

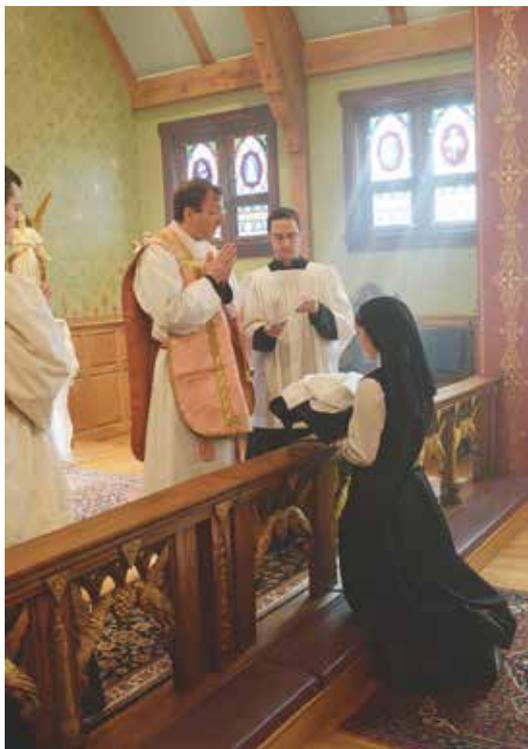


# FROM THE CENTER

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

## Sister Pia-Marie, Novice

Lent 2020 has been an unusual time for everyone, in the Church and in the world! The unprecedented situation created by the coronavirus crisis has touched all of our lives. But Holy Mother Church will always remain close to her children despite the closing of the churches. The lenten liturgy reminds us all to keep our eyes on the eternal goal. Just like a true mother, when anxiety is at its height, she provides us with beautiful thoughts to meditate on... this was the case on Laetare Sunday 2020, when Julia O'Leary was accepted as a Novice of the Sisters, Slaves of the Im-



*Julia O'Leary receives the habit of a novice and her new name of Sister Pia-Marie!*



*Left: Sister Pia-Marie cuts the cake in celebration as Sister Katherine Maria, Sister Superior, and Sister Christopher Margaret, Prioress stand by.*

maculate Heart of Mary.

*Laetare! Rejoice!* Even though all public Masses were cancelled, the MICM religious and the O'Leary family gathered in the small convent chapel, called "Gate of Heaven," to witness this young woman ask for the habit of a novice. What a beautiful contrast to the worries of the world!

Julia O'Leary, the third of Christa & Denis O'Leary's five children, was raised in Texas. She and her sisters became acquainted with the Sisters through the Morning Star Camp program, and travelled to attend for many years. After graduation from high school, Julia thought of God first, and was received as a postulant of the Sisters in September 2019.

Now, 6 months later, Julia received the habit of a Novice and a new name in religion on March 22, 2020 ~ Laetare Sunday. She will be known henceforth as Sister Pia-Marie, taking the great Saint Padre Pio for her patron saint!

Please keep Sister Pia-Marie in your prayers as she begins the two year program of study and formation that will one day lead to First Vows as a Bride of Christ!

*The O'Leary Family traveled from Texas to be present at this big step in religious life.*





*The Brothers MICM with Cardinal Zen in New York.*

## Princes of the Church

### Cardinal Zen

In the month of February the Brothers attended the third annual Lepanto Conference at Saint Vincent Ferrer Church, right in the heart of New York City.

The event opened with a Pontifical Mass in the extraordinary form celebrated by His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Zen, Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong. Cardinal Zen is an outspoken advocate for the suffering Church in China and denounces the political surrender to the patriotic church for these faithful souls. The Mass was followed by lectures and a procession. It was a day rich in inspiration and a deep reminder of all the beauty and strength contained in our Catholic Faith!

### Cardinal Kung, RIP

Early in March the Brothers and Sisters were blessed to attend a Pontifical Requiem Mass offered by Cardinal Burke to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the death of Cardinal Ignatius Kung. Cardinal Kung suffered under communist China's persecution of the Catholic Church, and spent almost 33 years in prison for his steadfast loyalty. Many of those years he spent in solitary confinement. He was finally exiled and died in Connecticut, where he lived with his nephew and family, in 2000.

What a blessing to have known this modern Confessor of the Faith, the first Chinese Bishop of Shanghai and one of the Church's staunchest leaders in time of persecution. Please pray for his canonization!

We were blessed to meet Cardinal Burke after the Mass and to receive his blessing. May God protect and strengthen all the Princes of His Holy Catholic Church!



*Above: Sisters stand by the catafalque representing the deceased Cardinal Kung after the Pontifical Requiem.*

*Right: Sisters MICM met with Cardinal Burke after the ceremony at the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist in Stamford, CT.*

## Prayers for Protection

When the Coronavirus shutdowns finally came to Still River, we began our last day of school with the special Mass of Protection from Plague, asking God's protection on all our students and their families. Following the Mass the student body, led by our chaplain, who carried the Blessed Sacrament, followed by the Brothers and Sisters, around the school property and returning to the church, ended with Benediction.

*"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell."*

*Matthew 10:28*



## Cement, Steel...and Snow?

The wintery months have definitely slowed the progress on the IHM School Expansion project... but nevertheless, there has been progress!

While the unseen, but necessary details were being attended to all winter, visual progress began with the melting of the snow when the cement trucks came to pour the foundation!

The steel workers have begun their initial work to install the beams for the first floor. It is definitely exciting, now that you can walk into



the actual basement with the elevator shaft and all! This large area that overlooks the valley with big windows, will one day be the function hall of the facility.

The students (and teachers) were watching, until the school closed, with bated breath for new and larger classrooms. The Sisters are anxiously looking forward to a new and more functional kitchen with a drive-in level food storage area! ...and just when spring was on the point of springing, another snowstorm comes! God surely has a sense of humor!

No one can make the sun shine and a building quickly pop up, but you can definitely help speed along the building project by sending a donation... and by keeping this in your prayers!

## Spreading the Message



The Brothers tackled a long drive to Florida recently to share some of the life and spirituality of True Devotion to Mary with a number of school groups in the Ave Maria area. The peace found in Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary and the beauty of the Traditional Mass enabled them to provide a unique week with the youth!

Sister Marie-Celine recently spoke at a women's Lenten Day of Recollection at the Shrine of the Little Flower in Rhode Island. The theme of "At the Cross with Mary" was a beautiful topic to delve into during this holy time of prayer and sacrifice. It was wonderful to see many of our past campers at the event! Mass and Benediction was provided by Father Berg FSSP encapsulating the day with the richness of our liturgy.



# Morning Star Season

It's pretty cold here in New England for Morning Star Camp... but the "camp season" is off to a fantastic start! Two camps have already come and gone in different parts of the country... and a whole new batch of campers have been added to the Morning Star ranks!

At the end of February four Sisters followed the Morning Star to the bayous of Louisiana for a southern-style Morning Star Camp again this year! A vivacious group of 61 campers and 8 counselors brought the trustworthy program to life during the 4-day program held at the Camp Abbey facility in Covington, LA.



Thanks to local priests, the group was blessed to start each day with the traditional Latin Mass in the Chapel on the grounds. Providing a program, used by the Sisters for 40 years, enhanced by some authentic some cajun cooking (and King Cake) everything else just flowed along! From music and dancing, catechism, crafts and sports to games, relays, campfire songs, evening Rosary and even a rainy night movie ~ it was simply the wholesome fun that make up Morning Star memories!



With the opening of March, two Sisters headed to Sacred Heart Parish in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for another session of Morning Star! Many of the campers had attended last year and dove right into the packed program of prayer and activities, learning to "Follow Mary, the Morning Star" in all of their actions.

Each of the three days included fun games and competitions, interspersed with times for prayer. Campers learned the Mercy Chaplet and also led the decades of

the Rosary with specific intentions. The days were full and happy, and lots of memories were made along the way! Our Lady walks among her campers!

Not everyone can make it to New Hampshire for MSC in the summer months so the Sisters love to bring the prayer, catechism, and Morning Star fun to campers across the country! We pray their hearts have been brought closer to Mary, the Morning Star.

## Visit the Monastery Online!

Our high-tech world is always changing... and even though our monastic life doesn't, it is important to keep our online presence up to date for visitors!

The Sisters recently designed and built a new website for Saint Benedict Center that can be visited on any device!

Check out the new and improved [www.saintbenedict.com](http://www.saintbenedict.com) for monastery Mass times, news, updates and inspiration!

