



FROM THE CENTER

A Newsletter for Friends and Benefactors of Saint Benedict Center across the Country

Finished! Done! Complete... almost.

It's been seven long years of hard labor, but now that it's finished, it doesn't seem that long at all... MacIsaac Hall is finally finished. And a big Thank You goes to our donors who helped either financially or with labor. There is not a day that goes by when the gym is not resounding with the voices of children, or adults, playing basketball or volley ball, watching a movie, performing a play or singing on stage. Sometimes we wonder... *How did we ever do without this beautiful building?* The Christmas Pageant this year was stunning, not only in the performance, but with lights, curtains and a packed audience.

IHM High School has also transitioned nicely into the new building and the students enjoy the sprint from Mass at the chapel across the street, to class, every morning. Classes are more focused as the building is exclusively used for high school. There is only one thing left to complete the entire project... landscaping including a paved parking lot and driveway... But like the building itself, it's only a matter of time. After all, it is Mary's work in the end.



The new building has been alive with daily classes for high school students, gym classes, play practices and basketball games!





As if the day couldn't be more uplifting, the main speaker of the rally, Michael Pence, made even more history in the March for Life as the first vice president ever to address the marchers. "Let this [pro-life] movement be known for love, not anger," Pence encouraged. "Let this movement be known for compassion, not confrontation. When it comes to matters of the heart, there is nothing stronger than gentleness."

A representative group of MICM Sisters attended this wonderful event, observing that a renewed spirit, a refreshing outlook was tangible in the attitude of the crowd. "What an

Historic March for Life

January 27th 2017, was an almost unbelievably "too-good-to-be-true" historic day for the pro-life movement. Immaculate Heart of Mary School's bus, driven by Brother Peter Mary, MICM, and packed with students and Brothers, rolled into D.C. after an all-night ride from Massachusetts, to join the hundreds of thousands of pro-life marchers who also came to show their support for the right to life.

But this year was different from the preceding 43 years, because this year the marchers weren't the only ones showing their support at the rally. "Steps away from here, in the White House, a president and a vice president sit at their desks and make decisions for a nation... As they sit there, they stand here with you!" The surreal words of Kellyanne Conway, Counselor to the President of the U.S., echoing in the green nearby the Washington Monument, were soon drowned out by the immense clapping and noise of a rejoicing crowd.

"This is a new day, a new dawn, for life," Kellyanne said. The right to life "is not a privilege, it is not a choice. It is God-given... This is a time of incredible promise for the pro-life, pro-adoption movement."



uplifting and exhilarating experience overall," a Sister noted. "The youthful crowd and prayerful spirit was great, and in the march we even met up with a good number of Morning Star Campers!"

IHM bus left as the sun set behind the Capitol building, each student and Brother filled with thankfulness in their hearts, rejoicing with millions of the pro-life generation. "Life is winning again in America," Pence stated. Thanks be to God for these hopeful times!

With Brother Peter Mary, MICM at the wheel, the IHM students, Brothers, and chaperones made the long trip from MA to D.C. in the IHM Bus for the very first time!

25th Jubilee of Profession

Sister Agnes Mary Mueller, MICM celebrated 25 years as a professed Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on December 8, 2016. Sister serves as the Novice Mistress and teaches in the elementary school. She has taught first grade for 25 years and fourth grade for the last three. Her first graders, many now grown and with children of their own, remember her First Communion classes as some of the happiest memories of their lives. Twenty-one of her nieces and nephews were among her students. By no means ready to retire, Sister also keeps the monastery gift shop stocked and oversees the convent chicken coop along with teaching.

The jubilee was celebrated with a cake on the feast day and by a formal luncheon with friends and family a few days later. Ad multos annos, Sister Agnes Mary!



Sister Agnes Mary cuts the cake surrounded by young family and friends along with Sister Katherine Maria, Prioress.



Sister Brigid Mary and Sister Christopher Margaret replace the garage door with windows.

ments, which were upstairs, are now finding a new home. Wall removal, window installation, plastering and painting were done by the Sisters. The Malm family, who have children in IHM School, organized a work crew who volunteered to finish the floor with the tiles donated by Dan and Marian Kelly. Lights were installed by Luke Austin and Mike Maney, while the Brothers continued to work on the gym. With this new expansion, we look forward to doing more for Jesus through Mary.

St. Joseph's Workshop

Nestled in the center of Saint Benedict Center's monastic complex stands a yellow split level house called Saint Joseph's. Dwarfed by the enormity of its new neighbor, MacIsaac Hall, Saint Joseph's, measures 1,400 sq. ft. Regardless of its size, a good portion of the monastery workload is done there everyday.

Originally a guesthouse, the building has been remodeled to function as a multi-purpose workspace. It houses *Te Deum Embroidery* works, the convent sewing room, where all the habits are made, and the sacristy linen department (on the top floor). Downstairs is split into two work spaces; the *Panis Angelorum Altar* bread bakery and the Housetops office. Recently the wall between the office and the storage area was removed, doubling the office space. Here the website and graphic depart-



Sister Brigid Mary finishes details in the office.



Special thanks to our volunteers who tiled our new office!

Back to the Grind

There are plenty of rock walls in New England... but visitors to the convent grounds here at SBC may wonder what the wall of full size trees along the cemetery road is all about. This oversized privacy screen may not be the prettiest part of the monastery... but it is a very important one – as it is the source of fuel that heats 10 of the 12 buildings that make up the monastery complex... a heating system that needs 10 - 20 tractor trailer loads of chips a year which is about 300 cords. Okay, so how do you chip a forest of full size trees into fuel? Easy – you get a big yellow “reduction machine” which is a nice term for the gigantic wood grinder called “the Beast.”

This versatile horizontal grinder produces screened chips for biomass fuel wood burners, like the one that will heat our monastery.

Thanks to the Beast, our old excavator – and of course, the Brothers – alot of full-sized trees can be devoured in a matter of minutes. It takes grapple loads of brush all at once and many pallets at a time, separating the nails with a magnet. And the heat is generated across the monastery – a big improvement from stoking various wood stoves all over the property! It’s bigger, it’s better, it’s “green”– and brings a new definition to “back to the grind!” And most of all, it saves a lot of heating bills.



Brother Peter Mary stands with two of the gentlemen who got the new chipping system up and running for the monastery.



IHM Chapel: Fit for the King!

The rustic beauty of Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel in Still River takes on a look of alpine majesty during the Christmas season. As some visitors have stated: This chapel was built for Christmas!

But what many people don't know is that the trees, wreaths, evergreen roping and fragrant greenery that drape our little House of Bread are a testimony to many people's generosity! Christmas tree stands, nurseries and farms pitch in to make the decor happen. For example, the Angelucci Family has been donating the two elegant trees that adorn the sanctuary for over 25 years! What a beautiful way to help make our little chapel into a little piece of Heaven that is fit for the King of kings! God bless all our donors!



Visitors from Afar

Father Francis Unegbu, from Nigeria, visited Immaculate Heart of Mary School on December 12 – the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Father is presently studying in Rome where he is working on a doctoral thesis in education. Father has been visiting schools to observe how they integrate religion into the classroom. Fascinated with IHM online, he made a point of spending a day observing some classes to see how we use Saint John Bosco's educational methods. He was enthusiastically welcomed by the middle and high school classes, initiating some lively discussions in each – much to his delight. After the day was over, Father returned to Boston promising to visit again. A beautiful snow-storm added to the day, as it was the first time he ever saw snow.



It's always exciting to have visitors! Especially when they come from far like Sara, our visitor from Australia (who helped the Sisters decorate their tree); Father Francis from Nigeria (seen here with the Junior/Senior classes) and Aranza from Mexico (who helped prepare medals for our street ministry!)

Before Christmas, we also hosted a visiting medical student from Australia, Sarah Atard, and the secretary for the Fraternity parish in Guadalajara, Mexico, Aranza De Loreto, who spent three weeks with the Sisters. The Junior/Senior Geography class enjoyed hearing about their countries which helped to broaden the students social perspective.

During Christmas break, Anna Rose McKinley from Northern Ireland, who is working in Denver with the homeless, spent a day visiting and sharing stories with the Sisters. Still River, might not be a big spot on the map, but it's message and apostolates reach across the world!



Happy Campers

Morning Star Camp launches into its 37th season this year. Growing over the years from small tents to army tents, to cabins and now to Montfort Retreat, every year is filled with happy memories! Now the campers are children of campers. This Thanksgiving Dena Ginelli Manzo visited with her husband and four little girls. Dena was a camper in ____ at Morning Star held at the Monomonack rented facility in New Hampshire. It is always exciting to see and hear from our campers... and find out how Morning Star had a positive impact on their lives!

We look forward to seeing more campers this summer! If you are interested in attending one of the four, week-long sessions of summer 2017, please be sure to contact Sr. Marie-Celine: srmarieceline@saintbenedict.com for more information.

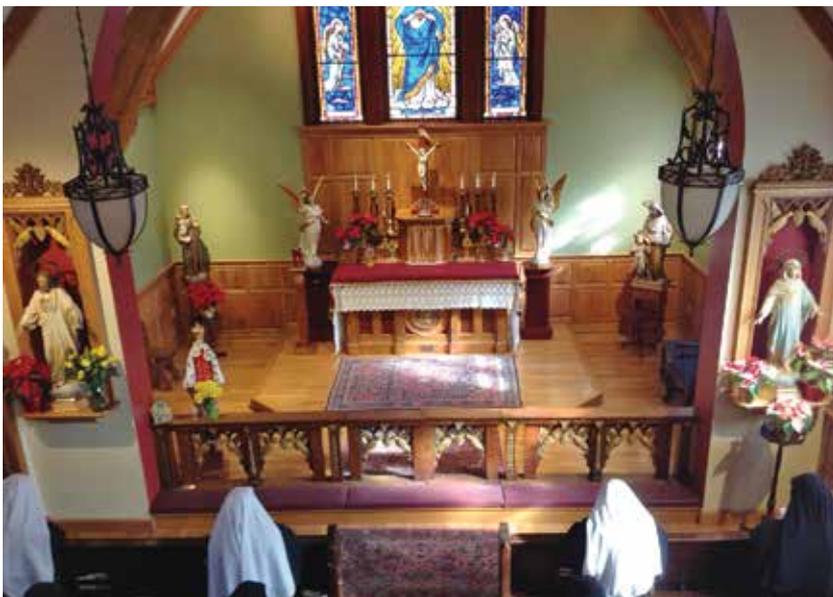
To Our Lady

In the heart of St. Elizabeth's Convent is the beautiful chapel of Our Lady, Gate of Heaven. Designed by John Howard in 2000, Gate of Heaven Chapel boasts the simple, elegant tudor architecture. This chapel is the pride and joy of the Sisters MICM, for it is here they spend the most time with their Eucharistic Lord. They begin their days here with meditation, and they come home in the afternoon after the work of the day and gather here for the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Evening visits, private Rosaries, Lectio Divina, and First Saturday Holy Hour, bring the Sisters to the feet of the Divine Master frequently throughout the day. Evening will always find the Sisters assembled together again in Gate of Heaven Chapel to chant the Little Office of Our Lady, as they gather at her feet to receive her blessing on their day and work.



Since the chapel was built, many have worked hard to see to the finishing touches. New lights were put in the sanctuary to enhance the color and bring out the beautiful altar

piece and tabernacle. The side shrines to the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart were built by Brother Thomas Augustine and show master woodworking. The Sisters are now planning the last and finishing touch on the beloved Gate of Heaven Chapel with some stenciling and detail work. The Sister anticipate a stunning climax for their lovely chapel by this labor of love for their Eucharistic Lord, the Center of their lives.



Festive for Fatima

This commemorative mug for the 100th Anniversary of the Apparitions at Fatima! (1917-2017) features images of the Fatima Children and the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. As you enjoy your drink you can say the beautiful prayer that the children learned from the Angel of Peace.

Shop for your custom 11 oz. stoneware mug exclusively from our online shop today! A beautiful gift for this memorable year! Shop at:

TrueDevotionals.com!



Rest in Peace

Dr. John H. Duffy
– the grandfather of Sister Mary Imelda, Brother Christopher Isaac and Brother Patrick

Joseph, died peacefully in the presence of loving family on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24, 2016 at the age of 88. A native of Hopkinton, MA, where he raised his family with his beloved wife Maryjo, and practiced dentistry for 50 years, Dr. Duffy leaves behind a legacy of family and faith which he passed on to his 12 children and 45 grandchildren . It is a special blessing that he was called home to God on the eve of the feast of Christmas. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends and all who had the honor to know him. May he rest in peace.