



# MONASTERY BELLS

LIFE WITH THE CLOISTERED DOMINICAN NUNS

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Winter 2014

MONASTERY OF THE INFANT JESUS

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*"They undertook the good work with vigor." (Nehemiah 2:18)*



In the Constitutions of the Nuns of the Order of Preachers, we read: "The nuns procure their livelihood chiefly by diligent work and moderation in their life style and expenditures; and at the same time they accept gratefully the gifts of benefactors." Almost from our first years in Lufkin, a large part of the "diligent work" we did was in the Cloistered Workshop (the vestment department). In the early 1950s, the nuns wanted to expand and improve their sewing abilities and received expert help in using their new embroidery machines and in the study of liturgical design from two Precious Blood Sisters from O'Fallon, Missouri. Later, in the 1960s computerized embroidery machines were purchased which sewed multiple designs using punch cards.



Nuns at work in CW



Working at first embroidery machines



Early vestment



Cutting plexiglass for palls



Computerized embroidery machine

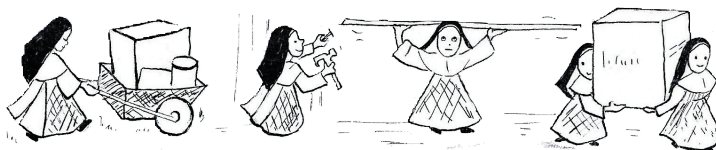


CW in new building

By the time we moved to the new building in 1967 the vestment department was in full swing. The Cloistered Workshop's importance to our monastery was evident in its size... it stretched half the length of our current main building. Numerous sisters worked there, making beautiful vestments, washable miters for bishops, altar linens, washable palls and other items for liturgical use. At that time, we had a large mail order business going, and it helped tremendously with the debt incurred while building our permanent monastery. However, by the late 1970s the peak of production had passed.



Renovated CW



In 2000 the room which was formerly designated for the Cloistered Workshop was gradually repurposed for our expanded library and our art room and the department was moved into what used to be the Print Shop. Over time, we discontinued various items until we were making mainly altar linens—purificators, palls, and so on. In 2011 we made the decision to close the Cloistered Workshop and finally in 2013 this was officially accomplished. The embroidery machine was sold and many bolts of material and other sewing supplies were given away. Heavy cutting tables and cabinets for material were moved out and the entire room was cleaned as only nuns can

clean a room. Much of the furniture in the old Cloistered Workshop room was moved to other departments, with the help of our faithful workmen.

**RAFFLE 2014** This is the third year for the raffle! It has been very successful in the past, and we pray it will be again this year. You can see the prizes in the gallery section of our website at <http://www.lufkintxnuns.com/gallery.php>. Please fill in your tickets so you will have a chance to win! You may also enter online by emailing your entry to [nuns@lufkintxnuns.com](mailto:nuns@lufkintxnuns.com). All of the prizes were made by the nuns, except the jewelry set, which was generously donated by Lufkin Jewelry.

We really enjoy doing this and getting the reactions of the prize-winners. We usually drop all the tickets in our ancient big dryer and let them spin before we take turns drawing, as you can see in the photo. We will have our drawings for the six great prizes on Easter Sunday, April 20, 2014. Thank you for your participation!



## “Entrust your works to the Lord.” (Proverbs 16.3)

The former Cloistered Workshop room has now become the new home of our Infant Jesus Guild department and our mailroom. This is another department that dates back to the early days of our monastery. Those working in the Guild are responsible for providing our beautiful perpetual enrollments, as well as personalized greeting cards; they answer the mail, record donations, and express thanks to our many benefactors; and of course they also mail out the issues of “Monastery Bells” and post them on our website! Now that the Cloistered Workshop is closed we are trying to build up the Guild department, so we would like to tell you (or remind you of) what we have to offer!



Filing cards in new Guild



Getting settled in the Guild



Samples of our enrollments

Perpetual enrollments are suitable for any occasion. A perpetual enrollment is a three-panel embossed folder suitable for display. It comes in two sizes, small (6 ½” by 8 ½”) and large (9” by 11”). The name of the person enrolled and the person requesting the enrollment are inscribed in calligraphy. We remember the people who are enrolled in our daily prayers and Masses. The enrollment itself is placed in the center panel and the benefits of enrollment are placed in the right panel. The left panel may have a religious picture. We have various images, including the Good Shepherd, Madonna and Child, Our Lady of the Rosary, the Monastery Chapel, and the Sacred Heart. Enrollments may be customized; please call or write to ask about this. An enrollment is a beautiful and thoughtful gift for graduations, weddings, anniversaries, memorials, or times when you want to say a special Thank You.

Prayer enrollment cards are designed for all situations in life. The cards are printed on quality paper, approximately 4 ½” by 6 ½”. We have cards suitable for special occasions, memorials, recovery of the sick, birthdays, and general prayers. Like the perpetual enrollment, the name of the person enrolled is inscribed in calligraphy inside the card, as well as the name of the person requesting the enrollment. If you’d like to have assorted cards on hand, you can request a packet, send them yourself, and notify us who has been enrolled.

**We are grateful to all those who have requested our prayer cards in the past, but we realize that it is time we updated. Our goal is to begin to introduce new designs for the cards gradually. We hope that this will make the cards more appealing and useful for you. We are also pleased to announce that we will be adding Mother’s Day and Father’s Day enrollment cards to our selection this Spring.**

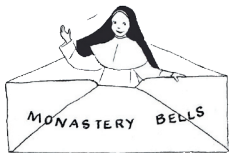


Preparing one of our mailings

We keep a mailing list of all the people who receive our “Monastery Bells”. This list is on a simple Excel database, and we utilize mailing software and other technology to help our newsletters and cards reach you in timely fashion! Be assured that we do not sell our list to anyone. Recently, thanks to the help of our friends Debra Green and her daughter Jennifer Molina, we also started using a computer program to keep track of donations and other contributions. We are so grateful for their help!



Debra and Jennifer giving instructions



The nuns in the Guild answer every letter and send a thank-you for every donation we receive. We are extremely grateful for all that you do to help us carry on our vocation of praise and intercession, whether it is a gift or donation of some kind, a request for a prayer card or enrollment, or simply a wish for prayers. Your requests are taken very seriously and we pray for each one individually, carrying them in our hearts as we go about our daily duties and community exercises.



You may have heard that nuns don’t retire? Sr. Mary Lucy, who is the oldest sister in the house, is living proof! At 89 years old, she still enjoys working in the Guild office most afternoons, opening letters, stamping the date a letter is received on the envelope, and sealing and stamping completed letters for mailing. She is a great asset to the Guild office and an inspiration to everyone around her.

**God is one mighty worker! What are some of his jobs?**

**Creation - And what he makes is GOOD!**

**Providence - He sustains and provides for what he creates. He neither slumbers nor sleeps! (Psalm 121)**

**Judgment - We’re glad he took that one! And we rely on his mercy.**

**Redemption - Jesus is God’s work incarnate. And his work is our salvation.**

**When you think about it, “It is all God’s work!” (2 Corinthians 5:18)**

**What is our job? To believe and spread it. So, let’s get to work!**

