

HOLY YEAR OF MERCY

8-12-2015/20-11-2016

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

OUR YEAR OF MERCY

Fr. Thomas A. Krosnicki, SVD

With the entire Church, our community at Mount Grace began the Year of Mercy on December 8th, as proclaimed by Pope Francis. The liturgy of its opening day, the Immaculate Conception, was celebrated with great solemnity. The Sisters were determined to help make the year a special time of grace. They embraced the motto of the Jubilee: "Merciful like the Father." That motto also set their agenda: show ever greater mercy in both word and action, in prayer and adoration.

Pope Francis stated that "mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope." Furthermore, acts of mercy are to be seen as "evident signs of God's presence and closeness" to his people. It is time for all of us to embrace mercy and extend it generously to others.

Traditionally, the Church has spoken about two types of works of mercy. First there are the corporal works of mercy extended to others in need. This special year, therefore, should be a time of greater outreach to others: to feed the hungry, give refreshment to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, visit the sick and bury the dead. In undertaking such tasks, one can

show the human and divine face of mercy. Such is the task for the Church—for you and me. In a sense, it involves personal fasting. To feed others, I might have to cut back on my eating habits; to clothe others I might need to budget less for my personal wardrobe.

It is impossible for our cloistered Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters to become engaged in such hands-on works of corporal mercy. Their thrust of mercy will, however, encompass true spiritual works of mercy without becoming directly involved in instructing the uninformed, counseling the doubtful, comforting the afflicted, or even admonishing sinners. That is not their calling which is lived in communal solitude behind the cloister walls. However, they will be involved in other spiritual works of mercy! In their life of prayer and sacrifice, of adoration and dedication, they will certainly

be offering powerful works of spiritual mercy: praying for the spiritually needy, interceding for the hopeless and helpless, begging for mercy for others who stand in great need before God. This type of "mercy-work" also demands the discipline of fasting. The Sisters deny themselves to live for others, to call upon the God of mercy night and day.

During this Year of Mercy all are called upon to "think mercy." But, kind thoughts are not enough. They must be backed by action. Let's get with it and "do mercy!"



GOD HAS ALWAYS HELPED
IN THE PAST AND HIS POWER
IS NOT LESSENER TODAY.
IT SEEMS TO ME WE HAVE
EVERY REASON TO BE SATISFIED
WITH GOD'S WAY OF DOING THINGS:

LET US HONOR HIM
BY OUR CONFIDENCE.
IF WE ALWAYS TRY TO PLEASE HIM
BY A LIFE OF HIDDEN FIDELITY,
THEN I AM SURE
HE WILL NEVER FORSAKE US.
*SERVANT OF GOD MOTHER MARY MICHAEL
OUR CO-FOUNDERESS*

In an official letter dated February 25, 2015, the Holy See gave the go signal for the beatification process for the Co-founderess and first Superior General of the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters, Adolfine Tönnies (Mother Mary Michael). On March 19 the so-called "Nihil Obstat" signed by Cardinal Angelus Amato was received. The beatification process first begins on the diocesan level. The Mass for the opening of the process took place on September 3 at our Motherhouse in Steyl with Bishop Frans Wiertz of the Diocese of Roermond, Netherlands, presiding.

Mount Grace Newsletter

DECEMBER 2015

HOLY SPIRIT ADORATION SISTERS

www.mountgraceconvent.org

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St. Louis, MO 63107

YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES
WILL BE GRATEFULLY
REMEMBERED
IN OUR ADVENT AND
CHRISTMAS LITURGIES
DECEMBER 16 TO 24 AND
DECEMBER 26 TO JANUARY 3
AND IN OUR
EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATIONS
ON CHRISTMAS DAY.



OUR COMMUNITY 2015

Our Superior General Mother Maria Elizabeth along with her assistant Sister Maria Devota joined the Mount Grace Community for a photo when they visited us in September. Servant of God Mother Mary Michael's portrait is in the background.



SISTER MARY CARISSIMA

quietly went to meet her Bridegroom on July 7. She had been bedridden for some time, but her departure came as a surprise to us. Sister Mary Carissima was in her eighty-fourth year of life and her fifty-seventh year of religious profession. She joined our community in 2012 after having spent many years in Philadelphia. Her name means "the beloved" and we pray that she is now enjoying her beloved face-to-face.



SISTER MARY CORDULA

celebrated her diamond jubilee of vows on May 21. One week after making her first profession of vows, in May of 1955 at our convent in Bad Driburg, Germany, Sister Mary Cordula received her assignment to come to the United States. Besides St. Louis, she has also served in our convents in Philadelphia and Austin (now closed). Grateful for the gift of sixty-and counting years in her contemplative-missionary vocation, Sister continues to rejoice always in the Lord!

PUT OUT INTO THE DEEP

from the homily of Bishop Frans Wiertz September 3, 2015

It is nice that in the middle of this year [of Consecrated Life] we can take an important step towards the Beatification Process of the Co-Foundress of your Congregation, Adolfine Tönnies, Mother Mary Michael. We could focus two floodlights, as it were, on two important aspects of religious life: the missionary elán and continuous prayer in adoration. The exterior active stepping-out and the interior recollection are two sides of the same medal. St. Arnold Janssen had from the

beginning of his mission work recognized very new convents, always proceeding from the idea well that one without the other does not go. Our Church is essentially missionary. Christ calls us to throw out our nets and to proclaim the good news. We human beings are quickly inclined to think: "We have done so much, but achieved nothing. Let us stop." Exactly then, comes the moment when Christ steps in: "Put out into the deep waters!" This demands daring and courage, because the deepest part of the sea is also the most dangerous. Trust in God that everything will be good is a characteristic trait of religious and certainly of missionaries. They have always, as it says in the Gospel, left everything behind in order to follow him. That is also the reason why there are Adoration Sisters. Many people in the world may ask: "What do you get out of all this praying? What have you thereby achieved?"

What Adolfine Tönnies teaches us is that prayer and adoration belong essentially to



missionary life. It is a way into the deep where apparently there is little to catch. But it is at the same time the place where Christ is nearest to us, where the presence of his Holy Spirit is most experienced.

When Sister Michael was called to help in founding a new community, it was for her a way into the deep. The story of her life shows clearly how she remained missionarily-active from this Adoration Convent. She shaped your Congregation and from here founded many

new convents, always proceeding from the idea that proclamation and prayer go hand in hand, indeed are inseparably united with each other. It is as St. Paul said in the first reading of the Letter to the Colossians: "From the moment that we heard what love the Spirit awakened in you, we have not ceased praying for you." To awaken the Spirit of God in people is no light task. That is precisely why it is so important that you, Sisters, are here, that you pray for us, that you have your gaze focused on Christ and thereby build the bridge between the two important elements of our missionary task: the exterior active setting-out and the interior recollection.

Mother Mary Michael lived out of a deep faith. This allowed her to leave everything behind and to follow Christ. Let us pray that she will now, as Paul said, share in the lot of the saints and that the step we are beginning today may lead to an official Beatification and perhaps, in the long run, to a Canonization.