

Anima Mariae

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate Queen



Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus and Mary!

Along with the beautiful devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the month of June holds a feast of significance for our Congregation on the 27th of the month, the feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. When our Congregation of Sisters was in its infancy in the late 1960's, devotions to Our Mother of Perpetual Help were prayed every Tuesday evening in the parish, and were followed by a picnic in Coeur d'Alene park where the young religious and the laity mutually shared spiritual support.

As time went on, the annual renewal of the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary for the members of the Congregation took place on this feast. The entire day was spent in prayer and spiritual conferences, after which the Community recited the act of consecration. A special Mass concluded the spiritual observance and a festive dinner followed at the home of one of the parishioners.

Finally, part of our night prayers every evening is a prayer to Our Mother of Perpetual Help for protection of our home and spiritual family from both physical and spiritual evils.

An interesting story regarding a particular image of this holy icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is also bound up with our history. In the early 1970's a number of statues and religious items discarded by a progressive parish in Ohio were rescued and transported to our little traditional group in Idaho. Among these items was a beautiful icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help ensconced in a large wooden shrine. This shrine was placed in the small public chapel in Coeur d'Alene where it remained until that chapel closed several years later.

Next it was moved to Colbert, Washington where it was to be refinished and placed in the Sisters' new chapel which was then under construction. In stripping the paint, however, the wood beneath was found to be badly charred. It was obvious that the shrine could not be refinished in its natural wood tone, which had been the hope, so the plan for the décor of the entire chapel was revamped to a theme of white paint with gold leaf.

When we Sisters moved to Mount St. Michael in 1995, the icon once more found a



The shrine to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in the Sisters' chapel. The plaque lists names of those who gave donations to help with the restoration of the icon.

prominent place in our private chapel. When it became obvious that the picture itself was deteriorating and was in need of restoration, it was removed from the shrine and replaced with a more modern copy of the image, much to the dismay of the Sisters, until they were calmed by the news that the icon was to be properly restored and then returned to its shrine.

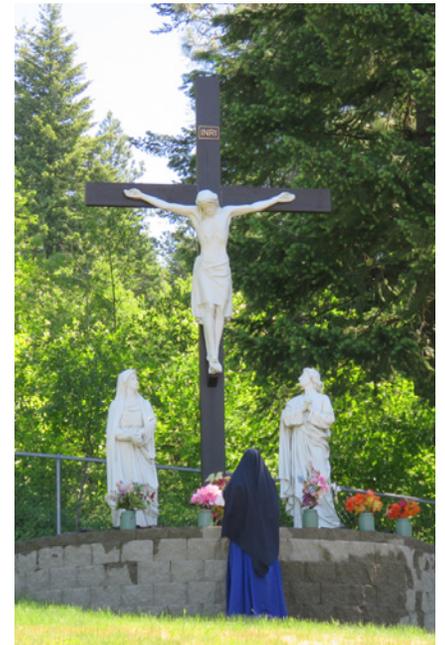
More easily said than done, however.

From a badly cracked and damaged document affixed to the back of the picture, the Sisters took what information they could glean, and contacted the Secretary General of the Redemptorists in Rome for help in tracing the history of the painting. After a bit of sleuthing in the Redemptorist archives, the Secretary was able to provide the Sisters with quite a bit of information: the icon had been painted in the traditional manner with egg tempera on wood and was the exact size of the original in the Redemptorist church of St. Alphonsus in Rome. In fact, it was one of about 2,300 copies painted after the Pope had commissioned the Redemptorists to spread devotion to Our Lady under this title, and the 1595th to be sold, on September 7, 1893, and shipped to Baltimore to find its home eventually in a church in Cincinnati.

Meanwhile, a Sister had located a company on the East coast specializing in restoring and appraising icons. On June 21, 2004, the precious icon, carefully wrapped and packaged, was shipped. The process, which took about four months, involved cleaning the painting, filling in damaged areas, and painting and retouching these areas in the original colors. Fragments that had become loose were carefully replaced and fixed into place with special adhesives, and any remaining cracks were filled and painted.

The icon arrived back at the convent on October 28, 2004. The nuns breathed a sigh of relief to see how beautifully the image had been repaired. Our Lady had come home, and soon the Sisters could once kneel before her shrine and pour out their hearts before her.

*Thou hast been made for us, O Lady,
a refuge, a helper in need and tribulation.*



A Sister stops to pray before the large crucifixion scene in Mount Calvary Cemetery at the City of Mary.



A little higher and more to the right. The young ladies attending the Vocation's Weekend assisted the Sisters in some of their *daily duty* tasks.



"So what was it like?" In mid-March, several young ladies participated in our Vocation's Weekend, an first-hand opportunity to explore Religious life.



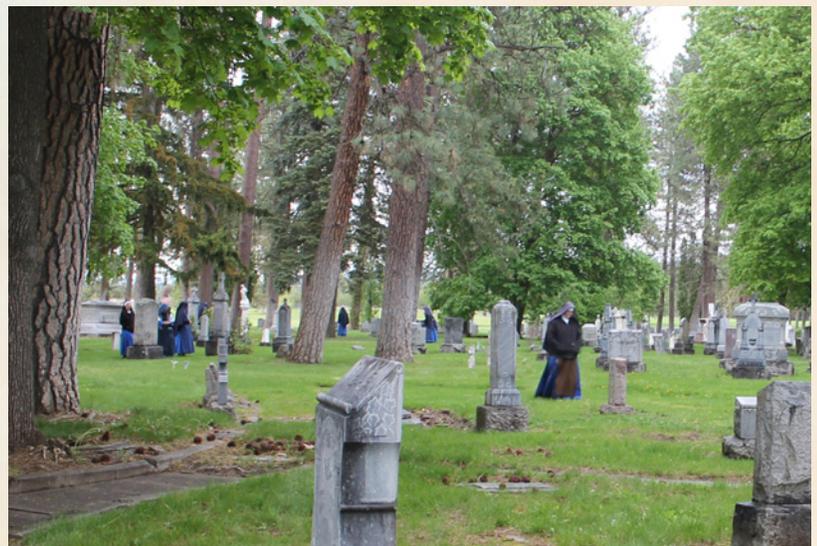
A most holy evening. Holy Thursday evening commemorates the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist. Before the ceremonies, we enjoyed our own Last Supper meal.



What would St. Dominic Savio do? Recreation on Mother Mary Dominica's feastday included all of us going on a leisurely stroll.



Tradition endures! Before their picnic dinner at Riverside State Park, several Sisters enjoyed a hike above and around the Spokane River.



Gone, but not forgotten. On their way home from the park, we stopped to pray in the Catholic section at Fairmount Cemetery. Among those buried there are some Catholic priests and Sisters from the early 1900's.



My, what little feet you have! We took a short trip down to the Novitiate to see the new chicks, and to give them some mealworm treats.



A tailgate party? After a long days' hard work, the Novitiate Sisters climb aboard the truck for their own convent-style on-site "tailgate party."



Ora pro nobis! The staff and students at Mary Immaculate Queen Academy join the clergy and minor seminarians for the annual Rogation Day procession.



Spring is procession season! The Sisters at Mount St. Michael took part in the school's annual St. Joseph's walk on May 1, in thanksgiving for his goodness to us.



"It wasn't me, Officer!" The students of Holy Guardian Angels Academy pose with a member of their local sheriff's department, who came to give them a talk.



Ofladies and tea. Sr. Bernadine Marie served at the Mother-Daughter tea for the sodality at Holy Guardian Angels Academy in Olathe, Colorado.



Sisters' Summer Support



The Sisters have no income from tuition during the summer while our schools are closed.

As this is our main means of support, in your charity, please consider sending a donation to help us with our needs over the next few months.

What do nuns DO all day?

“What do nuns DO all day?” We have to smile when we hear it. Some people think we spend all day in chapel. Others pity us because of our “boring” lives. Well, for one thing, our days are full of a variety of activities. And secondly, not many Sisters would agree that their lives are boring. Let’s consider a typical day here at the motherhouse.

At 5:15 a.m. the bell rings, and the Sisters quickly rise and kneel to make their Morning Offering, offering to God all their prayers, works, joys and sufferings of the day in a spirit of love and reparation. As we dress, we pray a special prayer for each part of the habit, much like the prayers a priest prays while vesting for Holy Mass. We keep a strict and prayerful silence while we make our beds and straighten up our cells (our individual convent bedrooms), for it is still the time of the *Grand Silence*, the sacred silence that began the night before. Again the bell rings, this time calling us to chapel.

This is the most special time of the day, for it is when we receive the primary spiritual nourishment our souls need. In keeping with our Marian spirit, we begin with the *Magnificat*, that beautiful canticle composed by Our Lady herself. Thirty minutes of mental prayer follow, a time for reflection and heart-to-heart conversation with Our Lord. Our morning prayers to Our Lady, St. Joseph, and our angel guardian are next, and then the holy hour of Prime from the Divine Office. And then comes the highlight of the day: Holy Mass, and the reception of Jesus, our Divine Spouse in Holy Communion.



We all share in the dishes and house-cleaning duties.

Breakfast is eaten in silence to the sound of Gregorian chant, and we wash our own dishes as we finish. The teachers go to their classrooms, and the others finish cleanup before going to their duties. Grand Silence ended after Mass, but the Sisters keep simple silence as they work, speaking only as duty or charity demands. To preserve this prayerful spirit, we bless the hour with a short prayer and make visits to the chapel throughout the day as our duties allow.

About midday we make our particular examen — a brief examination of conscience on a fault we are trying to overcome. The teachers eat lunch with their students, while the other Sisters eat in the convent refectory and do dishes afterwards. Each Sister makes a visit to the Blessed Sacrament before returning to her duties.

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Calendar

June	1	Sr. Maria Regina's feastday
		Sr. Mary Angela's feastday
	8	Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
		Sr. Corinne Marie's feastday
	13	Sr. Mary Antoinette's feastday
	18-19	Teachers' classes
	21-25	Sisters' Annual Retreat
	27	Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help;
		Sisters' vows ceremonies
	29	Sr. Mary Petra's feastday
	30	Sr. Mary Paula's feastday
July	4 & 5	Summer concerts
	12	Sr. Mary Veronica's feastday
	18-20	Teachers' classes
	29	Camp St. Philomena begins (<i>see CampStPhilomena.com</i>)
August	3	Camp St. Philomena ends
	9	Sr. Marie Vianney's feastday
	11	Sr. Philomena Marie's feastday
	11-15	Ladies' Retreat at Mount St. Michael
	18	Sr. Helen Marie's feastday
	28	Sr. Augustine Marie's feastday

Summer Catechism

The Sisters will be teaching catechism in the following areas this summer:

Alaska	Arkansas	Maine	Ohio
Alabama	California	Michigan	Canada

At 5:00, the Sisters again assemble in chapel for the Rosary, Vespers and devotions. It is our custom to include a hymn at this time, and it is always a joy to raise our voices in song together in loving praise. The Sisters also take time for 15 minutes of spiritual reading each day, but this is done individually.

It's time for dinner! On most evenings we have a reading from a spiritual book during the meal, but on Sundays and feastdays we have conversation, sharing thoughts on the spiritual life, the lives of the saints, and so forth. Then it's time for dishes, with the Sisters divided into two groups, alternating day by day.

Recreation comes next — games, crafts, jigsaw puzzles, walks, pickleball, volleyball — it has in many forms, but basically it is a time to relax and enjoy one another's company. Then comes a period of free time before the bell rings again for chapel.

We close our day with night prayers, a 10-minute examination of conscience, and Compline from the Divine Office, which concludes with a hymn to Our Lady. The Grand Silence bell then rings, echoing down the long halls, and a sacred hush descends upon the convent. Soon the Sisters are quietly making their way to their individual cells, and by 10:00 the lights are out.



Ringing the Grand Silence bell.

Anima Mariae is the free quarterly newsletter of the CMRI Sisters.

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