



FROM THE CENTER

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

Veni Sponsa Christi!

The First Profession of Sister Maria Faustina and Sister Mary Jacinta took place on September 8, 2018. What a perfect birthday gift for Our Lady: two young women dedicating themselves through vows as religious Slaves of her Immaculate Heart! Two and a half years of training and preparation had gone by, first as postulant then as Novice, and the big day was finally here!

That morning at Mass, both Sisters wore their mother's wedding gowns as they walked down the aisle to offer their lives and service as Brides of Christ.

At the Offertory during the Solemn High Mass they signed their document of vows at the altar. The Sisters then received the ring of espousals to Christ along with the habit of professed Sisters. It was a moving experience to watch these beautiful young brides of Christ leave the chapel in their bridal attire and return in the solemn black of the habit of a religious.

Sister Maria Faustina, 21, formerly known as Amanda Katherine Hannon, was born and raised in Iota, Louisiana. Sister was the second of Chet and Jessica's 10 children. Home schooled all twelve years, she attended the Latin Tridentine Mass along with her entire family. In 2011 "Katy" Hannon made her first trip to the North East to attend Morning Star Camp, where she immediately fell in love with the Order, the Sisters, Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. After attending Morn-



ing Star for four years as a camper and once as a counselor, and spending time with the Sisters discerning, Katy joined the Community as a postulant on February 2, 2016.

Sister Mary Jacinta, 22, formerly known as Jennifer Marie Brizek, was born and raised in northern

Above: Sister Mary Jacinta, left, and Sister Maria Faustina, right, leave the chapel to don the habit.

Left: The Profession Ceremony took place at the Offertory of the Mass. Watch the full ceremony on our website!



Above: The newly professed Sisters return to the Chapel in the habit of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Right: Past and present Morning Star campers and counselors traveled from across the country to attend the Profession!



New Jersey and was the second of Andy and Dawn Brizek's 8 children. Also home schooled for Grades 1-12, "Jenny" grew up attending the Latin Mass in Pequannock, New Jersey, and was close to the Chapel community there. At the age of 10, Jenny spent her first week at Morning Star Camp and returned for many years as a camper and later as a counselor. After graduation, she began college but soon after discerned God's call, and asked to join the Sisters. She was accepted as a postulant along with Sister Maria Faustina in February, 2016.

When the Mass and ceremony were finished, it was exciting to see so many Morning Star Camp campers and counselors who had traveled great distances to be present at the event! How appropriate... since it was Morning Star Camp that had brought these two Sisters to Christ!

A formal reception followed in MacIsaac Hall, just as at other weddings. Please pray for the newly professed Sisters! *The Bridegroom cometh...* and they are going forth to meet Him!

25 Years Professed

On May 30th, Sister Marie-Jean Schildknecht, MICM, celebrated her 25th anniversary as a professed religious, Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The official celebration took place on Saturday, June 2nd beginning with a Sung Mass in honor of the Immaculate Heart followed by a luncheon. Many of her family members travelled from the New York area to be present. It was a beautiful day of prayer, enjoyable company, good food, speeches, musical entertainment and well-wishes.

Sister has been a full-time high school teacher at IHM School over the past twenty-five years. She also coordinates the students' Saint John the Baptist Pro-Life League organizing many Pro-Life events in the community.

May God bless you, Sister Marie-Jean, for 25 years of service and love as a Bride of Christ... and may He grant you many more! *Ad Jesum per Mariam!*



Sister Marie- Jean as she cuts the cake for her jubilee with Sister Christopher Margaret, Prioress (left) and Sister Katherine Maria, Superior (right).

Montfort Grows

The 200-acre facility of Montfort Retreat, built by the Brothers, has been slowly adding buildings over the past 11 years. During the past summer months a Recreation Hall, the first log cabin style building you see on “Rosary Way,” was under construction and will be up and running for the 2019 camp sessions. The “rec-room” will add extra space for art classes and games, which will be especially useful on rainy days.

This summer, campers enjoyed a new and improved archery range, and new equipment, thanks to online donors! Each new bow has the name of the donor on it so they will be remembered by the campers.

A total of 600 young people from across



The new Recreation Hall at Montfort begins to take shape!



the country passed through the gates of Montfort during June–August! Four of the six weeks were Morning Star Camp for Catholic Girls directed by the Sisters, and two were Montfort Boys and Young Men, directed by the Brothers. Each enthusiastic group gives hope for the future of our Church and country!

God has truly blessed our camp programs and the Montfort Retreat facility and we know that He will graciously bless those whose help has made it possible to provide this program for today's youth.

The interior of the new rec-room before walls were completed.

Morning Star in Idaho

This summer Morning Star Camp went “West!” for a one-week adventure with campers from Saint Joan of Arc Parish in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho! 55 Catholic girls spent the week in the beautiful woods of Farragut State Park, experiencing the program of prayer and fun provided by the Sisters, MICM. This unique opportunity for girls gives them a chance to learn about religious life also. Daily Mass (thanks to Father Denis Gordon, FSSP) and the Rosary enhance the program of art and music and sports activities. The Idaho experience was unique in that campers were bused to and from a nearby lake, hiked and lunched up on a mountain vista and enjoyed an obstacle course prepared by FSSP seminarians. The traditional MSC campfire ended each day and had the Idaho woods ringing with the Morning Star theme song! Thanks to all who helped make the week a fun, safe, and faith-filled experience in the spirit of “To Jesus through Mary!”

Due to many requests for Morning Star Camps across the country, we are preparing a brochure for interested parishes. Contact Sister Katherine Maria skmaria@saintbenedict.com if you would like to receive one!



Brother Martin Professed

The feast of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, author of *True Devotion to Mary* and patron of our Order, was celebrated with special solemnity this year. After the Offertory of the Solemn High Mass, Brother Martin pronounced his First Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. After six months of discernment as a postulant and two years as a novice, the First Vows precede the Final vows, which will be taken in three years.

Known formerly as Cameron MacKenzie, the 25 year-old Brother Martin de Porres was supported by the presence of his parents, Alison



The sun beams through the chapel windows just as Brother Martin MacKenzie receives the habit of a professed Brother.



and Neal, and his nine siblings, as well as extended family from across the country and friends from his home parish of Mary Immaculate of Lourdes in Newton, Massachusetts.

After signing his vows on a document at the altar of IHM Chapel, Brother received the cassock and cincture of a professed Brother, and the lighted candle symbolic of the light of Christ.

Following the Mass, all gathered to congratulate the new Brother MICM, and celebrate with a piece of cake. The afternoon reception was held in MacIsaac Hall and was a lovely celebration for such a joyful occasion. May God bless Brother Martin, MICM, and may He send many more laborers into vineyard, for *the harvest is indeed great!*

100 Years... and Counting

It's unusual for an entire monastery to attend a birthday party, but an exception was made on September 16, 2018, when the community attended the 100th Birthday of Rita "Nana" Lombardi!

Rita, a native of New York, was born and raised in a time when a horse-drawn carriage took her to Mass every Sunday! In 1934, when she was 16, she met Father Leonard Feeney for the first time at a retreat. Five years later in 1939 Rita married Anthony J. Lombardi. Together they raised six children, four boys and two girls. Brother Matthew, MICM, was the youngest.

Always active in her Faith, Rita joined the Rosary Society in every parish she attended and even ran for political office on the pro-life ticket in NY State! In 1988, when Anthony retired, they moved to Boylston, MA and Rita became a member of Saint Benedict Center Third Order of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She volunteered for many years at our monastery Gift Shop before retiring when she was in her nineties!

Nana was surrounded by many of her 25 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren, 5 great-great-grandchildren and friends to celebrate a century of life. At the party she said she was "ready for 100 more!" *God bless you, Nana! Ad multos annos!*



Raising the Roof

The acquisition of the 77 acres last fall has been such a great blessing to the monastery. The property now gives IHM school a chance to grow... and plans are in the works.

Before any new work begins, maintenance and roofing needs were prioritized. On the property there are three existing buildings: a house, a pole barn and a mechanic shop. During the hot summer days, the Brothers stripped the old shingles, replaced rotted plywood and added overhangs and trim to the old mechanic shop which they hope to put into use soon. The lovely pavilion/ pole barn roof also had major repairs. The Brothers again, stripped all the old shingles, and replaced 40 sheets of plywood on one side before putting down over 7 thousand square feet of shingles! And last but not least, only one side of the house needed roofing making the final job easy!



Brothers remove shingles and replace the plywood before re-shingling the pole barn seen at left.

Meanwhile, our architects are busy planning, and revising an addition to the school. This much-needed space will affect the existing building, enlarging class space and adding offices and function room.

Our goal is to build it in one year, so our campaign to fund raise is not like the gym, which took seven years for completion... this is more urgent. Please contact us if you can sponsor a fund raising event or can contribute in any way.



Present plans for the new school addition which will expand the Community's kitchen, dining rooms, function room and new classrooms as well as enlarging the present classrooms.



Saints Among Us



This spring, in the field between our grape arbor and apple orchard, the Sisters built a shrine to Saint Michael the Archangel. The beautiful statue was a gift commemorating the profession of Sister Gabriel Marie. Saint Michael is an appropriate guard to watch over the Sisters and is the first shrine on the way to the convent.

In the spring we also acquired a lovely statue of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha which now

stands sentinel at her new home outside of the rustic Trading Post on Rosary Way at Montfort Retreat!

Requiescat in Pace



Loretta "Sally" Schmit

– dear friend and benefactor, passed away on August 27, 2018.

After struggling bravely through a battle with cancer, and suffering complications after a heart attack, this faith-filled woman was fortified with the Last Rites and told her family she was "ready" and asked

to be brought home where she passed away peacefully that same evening.

Sally and husband Albert befriended the Sisters while on missionary work in Arizona. They visited the monastery and were dear friends to the very last. *May she, and all the faithful departed, rest in peace!*



Father Leonard Lencewicz

– a professed Franciscan friar for 60 years and a priest for 55, died May 28, 2018. A native of Worcester, MA, Leonard entered the Franciscan Order on July 14,

1956, and professed first vows one year later. He made his solemn profession on August 22, 1960 and was ordained on March 2, 1963, at the Franciscan Monastery in Washington, D.C.

A long-time friend of the Community, Father Leonard offered Mass in IHM Chapel many times especially in the late 1980's and early 90's. May God reward him for his many years of faithful service. *Requiescat in Pace!*

Meet Loyola!

Here at the monastery, everyone and everything gets a patron saint, even vehicles! This summer "Loyola" joined the community when the Brothers' new Super Duty pickup truck arrived on the feast of Saint Ignatius!

After twenty years of heavy loads, building up the monastery and camp and endless hours of snow plowing it was finally time to retire the previous white truck "Clairveaux" to the lighter work of the new farm property.

Loyola has been blessed and is already helping out the "work" part of the Brothers' life of work and prayer!

