

THE ROSARY PILGRIM



MONASTERY OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

My Soul Glorifies the Lord

May 31, 2013, feast of the Visitation of Mary was a day of special joy as Sr. Joseph Maria of the Holy Family, O.P. made Solemn Profession as a Nun of the Order of Preachers. Family and friends from as far away as Texas and Vietnam were present for the Rite of Profession.

Archbishop John Joseph Meyers was the principal celebrant. Our chaplain,



Fr. Gregory Salomone, O.P. preached the homily. Fr. Allan White, OP, our confessor, and Fr. Gabriel Coless, O.S.B. concelebrated the Mass and our faithful daily server, Mr. Richard Sofie, T.O.P. served the Mass. Fr. Charles Kelly served as Master of Ceremonies.



The Rite of Solemn Profession for the Nuns of the Order is simple but beautiful in its simplicity. After the Gospel for the feast of the Visitation Sr. Joseph Maria prostrated before the altar asking Sr. Denise Marie, prioress, and the community for the, "mercy of God and yours."

Following the homily Sister was questioned on her intentions and desires for living the contemplative life. Then placing her hands in those of Sr. Denise Marie with the book of the Constitutions she promised to live the way of life of the Nuns of the Order of Preachers until death.



Then followed the imposition of the black veil and the presentation of the ring of espousals, both blessed by the Archbishop. The rite concluded with the embrace of peace by all the Sisters and Mass continued. At the conclusion of the Mass everyone gathered in St. Dominic's Hall for lunch and to greet a radiant Sr. Joseph Maria and the community.

An Interview with SR. JOSEPH MARIA OF THE HOLY FAMILY, O.P.

Would you tell us something about yourself, where you are from, how many brothers and sisters in your family, etc.?

I was born in Vietnam, the youngest of eight girls. From the very beginning, the Lord was already preparing me for community life! When I was nine years old, our family immigrated to the U.S. We settled in Arlington, TX where there was and still is a very vibrant Vietnamese community. I went to the University of Texas at Arlington majoring in Biology with the intention of becoming a missionary doctor, but God had other plans for me.

How did you find out about the Dominican Nuns?

From a friend who was discerning with the Dominican friars. I found out about our monastery in particular through our website and blog.

What attracted you to the Order of Preachers?

The emphasis on study. The love of study was inculcated in me by my parents who left everything behind in coming to the US so that their daughters could have a better education and better opportunities. So when I heard about an order with an emphasis on study, I had to check it out!

Why did you become a contemplative nun? Have you always wanted to be a cloistered nun?

I wanted to be a missionary, to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. As I was spending more and more time in prayer and adoration, I came to the realization that no matter how much I do and how far I go, I was limited. As the desire of embracing the whole world was growing stronger and stronger, I knew that the active life was not enough and that the Lord was calling me to a deeper union with Him through the cloistered vocation.

You've been in the monastery over 6 years; what have been some things that have surprised you about life in a cloistered monastery?

I'm still surprised at how ordinary our life is! When I started looking at cloistered communities, I was afraid of what I might find...what strange creatures and strange habits (both meanings by the way!) are enclosed by that brick wall! The more I live the life, the more I recognize how normal this life is for me, for those who are called to this vocation.

Another thing that never fails to surprise me is my sisters. You would think I should know the sisters who live with me 24/7 in such closed quarters by now, but I learn something new about them every day. As I grow in knowledge and love of my sisters, they become more of a mystery and wonder to me than ever before. I think this is so because our relationship with each other is an image of the relationship of the Trinity and our sharing in that communion. As we grow in our love for God and in our knowledge of Him, He becomes more of a mystery to us, and we will always be yearning for a still greater communion with Him.

Our life is a simple life of prayer, study and work lived in community. What do you like the most about monastic living?

That through my consecration I belong to God completely; that every part of my life and all my actions belong to Him.



Have you learned any new skills, hobbies, etc. since you've entered the monastery?

Coming from a different culture, I've learned to cook and bake things that not only I've never seen, but have never even heard of or dreamt of. Since we never baked at home, I didn't even know what a little "t" and a big "T" meant when I first came to the monastery. (Ed. t=teaspoon and T=Tablespoon) I think my novice mistress would say

that I've come a long way since then! I've learned how to sew, to weave, to make rosaries, soap, etc.

You made your Profession 3 years ago. What is so special about making Solemn Profession?

By solemn profession a nun is totally consecrated to God in the Order until death.

Do you have any advice for young women discerning a vocation?

Don't make your discernment process too complicated. Trust that God will manifest His will for you! If He expects you to follow a certain path He has to show it to you or else you wouldn't be able to follow it. For the majority of us, it will be through the ordinary means. If the community seems like a good fit, try out the life. You don't have to be 100% sure when you enter. Remember, that's what the formation period is for!

Monastic Artisans



One of the most frequent questions asked us is: "what do you do all day? While our life of prayer, work and study in community keeps us occupied from early in the morning to late at night there is time for enjoying hobbies and learning new crafts.

The past few years have seen an upsurge in new monastic arts and crafts. Nearly every evening recreation will find Sr. Maria Teresa, Sr. Mary Amata and Sr. Mary Cecilia clicking needles with varied colored yarns as they crochet baby hats, afghans and other items. Sometimes Sr. Mary

Catharine joins them crocheting an altar lace that she hopes to finish by 2016, the 800th anniversary of the Order. Recently Sr. Mary Jacinta has joined the crochet-crowd applying her new skills to baby hats.

At another table Sr. Joseph Maria, Sr. Mary Veronica and Sr. Mary Magdalene and Sr. Mary Elizabeth might be making our popular wood bead rosaries which are sold here at the monastery and online. There is a steady demand for these simple, sturdy yet beautiful instruments of prayer.

Go by Sr. Mary Magdalene's wood shop on an afternoon and you'll probably find her carving a holy water font, turning a bowl or crafting a beautiful hand turned pen for the gift shop.

Take a quick trip down the hallway and you'll come to a room off the laundry. At one time this is where Sr. Mary Peter made sandals for the Sisters. Now it is the home of "Cloister Candles" where Sr. Mary Catharine and Sr. Mary Jacinta make jar candles for the gift shop. When she has time, Sr. Mary Catharine also makes pillar and taper candles, hand dipped candles and votive candles for our chapel.

Then there are Sr. Maureen's beautiful one-of-a-kind photography cards. Sr. Maureen's photographic eye has captured beautiful scenes of the monastery throughout the year. You can find these cards at the monastery gift shop.

And lastly there is the Seignadou Soap department where the sisters are always creating new things.

For the past year Sr. Mary Veronica has been learning the art of making cold process soap and her soaps are now available in the gift shop on a limited basis.



NEW PRIORRESS



On Wednesday, September 25, 2013, the community elected Sr. Mary Martin de Porres of Jesus, O.P. to serve the community as prioress for three years. We wish Sr. Mary Martin every grace and blessing as she once again takes up this role of service for our community.



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Check out our website: www.summitdominicans.org for more news!



Photo credit: John Spillaro, Ocean Grove, NJ

PARISH OF SAINT TERESA OF AVILA MAKES MONASTERY REPAIRS A REALITY!

IF YOU HAVE VISITED Rosary Shrine lately you have probably noticed the orange cones warning visitors of the crumbling stairs! We hoped to put off the repair job for another year because of the need to replace the roof and the skylights that were damaged in Hurricane Sandy last October but the rapid deterioration of the stairs made us realize that it would be dangerous to wait.

Due to the great generosity of Fr. Brian Plate and the parishoners of our parish of St. Teresa of Avila here in Summit we are able to repair both the stairs and the roof this year! Not only that, their goodness to us will enable us to install a generator to provide for the needs of our elderly sisters and keep the contents of the walk-in refrigerator and freezer from spoiling

should another October 29th-like storm find us without electricity!

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy..." St. Paul's prayer to the Philippians is our own as we thank our Lord for the goodness of the people of our wonderful parish!

*"Reward with Eternal Life
 all those who do good to us for the sake of Your Holy Name!"*