



Monastery Bells

Life with the Cloistered Dominican Nuns

Website: www.lufkintxnuns.org

Blog: <http://lufkintxcontemplativenunsop.blogspot.com>

Email: nuns@lufkintxnuns.com



Fall 2015

MONASTERY OF THE INFANT JESUS

1501 LOTUS LANE

LUFKIN, TX 75904



Whoever receives you receives me,
and whoever receives me receives the One who sent me. *Matthew 10:40*

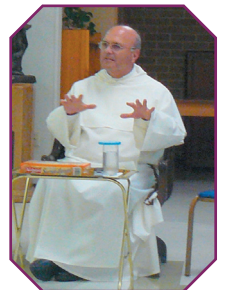
Hospitality is a way of offering thanks to God, who provides the means to be hospitable, and who asks us to recall the times when we have been, like Abraham our father in faith, strangers in the land. The first disciples, sent out by Christ to preach the Good News, relied on the hospitality of the people they encountered, as did the first Dominicans who went out to preach in 13th century Europe. The first monasteries of Dominican nuns were places of prayer, but they were also meant to be places where the itinerant preaching friars could stop and enjoy the nuns' hospitality as they tramped on foot throughout the region.

Today, we continue to exercise hospitality toward all we meet, which is also for us a form of preaching the Word of God. The Master of the Dominican Order, Fr. Bruno Cadore, OP, noted in a recent talk that Dominican nuns "extend [their] preaching by hospitality to so many 'seekers of meaning, seekers of God.'"

We've had numerous guests come to our monastery this past spring and summer! Some have been short visits, while others have spent a longer time, giving classes and having intensive meetings with the community.

Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Hebrews 13:2

In May our hospitality went international as we welcomed Fr. César Valero Bajo, OP, Promoter of the Nuns for the Dominican Order. Fr. César came to our monastery for a couple of days as part of his "tour" of the U.S. region. He is originally from Spain but currently spends most of his time visiting the Dominican monasteries of the world. He listened to our stories and offered us encouragement as we continue our Dominican monastic life. We appreciated his kindness and gentle humor, as well as his valiant efforts to speak English to us!



Visitors also included speakers. We had some very informative and instructive classes in canon law, taught by Fr. Juan-Diego Brunetta, OP. Father is originally from New Jersey and is a member of the Eastern Province. He is also a judge for the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of New York. In addition to a crash course in canon law, Father also spoke to us about the nature of the Dominican Order and the overarching organization known as the Dominican Family.

In August we had a stimulating workshop on leadership given by Fr. Michael Monshau, OP, a Chicagoan from the Central Province who had just returned to the States after teaching at the Angelicum in Rome. To begin the weeklong sessions Fr. Michael used the film "Interrupted Lives", a documentary about women religious in Eastern Europe during the mid-20th century, surviving communist repression and even thriving spiritually in spite of it. He went on from there to discuss a variety of topics, from servant



leadership to all the virtues needed to be a good leader. It was helpful to learn the different ways we can exercise leadership within our own spheres of life and work.



Our chaplain, Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP has been teaching a class for the sisters in formation and any professed sisters who are able to come and participate. His topic is the Fathers of the Church and it is very interesting! We are fortunate to enjoy the fruits of Fr. Marcos' many years of study in this area.

For your enjoyment and to promote vocations, we invite you to view our documentary on YouTube! You may click on YouTube and type in "Monastery of the Infant Jesus", or check the link on our website and blog. Please continue to pray with us for vocations.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door,
I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. Revelation 3:20

When speakers come, they usually give their presentations in the community room. When family and friends visit, we have several parlors where we can meet with out guests while keeping our enclosure. Some are intended for times when just a few sisters come to visit a small number of guests. These parlors are adjacent to the lobby. In addition we have a large parlor, also part of our main building, which can accommodate the entire community and several guests. For times when we have a lot of guests, or when more privacy is needed, we have another parlor, a small building connected to the monastery. Our monastery is truly designed to be a place of welcome for all who wish to come and experience monastic hospitality.

In May, it was so nice to meet the two novices from our Southern Province, Brothers James Martin Nobles, OP and Anthony John Mathison, OP. They came from the novitiate in Irving, TX with our former chaplain, Fr. Art Kirwin, OP and we had a great visit with them. They just made their first professions in August. We pray they will persevere, and many more young men will follow in their footsteps!



Some of the religious of the Tyler Diocese were able to come to our monastery at the end of May to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life: one of the activities planned by our diocese. The day included visiting and sharing in the parlor, followed by Solemn Vespers of Pentecost. The provincial of our own province of St. Martin de Porres, Fr. Thomas Condon, OP also happened to be visiting at the time, so he and our chaplain, Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP joined our group. We had a variety of religious represented, including a Brigittine nun, some Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, and the Daughters of Divine Hope as well as our Dominican brothers.



Before giving a presentation at a conference in Houston, Fr. J. Michael Sparough, SJ stopped by to see us. Father is a retreat director at Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington, IL. He has a unique talent for evangelizing by using drama to make Scripture come alive. He is never at loss for a story! We enjoyed visiting with him and hearing about all his latest projects.



Shortly before his ordination to the priesthood, Deacon Nelson Muñoz made a retreat here at our monastery and we were able to meet him. Before joining the Tyler diocese Father was a civil lawyer in Colombia. We listened as he shared his "journey" with us and had a delightful visit with him. We look forward to seeing him again when he returns to offer a "first Mass" for us.

Fr. Bernard Mulcahy, OP and Fr. John Rooney paid us a surprise visit one day in July. Both priests are working at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston, TX. Fr. Bernard is a member Eastern Province. Besides being a member of the spiritual formation team, he is also teaching at the seminary. Fr. John is the director of spiritual formation after having served at several parishes in the Archdiocese. He also has many links to the Dominican Order. Both shared their stories, kept us laughing and promised to return.

We had the drawing for our annual raffle on Easter Sunday. Sometimes we think it's more fun for us to draw the winners than it is for the people who win to get their prizes! Our next raffle opportunity will come again on Easter in 2016. We hope you look forward to it as much as we do! Here are some happy local winners showing off their prizes.

