



FROM THE CENTER

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

Bride of Christ

Sister Maria Veronica made her First Profession of Vows on the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii, May 8, 2024. Formerly known as Marie Cote, she is the eldest of Rebecca and David Cote's twelve children and a native of Rhode Island. The Cote family happily supported Sister's decision to dedicate her life to God and were blessed to witness the Vows of this Bride of Christ at the beautiful age of 21.

Sister came to know the Community through the Latin Mass and the Morning Star Camp programs, which she attended as a camper and later as a counselor.



Above: Sister Maria Veronica receives the habit at First Profession.

Right: Sister embraces her mother after the ceremony.



The celebration of Sister Maria Veronica's First Profession was a joyous occasion, attended by supportive figures, including six priests and her large, extended family.

During the next three years, Sister will continue to prepare for the day of Final Vows as a Slave of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Please join us in thanking God for this beautiful vocation and praying for her perseverance! *Veni Sponsa Christi!*

Left, Sister Maria Veronica cuts a cake in celebration with Sister Superior, Sister Katherine Maria (right) and Sister Prioress, Sister Christopher Margaret (left).

IHM Alumni Ordained to Priesthood

On May 29, 2024, four Sisters and three Brothers attended the Priestly Ordination of the Fraternity of Saint Peter in Nebraska. What a powerful ceremony! Father Anthony Fill, FSSP (IHM Class of '08) the brother of our Sister Magdalene Marie, MICM; and Father Joseph Duffy, FSSP (IHM Class of '15) the brother of Brother Patrick Joseph, Brother Christopher Isaac, and Sister Mary Imelda, MICM were among the newly ordained. Both were graduates of our Immaculate Heart of Mary School.

A week later, both new priests were in MA. and offered their first Masses in IHM Chapel. We were honored to have Bishop Robert McManus attend the Solemn High Mass on June 8th!

Afterwards, Fr. Fill and Fr. Duffy gave their First Blessings to the community and faithful attending.

It was a historic day for all of us here at IHM Chapel and School! *Ad multos annos!*



Above: Bishop McManus kneels in the sanctuary of IHM Chapel during the Solemn High Mass offered by Fr. Joseph Duffy on June 8th.

Left: First Blessings for the community by Father Joseph Duffy, FSSP (left) and Father Anthony Fill, FSSP (right).



Saint Joseph's Field

On May 1st, the feast day of Saint Joseph the Worker, Father Becker blessed the new playing field of Immaculate Heart of Mary School before the first baseball game of the season. We now have a baseball diamond on one end and a general playing field on the other end of "Saint Joseph's Field."

Following the blessing, long-time friends of Saint Benedict Center and baseball coaches Mike Diverdi and Bob Hood threw the first iconic pitches. It was wonderful to have Melkamu Creaghan (IHM Class of '23) who became an official MBAU umpire last summer, officiate at this first game.

There was a lot of spirit on both sides while the crowd cheered enthusiastically. The Eagles team is young and unseasoned, so some are still wondering how they were able to overcome Trivium School, 3 to 2! Saint Joseph helped them out! We are looking to many more games on Saint Joseph's Field!





All for Mary

Mother's Day was the perfect day for our annual May Procession here at Saint Benedict Center! The popularity of this annual event is a testimony to the love and devotion of so many for the Blessed Mother!

Following the Sung Mass, the procession moved from the Chapel and School grounds, down Route 110, and through the monastery grounds. Along the way, five statues were crowned by IHM high school girls, each followed by a decade of the Rosary. The procession made its way to the front yard of the Convent, where the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament took place at an outdoor altar. It was a touching sight to see old and young kneeling in adoration. What a perfect reminder for all that Mary always leads us to Jesus!



New Wheels

To keep our camp fees affordable to large families, we count on vendors to donate food for the seven weeks of camp. One of the first stops for the 2024 Summer Camp Season was at Donahue Brothers in Methuen, MA. It was also our last stop there since the Donahues recently sold the business started by their grandfather over 100 years ago.

As we loaded our mini-van, one of the Sisters mentioned to Mr. Donahue that we were looking for a small box truck. Bill pointed to a lone truck not far away and said he would ask his brother if they could donate it. And shortly after they did!

This truck, named *Fidelis*, was blessed by Father Becker and will be a valuable asset for our summer apostolate. The Donahue Brothers and their families will be remembered in prayer every time we use *Fidelis*. They will also be included in the prayers of all the campers pray for our benefactors every day of the camp program!



Join us in Celebrating...



20 Years of Montfort

On the feast of Saint Louis Marie de Montfort, April 28, 2024, we celebrated twenty years since the Sisters signed the final papers for our Montfort Retreat property! Morning Star Girls Camps and Montfort Boys Camps began over 40 years ago on the monastery grounds. As campers increased, we rented facilities and finally started looking for property. After four years of searching, Our Lady pointed us to the acres of untouched forest in the heart of New Hampshire that would become

Montfort Retreat. Thanks be to God, the piece was purchased in 2004, and in 2008, after a lot of hard work from the Brothers, Sisters, and volunteers, Montfort Retreat opened its doors to its first campers!

25 Years IHM Pro-Life League

The IHM School Saint John the Baptist Pro-Life League commemorated its 25th anniversary with a formal dinner at MacIsaac Hall on January 28, 2024. Students sold tickets, and with the help of volunteer moms, the event was beautifully organized. The school gym was transformed into a dining hall for 250 guests, and students served a delicious meal. Following the meal, a three-tiered wedding-style cake was served, and the guests enjoyed a League video and words from guest speaker Fr. Scarmozzino. We express our gratitude to the Pro-Life League for this remarkable event and extend our congratulations for 25 years of dedicated pro-life activities.



40th Spring Concert for IHM Band

The IHM Band performed its 40th Spring Concert on the evening of May 10, 2024, in our own MacIsaac Hall. Brother Peter Mary, MICM, who has directed the band since its inception, recalled the first performance years ago in the Chapel basement with young and inexperienced musicians playing a simple song by Father Leonard Feeney entitled "Sacred Heart of Jesus." In celebration of the 40th year, the 2024 members performed a full arrangement of the same song. The concert always features Senior solos and an enjoyable display of the IHM Band Drumline. As the last Catholic School marching band in the diocese, we thank God for the 40 years of music, performance, and witnessing the band has shared with all its viewers over the years.



Expansion Update

Months have flown by, but not without a lot of progress on the IHM School Expansion Project. Since our last update, the driveway has been remade and paved, and the water retention needs have all been finished. The newly rerouted drive has changed the look of SBC from Route 110 and added several new and badly needed parking spots!



Bishop McManus tours the addition with Brother Thomas Augustine, Superior, and Brother Anthony Marie during a visit to IHM School in May.

and will make a nice place to enjoy the sunsets.

Inside, the staircases are finished, walls are painted, flooring is about completed, and bathrooms, kitchen, and pantries are all tiled! Some original hand-painted tiles have been masterly mounted and framed with tile, but the most beautiful of all is the large tile mosaic of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the kitchen straight from Mexico!

We await the installation of the elevator, walk-in fridge and freezer along with the stove, ovens, and grill. We are almost there... It is just a matter of time!!



Above: Joe Maney (IHM Class of '94) works on the stone face of the back exterior.

Left: Sister Christopher Margaret, Prioress, and Sister Katherine Maria, Sister Superior, by the newly installed Guadalupe tile in the kitchen.

Below: The new and improved driveway allowed for more parking!

During the process, sand and dirt were removed from the hillside behind the school and transported to the driveway area, allowing us to dig out what will be a stunning Lourdes Grotto facing the valley! Right now, it's just a big hole in the hill, but the statues are here and ready for the day when they will be placed in the grotto! In the meantime, we are looking for a structural engineer who can help us accomplish the masonry needs on this project. Please contact us if you are interested in helping us out with this beautiful project!

The valley side of the lower level, which will be a function room, has been faced with stone and looks lovely



To Bee or Not To Bee

That's right, the monastery is now happy to be beginning to bee-keep! Thanks to our mentors, the Dragas and Bobkov families, and the donation of a bee hive from the Traylor family, we are off to a good start! Our two hives are happy and seem busy and content with our bee-utiful flowers on the monastery grounds!

Sister Brigid Mary and Sister Marie-Celine have been learning the ropes of beekeeping, and we are trying to get used to seeing them in their gear!



Great Song & Story

The Sisters' latest song, "Little Hands Divine," is a musical meditation on the hands of Christ. From Bethlehem to Calvary, the Crib to the Cross, the hands of Jesus are outstretched to receive you. Little in the Crib, bleeding on the Cross, ready to be held, kissed, and adored, for They are Divine.

The new song also comes with a great story! The Sisters originally wrote the lyrics to an instrumental composition by Gerard Fahy, an accomplished Irish musician and composer of the music for *Lord of the Dance*. However, when the Sisters contacted Gerard for permission to publish the tune with their song, the artist gently denied his permission, explaining that he had refused many with the same request because it was special to him as an instrumental piece.

A week later, to the Sisters' surprise, Mr. Fahy wrote again, but this time with the gift of a newly composed melody to accompany the Sisters' lyrics! Watch the video on our site, and you will agree that he captured the spirit of the words perfectly. All for the glory of God.



Rest in Peace



Evangelina Arriola, 85, passed away on June 3, 2024, at her home in El Paso, TX. She was the wife of Maximino Arriola for 56 years and the mother of Sister Martina Marie, MICM. Evangelina was very devoted to her Catholic faith and received the Sacraments regularly.

She loved art and drew and painted many lovely images of people, nature, and the Blessed Mother and Our Lord. May she rest in peace.



Agnes Haverty, 93, passed away on June 3, 2024. A longtime registered nurse at Mass General Hospital, "Aggie" came to know Saint Benedict Center through her pro-life activities in the Boston area. She was a close friend of the Sisters and was a substitute teacher at

IHM many times. May God reward her.



Mr. John Vail, 76, passed away on May 2, 2024. John was a native of Lowell, MA, and husband of 51 years to his wife Lucille. He was a Marine during the Vietnam War, after which he spent 40 years as a firefighter, basketball coach, and referee. John became a part of our

Community when his children enrolled at IHM School. He initiated the IHM girls' basketball team even before the gym was constructed and coached for 16 years, leading the Eagles to win the League Conference Championship twice before his retirement. "Coach Vail" will always have a special place in our hearts and prayers.