



# FROM THE CENTER

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



*Father Becker begins the Profession Ceremony after the Offertory of the Mass on Pentecost Sunday.*

## Brothers Professed

The unsettling and constant reports of political disruption, COVID 19, and violence daily poured out in the media, stand out in blatant contrast to the peace, security, and joy of one who gives himself completely and unreservedly to the Blessed Mother. This was experienced by two Brothers, who on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2020, knelt before the altar in Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel, and vowed themselves to God and His Blessed Mother as Slaves of her Immaculate Heart through the three religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Brother Gerard, formerly known as Nicholas Fretwell, attended Immaculate Heart of Mary School grades 1-12, graduating in 2015. He worked as a machinist until his entrance into religious life on August 22, 2017. Completing the required two and a half years of preparatory study, prayer and discernment, Brother Gerard pronounced his First Vows as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He teaches Junior High Science, and puts his knowledge and skill of carpentry and machinery to use in the various building projects around the monastery.

Brother Patrick Joseph made his Final Profession of Vows, having completed the three years of First Vows. Brother

had also attended Immaculate Heart of Mary School grades 1-12, graduating in 2011. He obtained his degree in engineering at UMass Lowell, and now teaches the High School Science and Math courses at IHM School.

The Ceremony of Profession of Vows took place at the Offertory of the Mass. Both brothers pronounced their respective Vows (first vows and final vows) and signed them on the altar. During the ceremony a lighted candle was handed to each, "as a sign of immortality, that, dead to the world, (they) may live only in God," and they likewise received their blessed cassocks, symbolizing the "putting on of the new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth." Having donned their habits, the Brothers received a final blessing, in which Father asked that "placed on God's right hand on the day of judgement, they may rejoice in having fulfilled all the promises of their dedication."

We pray that these Brothers will persevere in the way of life to which God has called them, and that the Holy Ghost will continue to enlighten and guide them during these uncertain times, making them "strong in temptation, firm in peace, constant in prayer," so that they may put the love of Christ before all things.



*Br. Gerard  
First Profession*



*Br. Patrick Joseph  
Final Profession*



## Morning Star: Camp-in-a-Box!

“All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single... star!” ... that is, the Morning Star! COVID-19 closed the camp but did not stop the spirit!

The Sisters (and campers, too) were extremely disappointed to hear that even though New Hampshire State allowed summer camps to open with 14 pages of restrictions, the officials in the town in which Morning Star Camp is located closed all camps in the town.

Sister Katherine Maria, Sister Superior, addressing the campers about the cancellation of camp told them online, “It was truly heartbreaking for us to make this announcement. After months of being cooped up due to the COVID pandemic, to cancel the opportunity for campers to enjoy their faith with other like-minded Catholics is devastating for us all here. Morning Star Camp has provided weeks of fun and faith in a Catholic environment for thirty-nine years straight, and this is the first time we have been forced to cancel.”

“But the light of Our Lady, the Morning Star will prevail through the apparent darkness. We are not going to let the summer go by without doing something for the campers and keeping the Morning Star spirit alive,” Sister Marie-Celine, the new camp directress said, “if campers can’t come to camp, let’s bring camp to them!” And the idea for a “camp-in-a-box” began.

The Sisters immediately began creating boxes designed specifically for each camper’s age group. Each box included either a spiritual classic book for the older girls or inspirational coloring books for the younger campers; along with explanations and hand-outs for their group’s religion classes. The Sisters prepared colorful craft packages with lanyards, leather kit projects, bracelets and beads, yarn and paper items. They spent hours filming their music activities, singing and games, and put them all onto an instructional DVD, which the campers could watch at home. Although they weren’t able to include campfires in the box, the Sisters did record some campfire songs on CD to send along. Before sealing up the boxes, the right size t-shirt with the camp motto was put in, along with a personalized dog tag, bandana, water bottle full of candy and a handwritten card from a Sister, and for the finale – a handful of confetti!

Campers also received online talks by the Sisters, some fun videos like “morn-ing wake-up bugle,” and Compline, where they could join the Sisters in their evening prayers. And last but not least campers were encouraged to interact with each other by sending in photos and entering the virtual talent show. “Talent Night is one of the highlights of every summer camp week,” said Sister Marie-Bernard, “and it’s important for the girls to share their talent with others. It inspires people to seek and develop their own God-given talents.”

It took the Sisters one month, to the day, to create, pack and send out over two hundred and seventy-five Morning Star Camp Boxes, reaching campers in twenty-four of the fifty US States. The response from the campers who received their boxes has been overwhelming with emails, cards and calls.

Despite our inability to meet this year, the Morning Star spirit of “To Jesus through Mary” continues shining through the box until we resume camp next year.

*Sisters ship get ready to send off the boxes to Teen Week campers!*



*Above, Sisters package t-shirts for participating Leadership campers.*



*Left, photos of a few of the happy campers who recieved their boxes!*





## Slowly but Surely

This coming fall we will celebrate one year since the ground breaking of our IHM School expansion project. From that very day we have been praying... and fundraising in hope to complete the new classrooms and be up and running for the 2020–2021 school year.....then COVID struck! This unforeseen obstacle forestalled our hope as the work slowed and materials delayed, until it almost came to a screeching halt up to the last month or so. It is now apparent that our one year deadline will not be met. As we say here at the monastery, “With God there is no time...” so we just have to be patient and pray... and continue to fund-raise!



The last days in May brought us a sign of hope when the steel-workers arrived with a 100-foot crane. The beams that will support the first floor were lifted and bolted into place. After this the sheets of steel were put on top for the first floor...where cement will be poured. But first the plumber!! Interesting to note, as special interest groups surface in political hostility, one cement company refused to be hired because they said they would not help build a Catholic school!

Please consider helping us with this project. We are a private school and almost all classes are taught by religious. Our tuition is low, making Catholic education available for big families who are struggling financially. God will reward you for anything you can give to speed along this important expansion project!



## Giving Back

Luke Austin came to Saint Benedict Center as a student in Immaculate Heart of Mary School from 3rd grade to 12th grade, graduating in 1999. While most IHM graduates prepared for college, Luke and many other boys opted to go into the trades. Aspiring to different fields of work was no easy task for these men to achieve. Hours of education and training in their prospective careers was daunting, but perseverance paid off in the end. Luke, now married with three children, is a perfect example. Not only has he been successful, but he has generously helped at the school he once attended.

Luke went home to Maryland after graduation and joined the local electricians union and worked in Rockville, Maryland, until the early summer of 2001, when he returned to Massachusetts and became an electrical apprentice with the local union in Worcester. After spending

a total 10,000 hours on the job and in classroom training he graduated to the next level of journeyman on May 13, 2007 when he received his journeyman license. While working his way to the next level his job took him to many interesting places, from Operating rooms to Sports arenas. Eight years later Luke was awarded a Master electricians License and soon after started his own business: Luke Austin Electrician LLC. Just two years ago he received his unrestricted contractors supervisor's license and he now works on site with our building project. This spring he extended his master electrician license to New Hampshire. It took a lot of time and hard work, but in the end with God's blessing Luke was able to work through the COVID crisis and provide for his family. And maybe it wasn't all his hard work, but his faithfulness to the Rosary that helped him achieve his goal.



## New Life in Christ

During the months of the shut down we have been honored to witness the baptisms of three new adult converts to the Faith. All three of them have taken formal traditional instruction with Brother Peter Mary, MICM here at the Center.

Charles Miyata, (top photo) age 27, became interested in the Catholic Faith after the conversion of his two older brothers, Francis and Tristan. He was baptized by Father Daniel Becker at Saint John the Evangelist Church in Clinton, MA in April.

Austin Matthes, (middle photo) age 23 came to seek the Truth through his fiancé Bridget Crory, IHM Class of 2014, and through her family. Austin was also baptized by Father Becker in April at Saint John's Church in Townsend, MA.

John Morris, (bottom photo) age 80, husband of 42 years to Pauline Morris – the head of 40 Days for Life in Worcester – found his Faith through the example of this wife and, no doubt, through her prayers! John was baptized a Child of God by Father Becker at Saint John's Church in Clinton MA in June 2020.

Yes, despite the darkness of our present world, the Catholic Church is still a beacon of light to those who seek the truth... in any circumstance. Please pray for these new members to the Church Militant that they may treasure their Faith and Heavenly inheritance above all else!

*For we are buried together with him by baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:4)*

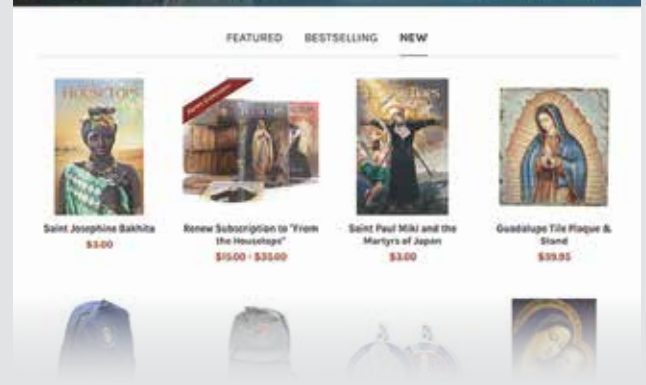


## Our Gift Shop has Moved!...online

Our monastery gift shop has been very busy these past couple of months! Although the physical shop has been slow due to COVID restrictions, we have still been receiving and filling online orders from all across the country... especially for our True Devotion Rings and Bracelets!

Recently our shop went through some important updates, and we've got a whole new look!

We've also moved the online shop to within the monastery site at [shop.saintbenedict.com/](http://shop.saintbenedict.com/). You can still reach us at [TrueDevotionals.com](http://TrueDevotionals.com)... but we ask that you take a moment to update any old bookmarks so that you can continue shopping! God bless you, and thank you for your support!







## Growth in Holiness

Any visitor to the monastery has noticed the number of garden shrines and statues around the property! These physical reminders to strive for holiness are a source of peace and inspiration to all of us... but it's not always easy to keep up on them and the weeds!! This year, with the "quarantine" closure of

school and summer camp the Sisters were able to devote more time to their assigned shrines.

A few statues needed some repairs, due to the harsh New England weather. One of these was the statue of Scourged Christ, sitting so sorrowfully in our cemetery. It was bought in 2001 in memory of the Profes-

sion of Sister Marie-Bernard and Sister Marie-Therese. Another statue that needed painting was the cement statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which the Sisters sanded down, repaired and repainted. Now Our Lady of Fatima looks just as lovely as the new addition of the three Fatima Children, which were given in memory of Sister Mary Jacinta's Profession.

A lovely shrine to the Sacred Heart on the side of the elementary school was spruced up by Sister Martina Marie, the assistant principal. Our Lady is honored by other shrines throughout the



*Just a few of the lovely garden shrines blooming around the monastery grounds!*

property under a few of her many titles, such as Our Lady Help of Christians surrounded by lilies and roses and gardened by Sister Marie-Jean. Our Lady of Grace welcomes visitors at the bottom of the gym/convent driveway and is pending some radical improvements by Sister Marie-Celine, while Sister Mary Elizabeth's shrine to Our Lady of the Globe is at the top of the hill. The magnificent marble statue of the Immaculate Heart which welcomes visitors to IHM Chapel is gardened by Sister Miriam Teresa. On the north side of the Chapel Sister Marie-Therese built a little rock wall and shrine for Our Lady of Guadalupe. One of the rocks from Tepeyac Hill, where the apparition took place in 1531 is embedded in the wall.



The first shrine to the Saints on the convent grounds is the Saint Anthony shrine. It was originally built by Brother Joseph, MICM, and enlarged and enhanced over the years by Sister Magdalene Marie, a devotee of Saint Anthony. A marble statue of Saint Christopher, patron of travelers stands near the entrance to the cemetery and is tended by Sister Christopher Margaret. A life-size Saint Joseph holding the Christ Child is flanked by an herb garden running along the handicap entrance to the convent and managed by Sister Katherine Maria, superior. Down the convent driveway is the garden to Saint Germaine, bursting with flowers all summer. This statue was given in memory of Sister Mary Germaine's 25th anniversary. In the apple orchard Saint Michael overlooks the garden, majestically guarding us, elevated by a rock shrine of flowers. He was given in memory of Sister Gabriel Marie's profession. Saint Joseph, the worker is appropriately placed outside Saint Joseph's House, and is attended to by Sister Mary Clair' green thumb! Behind the convent is a new statue of Saint Francis of Assisi, placed on the natural pedestal of a cut-down tree, climbing with morning glories. But that's only some of the shrines... a grotto to Our Lady of Lourdes may be next... want to help?

We also have plans in the making to erect a beautiful set of marble Stations of the Cross in the valley... but that is another story.





## Supporting Tradition

On the Sunday of Corpus Christi, Bishop McManus of our Worcester Diocese officiated at a Benediction and Procession of the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of the nearby town of Clinton, MA. We were honored to attend this courageous witness to Christ in these troubled times. The beautiful event which climaxed at the magnificent church of Saint John the Guardian of Our Lady, was well attended by many faithful Catholics.

Two of our Brothers recently took a trip to Buffalo to visit the traditional communities in that area. They enjoyed visiting with campers, speaking with the youth, and participating in the Eucharistic Procession that was made in reparation for the recent offenses made against the Catholic Church in the area, and across the country.

How beautiful to be able to support each other in a real way during this crucial time. *Let us go with confidence to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace.* (Heb. 4:16)



## St. Michael's Shop

Last summer the revamp of a mechanic barn on the new property began. One year later... the new workshop is fully refreshed and up and running!

Among a host of other jobs, the Brothers had chipped away at adding new siding, new windows, new doors, gutting the interior and replacing the walls, ceiling and lighting. Now, with its fresh coat of grey paint, white trim and red door, and a militant statue of Saint Michael the Archangel affixed to the exterior the shop space matches the other workshops on the property and will be used for housing seasonal equipment, landscaping needs and will provide additional work space.



## Requiescat in Pace



**Fredrick Long** – of Beverly Hills, FL, a proud son of South Boston passed away on June 22, 2020. Fred was a long time friend and supporter of Saint Benedict Center. He attended Gate of Heaven High School and received a BA from Boston University in Com-

munications. Ever the entrepreneur, he owned several businesses, his last being Compact Beverage Service. He also taught the Dale Carnegie Sales course. He served in the Army during WWII and the Naval Reserves. A devout Catholic, he served on the board of the Catholic Action League, was an active member of MCFL South Boston-Hyde Park Group, the Knights of Columbus, was a member of the Latin Mass Community and taught CCD for 34 years. Predeceased by his parents Frederick D. Long Sr. and Theresa (Oram) and siblings David, Augustus, Theresa, William, Joseph, Richard and Robert. Survived by his brother Edward. Beloved husband of the late Jean F. Long for 39 years and his current wife of 22 years Susan (Hurl) Long. Devoted father of 9 children and Papa to 32 and Great Papa to 37 including late grandson Timothy, and great granddaughter Cassidy. He will be greatly missed by all. Rest in Peace, Fred!