Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus and Mary!

“In all things give thanks for this is the Will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all.” (1 Thess 5:18)

As we come to the end of another year, first in the liturgy and soon thereafter in the secular calendar, we appropriately celebrate a day of Thanksgiving. We receive so many gifts and benefits from the Providence of the Almighty that it seems a shame there is only one day out of the year dedicated to showing our gratitude. From Cicero, who said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others,” through St. Ambrose: “No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks,” to G.K. Chesterton, who maintained “thanks are the highest form of thought,” men have borne witness to the fittingness and necessity of offering thanks to God.

As Catholics, we offer thanks to God every time we assist at Holy Mass, for that is one of the four purposes of offering Mass. Moreover, at the Holy Sacrifice, we unite with the infinite act of thanksgiving offered by Christ Himself. What a privilege! How else could we ever feel that we had thanked God sufficiently?

There are so many things that we Sisters have to be grateful for, it would be impossible to list them all, but here are a few things that are representative of the longer list.

• The privilege of living in the same building with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, so that we can easily bring our needs to Him and receive His blessings and strength in our day.
• The special devotion of our Congregation to Our Blessed Mother;
• Our good priests who bring us daily Mass and the Sacraments;
• The beautiful building that provides us with shelter (even if it is 100 years old and badly in need of repairs);
• The peaceful grounds at St. Michael’s;
• Our younger religious, with their generous and lively natures;
• Our farm animals;
• Our students and the opportunity of sharing God’s knowledge and love;
• Our dear parishioners and friends everywhere who support and encourage us;
• The various talents we share in our religious family;
• And yes, our crosses, by which we follow Jesus on the path to Heaven.

Wishing you all in advance the peace and joy of the Christ Child, and His blessing on you and your loved ones during the New Year.
The Sisters from St. Michael’s Novitiate take a break from their usual round of classes on the spiritual life and religious life to attend lectures on the Faith at the Fatima Conference.

The three young ladies who entered the convent in early September were received as postulants after the Pontifical High Mass on October 11. The postulancy marks the acceptance of the candidates into the Congregation.

Every month from May to October, the Sisters join in a Rosary procession to honor Our Lady of Fatima. Undoubtedly, the candlelight procession in October is the most solemn and beautiful.

Two Sisters work in the sound booth, recording the Conference lectures and burning them to CD.
Winner of St. Michael’s Academy auction item “Principal for a Day” enjoyed lunch at Tomato Street with principal Rev. Mother Mary Agnes and a friend.

A highlight for the Sisters is to attend the dress rehearsal for the various plays at St. Michael’s Academy. The Sisters peruse the program for the musical, Oliver.

The Sisters take turns in lighting the Advent wreath each evening, after which they recite a special Advent prayer and sing an Advent hymn.

Skate for Life, hosted by Students for Life, enabled several Sisters to spend time at the rink for a very good cause.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, the Sisters were invited to sing at a local assisted living community, where over one hundred residents came to listen to them sing a collection of songs and hymns that tell the story of our redemption.

Students of our newest school, St. Philomena’s Academy in Middleville, Michigan, presented a recitation of the poem The Sugar-Plum Tree for Rev. Mother Mary Agnes during her visit.
Our Apostolate of Prayer

Are you or someone you love in need of special prayers? Send your intentions to the Sisters to be remembered in our daily prayers, Masses and good works.

Upcoming novenas:
- Our Lady of Prompt Succor (January 15)
- Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11)

Convent Trivia

Our white-veiled novices, in their cloistered year of novitiate training, spend at least two hours a day in class time and study as they learn about the obligations of the religious life and the spiritual life. Sisters in formation, including postulants, also have classes in Scripture, Catholic doctrine and Gregorian chant.

Thoughts on the Vows and Love

You aspire to become a religious to love. Nothing less!

You do not enter the convent to escape from something, not to compensate for a disappointment in love, to withdraw into some sort of negative oblivion. You seek to become a Sister in order to live in the fullest sense of the word, in order to love in the loftiest and purest manner possible to you. You seek a consecrated life in order to achieve the fullness of your womanly personality.

Just as there is an extremely close connection between consecrated virginity and love of God, so is there an intimate relationship between this gift and prayer. And such is not at all surprising for the simple reason that prayer and love are themselves closely bound together. This is why St. Paul indicates facility in prayer as the reason for a life of perfect purity: the virgin thinks of the things of the Lord; she can pray without impediment, she is an inner soul in love with her God.

The consecrated virgin thinks about the things of the Lord, she meditates upon His goodness, she surrenders herself to His service — and all this through love. So true is this that consecrated virginity without love is inconceivable. A girl aspires to this dedication not because she has been disappointed in love, but rather because she is seeking a perfect love. Consecrated virginity may not be separated from the love of God.

— Excerpts from *Dawn of a Consecration* by Rev. Thomas Dubay, S.M.

Calendar

| Dec.  | 8 | Feast of the Immaculate Conception |
|      | 10 | Sr. Mary Loretta’s feastday |
|      | 12 | Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe |
| 14-15 | Christmas Concerts at Mount St. Michael |
| 23 | Sr. Mary Cabrini’s feastday |
| 25 | Christmas Day |
| 27 | Sr. Marie Emmanuel’s feastday |
| 30 | Benefit Dinner and Concert |

| Jan.  | 1 | Feast of the Circumcision |
|      | 3 | Sr. Mary Genevieve’s feastday |
|      | 15 | Feast of Our Lady of Prompt Succor |
| 21 | Rev. Mother Mary Agnes’ feastday |
|      |Sr. Maria Ines’ feastday |
| 31 | Sr. Giovanna Marie’s feastday |

| Feb.  | 1 | Sr. Mary Bridget’s feastday |
|      | 5 | Sr. Mary Agatha’s feastday |
|      | 11 | Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes |
| 18 | Sr. Mary Bernadette’s feastday |
| 20 | Sr. Mary Jacinta’s feastday |

| March  | 4 | Sr. Maria Kazimiera’s feastday |
| 9 | Mother Mary Dominica’s feastday |
| 19 | Feast of St. Joseph; Sr. Mary Josephine’s feastday |
| 20-22 | Vocations Weekend at St. Michael’s Convent |

Is God calling you? Come and find out during the Marian Sisters’

**Vocations Weekend**

March 20-22, 2020

This may be the most important decision of your entire life.

Jesus calls many to follow Him, but few will ever consider it. The world and its pleasures drown out His voice. What more can He do to show His love?

Meet young women who, like you, were once full of doubt — but are no longer...

* Young women who are at least juniors in high school and single women 35 or under, please contact the Vocations Directress using the information at the bottom of this page.

Attendance is free, but register at CMRI.org or call (509) 467-0986 x103.

*Anima Mariae* is the free quarterly newsletter of the CMRI Sisters.

To join our mailing list, or to send comments, questions, prayer intentions or donations, please write or email:

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