



MONASTERY BELLS

LIFE WITH THE CLOISTERED DOMINICAN NUNS

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Spring 2016

MONASTERY OF THE INFANT JESUS

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ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS



Our dear Sr. Mary Emmanuel entered eternal life on August 20, 2015. She was born in 1929, in Brownsville, TX, and attended college at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio. She worked as a civilian employee for the U.S. Air Force Security Service before entering the monastery in 1951. Sister was accomplished in almost every field! She was a ham radio operator (and kept her license, KC5AQ, current until her death), a photographer and filmmaker, an electrician, an inventor, a carpenter, a computer expert, a seamstress, and a talented musician. She did most of the outdoor maintenance and upkeep of the grounds for years. She was the first nun in our monastery to begin using a computer (one of the early Apples) and taught several of the other sisters. She was chantress for many years and was always faithful to the Divine Office. She enjoyed sharing stories and memories of days past. As her health declined, she asked to live at St. Dominic's Nursing Home in Houston, TX, and we would go regularly to visit her there. She died very peacefully after 64 years of good and faithful service as a Dominican nun. Her funeral was held here on August 24, 2015, with our chaplain, Fr. Ramos, OP, officiating.



On January 28, our postulant Cloe Chauviere began her canonical novitiate and received the Dominican habit and her religious name, Sister Mary Therese of Divine Mercy. Sister is a native of Dallas and served as librarian at the University of Dallas. Please keep Sister Mary Therese in your prayers.

On January 30, the chapel was filled to overflowing with guests as Sr. Bernadette Marie, OP made her solemn profession. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Joseph E. Strickland, the bishop of Tyler, TX, and concelebrated by several other priests, including our monastery chaplain Fr. Marcos Ramos, OP, Fr. Tom Condon, OP (provincial of the Southern Province) and Sr. Bernadette Marie's own brother, Fr. Joe Torres, OMI. Since her postulancy Sister has assisted in the laundry, print shop, altar bread department and guild office. She also plays the autoharp for the Divine Office and is currently assigned to the kitchen where she has proved to be an excellent cook. Her specialty: homemade corn tortillas! Sister's kind and generous spirit is a wonderful blessing to our community. Please pray for Sister, and for more vocations to the Dominican contemplative life and to our monastery!



An opportunity to be CREATIVE...



This year, from January 8 to 20, we were happy to welcome Sr. Mary Magdalen, OP, artist extraordinaire from the Queen of Peace Monastery in Squamish, British Columbia, Canada to share some of her gifts with us. In 2001 Sister had given some of us preliminary wood carving lessons. She also came in 2008 to design the front of our tabernacle and remodel our sanctuary. This time her eager students were to be instructed in the art of icon mounting and woodworking. Several sisters were able to take advantage of this opportunity to begin to learn (or continue to learn) these skills, and, with the added help of good tools and proper materials, the results were impressive. Sr. Mary Magdalen is a patient and dedicated teacher. We thank her and the community in Squamish for this wonderful opportunity to grow in our creative skills and develop new talents.



A challenge to be POOR, MERCIFUL, and READY!



Fr. Tom Condon, OP, provincial of St. Martin de Porres Province (the Southern Province), visited us in early September 2015 and gave us some challenging lectures on mendicancy and poverty based on a recent letter from the Master of the Dominican Order, Fr. Bruno Cadoré, as well as an overview of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. He also celebrated Mass for us and we enjoyed his engaging preaching. We are always happy to welcome Fr. Tom (and any other friars) to our monastery!

Fr. Jorge Rativa, OP, a friar from our province, preached our annual community retreat from November 19-22. We had a few days of silence before and after his conferences in order to make our full 8-day retreat. Father presented a wealth of profound information in an informal, upbeat style, using PowerPoint slides and eliciting participation from the nuns, using prizes as incentive! The conferences were held in our community room and led us all to meditate deeply on the mystery of God's mercy. Father skillfully tied in the Jubilee Year of Mercy as well as our own Dominican Jubilee to bring his points home. We also had a moving healing service one afternoon in the chapel. The retreat was amazing and made us all humbly grateful for the gift of mercy God gives to each one of us at every moment.



Fr. Charles Bouchard, OP, from the province of St. Albert the Great, gave some talks at our monastery on November 30 and December 1. Father Charles is a specialist in medical ethics so he timed his visit to coincide with presentations he was giving at some hospitals in the area. Father gave us some excellent lectures...on the "Ars Moriendi" (a collection of devotional books of the late Middle Ages on the art of dying) and the Spirituality of a Happy Death, Catholic Preaching, and Suffering and Sanctity. We enjoyed his visit and hope he will be able to come again some time.



*He has brought us
out of darkness into his
marvelous light. Alleluia!*



*Wishing you all the joys
of this glorious season.
Happy Easter!*