



Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Montmartre OSB

Benedictine Monastery, 5 Mackerston Place, Largs KA30 8BY, SCOTLAND, Tel. 01475 687 320

benedictinemonasterylargs@yahoo.com

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Pax



CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2024

Dearest Friends and Benefactors,

The Shepherds came “with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.” - Luke 2:16

“I found myself in spirit beside the crib, where I prostrated myself in order to adore Him. Just as Joseph, the shepherd, the Magi, were truly in the presence of the Divine Child in the Crib, so in the Eucharist we have the Divine Child with the same graces for us. In fact, even still more wonderfully, because it is by faith and not the senses that we are contemplating this mystery, Our Lord has made me contemplate, in the Eucharist, his Holy Childhood, He told me he is really there, in the tabernacle, a Little Child, just as in the Crib. And by a marvel of his love, He gives a new extension to his presence by granting it spiritually to the soul who desires it and is unwillingly far from the tabernacle. This grace flows directly from the Eucharist.”

These words from the writings of Marie Adele Ganier, Mother Foundress of our Congregation, express clearly the relationship of the Eucharist to the great feast of Christmas, the celebration of the coming of our Saviour as a little baby. As we kneel before the Crib, let us remember that the lifeless model of the Holy Infant is only a reminder of the Divine Child who once truly lay in a real crib, but let us remind ourselves also that we can truly



find that Divine Child alive in reality when we come to adore Him in the Holy Eucharist, for his precious Heart within the Blessed Sacrament never ceases to beat with love for us all. In each of the monasteries of our Congregation, we can find Him waiting for us to offer our adoration, but not to an invisible Lord locked away in the Tabernacle, but to a truly visible Lord displayed to all eyes in the Monstrance. So especially this Christmas, let us think of and contemplate the Divine Little Child as we go about our daily lives, but whenever possible making a visit to adore the Real Presence of that Divine Child in a church. Perhaps we too then may be able to develop a real spiritual childhood in our own private lives, enabling us to better welcome the Divine Child into our own souls.

Community News

As our monastery is part of a Congregation, we sisters are part of a larger family with all the sisters assigned to the other monasteries belonging to the Congregation. Every four years we have a General Chapter so called because representatives from all the monasteries attend. As you will all understand, the General Chapter planned for 2020 had to be cancelled, so it was eight years since the sisters last met. Early in September Reverend Mothers Prioress and Sub-Prioress left Largs to travel to Tyburn Convent, London, our Mother House, as the main House of the Congregation is called. The time of the General Chapter was a great time to renew old acquaintances, and to meet new faces, known of, but never seen before. It is a time when the full social aspect of our monastic family is truly manifest. Oh yes, it is a lovely time of mixing with each other closely, but that is not the main purpose of the General



Chapter, as the General Chapter is a time of serious business. Some discussions went on for lengthy periods. One evening we were particularly late, and Very Reverend Mother General asked "Is there anything else I've forgotten?" "Yes" piped up one sister - "Supper!", which we call our evening meal. So that session ended up with laughter - followed by supper at about 9.00pm! All who were at the General Chapter are very grateful to the Sisters who stayed in the monasteries to keep them going, but we especially appreciated those at Tyburn Convent who fed us all and kept everything going, and also looked after the elderly and infirm sisters. The General Chapter concluded on 18th October. Mother General arranged a special barbecue dinner on the Sunday afterwards to celebrate. Next day, the two Mothers left to return to Largs, accompanied by another sister, Mother M. Martin, who was transferring to become a member of the Largs Community. There may be some who remember her from her previous assignments at Largs, the last of which was just short of twenty years ago. Mother has been at a few of our other monasteries since then.

On 24th June, our Congregation Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Alexander MacDonald, of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Canada, came to reside at the monastery. We feel privileged to have Father Alexander at the monastery. Father is passionate for the spread of God's kingdom and started a Youtube channel "PriestsLive!"



Fr Alexander MacDonald is available for Spiritual Direction for those who are regularly involved in the life of the Benedictine Monastery either by attending Holy Mass here or as benefactors. He also invites everyone to subscribe and like his youtube channel: www.youtube.com/@priestlivenow. Topics include: "People who go to hell share this ONE characteristic without exception." "This might be the most absurd thing believed by Atheists." As well as an upcoming series on the "Thirteen Perfections of Mary, Mother of God."

Last month which was the month of Holy Souls, the Community went to Hallie Brae Cemetery, Largs to visit our Sisters who are



resting there. There we prayed the Office of Vespers for the Dead and sang the Suscipe. Praying at the cemetery is spiritually enriching as one is immersed in the reality of our existence, the hope of the glory of the resurrection and desire for eternity. May their souls and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

On 8th December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary which is the titular feast of this monastery, we had a Holy Hour of Grace with Benediction. During this hour we had devotional prayers to Our Lady, Rosa Mystica. Anyone familiar with our chapel will have noticed the Rosa Mystica statue facing the laity chapel at the rear right side of the choir stalls. It belonged to a devout Catholic woman Theresa, who had a devotion to Our Lady, Mystical Rose. Before her death she left it to our good friend Liam Coyle, to ensure that it found a good home, and he kindly donated it to the monastery. We received the statue in April and just three months later the Vatican announced the approval of the devotion to Our Lady of Montichiari - Rosa Mystica.



The devotion is based on a series of visions witnessed by Nurse Pierina Gilli between 1947 and 1983, the key years being 1947 and 1966. As we ourselves are Religious Sisters, this approval is of particular interest for us. In Mary's own words during the second apparition, she not only described herself as the Mother of Jesus and Mother of all, but also said that "Our Lord sends me to bring a new Marian Devotion to all religious orders and institutes, male and female, and to all the priests of this world. I promise to protect those religious orders and institutes who will venerate me in this special way, increase their vocations, and achieve a greater striving for saintliness among the servants of God," calling for the 13th of each month to be celebrated as a Marian Day, with special prayers to proceed it on 12 days before it, she continued "On this day I

shall pour out vocational holiness and abundant graces on the religious orders and spiritual institutes who have honoured me especially.” Then she added a request for 13th July to be celebrated annually in honour of her Rosa Mystica (Mystical Rose), Overall her messages focus on the need for charity, and the prevention of infidelity in the lives of priests and religious. She asked for Prayer, Sacrifice and Penance in order to save mankind. This devotion is for everyone and calls for many to pray for the salvation of souls. We as a community intend to heed her request. Eager for the reign of the Sacred Heart through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the graces offered for this devotion, in 2025 we will offer prayers on the first 12 days of each month, in preparation for the 13th. We invite everyone to join us in this Devotion.

OBLATE NEWS

In our Sacred Heart Newsletter last June, we announced the death of our friend and oblate Edward Tuthill who was called to God on 9th April 2024. Edward’s widow Sarah Tuthill, who was also a close friend and oblate of the monastery passed to the Lord on 19 July 2024, three months after his death. It was sad to lose them both within the span of three months, and devastating for their family. Sadie’s oblate name was Sr. Mary Paula. She began her novice year on 6th August 1996 and made her Oblation on 31st August, 1997.



She was also a lay adorer of the monastery and helped in the tearoom when she could. May the souls of Sadie and Edward rest in peace. Amen.

On 23rd November, the Oblates and Lay Adorers of the monastery had their annual retreat. It was given by our Congregation Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Alexander MacDonald. It was titled “The Thirteen Perfections of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” It was a deep spiritual experience for them and we give thanks to God for the life, virtues and glories of our Blessed Mother Mary.

TEAROOM/HELPERS.

On 24th August, we had our annual Strawberry Tea. The weather was not very clement that day but our faithful helpers and friends worked hard to ensure its success. On 30th November, we had the Christmas Fayre. It was a huge success and our helpers generated just over £3,000. Our helpers are an essential part of our monastic community who through their help and support labour with us for the reign of the Sacred Heart. May the Sacred Heart bless them abundantly for all that they do for Him.



CONGREGATION NEWS

Our Community in Australia have moved to a new home. Our Sisters moved from Tyburn Priory, Riverstone, to our new monastery in Kurmond in November. The Monastery had to be moved to another location due to a new major road that the government were constructing through the back of the monastery, making the environment unfit for recollection. The building of the new monastery is taking place in stages, the first part being the guest quarters which includes a large hall. The large hall was designed so as to prove suitable as a church when needed, as indeed it is now in use as a church until the monastic church is constructed. Later it will be suitable for a conference centre, receptions etc. The community's first Holy Mass there was celebrated by a priest oblate of the monastery.

BUILDING RENOVATION

In our last Newsletter in June, we stated that our next project was going to be the re-slating of the West Wing of the guesthouse. However, we have had many emergency repairs since then. In July, the slate roof of the Noviciate wing of the inner enclosure began to leak and the ceiling was collapsing. That part of the building had never been renovated since we purchased the property. We did not have the funds to fix it but our roofers: First Roofing and Building Services Ltd. (FRBS), agreed to install a brand new roof on that wing for £25,000. Our good friend James McAllister who is the director of the company asked us to pay at our convenience. The roof was completed just before the start of the General Chapter in



September. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, we have been able to pay £20,000 off the debt with only £5,000 outstanding. Just after the installation of the roof, the ceiling of a room in the chaplain's flat was collapsing and a part of the inner wall was crumbling. The flat had to be sealed off. James McAllister came to our rescue once more and installed a brand new ceiling there for free and all that was left was to fix the wall. We decided to get rid of the wall papers but when the wall was stripped heaps of sand and dust comes tumbling down, leaving a hollow void in it. While we

were at the General Chapter at Tyburn the wall was restored at a discounted rate and thanks to the generosity of a benefactor we were able to pay for it. The flat has recently been redecorated by our good friend David. He did all the decorating for free. He has also decorated the cottage for free and plans to do the conservatory and other parts of the building. David's generosity has saved us thousands of pounds and we are very grateful to him.

Just when we thought the problems were over and we were going to enjoy a time of respite, the drainage pipes in the ceiling of the tearoom started leaking and the water was pouring through the ceiling. It was the second time we have had this problem, the last time it happened it was a blockage and we had to renew a pipe in the ceiling. This time around the interior pipe had to be disconnected and a brand new pipe was installed on the roof to channel water to the external drains. We are now completely watertight. Deo gratias!

Upcoming Project

Although we have no leaking roofs, we cannot wait for old roofs to be badly damaged before renewing them. We still have to re-slate the west wing of the Guesthouse and fix the flat roof of the Enclosure Kitchen. We also have to upgrade our ancient lift to a modern one. The lift costs a lot of money to maintain. This year

alone, we have spent approximately £10,000 on servicing and repairs. These projects will cost hundred of thousands. In the past we tried to get grants for our projects but were unsuccessful mostly due to the fact that the building was not originally built as a place of worship; it used to be a hotel. However, there are grants available for places of worship with emphasis on how these places benefit the public. We believe we stand a chance of securing a grant with proper presentation.

The National Heritage Fund (NLHF) has recently launched a scheme to secure the future of UK's Places of Worship by investing £100 million in Churches, Chapels, Monasteries and Synagogues. In order to be able to apply for NLHF, we would need to obtain some basic but necessary documentation such as a 'Condition Survey Report' with associated 'Indicative Costs' that will help to determine the project. Upon consulting with relevant professionals and our Restoration Consultant, we are advised that costs for the professional investigative work, reports and application would be in the region of £10,000.

We would be grateful for your contribution, however small, to help us fund the professional fees, so that we could apply for a major grant for the essential Restoration of the Monastery. You can make donations on our fundraising platform and help share the link:
<https://www.peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/Tyburn-Largs-urgent-roof-repairs>

We thank all our beloved benefactors, friends and helpers for all the support you give us in enabling the enthronement and adoration of the Sacred Heart to continue here. Holy Mass will be offered for you on Christmas day. If you would like to donate towards our roofing and restoration project please visit our website at: <https://www.tyburnconvent.org.uk/largsmonasterydonations>
If you would like to pay by cheque please make it payable to Benedictine Monastery.

With loving prayers for a blessed and peaceful Christmas in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Chaste Heart of St. Joseph.

Mother Prioress and Community