



# Living Spring

## Solemn Profession

by Sr. Anne-Marguerite Potchen, VHM  
photos by Sr. Judith Clare Phillips, VHM

The day of profession is always a time of joy and celebration for the individual Sister and for the Community. On October 15, Sister Teresa Cordes Yoshida pronounced her Solemn Vows, making her a permanent member of the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary.



Our Bishop of Springfield, Most Reverend Timothy McDonnell celebrated the Mass of Profession at 10:30 a.m. Sister Teresa Cordes invited Capuchin Friar Gregory Noel to preach the homily during the Mass. Also concelebrating were Very Rev. Kazimierz Chwalek, Rev. Walter Gurgul and Rev. Anthony Gramlich representing the Marian Fathers; and Rev. Msgr. John

Bonzagni, Rev. Jonathan Reardon, and Rev. Michael Wood representing the diocesan clergy. Rev. Gary Dailey, an affiliate of the Order, graciously served as the Master of Ceremonies with Rev. Mr. George Browne as Deacon and David Gauthier as the acolyte.

As a prelude to the Mass, there was 20 minutes of classical music played by Dr. E Lary Grossman, organist; Joanne Nelson-Unczur, oboist; and Tracy Norkun and Sister Judith Clare, flautists. It is always a pleasure to have such fine musicians join us in making a joyful sound for the Lord.

The Rite of Profession is so inspirational to witness. At the conclusion of the homily, the Bishop invited Sister Teresa Cordes to express her desire to be professed through a ritual dialogue. This was followed by the chanting of the litany of the saints during which Sister made the customary prostration. Having called on the assistance of the Saints, Sister Teresa Cordes professed the Solemn Vows of Chastity, Obedience and Poverty promising to live and die in the Or-



der of the Visitation. This was recorded in the Book of Profession and signed on the altar by Sister Teresa Cordes, Mother Mary Ruth and Bishop McDonnell.

As the rite continued, Sister knelt before the Bishop who prayed a special prayer of blessing over the professed. Bishop then presented Sister with the black veil, a crucifix and a lighted candle. Carrying the candle

to the superior's chair, Sister Teresa Cordes was officially welcomed into the Community by Mother Mary Ruth. A beautiful crown of white roses was placed on Sister's head by Mother. All the Sisters gave the Kiss of Peace to Sister. This ritual was accompanied by the singing of the Gregorian Magnificat in Latin. The Rite of Profession was concluded and Mass continued as usual. In honor of Sister Teresa Cordes' Japanese heritage, we sang "Kirisuto No Heiwa" (May the Peace



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# Solemn Profession, cont.

Continued from page 1.



of Christ Be With You) during the procession of the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. The ceremonies flowed so beautifully that it was hardly noticeable that almost two hours had passed. It was a taste of the heavenly liturgy that awaits us!

The Yoshida family all live in Japan and were unable to join us for the celebration. Despite the lack of personal guests, the Mass and luncheon were well attended by the friends and benefactors of the community. Arlette Webster, our long-time friend and cook, catered a seasonal luncheon served with a lovely autumnal place setting and floral centerpieces.

Sister Teresa Cordes was radiantly happy and the Community is grateful to the Lord for gifting us with another permanent member. We ask you to join us in praying for vocations to fill our novitiate!



*A Note from  
Sister Teresa Cordes  
on her profession*



*What shall I render to the Lord  
for all He has done for me?*

*A heart-felt "Thank You"  
for those who participated  
in the joyful celebration  
of my Solemn Profession.*

*May God reward your  
kindness abundantly.  
You are in my prayers in the  
Hearts of Jesus and Mary.*

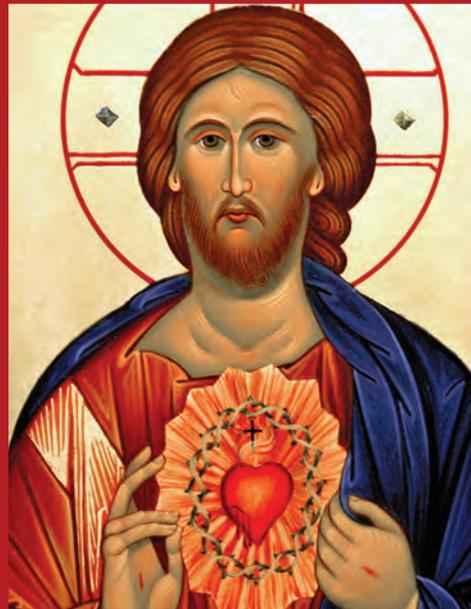
*Gratefully,  
Sister Teresa Cordes Yoshida,  
VHM*

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## SACRED HEART TALKS

Come spend an afternoon in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Monthly talks are given by the sisters at 4:00 p.m. at the monastery.

Vespers and benediction follow the presentation.

FEBRUARY 5, 2012  
MARCH 4, 2012  
APRIL 1, 2012

# South of the Border

by Sr. Maria Marguerite Gray, VHM

This October, thanks to the generosity of Mother Mary Ruth and my sisters, I was given the privilege of visiting our Visitation Monastery of Guadalajara, Mexico, to learn more about their very rich and vibrant Guard of Honor Chapter. Sister Carmen Olimpia, VHM, the Chapter's zealtrix, was more than accommodating and much was accomplished to progress our chapter in Tyringham. However, that is the subject for the next newsletter article! For this Guard of Honor installment, I would just like to introduce you to our beautiful Mexican Sisters and share some of the experience of my two week visit.

Traveling with Fr. Sean O'Mannion, our Guard of Honor's co-director, we arrived at the monastery well after 10pm. Despite the lateness of the hour, Mother Maria Esther and the entire community were waiting to greet me with joyous laughter and hand made welcome signs. We might have begun as strangers from different countries, but our shared Visitandine spirit enabled a bond of friendship to be easily realized.

As we celebrated the Feast of St. Margaret Mary the following day, the sisters treated me to a festive afternoon which included a picnic - Mexican style - in the outdoor quadrangle that defines the interior of the monastery and then to some musical renditions in both English and Spanish complete with guitar and dances featuring some native dress. Our times of recreation continued in this joyful vain as we shared stories of our lives and communities and happily discovered how much we have in common.



*Fr. Sean O'Mannion center front and Sr. Maria Marguerite center back with Board of Directors of the Guadalajara Guard of Honor Chapter*



*Guadalajara Sisters preparing the corn tamales they sell every Thursday.*



*Sister Maria Marguerite learns the native dances!*

That evening The Guard of Honor chaplain, along with Fr. Sean, were on hand to celebrate the liturgy for the Feast Day and enroll over a dozen new Associates in the presence members of the Chapter and with the Sisters' beautiful voices enabling the ceremony to be even more meaningful and moving.

The Sisters support themselves through the sale of hand made cards, vestments, altar goods, and various crafted items in their Chantal Gift Shop. In addition, they host various religious groups and Guard of Honor events in an enclosed pavilion within their retreat area which features overnight facilities - currently being refurbished - and a large chapel. The sisters do all the cooking and clean-up for these events without even the aid of a dishwasher. I witnessed even on a warm Sunday afternoon of serving over 70 people, a spirit of camaraderie, joy and infectious laughter.

Another way of support is in the sale of home-made tamales. Every Thursday morning, after a prayer to Our Lady to bless the work of the day, the sisters head to the large kitchen of the retreat area and join together to create these delicious treats. The corn is shucked and leaves retained for wrapping, while another group grinds the corn to make the filling. Finally they are passed to another team for filling and wrapping and then given to the sister for steaming in a large pot over a low stove. As you can see from the happy smiles of the sisters, even this work is their joy because it is all done for love of God.

The sisters' life of prayer in true Visitandine style consists of silent prayer and the chanting of the Di-

*Continued. Please turn to page 6.*

# News in a Nutshell

by Sister Anne-Marguerite Potchen, VHM

## MOTHER MARY RUTH'S FEAST DAY

September 8, the Birth of Mary, is the day that Mother Mary Ruth keeps her feast day. We celebrated the spiritual aspects of the feast day on September 8 with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Then on September 12 and 13, we enjoyed a day and a half of recreation. On those days, we gave Mother our handmade gifts and entertained her with some homespun talent. It was a real community feast with each Sister making her contribution to the fun.

## SOLEMN PROFESSION

Sister Teresa Cordes Yoshida made her Solemn Profession of Vows on October 15. This news won't fit in a nutshell! Read the article on page one to enjoy the details!

## GUADALAJARA

Yes, it was the day following the profession, October 16, that Sister Maria Marguerite and Father Sean O'Mannion flew to Guadalajara. There Sister learned a lot more about the Guard of Honor Chapters. You can read about the trip in Sister's own words in the article on page three.

## THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Linda Ellingson, our vocal coach from Federal Way, Washington, spent a few days working with the Sisters from October 18 - 20. It's so invigorating and energizing to review favorite techniques and to learn some new ones to help us produce beautiful singing for the Lord. Thanks, Linda, for fitting us into your very busy schedule.

## WHITE OUT

The day after Sister Maria Marguerite arrived home from Mexico, we had a freak snow storm that blanketed our landscape with 18 inches of the white stuff. It was only October 29 so the trees still had their late fall colors and some flowers were still in bloom in the garden making for some most unusual sights.

## THE MONTH OF ALL SOULS

Each November, we invite you to send the names of your deceased loved ones to be added to our prayer intentions for All Souls Day on November 2 which we continue through the month of November. Your petitions are placed in the Sisters' Choir in front of an icon of Our Lady. During November, we conclude Mary's Litany with a special prayer for the souls of all your loved ones.



*Sister Teresa Cordes professing her vows to Mother Mary Ruth.*



*Sister Maria Marguerite with Sister Olivia (left) and Sister Erminita (right) in Guadalajara..*



*Tyringham landscape after the October 29 snowstorm.*

## ABBOT MARCEL

Abbot Marcel Rooney, OSB, the retired Abbot Primate of the Benedictines, was tapped to give a presentation to the Western Massachusetts Legatus Chapter (you'll recall that we hosted the May 2011 meeting of Legatus) and so he was able to spend a few days with us from November 14 - 16. Time slips by too quickly when we have Abbot Marcel with us. We enjoyed sharing Liturgy with him and spending some conference time reflecting on it as well. It was very timely given the pending implementation of the recently translated Roman Missal.

## RENEWAL OF VOWS

On November 21, the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, Visitandines all over the world devotionally renew their vows following a three-day retreat. This year, the retreat master was Father Michael Murray, OSFS. It is an absolute treat to have an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales lead us in this renewal retreat and we were especially grateful to have Father Murray with us. A number of the Sisters have known Father for many years. Father Murray's last visit to Tyringham was to participate in the recording of "Live + Jesus" the 400th Anniversary CD. Father's conferences on the religious life were spiritually enriching and a good preparation for the annual renovation of vows.



*Abbot Marcel Rooney OSB*



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6 mm onyx beads and deluxe sterling silver crucifix and center, with sterling silver chain and wire. \$75.

## *South of the Border, cont.*

*Continued from page 3*

vine Office. Their chanting is in Gregorian mode with a definite Spanish accent and quite beautiful. In addition, they have daily exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a rosary procession after Vespers. The rosary took on a festive nature as we celebrated World Mission Sunday. Each decade represented a continent of the world and the prayers recited in a language reflective of that continent. As each decade was initiated, we paused at a display symbolic of the culture and sang a hymn to Our Lady appropriate to the particular region. This really brought home the sense of Catholicism for each of us as a universal and apostolic Church desiring to gather all peoples to Herself.

We were visited by several traveling priests and even by the Bishop of Guadalajara who is a member of the Guard of Honor and retains close ties to the sisters. In addition, I was able to visit Santa Anita and visit the Poor Clares and the Franciscan Friars who greet you with their prayers and with whom I offered mine at the beautiful shrine of Our Lady of Santa Anita.

Finally it was time to return to Tyringham and after joyous, but a little teary, dinner and recreation, the preceding evening, I was sent off in the pre-dawn with the full community as we had begun knowing we were truly



*Sister Maria Marguerite says good-bye to the community in Guadalajara.*

living the words of our Holy Father St. Francis de Sales Those who go stay, and those who stay go....Sisters of one heart and one spirit! Farewell to the palm trees and warm days of Guadalajara, hello to 18 inches of winter snow at home in Massachusetts!

In the next installment of Living Spring, I will be anxious to tell you more about The Guard of Honor in Guadalajara and share some of the Associates' stories. We also have some exciting news of our own in Tyringham to share... stay tuned!!!



## Our Christmas Gift to You



Is a  
Novena of Masses  
That will be offered at our  
Monastery church  
For all our  
Relatives, Friends and Benefactors  
From our  
Christmas Midnight Mass  
To  
New Year's Day Mass.

We wish you much joy and many blessings for  
Christmas and the New Year 2012.

# *Special thanks...*

by Sister Mary Emmanuel Dominguez, VHM

If you have been to the Monastery in recent months you may have seen varied types of big equipment on lawns and in the parking lot! A recent renovation to the front entrance required a wall of stationery scaffolding so the new Sto could be applied. Special thanks go to the LB Corporation who provided us with a JLG Lift (pictured here) for giving the workers easy access to the higher parts of the building. Advancing technology has provided Sto painters with a water resistant paint which promises years of life to the newly fabricated surfaces. An outside company did the restoration of the front areas of the Monastery, while Bill Tyer and David Gauthier worked the boom lift to paint a ledge that runs the entire circumference of the Monastery's second floor.

Of course we Sisters can always find "other uses" for boom-lifts: as you can see as a few daring Sisters took the opportunity for a survey of the surrounding country side. Literally this was a "bird's-eye-view." It's not every day that we can take a look at the Monastery from the top down! We are most grateful to the Tom Garrity Family, who own LB Corporation, for their gracious willingness to respond to our needs. Actually it happened that one day, while visiting the Garrity's worksite and marble quarries, Tom Sr. was showing David and Sister Mary Emmanuel around his work building. We passed into a room that had a strange looking item. The item looked more like a dinosaur of sorts!

"What's that?" Sister inquired.

"That is a boom-lift." replied Tom Sr. in his enchanting Scottish brogue. He went on to say, "If you ever need it, let me know!"

Well be careful what you say to the Sisters because sure enough they will remember and take you up on it.

When we called to ask if we could use it, one Sister offered to "pick it up and drive it back to the Monastery!" Fortunately she does not have a license for driving heavy equipment! Not only did the Garrity's deliver it, but demonstrated how to operate it to Bill and David. It was really put to good use! Help us to pray that God will richly reward the Garritys for all that they do for us. We won't put this on our wish-list since we know one is always available for our use!

Another group of workers brought a John Deer front-end loader and a back-hoe. What great timing! We had to dig an 18 foot long hole which is more than 24 inches deep. No, it's not a swimming pool (wouldn't that be something!), but it is to facilitate drainage away from a window well wall which is leaning toward the building, probably due to freezing. Our ground has a high content of clay which prevents drainage. Removing the soil and lining the area with garden fabric and stone-fill will hopefully stop the progressive movement of the wall. Time will tell. We will be monitoring this during the winter into the spring and see how it works.

David and Bill have found that this John Deer tractor would be a wonderful addition to their work tools. Sounds like a WISH LIST item doesn't it? Even a used one would be great! Enjoy the pictures and join us again in thanking God for such wonderfully generous friends who let us borrow what we need just when we need it! What timing! God bless all!



*David (above) and Sisters (below) on JLG lift.*



*David digging the window well trench with the borrowed John Deer.*

# *From The Desk Of Mother Mary Ruth*



*W*hat comes to your mind when you realize that Christmas is almost upon you? Do you automatically think of all that you still have to do before December 24? Do you feel like you are in a panic mode fearing that you will never get everything done? Do you dread the pre-Christmas parties that you have to attend at work, or those that you, yourself, perhaps have to give?

And in the midst of all of this do you suddenly realize that it is Advent? There's the Advent Wreath in your parish church, Father is wearing purple vestments, you are singing the familiar Advent hymns that you learned when you were in Catholic school. But, somehow, it just doesn't seem to go all together...Advent with lovely hymns of longing for Christ, the Messiah to come and your simultaneously hearing "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" playing in every store where you shop.

How do you solve this dilemma? Obviously, you can't suddenly join a monastery! You have your own God-given vocation. Perhaps you could let yourself stop for fifteen minutes each day and reflect on the Advent Scripture for that day. Or would it be possible to attend Mass once a week besides the Sunday Liturgy? Could you have a "prayer corner" or even an Advent Wreath in your home?

For those of you who live in the Berkshires, you are invited to attend our Holy Hour at 4:00 p.m. every Sunday and join us for Advent Evening Prayer. In your own parish, though, there will surely be Liturgies that help to re-focus your thoughts on the coming of our Emmanuel. Thus you will experience the fact that preparing spiritually for Christmas throughout Advent really does enhance the beauty of the celebration of the Birth of Jesus in time.

All of your Visitation Sisters in Tyringham wish you a blessed Christmas and a happy, holy, joyful New Year! We remember you in our prayer and ask you to pray for us.

God be praised!  
Mother Mary Ruth Dolch, VHM

*Come Celebrate Christmas with us!*



The Ceremony of Lessons & Carols  
December 18, 2011  
2:00 p.m.

Christmas Midnight Mass  
(12:00 a.m.)  
preceded by Vigils at 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Mass  
9:30 a.m.