

Hope
for the
World



Hidden
with Christ
in God

3452 Willow Oak Road
Charlotte, NC 28209

www.stjosephmonastery.com



The solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady is a particular day of joy for us not only as Catholics, Franciscans but also as Americans! Our Lady venerated under the title of her Immaculate Conception has always been a special love of the Franciscan Order. And we as Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration were founded on December 8th, in Paris, in the year 1856, the same day the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX. Our Lady invoked as Immaculately conceived is also the patron of our entire country!

The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the Virgin Conception which took place at the Annunciation. The word "immaculate" is taken from two Latin words meaning "not stained." The Immaculate Conception means that at the first moment of her existence, at the moment of her conception, the Blessed Mother in the womb of her mother, St. Ann, and in virtue of the anticipated merits of the Redemption of her Son, was presented free from the stains of original sin. She was indeed redeemed, but in advance, by way of prevention. She had this privilege not for her own sake, but for her Son's sake.

There had to be some such creature as Mary— otherwise God would have found no one in whom He could fittingly have taken His human origin. Fulton J. Sheen in

writing about the Immaculate Conception speaks of the need for Mary to be "so pure that the Heavenly Father would not blush at sending His Own Son" to become incarnate in her womb.

Our Lady's perseveration from all stain of original sin is an absolutely unique privilege. Every aspect of her being shone with the splendor of that harmony with which God had originally wanted to endow all humanity.



Reflecting on Mary's Immaculate Conception is a fitting way to prepare for Christmas. It recalls to our minds Christ's dignity. God never does anything without exceeding preparation. He prepared Mary as the most suitable creature within whom Jesus Christ would dwell for nine months from the moment of His Incarnation until His birth in Bethlehem. The graces of her Immaculate Conception are directed towards the fulfillment of her divine Maternity.

May Our Blessed Mother prepare our hearts for Christmas, open to all the graces Our Lord wants to give us and also willing and generous to fulfill His desires by doing His will as she always was from the very moment of her Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be the holy, pure and immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary!

Deo Gratias Per Jesum in Sanctissimo Sacramento





Some "interior decorating"!

Sr. Mary Raphael renewing her vows in our chapel.



Enjoying time with family and friends!



Cloister Q & A

Q. What is the "bracelet" you wear as part of your Holy Habit? What does it stand for and are there prayers you say on the beads?

A: The bracelet we wear around our wrist we use to pray what is called "The Immaculate Conception Chaplet." The Chaplets consists in praying one Our Father and 4 Hail Mary's and one Glory be in honor of each Person of the Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for Their role in Our lady's Immaculate Conception. After each Hail Mary the following is prayed "Blessed be the holy, pure and immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

It is a beautiful chaplet to pray and very fitting for us to pray in light of our vocation of thanksgiving, and given the fact that our Order was founded on December 8th under the special patronage of the Immaculate Conception.

Send us your questions about our life and we will publish our answers in future issues of this newsletter.

Questions can be mailed to: 3452 Willow Oak Rd. Charlotte, NC 28209

Or e-mailed to: nuns@stjosephmonastery.com

As followers of St. Francis and St. Clare we look forward to Christmas with special eagerness and excitement! Many people know that St. Francis began the tradition of setting up the Nativity crèche, motivated by his deep love for the Incarnation and the Christ Child. But perhaps people have not read the



stories the sisters in St. Clare's Monastery relate about witnessing her holding the Divine Child Jesus. There are countless other Franciscan saints who also have had this burning love and miraculous encounter with the Child Jesus (prominent among them is St. Anthony of Padua). We pray that this same love inflame our own hearts and yours so that we may celebrate this Christmas with ever more grateful hearts!

As our Christmas gift to you,
a Novena of Masses

will be offered at
St. Joseph Monastery
for you and all your intentions.

Thank you for all
that you do for us,
and know that you are
always remembered
in our prayers!



At the end of October, we had an association meeting with some of our other monasteries. Sisters from our Cleveland, Canton and Washington communities came to be with us in Charlotte for almost a week with Capuchin friar, Fr. Frank Yacobi, our spiritual assistant for the meeting. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with our dear Sisters, our games of jenga were especially fun! At the concluding of the meetings, there was a special Mass celebrated by our good Bishop at the Cathedral in honor of our holy mother St. Clare, commemorating her during this jubilee year.



POOR CLARES

of perpetual adoration



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Christmas Novena

Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin in Bethlehem, at midnight, in piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, O my God, to hear my prayers and grant my desires, through the merits of our Savior Jesus Christ and of His Virgin Mother.

Amen

It is piously believed that those who recite this prayer, fifteen times daily, from the feast of St. Andrew until Christmas, will receive what they ask.



Prayer Requests

Send Us Your Intentions:

Sign up to receive our newsletter!

Name _____

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City/State/Zip _____

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Name corrections and address changes appreciated!