Summer 2019

FROM THE CENTER

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

The newly cleared area that will one day be the addition on IHM School as seen in the computer rendition.

Clearing the Way

Preparations for the addition on Immaculate Heart of Mary School building for grades 1–8 are well under way here at Saint Benedict Center.

As the final details get wrapped up, the Brothers have been preparing the site, chopping down pines and oaks and clearing underbrush that line the ridge overlooking the valley. Once the trees were removed, breathtaking views of the sunsets were revealed!

As we await approval to start, the first thing on the list will be to enlarge our existing parking and re-route the driveway. One entrance will divide in two directions, and unify the properties in an organic manner, also enabling us to add some desperately needed space for parking and create a larger school yard for the students.

The 2019-2020 academic year will open with the sound of backhoes and bulldozers accompanied by a symphony of hammers and saws as anxious students and teachers look forward to more spacious classrooms, larger library and function room before the academic year is over.

Please keep this urgent project in your prayers and on your donation list so we can meet our time goal and finish within a year!

To the left of the existing school, the trees have been removed to prepare for the new addition.

By donating to the Immaculate Heart of Mary School building fund, you promote and foster Traditional Catholic Education and you will reap the eternal benefits in Heaven!

Donations can be made at ImmaculateHeartSchool.org and SaintBenedict.com. God bless you.

The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of SAINT BENEDICT CENTER • P.O. Box 1000 • Still River, MA 01467
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Montfort Retreat: Behind the Scenes

The spring season is late in coming to Massachusetts, but it's even later getting to New Hampshire where our Montfort Retreat stays dormant from November to May.

It has been 15 years since we purchased the property and 11 seasons of camp, but it's still exciting when we arrive at our 200-acre facility, after a 2 hour ride, to open it up for the season.

This spring, the Brothers installed a generator (the gift of a donor) that is big enough to handle the electricity in all 23 buildings. They also put the final touches on the new Recreation Hall, added a new shed for the swim area and put a fresh coat of paint inside the bathhouse. The annual pre-camp work didn't stop there. Reassembling docks, clearing fallen trees, checking for snow damage and cleaning the buildings and cabins were just the beginning! Stocking shelves in the kitchen and Trading Post and preparing the Nurse's Station must be done to get everything into shipshape. Some volunteers came and helped to clear "Saint James Trek" and other trails that are hiked by campers each year.

Sister Gabriel Marie and Sister Marie-Celine bring out the tables and chairs on the deck of Sacred Heart Lodge.

It is a lot of work to get the camp up and running, not to mention seeking donations to keep campers' costs low, but it's all a work of love and worth it! Montfort Retreat / Morning Star Camp was built for Our Lady and through her intercession, and each year she blesses many young souls who attend the summer programs!

Sister Mary Jacinta stands near the newly installed generator that will keep Montfort up and running during summer storms.

Timothy the Tractor

We welcomed a new addition to our fleet of vehicles when a new and bigger tractor arrived at the monastery! A step up from our 20+ year old Cub Cadet tractor named "Pio," the new Kubota 3301 with backhoe and loader was lovingly named "Brother Timothy"at the special request of the generous donor who helped make this purchase possible! Thank you so much for your generosity …the Sisters are unstoppable now!

Sisters replace a gutter on the front of Saint Elizabeth's Convent with the help of the new tractor.

Confirmed in Christ

We were blessed to have 24 students and converts confirmed in the Traditional Rite by Bishop McManus at Saint John the Evangelist Church in Clinton, MA, on the evening of Friday, June 7, 2019.

The Brothers and Sisters were honored to sing once again at this beautiful ceremony, which ended with Traditional Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

May these young Soldiers of Christ carry the Light of Christ into the world!

Brother Gerard and Brother Christopher Isaac serve for Bishop McManus at the Confirmation in the Traditional Rite.

Camps Across the Country

Next year we will celebrate the 40th season of our summer camp apostolates! It's amazing to think that this once small endeavor in the 1980's for a handful of IHM students has grown to a national apostolate reaching girls attending Morning Star and boys at Montfort across the country!

Sisters' camp in Louisiana in March, 2019.

Now, not only do we offer six weeks of camps at our facility, but we have been bringing our camp programs to parishes across the country …and even receiving invitations outside the country. We are planning an English speaking Morning Star Camp in Brazil in January!

In the early months of 2019 three Sisters conducted a Morning Star Camp for a vibrant group of girls at a retreat facility in Louisiana!

Not too long after, the Sisters were headed out to Indiana for a "mini" camp weekend and then they flew to El Paso, Texas, for another "mini" camp weekend. The summer closed with a final camp in Rhode Island

Two Brothers conducted their first out-of-state camp at Ave Maria, Florida, in August! Every camp was a visible and wonderful success, spreading the Montfort and Morning Star message: To Jesus through Mary!

Brothers' camp, Ave Maria, Florida, in August, 2019.

Monastery Up-Keep

There's always plenty to do around the monastery! The newly acquired acreage brought our complex of Saint Benedict Center to 100 acres and added several new buildings! Cristo Rey (the farm house on the new property) has given the Brothers some extra room as they await the day when a new Brother's House can be built.

The mechanic barn, a long dark structure was re-roofed last summer and this summer new windows were installed and siding added to match the other workshops at the monastery.

The field has also been re-worked in preparation for a new baseball field and a multi-purpose playing field.

Brothers work on re-siding the new mechanic barn.

All the work done at Saint Benedict Center is done in the spirit of True Devotion to Mary, as we offer ourselves and all we do to her each morning.

Sisters harvest blueberries offered by our neighbor, Shiela Anderson.

Japan 2019

Sister Katherine Maria and Sister Miriam Teresa stand outside the Urikami Cathedral, ground zero in Nagasaki and at the shrine of the Japanese Martyrs.

On March 20th, Sister Miriam Teresa and Sister Katherine Maria were sponsored by Masumi Yorita, the sister of Sister Miriam Teresa, to accompany her to Japan. They first arrived in Tokyo and took a train to Hiroshima to visit relatives for four days. Then they traveled to Nagasaki and were met at the train station by Father Furusato, OFM, who took them on a pilgrimage to all the sites of the martyrs and hidden Christians.

The story of these faithful Catholics who kept their faith for 200 years with Baptism as their only sacrament is awe-inspiring. Persecution of the Faith left them priestless for two centuries, but when a priest finally arrived, he was shocked to be greeted by so many souls who remained faithful to the teaching of the Church.

The Sisters and Masumi also visited the sites of the 26 Martyrs of Nagaski, the Cathedral – where the nuclear bomb was dropped – and Doctor Takashi Nagai's house. The haunting stories of the martyrs stayed with them as they ended the trip at the foot of Mount Fuji, Kyoto and Tokyo.

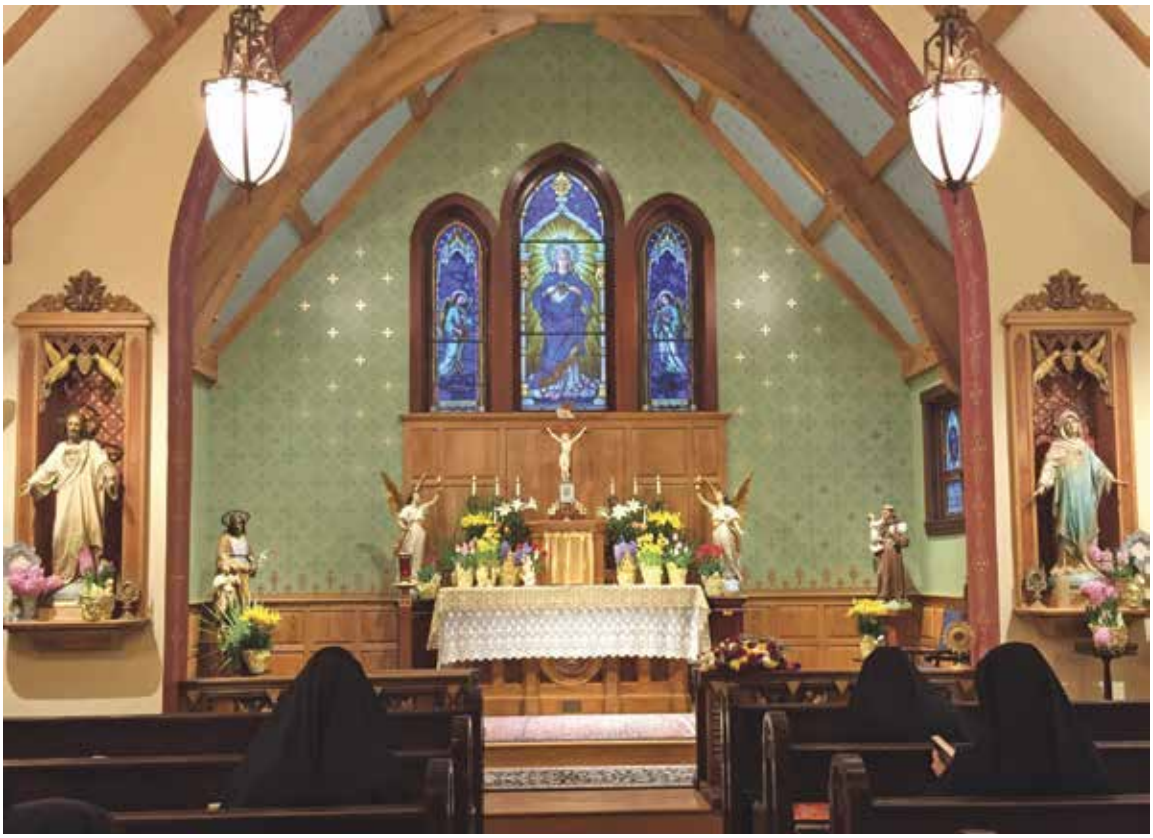
At the Gate of Heaven

A dear priest friend used to say that life at Saint Benedict Center was like living on the doorstep of Heaven… and he wasn't too far off! Actually we do have the "Gate of Heaven" here, which is the name of the Sisters' Convent Chapel!

After years of contemplating just the right stenciling, this spring we finally got the courage to mount the scaffolds and paint the back wall of the sanctuary.

Three Sisters designed the pattern, made the stencils, and went to work as a team to paint, stencil and gold-leaf the sanctuary walls, ceilings, archway and shrines.

Climbing up staging, teetering on ladders, and putting faith in our guardian angel for those "hard to reach" spots, paid off with a glorious product worthy of the name of our little chapel. After all, we may be living on the doorstep of Heaven, but we are praying at the very Gate!



Above, Sister Magdalene Marie and Sister Agnes Mary prepare the stencils and designs in the convent art room.

Above, left, the painting team at work.

Sisters' morning meditation in the gloriously finished Gate of Heaven Chapel during the Easter season.

Chartres Pilgrims

This summer two of our Sisters were sponsored by the Chapter from Saint Joan of Arc Parish in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to join the annual Chartres Pilgrimage. On June 6th, they set out for France where they met their group and joined 14,000 Catholics to make the historic Pentecost 72-mile pilgrimage from Paris to Chartres. The three-day walk is an annual event uniting pilgrims in a spirit of adoration, reparation, thanksgiving, and petition.

Before the pilgrimage, Sister Mary Clair and Sister Mary Imelda visited the Chapel of the Miraculous Medal and also Sacre Couer Basilica, Sante Chapelle, and Saint Sulpice among other holy and historic sites with their fellow pilgrims.

The pilgrims set out at dawn from Saint Sulpice in Paris on Saturday, and arrived at the Cathedral of Chartres on Monday afternoon. This beautiful Cathedral houses one of the greatest relics of Christendom, the veil of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Sisters remembered in prayer the intentions of all those who sponsored the trip along with the friends and benefactors of Saint Benedict Center. May God reward Saint Joan of Arc Parish for giving the Sisters the opportunity to make this pilgrimage!

Requiescat in Pace

Rev. John L. Donovan, age 91, died peacefully on March 5, 2019. Father became acquainted with our community in the early 2000's when he would take time from his retirement in Boston to help us out for many feasts and Sunday Masses. A moving preacher and beautiful example, Father was a figure of manly strength and priestly zeal. He was very close and dear to all the religious and lay people of Saint Benedict Center. In his later years when he could no longer travel to Still River, he remained a loyal friend and an encouraging example. He is greatly missed. Rest in peace, Father!

Lucille Flynn, age 98, passed to eternity on March 27, 2019, surrounded by her family. Lucille's life epitomizes the resilience, courage, steadfastness, and can-do spirit of her remarkable generation. A Third Order Member and a gifted musician, she used her talent for God by playing the organ in IHM Chapel for many of her later years until she was almost 90! May God reward her for uplifting so many souls through countless Masses she played for! May she rest in peace!

Kathleen Golden, age 81, died peacefully on July 27, 2019, at her home in New Jersey. Kathleen was born in the Bronx of Irish parents and then moved to Lincoln Park, NJ. She was the mother of Sister Marie-Therese, MICM, the youngest of her nine children. Always living a full life of faith, "Kathy" ran a family day-care for many years, and after she retired she spent the next 13 years working at Morning Star Family Health Center and active pro-life work with her daughter, Jean Tevald, MD. Kathy made the trek to Still River a couple of times a year to visit and take part in different community events. We especially enjoyed her Christmas Eve visits where she took part in our candlelit procession at midnight. She was an example of faith, joy, generosity and energy to the very end. Rest in peace!

Brian Erdelac, age 90, passed to eternity on July 15, 2019, surrounded by his loving family. Born in Yugoslavia, Brian spent most of his life as an Ohio resident. He was a U.S. Army veteran, having served in the Korean War and recieved the Bronze Star. An aerospace engineer by trade, Brian was an avid golfer, bowler, and a family man, whose family was always his first priority. He was the grandfather of Sister Marie-Celine, MICM and predeceased by his daughter, Jeannette, Sister's mother.