

# HE LEADS

# IFOLLOW

*Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary Province*



## Called To Witness A Life Of Ceaseless Adoration Through Prayer, Community And Apostolate.

**T**he Sisters had much cause to rejoice at the end of the 2018 Provincial Chapter. This year's Chapter centered on the theme, "Called to witness a life of ceaseless adoration through prayer, community, and apostolate."

This week-long event began with the Chapter of Affairs, during which the Sisters met to discuss our relationship with God, each other, and the Church. We began these days with reflections from our chaplain, Father Georges Massinelli, OFM, who shared about the Persons of the Trinity in relationship with St. Francis.

Throughout our discussions, we sought ways to grow in these bonds, always mindful that we are called to "combine the contemplative life with the active in perpetual adoration and works of mercy." The conversations were very fruitful and served to unite the Sisters in our common goal, namely, to adore Jesus and witness His love to one another and the world.

The second part of the week was our Provincial Chapter of Elections, which included a day of prayer. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the Main Chapel, allowing more Sisters to pray together in the presence of

our Eucharistic King. On the day of elections, and after intense prayer to the Holy Spirit, the delegates met to choose the provincial and council who will serve the community for the next four years.

We rejoice to receive Sister M. Angela Mellady as our Provincial Superior alongside councilors Sister Margaret Mary Mitchel, Sister M. Rose Agnes Pfautsch, Sister M. Rachel Dinot, Sister M. Lissetta Gettinger, Sister M. Petra Nielsen, Sister Lethia Marie Leveille, and Sister M. Clare Reuille. We are grateful for the generosity of these Sisters.

*Front Row (left to right): Sr. Margaret Mary, Sr. M. Rose Agnes, Sr. M. Clare, Sr. Lethia Marie, Sr. M. Petra  
Back Row: Sr. M. Lissetta, Sr. M. Rachel, Sr. M. Magdalena, Sr. M. Angela*



SUMMER 2018

### WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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# The Legacy of our Blessed Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel



Dear Friends,

This year I was able to visit all the Provinces of our Congregation and take part in the Provincial Chapters. I could see and feel that the legacy of our Blessed Foundress is vibrant and forward-looking.

When in 1875 the first Sisters came from Germany to Lafayette, Indiana, they did not hesitate long to help the people in their various needs.

They often did it under difficult circumstances and were themselves dependent on the help of good people. Time and again Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel was asked the question to send Sisters to the various regions of the United States which she answered positively. She sent the necessary Sisters. Soon, there were not only German Sisters but also Sisters who became members of the Community here.

The legacy of our Foundress was not for the numerical growth of the Community. Her motivation was: "After the example of our holy Father Francis, the Sisters strive to combine the contemplative life with the active in perpetual adoration and the works of mercy." (General Constitutions 1865/2010). This legacy has remained. The loving relationship with Christ and the service to people in need are the most important motives to carry on in our Community.

The commitment of our Mother Maria Theresia has become the motto for all of us: "All as God wills. He leads. - I follow." This spiritual legacy runs like a red thread through the history of our Congregation: from Germany to the United States, from Lafayette, IN to Columbus, NE, and from these places to many others around the United States. Later in 1962, Sisters went from Mishawaka to the Philippines and in 1963 from Olpe, Germany to Brazil. The Sisters understood the call of God, recognized the concerns of the Church and the signs of the times.

These were often busy beginnings and hard living conditions. In these conditions, the Sisters remained faithful to the spirit of our Foundress. She wrote to them: "Although Martha's work rest on you, let Mary's prayer sustain you. Intimate prayer and a close and loving relationship with God



*"Dear Sisters, now it will not be much longer before I must leave you. Be loyal, dear Sisters, obey the Rule and practice obedience... I have loved all of you, all without exception, and this love will endure."*

*Spiritual Testament of  
Blessed Maria Theresia*

make us real religious, not our work for and among the sick or children."

In the present, we have other challenges to respond to and to find solutions to various problems. The trust in God's Providence that we have learned from Mother Maria Theresia gives us the joy and strength to live our vocation as Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration.

We work together with men and women in various tasks and institutions. Together with you, we want to stay true to the legacy of our Foundress. Through Baptism we are sisters and brothers in Christ. I am full of gratitude on this holy togetherness in our lives. I thank my Sisters in the four Provinces and those who support them in their services.

May our Blessed Mother Maria Theresia be a faithful advocate for all of us. May we listen carefully to the voice of God, so that we can together confess: "He leads. - I follow."

*G. Magdalena Krd OSF*

General Superior

# IN-FORMATION

*Highlights from the Sisters in Initial Formation*

## Sister M. Evangeline Reflects On Her 2nd Year Novice Mission Experience.

**T**his past winter I spent nine weeks at St. Anthony Convent in our hospital in Michigan City, IN. For three days a week I worked in the hospital laboratory. If you get your blood drawn or your nose or throat swabbed and it gets sent to the lab, I am one of the people who run the tests. I spent my time helping to run the flu tests as well as some other testing in that area of the lab.

The other two days of my work week were spent at the front welcome desk. I was there to greet patients and employees when they came in the door, I directed people where they needed to go and answered their



*Sister M. Evangeline*

questions, and I helped to answer phone calls. It was beautiful to get to know the volunteers and employees.

I worked in the lab before I came to the convent, and I volunteered

at a hospital front desk when I was in college. I am a Sister now, and that makes a huge difference. My perspective on my work has changed. I have always cared for the patient, but now it is on a different level. I tried to pray for the patients after I entered their results in the lab or helped a patient or family member get to the right place. Being a Sister also prompted many of the people I worked with to ask questions about the faith and about my life. I feel so blessed to have been able to have this experience.

*Each summer the Sisters have many opportunities for ongoing formation on various topics relating to our life. This summer two of the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles presented a class on friendship in religious life. Participants appreciated reflecting on Scripture, the Catechism, Church documents, and the contribution of St. Teresa Benedicta (Edith Stein) as they discussed friendship and how it is particularly lived out in religious life. Pictured are Sr. M. Ignatia Henneberry, Miss Emily Naville, Miss Jessica Ruschke, and Sr. Marie Thérèse Lolmaugh enjoying the insights of Sister Regina Marie Gorman, OCD.*





# He Still Leads, We Still Follow: The Enduring Legacy Of Blessed Mother Maria Theresia.

This past Spring, Our Sunday Visitor published a second English edition of the biography of our foundress, *He Leads, I Follow*. This edition includes an afterword by Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades, Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Several Sisters had the opportunity to visit Our Sunday Visitor, the publisher of this edition, when the book was being printed. They enjoyed seeing the process behind making the book. Now we continue to share the legacy of Blessed

Maria Theresia while rediscovering her life through this biography. She reminds us of His providential guidance in all things: "He leads, I follow." Some of our Sisters have shared what this legacy means to them.

## *He Leads, I Follow: The Life of Mother Maria Theresia Bonzel*

is available in paperback and as an eBook online through *Our Sunday Visitor* (osv.com) and Amazon.

*We are blessed to have our foundress in our midst! At this community gathering, we process to Blessed Maria Theresia's shrine, where her relic is, to pray for her intercession.*



*The Sisters appreciated the warm welcome received at Our Sunday Visitor in Huntington, Indiana.*



**Sister M. Clare Reuille:** Mother Maria Theresia was ahead of her time in allowing Sisters to care for their parents in their time of need. Her biography states: "Why should not the Sisters care for their parents who under great danger gave them life and now are in need of their help?" My Dad is currently in ill health and I am so grateful to have permission to visit him often and to assist my family in caring for him.



**Sister M. Joseph Ann Vogel:** Each time I read, study, or teach the life of Mother Maria Theresia, I continue to deepen my appreciation for the way she was able to see every event in her life as Divine Providence at work. However, this did not happen at once, but often only after intense prayer and contemplation before the Blessed Sacrament during Adoration. How truly blessed I feel to be a member of this Congregation whose Foundress has left us with such a beautiful gift in her spirituality, and may I continue to attempt to keep her before me as my Model.



**Sister M. Lenore Schwartz:** In 1872, Mother was acutely aware of the present situation, the Kulturkampf laws of Germany. Little did she understand the hardships the founding Sisters in Lafayette would endure. Yet, on her first visit America in 1878, she had to be amazed that within three years, there was a Motherhouse, St. Elizabeth Hospital, and teachers at St. Boniface School. All this in contrast to the forced inactivity in Germany. There had to be a deep sense of gratitude within Mother's heart, that the risk and the trust were fruitful according to God's Plan. We all have to take risks, to look beyond our own comfort zone and not be afraid to share in God's forward vision of life within our entire world.





# SOURCE AND SUMMIT

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

## Corpus Christi:

**“In life, we constantly need to be fed: nourished not only with food, but also with plans and affection, hopes and desires.**

**W**e hunger to be loved. But the most pleasing compliments, the finest gifts and the most advanced technologies are not enough; they never completely satisfy us. The Eucharist is simple food, like bread, yet it is the only food that satisfies, for there is no greater love. There we encounter Jesus really; we share his life and we feel his love. There you can realize that his death and resurrection are for you. And when you worship Jesus in the Eucharist, you receive from him the Holy Spirit and you find peace and joy. Dear brothers and sisters, let us choose this food of life! Let us make Mass our priority! Let us

rediscover Eucharistic adoration in our communities! Let us implore the grace to hunger for God, with an insatiable desire to receive what he has prepared for us.” Pope Francis, Homily for Corpus Christi 2018

“Ah yes, how innumerable the graces the Lord bestows on us during the quiet hours of adoration. Let us fulfill this obligation faithfully; then we can look forward to our last hour with confidence, for in eternity, we shall continue the loving labor of our grateful hearts: the adoration of God.” Blessed Maria Theresia Bonzel, Letters, 2.4



After her beatification in 2013, the remains of Blessed Maria Theresia were transferred to St. Martin, the parish church in Olpe. In this church, our foundress was baptized. Blessed Maria Theresia is interred in an adoration chapel, where others can join in “the loving labor of our grateful hearts: the adoration of God.”



*Sisters and guests participate in the annual Corpus Christi Procession on the grounds of Mount Alverno.*



# Our Life In Pictures



*Sr. M. Elise Kriss, President of the University of Saint Francis, accompanied students from the School of Creative Arts on a trip to England and France as part of their art history studies. The students enjoyed her insights as well as the chance to get to know her better!*

*About 80 Mothers and Daughters joined Sisters at the Mother Daughter Tea in May, which concluded with a Marian Consecration at the grotto.*



*One project Junior Sisters worked on this summer was cleaning headstones in the cemetery. Good thing it wasn't too hot that morning!*



*Sr. Jane Marie leads a recommitment service for employees from the Western Indiana region of Franciscan Alliance. The various regions of our healthcare system schedule pilgrimage days to the motherhouse throughout the year to help our coworkers learn more about our Franciscan heritage and the legacy of Mother Maria Theresia.*







## *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.

# *Discernment Retreats*

register: [ssfpa.org/retreat](http://ssfpa.org/retreat)

**2018** November 2-4

February 22-24

**2019**

June 14-16

November 8-10

