



Sentinels of the Dawn

Door Clares of Perpetual Adoration
Our Lady of the Angels Monastery
Troyes, France

Easter 2017

Issue 19

Christianity: faith on its feet

Despite what your English teacher may have taught you...Easter isn't just a noun. Easter could equally be considered a verb. Just like our faith, it is active. It moves. It's something alive, and wondrous, and constantly in motion. The fact that every year hundreds of thousands of men, women and children throughout the world receive Baptism and enter the Church is proof of it.

And if you want more proof, look no further than the gospel accounts of the Resurrection: Mary of Magdala runs to tell the apostles what she has discovered after arriving at Jesus' tomb on the first Easter Sunday, then two apostles run to the tomb to see for themselves. Even in the earliest moments of our faith, literally at the dawn of Christianity, ours was a faith on the move.

Easter is about going. It's about rising. It's running, pouring, anointing, sprinkling, affirming, and rejoicing.

Easter is sharing – the Paschal candle which is lit and its flame is passed from person to person until the entire Church is ablaze with a fire that can only be called faith.

Easter is hearing – there is the quiet stirring of the human heart, as the story of our salvation is told again and again through the Sacred Scriptures. You can't help but be touched at how God saves us – to be humbled and in awe at how far we have travelled as children of God, and how He has moved through creation.

Easter is flowing – from the baptismal font to the altar – reminding us that we are a pilgrim people. In the ritual of Baptism, the water flows over us, cleansing us of original sin, and making us sons and daughters of God.

Easter is proclaiming – it is announcing the Good News that our Savior lives. The end of the resurrection story is the beginning of our life. Darkness has become light. Sin has been forgiven. The tomb has



become the womb of the new creation. Christ is risen, death has been conquered and has lost its sting. (1 Cor 15: 55)

Easter assures us that Christianity is faith on its feet, running to spread the Word. Indeed, ours is a faith that cannot stand still. It's Mary of Magdala racing to tell the others, after she encounters the Risen Lord at the empty tomb. It's Peter, a man who denied Jesus, running toward a destiny that will transform his life. It's the apostles fanning out around the world, by ship or on foot, to face prison or torture or death. It's missionary priests living in huts and saying Mass in tents and baptizing with water from shallow rivers in third world countries, going where no one has ever gone before. It's contemplatives and hermits who are in the world, but not of it, as they live out here on earth what we shall be doing forever in Eternity. It's Pope Francis, on his knees Holy Thursday, washing the feet of prisoners –not in the beautiful Basilica of St. Peter's, but in a humble church in the outskirts of Rome. It's the lives of countless others throughout history who simply believe that we are not meant to keep what we have to ourselves.

By God's grace, our Church continues to grow. Why? Because ours is a faith that cannot stand still. Christ lives. And we live in Him. It is that simple, and just that miraculous. At Easter we are called to carry the message of the empty tomb with us into the world, continuing what Mary of Magdala began centuries ago. We have to tell others. It's not the sort of news that you spread by walking. You have to run. And Easter, the celebration of Christ's resurrection, is the greatest reason of all to keep the momentum going. "There is no need to be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus... He is not here, for He has risen, as He said He would... Come and see the place where He lay, then go quickly and tell His disciples." (Mt 28, 5-6)

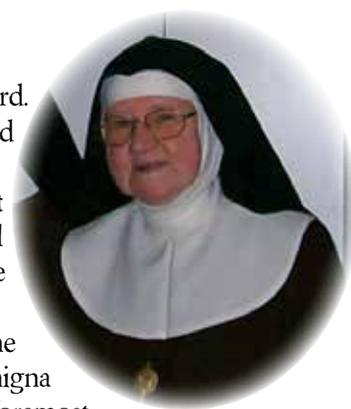
Ready...set... run !

Farewell to a beloved Bride of Christ

On January 6, 2017 Mother Mary Benigna passed from this life to her Eternal reward. She was the Abbess of our Monastery in Castelnaudary for many years, and was very much loved and respected by her Sisters.

Mother Mary Benigna will be remembered for the many different ways that she brought love, life and laughter to her Community. Thanks to her persistence and determination, as well as that of Mother Mary of Christ, a dream became a reality in 2007: the reopening of the cradle Monastery of our Order in Troyes.

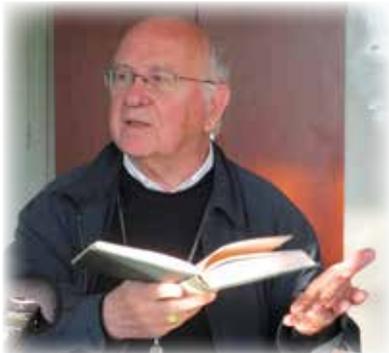
Most of the Sisters of our Community had the blessing to live with her for a short time in Castelnaudary, in preparation for our return to the diocese of Troyes. Mother Mary Benigna enjoyed telling stories and was very gifted with her hands. But above all, Adoration was of foremost importance to her. She spent many hours in prayer before Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, interceding for the needs of the Church and the world, which she carried in her heart. May she rest in peace and may she rejoice with Our Lady and all the Saints in Heaven.



A journey of faith in our spiritual life

During the Lenten season, we were blessed to have Archbishop Yves Patenôte and Brother Guillaume come to the Monastery to give spiritual conferences.

The Most Reverend Yves Patenôte, Bishop Emeritus of the archdiocese of Sens-Auxerre, currently resides in Troyes, where he was ordained a priest. Our first conference took place on Ash Wednesday. He emphasized that the surest way to know and “see” God is through His Son, Jesus Christ. We were challenged during the 40 days of Lent to read and meditate on the Passion of Christ according to St. Matthew. During our second conference, each Sister shared what struck her the most in the Gospel account and posed questions to Archbishop Patenôte. It was a very fruitful time, that prepared our minds and hearts for Holy Week.



Brother Guillaume, an Olivetain monk, is no stranger to our Community. For two and a half years, he gave us monthly conferences on different topics, such as the Religious Life, the



Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the Psalms. We were delighted when he came once again during Lent for his conference entitled “Time in the desert”.

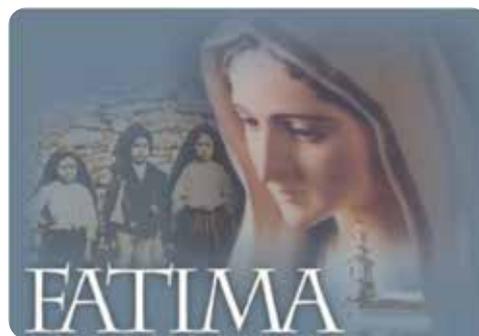
Together we pondered on the sense of the word desert and what we find there. The

desert is where we are invited to meet God, to ponder on His Word ; it is a place of purification, a place of silence and solitude, but also a place of spiritual combat.

We give thanks to God for these two holy men of God who shared their knowledge of Christ and His teachings with us, helping us to advance in our own personal journey of faith with the Lord. May they be blessed for the witness that they give to others through their lives dedicated to serving Christ and His Church.

OUR LADY OF FATIMA'S URGENT APPEL OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Beginning in the spring of 1916 in Fatima, Portugal, the Angel of Peace appeared three times to three shepherd children - Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco. These visitations prepared the way for the six apparitions of Our Lady the following year. May 13, 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the first apparition to the children. On this centenary anniversary, we are reminded to hear and respond to our Lady's message to “pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners.” Pope Francis has declared a Jubilee Year from November 26, 2016 to November 26, 2017. As part of the Jubilee Year, the Holy Father has granted the opportunity for the Catholic faithful to obtain a plenary indulgence by:



- Making a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Fatima in Portugal
- Making a visit to a church or oratory where an image or statue of Our Lady of Fatima is on display for public veneration on the anniversary days of the apparitions (the 13th of each month from May – October 2017), and participating in a celebration.
- Those who are unable to meet either of the above sets of conditions because of age or illness may join “spiritually the jubilee celebrations, by offering their prayers and sacrifices of their own lives” in front of an image of Our Lady of Fatima.

A statue of our Lady of Fatima will be honored in our Chapel during this centenary anniversary, on the appointed days. May the message of Our Lady of Fatima be a source of comfort for the sick and suffering and bring peace to all nations. *Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!*

UPDATES FROM THE CONSTRUCTION SITE



In our last issue of “Sentinels of the Dawn” we mentioned that “Phase Four” of the renovation work in our Monastery began. Since December, many transformations have taken place. The masons wasted no time in knocking down partitions and removing debris until they arrived at the original framework of the first and second floors. During the course of their work, they discovered three arches, still intact, of the



original Chapel, dating back to the 15th century, which belonged to Canons of the Cathedral. In the middle of the 19th century, our Foundress purchased the building. It was in this place that for our Mother Foundress and her Sisters participated at Holy Mass and where Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament first began. These arches will be restored and will be a beautiful addition to the area where we have planned to create a kind of Heritage room with souvenirs of our Founders and our precious archives. On the second floor, the masons also uncovered an area in the wall, which revealed the signature of the plasterer dated 1875. At that time the Sisters had so many vocations, they had to transform the attic into bedrooms!



As the work continues throughout the next few months, please join us in thanking God for the generosity of all those who helped make it possible to begin this work. We pray every day, through the intercession of Saint Joseph, the Worker, for our benefactors, and for the safety of the workers. We pray also that we may be able to obtain the necessary funds, so as to continue the renovation work of our Monastery and accomplish the mission the Lord has confided to us.



“Spring fever” in the Monastery

After a long, cold winter, new signs of life announce the arrival of spring – the fruit trees are in full blossom, an array of daffodils,

tulips and other flowers open themselves to the warmth of the sun, and our Sisters adorn themselves with aprons and roll up their sleeves to work!



A special thank you to Mr. Michel Schall, a friend of the Monastery, who gave us a beautiful gift in installing wooden borders around all the flower beds in our exterior courtyard.

Taking advantage of the warmer weather and the fact that it stays lighter now in the evenings, our Community seized the opportunity to do some cleaning projects. With buckets of hot, soapy water, the Sisters climbed ladders and set out together to accomplish the task at hand – giving the walls of our Kitchen a thorough cleaning, as well as washing windows,

and outdoor tables and chairs! After a few hours of hard work and applying a little elbow grease, our project was complete.

Working together gives us a sense of strengthening our Community life, plus “many hands make lighter work!” On May 1st, we begin our summer schedule which gives us extra time in the evening to work in the garden.

Symba, our miniature Labrador, has also been enjoying the warm, sunny days. When she is not making her rounds in the backyard to ward off any trespassers



(aka our neighbors’ cats who climb over the cloister wall and like to roam in our gardens), she is always ready to play, always ready to be chased with a ball in her mouth. Full of energy, she keeps us on our toes!

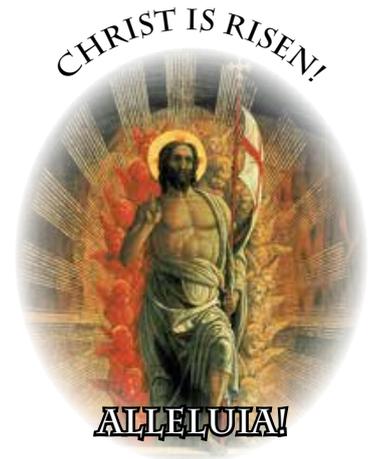




The Poor Clare Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
in Troyes, France
wish you a Blessed Easter season,
filled with the joy and peace of the Risen Christ



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THE TRIDUUM AND EASTER 2017 AT THE MONASTERY

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the priests of our diocese who replaced our chaplain, Mgr. Bernard Savourat, for the Triduum and the Easter octave. Unable to preside at the liturgies this year, because of some health problems, we were very touched by the generosity and willingness of several priests who made arrangements to come to the Monastery at the last moment. Fr. Jerome Berthier, the Vicar General of our diocese, presided at the Liturgy of the Passion and Easter Sunday; Fr. Jacques Breton was the celebrant at the Easter Vigil, with Fr. Paul Guillemain concelebrating and preaching the homily. During the Easter octave Fr. Gerard Dannemuller, Fr. Antoine de Moisant, ofsc, Fr. André Doré and Fr. Denis Bourry presided at the Mass. May God reward each one of them for the witness they give to us and to all the faithful of our diocese through their fervor and their fidelity to Christ and His Church.