



# MONASTERY BELLS

## LIFE WITH THE CLOISTERED DOMINICAN NUNS

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Fall 2014

MONASTERY OF THE INFANT JESUS

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In the last few issues of "Monastery Bells", we've shared some of our work with you—what we do in the infirmary and how we've tried to help support ourselves through the Cloistered Workshop, the Guild and the Altar Bread Department. Now we would like to continue that theme of WORK.



Sr. Mary Lucy



*"I have finished the work you gave me to do." (John. 17:4)*

Our dear Sr. Mary Lucy passed away on Wednesday, July 3, 2014, just a day short of her ninetieth birthday. Sister was born and raised in Austin, TX—the capital of Texas, as she loved to tell people. She entered the monastery in 1950. In her 64 years as a Dominican nun Sr. Mary Lucy held a variety of duties, including music director, organist, librarian, maintenance supervisor, bursar, and infirmarian. She was also an accomplished violinist, often playing for liturgy and special occasions. Sister was a great community person; she loved all the community activities and continued to come to the Guild to work until two weeks before her death. We miss Sister very much, but we are happy to know she is resting with God. Her work on earth is done!

*"Serve the Lord with gladness!" (Psalm 100:2)*

Sr. Mary Christine recently celebrated 25 years of Dominican life—as a member of the Houston Vietnamese Dominican Sisters and as a Dominican nun here at the monastery. Her public Mass and celebration took place on July 13 and was well attended by her family, friends, and many priests. We had a community celebration for Sister on August 2, with games, treats, gifts and a documentary on the Servant of God Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan. Both days were filled with joy! Sister currently serves the community as bursar, which means she pays the bills and handles our finances, and as sacristan, preparing everything for Mass and other liturgical events at the monastery. Sr. Mary Christine is an avid gardener—plants, especially orchids, fill her bursar's office, and flourish in our many gardens. She is also a talented artist. She painted the beautiful flowers that appear on our new enrollment cards. She makes gorgeous designs on cards and candles with quilling paper, and knits stylish scarves for our gift shop. In fact, we sometimes wonder if there's anything she can't do! We wish you many more years, Sr. Mary Christine!



Sr. Mary Christine



*"...those who labor in preaching and teaching..." (1 Timothy 5:17)*



Fr. Marcos

We are pleased to welcome Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP to Lufkin and to our monastery! Fr. Marcos began his duties as chaplain here on August 1. You may be wondering: what does a chaplain for a monastery of nuns actually do? Father's responsibilities include celebrating daily Mass for the nuns and the visitors who come to our chapel; presiding at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament each evening; administering the sacrament of anointing to infirm sisters; and giving the last rites to sisters who are dying. We also sometimes invite the chaplain to officiate at Vespers, usually on solemnities such as Easter. And we always enjoy periodic parlor visits with the chaplain. Of course, these duties do not begin to take up all their time, so many of our chaplains have worked in other local fields, such as prison ministry and helping out in nearby parishes. Some of them have also given classes to the novitiate sisters or to the entire community. Fr. Marcos

is working on his dissertation for a doctorate in historical theology, on St. Irenaeus of Lyons and baptism in the early Church—so he concentrates on this task when he is not taking care of our spiritual needs. We really enjoy Fr. Marcos's homilies at Mass and his beautiful singing voice, which enhances our own liturgy.

*"...commended to the grace of God for the work they had accomplished" (Acts 14:26)*



The documentary we promised you some time back is finished! Many thanks to Reg Reynolds and Elaine Jackson who spent so much time working on it and making it the great production it is! The documentary has five segments: prayer, study, community, ministry, and the history of the monastery. You can see it on YouTube, or on our blog. We hope to have it available on our website soon, and on DVD as well.

Saint  
Martha  
the  
Worker



MARTHA: apron-ed and alert, attentive to His needs.

Your work: your worship.

Your service: a psalm.

Your hospitality - a pillow for His homeless head.

Your cry, "You are the Christ!": a flag unfurled.

Your part: practical, yet praiseworthy.



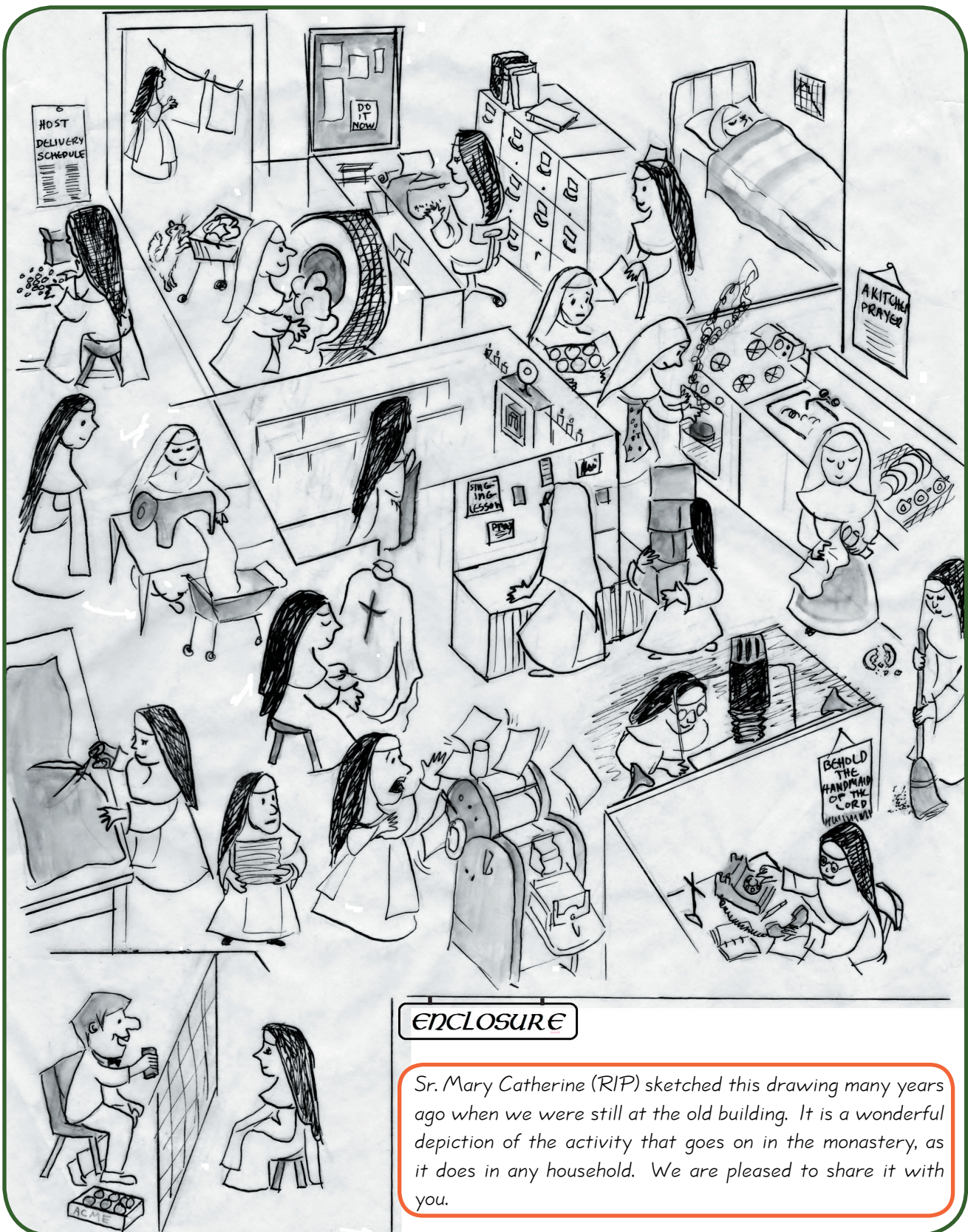
BLOSSOMS

lotus

## Working around the Monastery

What is a “typical” day in the monastery like? If we ever have a “typical” day, we’ll let you know! But in the meantime, this is a glimpse inside the daily workings of the monastery. Throughout the day, when we are not in Chapel, these are some of the places you might look for one of the nuns:

- The Clothes Room, where our habits, veils and other garments are made
- The Archives, where we keep our historical documents and other information concerning the monastery
- The Refectory, where we eat our meals
- The Kitchen, where our delicious meals are prepared and dishes are washed
- The Infirmary, where we care for the sick and elderly
- The Altar Bread department, where hosts are packaged and shipped around the country
- The Guild, where letters are answered and enrollments sent out
- The Library, where books are ordered and processed and can be checked out
- The Laundry, where we wash and press our habits
- The Parlor, where we receive and speak with our guests
- The Sacristy, where Sister prepares vestments and other things for our daily Mass and liturgical offices
- The Bursar’s office, where our bills are paid and our supplies are ordered
- The Prioress’s office, where Monastery matters large and small are handled
- The Print Shop, where “Monastery Bells” comes to life, as well as holy cards, calendars, enrollment cards, Christmas cards...



### ENCLOSURE

Sr. Mary Catherine (RIP) sketched this drawing many years ago when we were still at the old building. It is a wonderful depiction of the activity that goes on in the monastery, as it does in any household. We are pleased to share it with you.

*"Let all our work give you praise and carry out your loving plan." Prayer from Liturgy of the Hours*