finish work before we tackle the stage and furnishings (bleachers, chairs and desks). We want to thank all our donors for helping us get to this point and especially Bob Butchta who donated three weeks of his time and talent to actually work with the Brothers. May God bless you all!



Above: Brother Anthony Marie is hard at work!



Left: The first coat of paint goes on the ceiling and beams of the gym.

Below: MacIsaac Hall piled high with snow!



Paintings to Ponder

Two stunning paintings, one of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus and the other of Saint Padre Pio were donated to the Center this Fall. The painter, Tim Sanders, captured the life-like expressions using the Flemish style painting with its warm and mysterious look. Each painting is over 6 feet tall and framed in a complementary wooden frame.

Tim and Bridgett, his wife, moved two years ago from Pennsylvania to Holliston, MA. where they now manage historic farm property. Tim is a self-taught artist and uses his imagination to bring his paintings to life with his brush. Although he was previously employed as a stone mason, Tim has been painting as a hobby for 20 years, mostly architectural and folk-art, using acrylics. These paintings and sketches he would sell at fairs and art shows either in prints or originals.



Saint Therese is his first oil painting and his first painting of a saint; Padre Pio is his second! Tim attributes the Traditional Latin Mass for his inspiration, although he has always had a devotion to Saint Therese and Saint Padre Pio. Saint Therese now welcomes visitors to “Gate of Heaven Chapel” in the convent, as she is displayed in the hall outside the entry, whereas Saint Padre Pio’s painting hangs in the cloister until he finds a more open space in the new rooms at MacIsaac

Hall. These wonderful donations are like a gift straight from Heaven. Thank you, Tim and Bridgett! God bless you!

Jeanette Kelly RIP

Jeanette Kelly, 57, wife of Daniel Kelly and mother of Sr. Marie-Celine passed away peacefully on September 27, 2014.

Diagnosed in 1987 with Lupus Cerebritis, a disease which effected her immune and nervous systems, she battled the illness for 27 years, enduring countless griefs including many miscarriages.

Before her struggle with Lupus she was very much involved in everyday life. A graduate of Euclid H.S. in 1974, Jeanette earned B.A. and M.A. Degrees from John Carroll University and went on to teach Religion at Lake Catholic and Elyria Catholic High School while she worked for the Allen Bradley Co. in Highland Hts., Ohio.

Coming to Still River in 1996, she soon became a Third Order member of Saint Benedict Center. Aside from finding her always with a smile, she could be found volunteering at the monastery’s gift shop or helping with “Hot Lunch” meals with the other mothers.

A frequent attendee at daily Mass and Rosary she lived her life in a simple and childlike way. She had a special devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes and even went to Lourdes in 2002 with hopes for a cure. Although she did not receive a cure, she nevertheless increased her prayers. She would mention that her sufferings were in petition for more vocations to the religious life.

As her illness progressed, strokes and seizures were common occurrences which affected her ability to undertake normal household and motherly roles. In 2011 she suffered a severe stroke which took her sight. In spite of these troubles she never questioned why this had happened to her. Even when unable to say or remember anything else, she never forgot how to say the Hail Mary. She always appreciated even the smallest favor and would promise to keep you in her prayers. What an example she was to family, friends and anyone she met of bearing sufferings patiently and resignedly.

Rest in peace, Jeanette.



What's Going On @ SBC?

Get frequent updates on our daily life and apostolates!

Monastery: www.saintbenedict.com

facebook.com/SaintBenedictCenter • twitter.com/StBenedictCtr

Brothers: facebook.com/BrothersMICM

Sisters: facebook.com/SistersMICM