



HE LEADS

I FOLLOW

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

Sisters in Formation Meet with Bishop Rhoades

“And let all of us know for certain that no one can be saved except through the holy words and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which the clergy pronounce, proclaim, and minister.” These words of St. Francis in his Letter to the Faithful express the long tradition in our community of respect and care for priests, with particular attention to bishops. Because of this, it was with great joy that the Sisters in initial formation spent an evening with Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend during their summer formation program.

During this informal meeting, the bishop spoke to the Sisters about formation, drawing on his experience as a seminary rector. He outlined formation based on Pope John Paul II’s encyclical “Pastores Dabo Vobis”, which addresses priestly formation.

The first aspect is human formation, which includes learning how to balance prayer, work duties, exercise, study, etc. Maintaining this balanced foundation serves as a basis for addressing the further areas of formation. Spiritual formation follows, with the Eucharist holding a central place in the priesthood, but also for our community as our primary charism of Perpetual Adoration.

Another important part of spiritual formation is the reading of Sacred Scripture, being “immersed” in the Word of God. The final point he addressed in spiritual formation was Marian devotion, which was central in the life of Pope John Paul II. The next aspect of formation is intellectual.

For seminarians this consists in an intensive study of philosophy and theology. The classes of our formation program include basic Church teachings such as the Catechism and Church documents, prayer, theology of religious life and the vows, and classes specific to our identity as Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, including the life of our founders and Franciscan spirituality.

Bishop Rhoades noted that the distinctive mark of religious life is fraternity, a gift which we are able to offer to the Church and the world by our common life. The evening ended with questions and answers, and the Sisters were very grateful to Bishop Rhoades for this time of sharing. They assured him of their prayers for him and his intentions. Daily, and hourly, the Sisters offer prayers before the Blessed Sacrament for all bishops, priests, and seminarians.



From the Desk of the Provincial

Dear Friends,

Peace and all good! One of my favorite Community Days of the year is to gather with our Bishop and all of our Sisters to celebrate our Jubilarians with a special Mass and dinner. It is an opportunity for us to thank them for their years of loving and faithful service to our community but above all to thank God for their vocation and the gift they are to us and to so many they have served over the years. It is a great blessing to have many priests concelebrate for this special celebration. Each Jubilarian invites those priests who have guided her along the way.

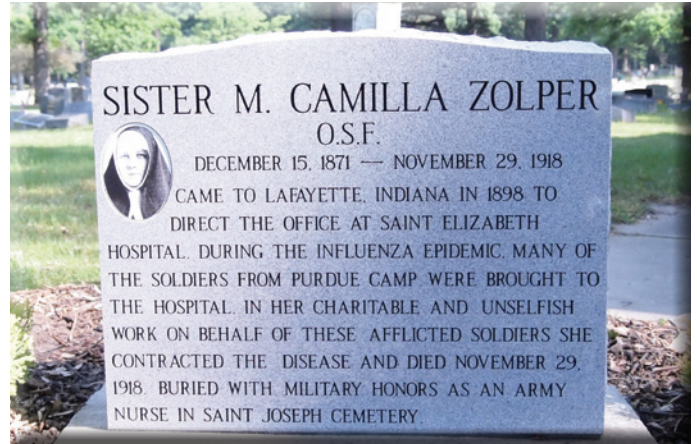
Other priests will take time out of their busy schedules to be present for our upcoming vow ceremonies. God has indeed blessed us through so many dedicated and holy priests who through their ministry and example have nurtured our vocations and led us closer to our Divine Spouse. Several of our Sisters have had the privilege of attending ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood this summer. St. Francis of Assisi had great reverence for all priests because it is through them that we receive the Eucharist. He once stated to his followers: "If I saw an angel and a priest, I would bend my knee first to the priest and then to the angel."

It is with great joy that we are able to offer to priests and seminarians a place to rest and pray away from their hectic schedules. As Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration we pray in a special way for our Holy Father, all Bishops and priests daily, particularly during our hours of Eucharistic Adoration. Mother MariaTheresia once wrote to the Sisters in America, "If you, dear Sisters, support the priest there with prayer, zealous work and good example, I am sure that in a few years you will have a promising Catholic parish." We thank God for all priests and invite you to join us in praying for them and for an increase in vocations to the priesthood.

May the Lord bless you always!

Sister M. Angela

DID YOU KNOW . . .



In the World War I years, Mother Josepha Dirkman placed the hospital and the Sisters at the disposal of the U.S. government. St. Elizabeth Hospital cared for the sick soldiers and ambulance corp members, a detachment of several thousand men based at Camp Purdue, Purdue University... By 1918 50% of the nurses and 75% of the doctors were with the Armed Forces when the influenza epidemic occurred.

Sister M. Camilla for many years was in charge of the admitting office. She especially endeared herself to the soldiers at Purdue. Sister M. Camilla who had tended so many of the soldiers from Camp Purdue, died after a brief illness (at 47 years of age). Because of her dedication to the care of the soldiers, she was given a full military honors funeral.

Military guards were stationed around the coffin and the entire detachment of 3000 soldiers attended her funeral Mass within and outside the hospital chapel. Sixteen honor guards, the entire detachment and the military band accompanied the hearse to St. Joseph Cemetery (Greenbush Street). During the cemetery services an airplane flew over, dropping flowers on her place of burial.

Fr. Tim Alkire celebrated a Mass on Memorial Day and blessed the memorial recently installed at St. Boniface Cemetery, Lafayette. Sisters from the Motherhouse, St. Elizabeth Convent, and St. Boniface Convent in Lafayette attended the Mass and blessing of Sr. Camilla's memorial.



IN-FORMATION

Highlights from the Sisters in Initial Formation

Caught in a Net of Joy: Sister Benedicta's Call Story

While studying in Italy as a freshman in college, a weekend in Rome turned out to be a life-changing experience. Crowds were gathered outside the Holy Father's window as he lay dying. Two days later, I waited amidst throngs of people to see John Paul II's body in St. Peter's Basilica.

The millions who came to venerate him gave witness to the tremendous power of one man's union with Christ. I left with an ache in my heart, because I knew he loved me although I didn't know him; I regretted not knowing him better while he was alive.

I am one of seven children and grew up in a devout Catholic family, but our secular society inevitably had its effect on me, and I left for college with uncertainty about what I personally believed. I knew John Paul II's love came from his deep faith, which inspired me to know and love the One who was the source of living waters for this saint.

I transferred to Notre Dame as a sophomore, and while on retreat, I realized a lively faith must color every detail of life. The subsequent thought came from the Holy Spirit: "What better way to do this than as a religious sister?" In my prayer, I asked God: "If

this is what you want for me, just let me know."

As I began to deepen my relationship with Christ, I found more joy in spending time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament than amongst the crowds at football games. One of the greatest gifts of attending Notre Dame is His silent presence in every dorm's chapel, and how frequently Mass is offered—an opportunity of which I took advantage.

Because our motherhouse is only fifteen minutes from campus, our convent is the first one I visited. Upon meeting the Sisters, I was caught in their net of joy and knew instinctively its source— Emmanuel, God-with-us, truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, and perpetually adored by the Sisters for the past 150 years. I entered the community in September of 2008 after graduating in May. As Divine Justice would have it, the sisters love Notre Dame football, making me a better fan.

I professed my first vows a year ago and currently serve in the apostolate of teaching 6th-8th grade religion. I am so blessed to serve the Divine Master, the One who continues to teach me daily what it means to love and be loved.



Sister M. Benedicta pictured with two preschoolers at St. John the Evangelist School, St. John, Indiana.

High School Girls "Come and See" the Life of Sisters



Sister M. Lucia, first year novice, completes a service project with Cassi Mestrovich and Melanie Williams. These two young ladies and several other high school girls participated in our June "Come and See." During this time, the girls experience various aspects of the life of the Sisters, including prayer, work duties, and visiting with our elderly Sisters.



Jubilee 2012

Above: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and the 2012 Jubilarians. Top row: Sister M. Delrose Ricke (60th), Sister Rita Marie Biegel (60th), Sister M. Esther Ann Stammen (25th), Sister M. Barbara Anne Hallman (60th). Bottom row: Sister M. Rose Bernadette Schmit (60th), Sister M. Lois DeLee (50th), and Sister M. Marita Stoffel (80th)





“Trusting in the grace the Lord has given me in Baptism, I am firmly resolve to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ ...”

Words from the beginning of the community’s vow formula





Source and Summit

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

Sisters Accompany the Lord in Corpus Christi Procession



What Adoration Means to Me: Thoughts of Sister M. Lucille

Adoration is a special privilege for me. It is time well spent. Mother Maria Theresa encouraged her sisters to have devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

In the first Constitution, she wrote, "The special purpose of perpetual adoration is to make atonement to God, to recommend to Him the intentions and needs of the Church and to implore God's blessing upon the community."

To be in the presence of God is food for my body and soul. As food gives my physical body nourishment so the Eucharist gives spiritual life to my soul. The Eucharist is a nourishing gift to me and spending time with Jesus in adoration is my gift of love in return.

The Eucharist is the focus of my daily life and prayer. The most intimate time with adoration and the Eucharist is when I am in the adoration chapel and during Holy Mass.



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament gives me courage and strength to serve others and help them to become closer to the Kingdom of God. I now understand why our Sisters do not want to give up their time with Jesus in Adoration.

For me, the Lord comforts me during my hour or minutes of adoration. In His presence I see a world of brightness and beauty that brings joy to my heart. At Holy Mass Jesus comes into my heart and soul to keep me close to Him and I give myself to Him. Without Him I would not be able to function and carry out my ministry to others.

As I prepare to retire, my joy fills me with the knowledge that I will at last live under the same roof where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is adored day and night. I am looking forward to taking my turn for Adoration. "Possess nothing, but God Alone," Mother Maria Theresa Bonzel

Our Life in Pictures



The Sisters were blessed to host the Conventual Franciscan Friars for the simple vow ceremonies of their novices at the convent chapel in July.



Sr. Mary Joseph reads *The Weight of the Mass* to six year olds at St. Boniface Vacation Bible School in Lafayette, IN.



In May, Sr. Ann Bernadette received the "Distinguished Graduate Award" at St. John the Evangelist School, St. John, IN.



Sr. Clare drives Sr. Imelda, Sr. Blanche and Sr. Clarice from Our Lady of Angels Convent for a breath of fresh air in their new golf cart.



Sr. Mary Grace (left) and Sr. Mary Gerard "cut a rug" at this year's Fourth of July picnic.



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

"LET US ENDEAVOR TO BECOME, TO BE, AND TO REMAIN GOOD, FAITHFUL CHILDREN OF OUR HOLY FATHER FRANCIS. GOD'S BLESSING WILL NOT BE LACKING."

VENERABLE MOTHER MARIA THERESIA BONZEL

HIGH SCHOOL RETREAT:
OCTOBER 6-7

YOUNG ADULT
DISCERNMENT RETREAT:
NOVEMBER 2-4

CALL TO SCHEDULE A VISIT:
574-259-5427
WWW.SSEPA.ORG/RETREATS

