



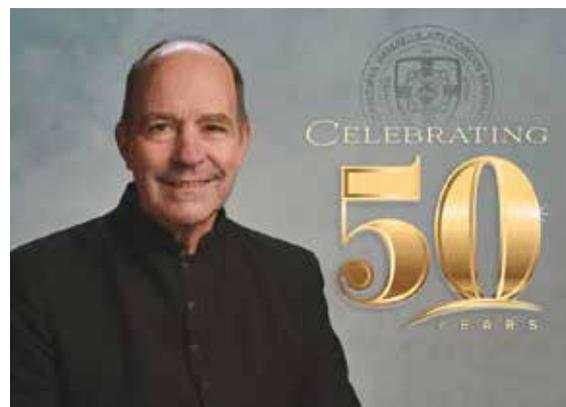
FROM THE CENTER

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

Golden Jubilee

On November 25, 2021, Brother Thomas Augustine, MICM, celebrated 50 years of Religious Profession as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was no coincidence that the day should fall on Thanksgiving... as we are so thankful for all that he has done for our community. Brother has served as Superior of the Order for many years and is the unseen force of so much that goes on here at Saint Benedict Center.

Although Brother preferred to forgo the public celebration that a Golden Jubilee calls for... this landmark event could not be bypassed without some festivity. Before the big day, the elementary students presented skits, songs and poetry in an assembly held in Brother's honor. They presented cards and good wishes and a treasure box which held the funds they had raised for the school expansion project!



The community celebrated with a special meal in his honor at which they presented him with their gift of a 54-day rosary novena for his intentions. After Mass on Sunday, we celebrated once more with our friends and supporters with a cake in the school hall.

We thank God for the 50 years of excellent example and leadership that Brother has given to Jesus through Mary... and we look forward to many more! *Ad multos annos, Brother!*

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Above: The Brothers MICM stand on the back porch of the IHM School Expansion Project.

Right: The communities of the Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary celebrated Brother Thomas' 50th Anniversary.

Profession of Final Vows

On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 2021, Sister Mary Jacinta Brizek and Sister Maria Faustina Hannon made their Profession of Final Vows after spending 6 months as a Postulant, 2 years as a Novice and 3 years in First Profession.

The simple ceremony of Final Profession takes place fittingly at the Offertory of the Mass. Uniting their sacrifice with that of the Lamb of God, these young Sisters recited their vows with determined voices for all to hear. After signing them on the Altar, they received the black veil and crown of white roses symbolic of their eternal espousals and the candle of the light of Christ which was lit from the victorious Pascal Candle.

The unblemished beauty of the feast of the Immaculate Conception was the perfect backdrop for this lovely event. All were welcomed for cake following the ceremony.

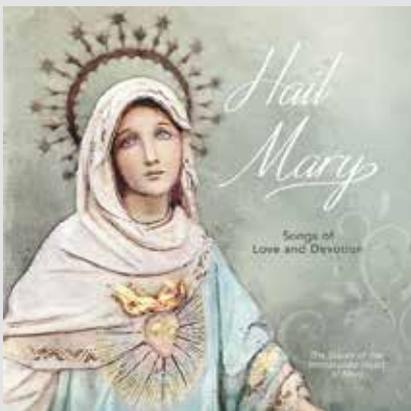


Members of the Brizek family from New Jersey, and the Hannon family from Louisiana, joined the MICM community for a special luncheon on this momentous occasion. Please

keep the newly professed Brides of Christ in your prayers!

Above: Newly professed receive the crowns of white roses of Brides of Christ!

Left: The community of the Sisters MICM. See a full gallery of this event on www.SistersMICM.com



Sisters Sing: Hail Mary!

The Sisters' new CD – "*Hail Mary: Songs of Love and Devotion*" is now available! Thanks to the enthusiasm and generosity of Dan & Marian Kelly, who arranged for professional studio recordings, the collection of 15 *a capella* songs reflects the Sisters' love for the Mother of God in simple, prayerful harmony.

The booklet in the CD case has all the lyrics and translations... so you can raise your minds and hearts to Heaven and pray along with these loving hymns. Includes favorites such as: I'll Sing a Hymn to Mary, Ave Maris Stella, Heart of Mary, and more! Get it at TrueDevotionals.com!



Expansion Progress

Throughout the weeks of Advent and Christmas, progress on the IHM School Expansion Project has not stopped thanks to your generous support and especially the gifts many made for Giving Tuesday and the Christmas season.

In December the cement trucks came to finish pouring the floor in the function hall that is the basement level of the new addition. The Brothers have started framing the walls for the bathrooms, etc. that will also be on this level. With its full windows across the wall that overlooks the valley and its newly poured floor, the function hall is going to be such a lovely room some day soon!

Plumbers and workers doing duct work for the ventilation system were busy every day and now we are getting ready for the heating crew to come soon to begin piping for radiators. Hopefully after that we can hang the curtains!



Top: Sunset colors illumine the School Expansion.

Above: Brothers prepare the basement level for cement flooring which was poured in December.



As volunteers and electricians brave the cold to work on the Expansion Project, classes continue as usual in IHM School. We anxiously await the much-needed elbow room that the new addition will provide!

Christmas Festival

It's amazing what a little change of decor will do... within one day MacIsaac Hall gymnasium was completely transformed into a Christmas wonderland for the 2021 Christmas Festival!

It was a day of wonderful Christmas spirit from start to finish! Friends and families bought some special items from the bakery table or filled a box with cookies, then walked through the line of tented booths with homemade items and crafts made by the Sisters or went treasure



hunting at the doo-dad sale. The children

were busy winning prizes at the game, making gingerbread men or a custom jewelry gift... and everyone loved admiring the museum-quality display of Nativity scenes on the stage and voting for their favorite! But the best of all was the open mic on the stage where songs were limited to Christmas Carols... We had some professional singers fill the air with delightful tunes and then a few Alfalfas sang their hearts out in karaoke performance. It was 100% Christmas the Catholic way! Thank you to all who helped make this festive fundraiser a great success!



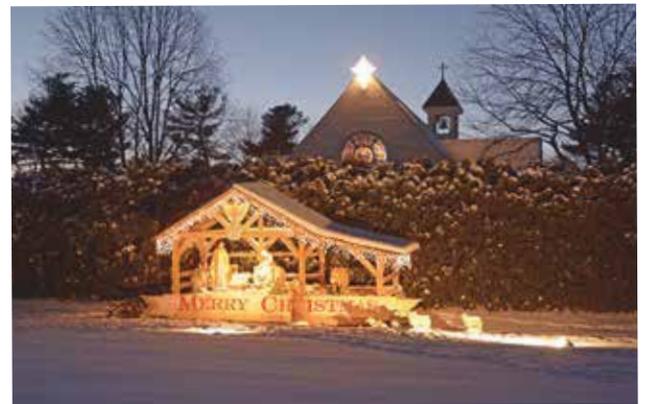
A Christmas Miracle

Shortly before Christmas, three figures from our large outdoor Nativity were suddenly missing. After reporting the offense to the Police, there was very little hope of ever recovering them. Saddened by this, we posted a few photos and an alert on our town's Nextdoor chat about *the iconic life-size manger displayed every Christmas at IHM Chapel... which has given peace and comfort to passersby. But this week someone stole three of these hard-to-replace statues that the students of IHM Elementary School raised money to buy over 25 years ago!* ...

A flood of comments and concern were made almost instantly! It was incredible that so many people loved the display! That evening, a friend saw the three figures placed on the side of the road not far from the scene... and brought them back! It was like a miracle!

And it just got better... the next morning a gentleman called to say that when he read the post, he put two-and-two together, and realized the his teen-age son and his friends

were the culprits. The son had already returned the figures, after seeing the response online... but when his father discovered the story, he brought the son to apologize. It was a real Christmas Miracle and one that will go down in history for 2021!



The life-size Nativity scene displayed on the front lawn of IHM Chapel has given peace and comfort to passersby for 25 years!

IHM Marches in D.C.

After the Covid-year hiatus, the March for Life rally in Washington D.C. reconvened this January! Brothers, chaperones and IHM students from grades 8–12, enthusiastically boarded the bus for the long over-night ride to D.C. on the evening of January 20th. We were the only bus from the Worcester Diocese this year!

Despite the advertised restrictions, the March was crowded with young people from all over the United States with more spirit than ever before! It was wonderful to see so many people sacrificing to make the trip to witness to the sacredness of life! A whole new generation seems to be rising up to protect mothers from the false narrative of pro-abortionists.



New Designs!

Our popular Embossed Denim Apron featuring an image of Our Lady with the Christ Child had a make-over this year! Plus, two more designs have been added to the collection!



Get yours at
TrueDevotionals.com



*Top to Bottom:
Guadalupe
Apron, All things
begin small
Apron, and
Viva Cristo Rey
Apron.*



All Saints on Main Street

A history-making All Saints' Procession, which was cancelled last year due to Covid restrictions, took place at Saint John the Guardian of Our Lady Parish for the first time on Sunday, October 31, 2021.

Under the direction of Father James Mazzone, pastor, the procession took place on the streets of Clinton, MA, and was made possible through the legacy that the late Charles Moran left to his Parish. Seventeen large fiberglass statues, on sedias covered with flowers, were carried by parishioners, religious and the local friends. Many banners of saints were also carried.

The Brothers MICM were honored to carry the statues of the Blessed Mother and of Saint Benedict! The Sisters also joined the event. The memorable procession climaxed with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in Saint John's exquisite Church. It was truly a spiritually exhilarating day!



20 Years in Eternity



On January 15, 2022, we commemorated the 20th anniversary of the death of Brother Joseph Mueller, MICM. Brother Joseph joined in 1975 at the age of 18, and celebrated his 25th anniversary of Profession one month before his death.

A model of the energy and dedication of Religious Brotherhood, Brother helped construct many of the buildings on the monastery, including the chapel, school, mechanic and

wood shop and the convent. He was known for his many talents, missionary zeal and excellent sense of humor. Brother contracted an auto-immune disease in 1999 and after three years of suffering, passed to his eternal reward on January 15, 2002 at the age of 45.

Today his grave rests beside that of Brother Hugh MacIsaac, MICM, in our Slaves' Cemetery. We attribute much of our monastery growth to his intercession, and we look forward to the day when we see him once again! *Requiescat in Pace, Brother Joseph!*



Always Thankful

In the Sisters' Host Making room, Mr. Patrick Trimble (Sister Gabriel Marie's father) has come thousands of miles, sacrificed countless hours and offered a wealth of knowledge to get our old host oven machines up to par. Now we are finally able to make our lovely traditionally embossed Priest Hosts available to pastors!

Requiescat in Pace



Father Joseph Santos – 62, Pastor, leader, and administrator of the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Providence, RI, and a dear friend of Saint Benedict Center, passed away on December 4, 2021, after a short illness.

Ordained in 1989 in Braga, Portugal, he studied and worked in Braga and later in London, before returning to the USA in 2003 due to concerns for his aging father. The Diocese of Providence welcomed him back with open arms, and he was made pastor of Holy Name Parish. Father Santos said and revered the Latin Mass and had a great love for Catholic traditions of the past and wasn't ashamed to profess it and defend his position in fearless fashion and passion. A close friend once commented that "Father Joe was born in the wrong century!" *Rest in peace, Father!*



Charles Brackett – 89, of Harvard, MA, passed into eternity on December 20, 2021. Beloved husband of 56 years to the late Gloria and father to 13 children including Brother Peter Mary, MICM, and Brother Anthony Marie, MICM, Charles was a man

of Faith and Family, leaving behind a legacy of 27 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

A long time supporter and friend of Saint Benedict Center, Charles gave much of the time of his later years to helping out in our mail room shipping orders to our numerous customers! He was reporting for duty right up until the week before his death! May God reward him for his generosity! *Rest in peace, Charlie!*



Mary Jo Duffy – 93, of Hopkinton, MA, passed away peacefully on December 3, 2021, surrounded by her loving children.

This memorable little Irish lady was the grandmother to Brother Christopher Isaac, MICM, Brother Patrick Joseph, MICM, and Sister Mary Imelda, MICM, and the reason they came to know of Saint Benedict Center. An avid reader of philosophy, theology and history, Mary Jo displayed an incisive mind and ready wit. She was a formidable challenger in any intellectual discussion; yet she always had open arms and a compassionate heart to anyone in need. Above all, Mary Jo was marked by her deep and abiding Catholic faith. *Rest in peace!*