



FROM THE CENTER

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

Brothers Professed

Brother Gerard, MICM

On Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023, Brother Gerard Fretwell professed his Final Vows as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was the climax of over five years of prayer and study.

The eldest of Carol and Christopher Fretwell's three children, Brother Gerard was raised in Pepperell, MA, and attended IHM School, graduating with the Class of '15. He worked as a machinist and carpenter before discerning the Brotherhood. Steady and hardworking, Brother Gerard's meticulous skill and love of woodworking and carpentry are a wonderful addition to the Brothers. Besides contributing to the IHM School Expansion Project, Brother teaches 8th grade Life Science



and high school Woodshop. Among his many carpentry accomplishments are a beautiful trophy case in MacIsaac Hall which he made with his woodshop class, and more recently, handcrafted wooden coffins. He now takes his skills to a whole new level as he works to build up the Kingdom of God and achieve sanctity as a Brother, MICM. Perseverance, Brother!



Brother Louis Marie, MICM

On the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, February 11, 2023, Brother Louis Marie, age 24, completed his two years of Novitiate and made his First Vows as a Brother, MICM.

The simple Profession ceremony takes place at the Offertory of the Mass. After making a profound bow and asking for the "mercy of God and the companionship of the brethren," Brother

Louis stood and professed his vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In response, the celebrant, Father Daniel Becker, spoke these moving words: "I, on the part of God, if you keep these vows, promise you eternal life." He then received the cassock and cincture of a professed Brother and the lighted candle symbolic of the light of Christ. Please pray for him as he continues towards Final Profession as a Brother, MICM. Perseverance, Brother! See photo galleries from the Brothers' Professions on our website: www.saintbenedict.com

Sister Mary Anne, MICM

On the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, May 13, 2023, Sister Mary Anne Lim professed her First Vows as a Sister, Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Sister Mary Anne was born in Singapore. There she was raised Protestant and attended Anglican schools. While reading the writings of the Early Church Fathers in 2016, she became fascinated with the Catholic Church, and that year she attended her first Latin Mass. The following May, she was received into the Church along with two of her sisters. Soon after, she joined the Legion of Mary and was active in the East Curia.

Sister holds an LLB degree from the University of London and worked as a Legal Executive and Trust Administrator. She speaks English and Mandarin (Chinese) and studied Arabic.



Top: Sister Mary Anne receives the habit after professing her First Vows.

Above: Sister Mary Anne cuts the cake at the reception while Sister Superior, Sister Katherine Maria, and Prioress, Sister Christopher Margaret stand by.

Right: From Singapore to Still River, Sister Mary Anne, friends and family.

Introduced to the Center by Third Order member, Sean Coakley in 2019, Sister Mary Anne left Singapore on the Feast of the Assumption in 2020 and joined the Sisters, MICM on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, September 8, 2020.

The Profession ceremony on May 13, 2023, began with Sister entering the Chapel dressed as a bride, symbolic of her role as Bride of Christ. At the Offertory of the Mass, when the Profession actually takes place, she publicly professed her vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience and signed them at the altar. She then received the ring of a Bride of Christ, and the black veil and habit. Carrying the lit candle and habit out of the Chapel, she re-entered minutes later as a professed Sister.



Please keep Sister Mary Anne, MICM, in your prayers as she continues her journey toward her Final Profession in three years.

Progress Continues

The school year has closed, and the summer camp programs are commencing, but the Brothers continue to work on the IHM School Expansion Project. We still have high hopes of opening in September –please God!

The fire sprinkler system is in place; the rough electrical main panels are in, and the meter is installed, along with phone and data wiring, smoke and fire detectors, and pull stations. The sheetrock has arrived, and 1400 sheets are currently being installed.

It is exciting to know that all the lighting fixtures are on the way, and just as the school year was ending, about 17,000 pounds of rubber tile arrived!



Above: Brothers and volunteers prepare the future art room for wallboard!



This tremendous donation was paid for by one generous donor family and a company who gave a huge discount! May God bless them!! We are still waiting for granite caps for the main entrance, but the trusses are built and ready to go.



Meanwhile, the crew from Pitt Pipe Line has finished the driveway and parking lot for the lower fields. They also controlled all the groundwater with pipe, fabric, and stone on the slopes, directing it to an irrigation pond. The grass is beginning to grow on the new field, and the Brothers just measured and marked out the baseball diamond!

The summer months will be crucial to the prospect of new classrooms in September, but we are confident that with Our Lady's help and your support, it will be possible, and we will finish before the world ends, after all! Visit our monastery website to make your donation – and stay tuned for updates!



Above: Students check out the new flooring for the school while 7th Grader, Anthony Beecher helps out in hopes to be in the new building for 8th grade!

Left: A recent aerial shot of IHM School and Chapel and our spectacular view!

Mass of All Time

With rumors swirling and evidence that the Latin Mass is under attack, the Sisters recently wrote a song in defense of the Mass. Taking the old Irish tune, “The Town I Loved So Well,” the word replacement captures all the aspects of the beauty and history of the Traditional Latin Mass. Read through the lyrics below, and watch the video of the Sisters singing at www.saintbenedict.com!

In my memory, I will always see
The ancient Mass I have loved so well;
Unchanged through time, a mystery sublime
Bringing God to the altar to dwell.
How reverently is the Lamb of God received;
How grand its beauty and its splendor!
Filled with love untold, like the Cross of old
Is the true Holy Mass of all time.

Heaven comes to earth, not a sound can be heard,
For the silence tells that God is near;
Every solemn face, in that most sacred place
Bending low with reverence and fear.
At the sound of the bell, every heart starts to swell
To see God the Son raised o’er the altar,
And we gaze in awe at our Lord and our God
At the true Holy Mass of all time.

In the ages past, it was always the Mass
Giving martyrs the strength to endure any pain.
They laid down their lives, they would rather have died
Than deny their God and their Faith.
Though the storms did rage, persecution went and came
They kept safe that great and precious treasure!



In fields and in farms, and in all faithful hearts,
Was preserved the true Mass of all time.

Now in our own day, they would try to take away
What our fathers in Faith did fight to defend.
The Mass which survived, for which Saints gave their lives,
They dare try to change and to end.
But a gift so sublime, a treasure so Divine,
Can never be destroyed or ended;
It will always remain eternally the same
As the true Holy Mass of all time.

From Calvary unto eternity
Ever blessed be God on the altar!
His Most Precious Blood, His infinite love
For us will remain forever.
Let us kneel and adore, let us love forevermore
This Sacred Mass of all the ages!
And our hearts will defend until the very end
The Tridentine Rite for all time.



Light of Christ

Over past the few years, Sister Mary Jacinta and Sister Christopher Margaret have been working on making the Community’s own Pascal candle from altar candle stubs. This Easter, they finally succeeded.

The handcrafted 2023 Pascal Candle added an elegant touch to the glorious season of Easter here at the monastery!





The Sisters with Bishop Strickland in Tyler, TX.

Texas Revisited

At the end of January Sisters traveled to Tyler, Texas, for a 5-day Morning Star “Mini Camp” for over 100 happy campers. Unusually cold, icy weather made outdoor activities difficult, but the Morning Star program adapted to the close quarters provided and everyone had a wonderful experience!

Bishop Strickland of the Tyler Diocese came to see the camp on the first day, giving the Sisters and campers his blessing! What an incredible way to begin! The week was a wonderful success and

100 new campers are now singing the camp song and loving Our Lady, Morning Star! We look forward to seeing them all again next year!

Two months later, three Sisters flew to Sugarland, Texas for a youth retreat at Saint Theresa’s Parish. Over 50 high school students gathered for this 2-day event at which the Sisters spoke, emphasizing True Devotion to Mary and encouraging the retreatants to make their Total Consecration. These young adults were spiritually strengthened by Eucharistic Adoration, renewing their resolution to stand up as young Catholics in our modern society.

The power-packed retreat was an intense preparation for the coming Sacrament of Confirmation! The Sisters also had a chance to talk to younger students at Saint Theresa’s Catholic School. It was a joy to spend time with all these young Catholics!



Rest in Peace



Joseph M.C. Kung, 90, passed away peacefully at home on February 14, 2023. Born in Shanghai, China to a distinguished 6th-generation Catholic family, he lived a life of faith, courage, and principle. At 18 years old, soon after the Communists took over China, he left Shanghai to be reunited with his father who had fled to Hong Kong months earlier. The border closed not long after, and he would not be able to see his mother and siblings for almost 30 years. After the death of his father, he relocated to Ohio and enrolled at John Carroll University, working full-time to put himself through school. His education culminated with two MBAs from (Case)

Western Reserve University and Wayne State University. He was a CPA by trade. Eventually, he returned to Hong Kong where he married his wife, Agnes, in 1968. They were blessed with four children and relocated to Stamford, CT.

Among his greatest accomplishments was the immigration of his mother and six siblings along with their immediate families to the United States; successfully fighting for the release of his uncle Ignatius (Cardinal) Kung after 32 years of incarceration in China; and establishing the Cardinal Kung Foundation not only to promote the persecuted Roman Catholic Church in China, but also to champion the cause for Cardinal Kung’s canonization.

Joseph was a dear friend and supporter of Saint Benedict Center for many years, and we will miss him and his enthusiasm for the Faith. *Rest in peace, Joseph!*



Changing Scenery

Our beautiful marble statue of the Immaculate Heart of Mary has been enshrined in the central garden of the Chapel grounds for over thirty years. Due to the construction of IHM School, the life-size statue was removed earlier this year, and set in a place safe from heavy equipment! Come May, the Brothers made a temporary block shrine, and this lovely statue was still one of the five statues crowned during the annual May Procession.



Recording Again

At the end of February the Brothers and Sisters spent a day at Wellspring Studios to record a new Christmas CD! The event, which was sponsored by Dan and Marian Kelly, had been postponed for various reasons, but everything went off without a hitch and we will be excited to make this new album available in the fall. The original “Christmas in Still River” was recorded in IHM Chapel in 2007 and continues to sell all year long!

Alumni Ordained Deacons

On March 25th, 2023, the feast of the Annunciation, two alumni of Immaculate Heart of Mary School were ordained to the diaconate for the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. Anthony Fill (IHM Class of '08) and Joseph Duffy (IHM Class of '15) were ordained with nine other seminarians by Archbishop Thomas Gullickson at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary in Denton, Nebraska. It was a grace-filled ceremony that seemed to bring Heaven down to earth for three short hours. The class of eleven new deacons will be ordained to the priesthood in May 2024. Please pray for their perseverance!



Alumni Anthony Fill, far left, and Joseph Duffy, far right.