



Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration • Immaculate Heart of Mary Province

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SPRING 2012

IN-FORMATION

Through the Camera Lens: The Call of Sister Madeleine

FEATURE

The Lord is Risen! Easter Joy in the Community

SOURCE AND SUMMIT

What Adoration Means to Me



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HE LEADS I FOLLOW

Our community's vow formula ends with this striking phrase, "...and with the support of my Sisters I will fulfill my consecration in the service of God and the Church." Our good God not only calls religious to this way of life, but promises to be there to sustain us on our journey. One of the most profound ways that He manifests His will to us and His love for us is through community.

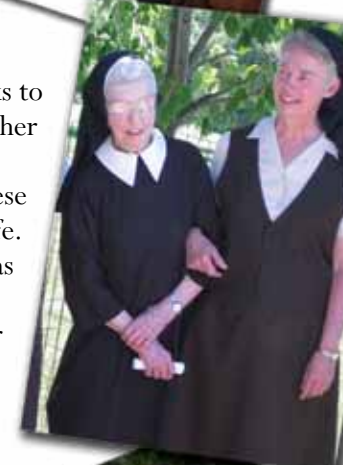
There are different "seasons" in our religious life, through which God sustains the religious Sister in community. During candidacy a young woman usually befriends religious who encourage and pray for her as she seeks to respond to God. The next "season" is that of postulancy. While the adjustment into religious life can be jarring at times, her relationships with her fellow Sisters gives strength and the affirmation she needs to continue following the will of God.

The next "season" is that of the novitiate. During the novitiate, she looks to the daily example of her directress and humbly allows this Sister to teach her how to accept the will of God in her life – even in the smallest of matters.

After her first profession, a Sister enters the next "season" of life. These years take her to a new level of appreciating the role of community in her life. Many Sisters help guide her, and a new level of "interdependence" occurs, as she too, works to help her Sisters to accomplish God's will in their lives.

When a Sister professes her final vows, a wedding ring is placed on her finger, symbolizing her espousal to Christ and commitment to her religious family. Like any Christian family, Sisters face one another's struggles, as well as those within themselves. Yet, they look at these difficult moments with hope, loving each other as Christ has loved them. At the end of a Sister's life, the Community gathers to celebrate the life of a Sister during her funeral, knowing with joy that she has finally reached the heavenly wedding banquet.

Throughout the year, Sisters take time out from their apostolates to meet at our motherhouse for "Community Days." Whether meeting to discuss the matters of finances or gathering for "on-going formation", the Sisters enjoy the time to grow closer in loving communion – a union which is a true living out and a symbol of the unity of the Church herself.



From the Desk of the Provincial

Dear Friends,

Peace and all good! May is a busy time of year for our Sisters serving in the educational apostolate as they conclude this year and prepare for the next. Recently Pope Benedict addressed United States bishops with the following:

“First, as we know, the essential task of authentic education at every level is not simply that of passing on knowledge, essential as this is, but also of shaping hearts.”

What an awesome responsibility as well as a privilege. Our senior Sisters teach us volumes through their lives of prayer, sacrifice, selfless service and suffering. They have helped to shape the hearts of those they have so lovingly served while in the active apostolate and now they continue to shape our hearts by their prayers and example. What better textbook do our young Sisters have than learning firsthand from the wisdom and experience of these Senior Sisters who have faithfully lived religious life for sixty, seventy, and eighty years! They continue to teach us and we are so blessed with their presence among us. That is the beauty and gift of community life! Blessed Pope John Paul writes in *Vita Consecrata*,

“By constantly promoting fraternal love, also in the form of common life, the consecrated life has shown that sharing in the Trinitarian communion can change human relationships and create a new type of solidarity. In this way it speaks to people both of the beauty of fraternal communion and of the ways which actually lead to it. Consecrated persons live “for” God and “from” God, and precisely for this reason they are able to bear witness to the reconciling power of grace, which overcomes the divisive tendencies present in the human heart and in society.”
Vita Consecrata, #41

My prayer is that each of you will realize your own call to help create and sustain an environment of “Trinitarian Communion” in your families, work place, parish and society. We pray in union with Pope Benedict this month that initiatives which defend and uphold the role of the family may be promoted within society.

God bless you!

Sister M. Angela



“May the power of the Holy Spirit blow away all chaff from our hearts and enkindle the weak spark of our love into a glowing flame therein. Let us ask this for one another in prayer.”

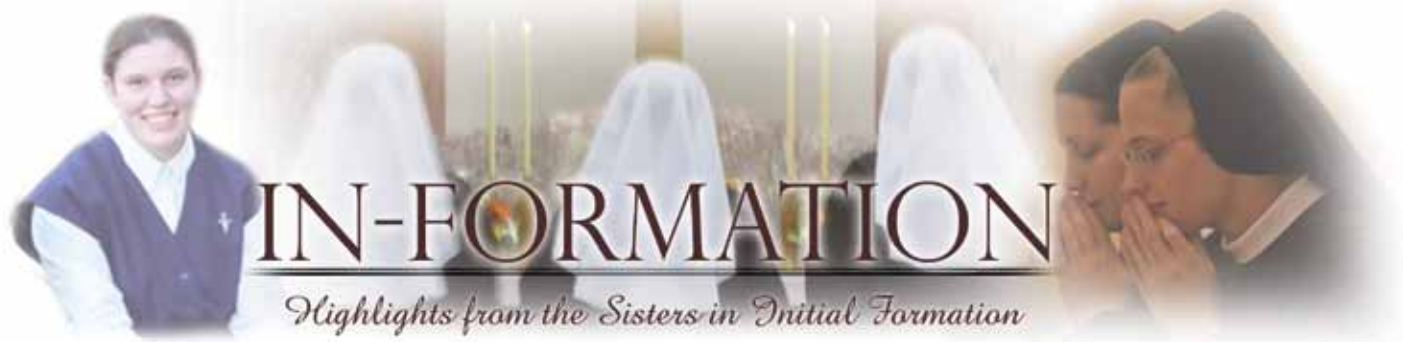
*Venerable Mother Maria Theresia
Letter I-77*

DID YOU KNOW . . .



The first Cobalt Teletherapy Unit in the United States was installed in St. Francis Hospital, Beech Grove.

Chronicles, 1957



IN-FORMATION

Highlights from the Sisters in Initial Formation

Through the Camera Lens: Sister Madeleine's Story

Although I was raised Catholic, I never really had a deep appreciation for my faith. As a result, I fell away from the Church during college. However, God followed me in all my twists and turns and gently guided me to the first Consumed Retreat of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

My friend Jerry Byrd asked me to videotape the retreat. During the course of the weekend I fell in Love; it was through the camera lens that my life changed. On that Friday evening when Father exposed the Blessed Sacrament I had a fundamentally intense experience of God, His grace and mercy.

Up to then I never really believed that Christ is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, but through that humble priest, God brought grace and the gift of Faith. I returned to the Sacraments, the Church, and God took up His place in my heart.

Two of our Sisters were at this same retreat, and it was the first time in my life I had seen Sisters in habit. Although I had little contact with them, I was so struck by their joy and their love. At the end of Mass on Sunday the priest asked if anyone had

seriously considered being a priest or religious during the course of the weekend to raise their hand. For some reason my hand shot into the air. I had not thought about this. Why was my hand in the air? I told myself, "Ok, leave it up. Someone saw you by now anyway, so just go home and forget about it."

Much to my family's surprise I returned home and the change was real and radical. I began participating in daily Mass and frequenting the Sacrament of Reconciliation; most importantly I began to spend time in the presence of our Lord. It was in those quiet moments of prayer and in the Mass that the initial, intense experience of God began to grow into something more. I realized that it was more than a fluke that my hand shot into the air.

After visiting our Community, feeling the overwhelming joy and love of our Sisters, I entered our Community in September 2006. Three years later I made my first vows, and this summer I will renew my vows. I currently serve at Franciscan St. Francis Health in Mooresville and Indianapolis where I am pleased to help bring our patients compassionate and quality care.



Sister M. Madeleine stands before the registration desk at Franciscan St. Francis Health.

Sister Theresa Marie Shares Her Mission Experience

I have been blessed by God! As a second year novice, we are assigned to one of our smaller convents for a few months. My assignment took me to St. Boniface Convent and School in Lafayette, Indiana.

Our mission experience is an opportunity to integrate my prayer and what I have learned in the novitiate with a full time apostolate.

God's love was evident in the Sisters and others at St. Boniface. At the Convent, I was able to share in the responsibility of leading prayers, cooking, grocery shopping, and

cleaning. I felt like I was part of the family!

While out grocery shopping, we were often stopped by someone who knew the Sisters. God's love was even at the grocery store!

Each weekday I taught sixth grade religion. On Tuesdays I taught religion class to the fourth and fifth grades.

Once a month I took each class to the Church to learn about the artwork in St. Boniface. The students were excited each time. God's graces were with me on mission!



Sister Theresa Marie is pictured surrounded by students at St. Boniface School after completing a Valentine's Day art project.

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Sister M. Lissetta carries the balsam during the Chrism Mass at St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.



Above from left to right: Sister M. James, Sister Jane Marie, and Sister M. Dorothy carry candles during the Holy Thursday procession to the altar of repose.



Sister M. Duane, Sister Lethia Marie, and Sister M. Charita in the Palm Sunday procession.



Sister Mary Vianney adjusts the crown of thorns on sixth grader, Alec Barson, who played Jesus during Living Stations of the Cross at St. Anthony Catholic School, South Bend



Sisters pray the Stations of the Cross with students at University of Saint Francis in Ft. Wayne.

Holy Week and Easter - 2012



Sister M. Fidelis (front) and Sister M. Andrew (back) offer Sister M. Alfreda the cross to kiss at the Good Friday services at the motherhouse.



Sister Mariana displays her homemade cake shaped like a tomb in Steubenville, OH where she and Sister M. Anna Joseph study at Franciscan University of Steubenville.



Father James, chaplain at Our Lady of Angels Convent, blesses the new Easter Fire during the Easter Vigil Mass at the motherhouse.





Source and Summit

*Combining the Contemplative Life with the Active
in Perpetual Adoration and Works of Mercy*

He is My Everything; He is My Enough; He is My All



What does Adoration mean to me? How can one express the answer to this question? It would be similar to answering questions such as: What does it mean when you look into the eyes of your beloved? Or what does it mean to hold in your arms your newborn babe? Or what does it mean when you look at the wrinkled hands of your elderly grandmother or grandfather?

The common element that exists in these examples is a relationship of intense love for the one whom you behold. The relationship is similar to that of being in Adoration; yet, there is a difference because the One we adore is Jesus Christ: Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, true God and true Man, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Yes, our hearts are filled with the love of our Beloved, and we believe that we behold the One who fills our lives with a sense of identity, meaning, purpose, grace, and moreover, Life and Love Himself.

For me the school of holiness is two-fold. Part one takes place in the classroom of the Adoration Chapel where I gaze upon Christ. As St. Clare encouraged, "Gaze upon Christ; consider Christ; contemplate Christ." I look at Him and He looks at me. I pour out my heart to Him and He fills my mind and heart with virtuous thoughts and the holy desire to love as He loves.

My union with Jesus continues in relation to the degree that I submit to His will, because as Pope Benedict XVI spoke at World Youth Day 2005 in Cologne, "Submission becomes union, because He to whom we submit is Love. In this way submission acquires a meaning because it does not impose anything on us from the outside, but liberates us deep within."

Part two of my school of holiness begins when I step out of the Adoration Chapel and encounter others. If I have learned my lessons well, the love with which Christ has filled my heart in Adoration will be poured out to all with whom I come in contact. His love is most aptly expressed in works of mercy: a helpful hand, a kind word, a listening ear, giving 100% to all of which I am entrusted. As I spend myself in daily works of mercy, I return to the Fount of Love and Mercy, my Lord and my God, Jesus, in the Eucharist where I am renewed and fed by the Bread of Life.

For us Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, our primary charism is perpetual adoration. We strive to combine the contemplative with the active in perpetual adoration and in works of mercy. I am utterly convinced that if I am faithful to adoration and my relationship with Jesus is primary, then relationship with others will follow in good stead.

He is my Everything; He is my Enough. He is my All, past, present and future. No wonder my favorite prayer is O Sacrum Convivium – "O Sacred Banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us."

Our Life in Pictures



Bishop Kevin Rhoades pauses for a picture with graduate, Kristen Daniel, and trustee, Sister Clare after the Baccalaureate Mass.



Sister Rachel (left) and Sister Madonna (right) enjoy a delicious scoop of ice cream at St. James Convent in Chicago Heights, IL.



Sister Lucille shares her expertise with Shaina at Franciscan St. Elizabeth in Lafayette during the postulant mission trip.



Bishop Dale Melczek and Sister Jane Marie (center) and executives of Franciscan Alliance at the blessing of Franciscan St. Anthony Chesterton Emergency Center.



Our Sisters at Our Lady of Angels Convent enjoy the Easter season by playing a game of ping pong using hand fans.



Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration

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Return Service Requested

Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, participate in the mission of the Roman Catholic Church by living the Gospel after the example of Saint Francis and our foundress, Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel. We strive to combine the contemplative life with the active through perpetual adoration and the works of mercy in education, healthcare, and other ecclesial ministries.

*Sisters of St. Francis
of Perpetual Adoration*



YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT . . .
TO BE INSPIRED BY THE COHERENCE
AND BEAUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE,
SO THAT THEY IN TURN CAN INSTILL
IN THEIR PEERS A DEEP LOVE
OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

POPE BENEDICT XVI

HIGH SCHOOL "COME AND SEE"

JUNE 21-23

IS GOD CALLING YOU TO BE A SISTER?
CONTACT US TO ARRANGE A VISIT.
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