



FROM THE CENTER

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

May Procession

“Tis the month of our Mother!” The “blessed and beautiful” days of May would not be complete without the annual May Procession, a day of flowers, song, prayer and love in honor of the Mother of God.

On Sunday, May 17, over 300 people gathered to join the procession which followed the *Missa Cantata*. The first crowning was of Our Lady of Fatima in the sanctuary. The sedia with the statue then led the congregation as they spilled out of the chapel, processing the grounds, singing and praying a decade of the rosary at each shrine. The crowd of faithful, walking and in strollers, traveled along Route 110 to a total of four shrines, where each statue was crowned along the way. The final destination was the convent front yard, where an outdoor altar, canopied and ready for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, greeted them on the crest of the hill. Incense added one more touch of elegance to the almost heavenly experience.

It was a glorious day and a pot-luck picnic lunch followed where children and parents alike enjoyed some fun on a day dedicated to Our Blessed Mother.

We thank Our Lady for her continued blessings... and we thank all those who did garden work and cooking to make the 2015 May Procession truly worthy of our Queen!

Right: Samantha Ravesi crowns the statue of Our Lady of Fatima to be carried in procession.

Below: Servers, sedia, Brothers and Sisters lead the procession to the last crowning shrine outside St. John Bosco Workshops.



Above: The Procession, led by servers and the sedia of Our Lady carried by four men, makes its way down Route 110 in Still River after the third crowning.



Soldiers of Christ

On Saturday April 25, 2015, at 10:30 am, the Most Rev. Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester, conferred the sacrament of Confirmation on 77 young candidates in the church of St. John the Evangelist, Clinton, MA. In bestowing the Gift of the Holy Spirit upon the young Catholics, Bishop McManus employed the *usus antiquior* or Tridentine use of the Roman Rite according to the 1962 edition of the Roman Pontifical. Forty-three students of Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Still River, MA, comprised the majority of the 77 young people. The remaining 34 students were from the Sisters of the St. Benedict Center at St. Anne's Convent, Still River, MA, and various parishes in the diocese.

The church of St. John the Evangelist was built in 1886 by Irish-American architect Patrick W. Ford (1847-1900) according to the neo-gothic style highly popular in the latter half of the nineteenth century. St. John's recently was restored under the leadership of the late Father Thomas V. Walsh. IHM Chapel was the venue originally designated by the bishop, but owing to limited space, this glorious church was chosen to accommodate the congregation. The Center is grateful to Father Joseph M. Nally, current pastor of St. John's, who graciously extended the hospitality of his magnificent church.

Before the Confirmation, Bishop McManus briefly addressed the *confirmandi*, exhorting them to use the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost received in Confirmation to produce the fruits of the Holy Ghost. The choir, conducted by Brother Peter Mary, MICM, chanted the hymns *Veni Creator Spiritus* and the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* as the *confirmandi* approached the sanctuary. Other sacred hymns were sung during the conferral of the sacrament.

Each candidate knelt before the bishop, who anointed the forehead of each *confirmand* with sacred chrism consecrated during Holy Week in March, 2015. During this anointing the bishop imparted the sevenfold Gift of the Spirit with the formula: *Signo te signo crucis, et confirmo te chrismate salutis in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* ("I sign thee with the sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"). Once the bishop bestowed the Holy Spirit through the sacred anointing, he gently tapped the cheek of the confirmed, saying *Pax tibi* ("Peace be with you").

Once all the candidates were confirmed, the



Confirmandi, dressed in red, approach the Bishop with their chosen sponsors to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

bishop addressed the sponsors, pointing out that the newly confirmed will face a world considerably more hostile to the Christian Gospel than it was when the sponsors themselves were confirmed. The bishop urged the sponsors to fidelity in prayer, good example, and close support of their spiritual charges. The bishop's remarks highlighted the theme of authentic and bold Christian witness as the hallmark of those confirmed in the apostolic Faith entrusted to the Church by Christ Himself.

Concluding the sacrament of Confirmation, the Bishop celebrated Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament assisted by Monsignor Robert K. Johnson, master of ceremonies and rector of the Cathedral of St. Paul,



Worcester, MA, Father Neil J. Roy, Montfort Fellow of the St. Benedict Center, and Father Daniel J. Becker, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas, West Warren, MA. The servers and acolytes, students in Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Still River, MA, enhanced the sacred rites by their reverent deportment, dignified carriage, and careful precision.

After Confirmation and Benediction, the newly confirmed and their sponsors posed for photographs on the steps of St. John's Church. The bishop, flanked by his entourage, stood with the assembly before the front doors of the church. The joy of this great sacrament of faith radiated in the faces of all participants.

Brother Patrick Joseph, Novice

When the six months of Postulancy is up and the time for Novitiate is at hand, the candidate prepares to "put on the new man" by receiving the habit and a new name in religion.

On the feast of St. Louis Marie de Montfort, postulant Michael Duffy did just this. After a Solemn High Mass in honor of the great saint, Michael publicly asked for the "mercy of God and the companionship of the community," receiving in return a special blessing, the habit of a Brother Novice and the new name of Brother Patrick Joseph.

Brother Patrick Joseph graduated from IHM in 2010, after which he attended Thomas More College of Liberal Arts. He then went on to study mechanical engineering at UMass, Lowell, where he received his bachelors degree, *Magna Cum Laude*, in the field of engineering. He joined the order as a postulant on August 15th, 2014, and now uses that degree to teach high school science at IHM. Brother Patrick Joseph is the 3rd member of his family to join the community, after Sister Mary Imelda and his twin, Brother Christopher Isaac.

This "new man" has now begun the next step in becoming a professed member of the Brothers, Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; a time of prayer and formation for a period of two years known as the Novitiate. But he is in good company... entering the next phase of the journey on the Feastday of St. Louis de Montfort and with two powerful patrons beside him: St. Patrick and St. Joseph. Please join us in thanking God for this vibrant young vocation.



True Devotion Travels

The Spirit of St. Louis is soaring again...though a bit differently from that notable flight of 1927. This time it is the "Spirit of St. Louis de Montfort," as set forth in his writings called *True Devotion to Mary*. Many Catholics across the country are discovering and embracing the practice of this devotion which has inspired hundreds to perform the life-changing 33 days of prayers and practices, ending in the formal Total Consecration of oneself to Jesus through Mary.

In mid-February, several Catholic parishes in the diocese of Evansville, Indiana, began public preparation of the 33 days on the Friday after Ash Wednesday. Sister Katherine Maria and Sister Mary Imelda were invited to participate in the opening ceremony of the Consecration to Mary and also to spread its message to the students in the local Catholic Schools. During the day these Sisters addressed several classes containing approximately 500 students total, about the spiritual benefits of making the Total Consecration. The enthusiasm of the teachers at these schools as well as the eagerness of the young children was astounding.

The opening ceremony beginning the Total Consecration preparation took place in St. Philip's Church in Evansville in the



evening of the same day. The expected crowd of 800 was somewhat inhibited by the ice and snow storm of the day, but 200-plus daring souls showed up despite the lack of plows in the area. The event began with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament followed by beautiful personal testimonies on the life-changing effects that this spirituality had on many parishioners. Sister Katherine Maria then addressed the congregation with some compelling insights and stories illustrating the need for this consecration in today's world. The event ended with the recitation of the rosary and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

True Devotion is a solution to the problems of today's society. Total Consecration to Mary is growing rapidly, and all are encouraged to join forces with this heavenly Queen whose Immaculate Heart, as is promised, will triumph in the end.



Worcester Men's Conference

On March 21, the Brothers brought a table of True Devotion items to the annual Worcester Catholic Men's Conference. Bringing together hundreds of men, the popular event aims to assist Catholic men in conforming themselves more closely to Christ as they live their lives of faithful witness in a changing world. The schedule included Mass, inspiring talks, Confession and camaraderie. The Brothers enjoyed meeting new friends and old and introducing many to the work and spirit of St. Benedict Center.



MICM @ Holy Cross College

Father John Gavin, SJ, the chaplain at Holy Cross College and coordinator of the Society of Sts. Peter and Paul, invited Sisters, Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary as guest lecturers at the Theology by the Slice program on March 10. A thirty-minute powerpoint presentation entitled *Holy Slavery to Mary* was given by Sister Marie Jean to the 35 students in attendance, after the customary pizza dinner. Thanks to Joseph MacNeil, President of the Society, this was the first time that Total Consecration to the Blessed Mother was promoted on a Jesuit college campus. This wonderful movement is sweeping across the country with amazing appeal to young people! The total giving of oneself to Jesus through Mary is a wonderful response to the hedonistic society they are surrounded by. The latest issue of *From the Husetops* magazine featuring the explanation of "Slavery" to Mary was distributed to all who attended.



Light at the End of the Tunnel

Not only is the gym coming to completion, but the additional classrooms are also almost ready for occupancy. The Sisters have contributed a little help to the massive undertaking of the Brothers by painting rooms. When the entire project is finished, the first floor will not only consist of a full size gymnasium, but a full stage with balconies, a large activities room, boys and girls locker rooms, bathrooms and showers and a snack bar and facilities for the public. Upstairs will be three lovely classrooms, a balcony for the scorekeeper and film making.

The spacious basement will be a resource for additional books and a room for band practice. We are about to begin to tile the bathrooms and the rest of the floors, as landscaping is being addressed on the outside. A beautiful marble Sacred Heart statue is waiting in storage to be put in a place of honor at the entrance. Soon MacIsaac Hall will be bustling with activity as an extension to IHM School. Thank you, all who have made it possible and just know we are still depending on you to see it through to the end. God bless you!



Above: A custom spiral staircase was just installed that will give access to the A/V department of the new facility!

The Holy Face of Jesus

In these days of brazen impiety, the Holy Face of Jesus has inspired faithful souls to make reparation to Christ in today's society, as Veronica once did when she offered to wipe His face with her veil. Sister Marie Bernard, using the Holy Shroud as a model, painted a compelling source for this devotion. This image is displayed each Lent in the convent chapel and reminds us to console Christ as Veronica once did on the way to Calvary. The world looks on with mockery and ridicule as the pure Lamb of God is once again crucified in souls who disdain His Love and crucify Him with their sins. Join the silent prayerful army of "Veronica's" who did not hesitate to step into the crowd to console Christ with their prayers and actions.

Prayer to Reproduce the Image of God in Our Souls

I salute Thee, I adore Thee, and I love Thee, O adorable Face of my beloved Jesus, as the noble stamp of divinity! Completely surrendering my soul to Thee, I most humbly beg Thee to stamp this seal upon us all, so that the image of God may once more be reproduced by its imprint in our souls. Amen.



Tapping Our Natural Resources

Sister Brigid Mary and Sister Christopher Margaret tap into a hidden treasure on the convent grounds every year. When the weather starts to warm and the sap begins to flow, a sign that spring is on the way, and maple syrup is in the making!

For a usual run of two weeks, sap is collected and boiled down to make syrup for the monastery. Forty gallons of raw sap when boiled will produce 1 gallon of the liquid sugar. A homemade stove and split wood stoke the long hours of production while the final



stages are finished in the kitchen, where it is boiled to the right thickness and filtered for a transparent golden topping for pancakes!

We thank God for providing us with over 36 sugar maple trees in our back yard.

Don't Miss it! We make daily posts to our social media pages for the monastery! Even if you don't want to log on as a user, the pages are still visible to all visitors! Feel free to visit and enjoy the photos and updates! Facebook: *SaintBenedictCenter / SistersMICM* and *BrothersMICM* Twitter: *StBenedictCtr*



Make Melody...

After many requests, the Sisters are finally attempting to make a CD of various songs that are sung at the Morning Star Camp campfires! Not to be confused with chants and hymns for the liturgy, this recording will be a homespun collection of fun tunes and parodies that are known to campers and often sung for visitors to the monastery. The instrumental tracks have been put down but the vocals are more tedious! Recording is much different than campfire singing! Stay tuned!

Winning Essay

April 14, 2015 marked an impressive, historic moment when one of IHM's students was presented with a \$1000 cash award. The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Irish Essay topic for this year for grades 6-12 was "The Role of the Irish People in the American Civil War." Students had to adhere to MLA (Modern Language Association) format, length requirements, as well as other specific guidelines. Keeping to tradition of past experience, there were some IHM winners at the local and state levels, but this was the very first time we had a winner at the national level. Dominik Fill, a sophomore, received the 1st place award and received \$1000. The local LOAH Chapters were just as excited as the school in winning first place in the Nationals. Plans are already in the making for next year's topic and competition might be tough next year after this incentive.

