

Our Lady of the Angels Monastery

Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration
of Hanceville, Alabama

Family Newsletter

www.olamnuns.com

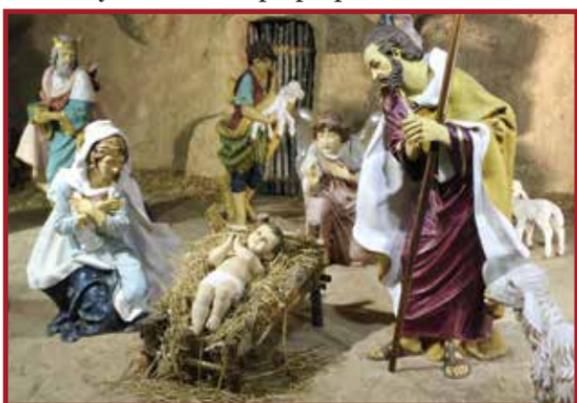
Winter 2015



Dear Family,

As we make ready for the celebration of the birth of the Divine Child in Bethlehem, let us take a few moments out of this busy, busy season to reflect on our preparations. Christmas shopping, decorations, and parties crowd our calendars, but do they crowd out our expectant awareness of the first and greatest of Christmas gifts?

Our Lady and St. Joseph prepared for the birth of the Child not by making their home ready, but by leaving it to make the trek to Bethlehem to be registered for the Emperor's census (see Luke 2). It is hard to imagine that the trip on foot and by donkey gave them much room to pack a lot of belongings. If St. Joseph, carpenter that he was, had made a cradle for the Child, he must have been forced to leave it at home because the new parents in the stable laid the Baby in a manger.



We tend to think of getting ready to welcome Christ by filling our homes as well as our calendars: decorations, a tree and gifts to go under it, special groceries for the Christmas festivities, whatever we can afford. But Mary and Joseph prepared to welcome Him with empty hands and full hearts.

They can teach us something important about what matters most at Christmas. They teach us to welcome the Child by filling our homes less and emptying our hearts of everything He would find unwelcoming. Is there an inner room in our hearts where we cherish grudges old or new? Are there dark corners where we have hidden secret sins? Is the door barred shut to some of God's other children by prejudices, judgments built on ill-founded gossip, or unkind thoughts too often rehearsed? Is the front hall cluttered with resentments, grievances, or talk the Child would not be happy to hear?

Even if we scour our inner house for Him, what else do we need to do to receive Him? He did not reject a manger filled with straw, however uncomfortable it must have been, because it had been prepared for Him with love. Can He find the same love in our own hearts? Do we receive Him into a place already prepared with prayers, good reading, thoughts that often turn His way? Or will He find a narrow, dark room where He finds Himself a stranger?

Once Christmas comes, whatever we have in the way of decorations, lights, gifts, and food is already there, and we cannot change it. The Christmas of the heart is different: if the place we have to offer Christ is stuffed with habits of thought or behavior that will not welcome Him, or if it is bare of the love which is, we can ask Him to make us truly ready for Him at any time through prayer and the sacraments. What a gift from the God who loves us!



Christmas Novena

December 16-24

Father, at Christmas, You fill our hearts with joy as we recognize in Christ the revelation of Your Love. No eye can see His glory as our God, yet now He is seen as one like us. Christ is Your Son before all ages, yet now He is born in time. He has come to lift up all things to Himself, to restore unity to creation and to lead mankind from exile into Your Heavenly Kingdom. In honor of the birth of Jesus, grant what we ask if it be Your Holy Will. Amen.



Please join us and send in your petitions! 3222 County Road 548 / Hanceville, AL 35077

Mother's Corner

"O Jesus, give me the humility to give love for Love - that as You came for me, so may I live for Thee. In my heart may You always find shelter and a warm inn where You may dwell, as in a temple. At every moment I wish to say, 'I love Thee my God, I love Thee.'"

Mother Update - "All For Jesus"

Since our last update, Mother Angelica's condition has declined, and it became necessary to put her on a feeding tube. The good part is that she now receives the necessary nutrients she needs. There were some up and down moments, and Mother has suffered a great deal these past months. She is quite a trouper. God has gifted Mother with much suffering during her life which she has always accepted, living out her motto "Totus Jesu" - All for Jesus.

Recently, a Mother Superior wrote this to her:

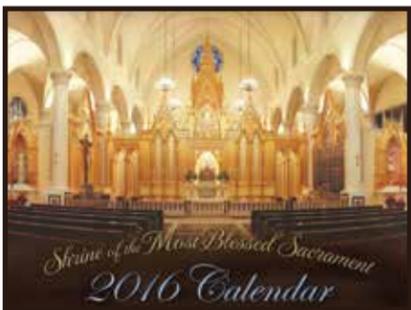
"I believe only in Heaven will you finally realize all the GOOD your loving labor for God and His people have done for us all."

Please keep Mother in your prayers as she continues to give her all to Jesus.



Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament 2016 Calendar

This calendar shows beautiful images of the Shrine, collection of pictures of the Poor Clare Nuns, displays Solemnities and Feast Days, and much more.



Gift Shop of El Niño

www.nunsgiftshop.com or 256-352-0358

Could you please help us with our Castle project?

Construction is underway on our Castle addition! The ground has been cleared, and the foundation poured. We would be grateful for any donations to help us complete this project. This addition will provide for the increased number of pilgrims who come here seeking an oasis of prayer and peace.



Christmas at the Shrine

Come experience the beauty of the Christmas Season at the Shrine!

Join us Dec. 24th at 11:25 PM for Christmas Carols followed by Midnight Mass, as we celebrate the Birth of Our Lord!

For the full Christmas schedule, visit: www.olamshrine.com.



Many Gifts...

Celebrations!

On August 22, Memorial of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sister Haley LeBlanc from the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux in Louisiana, joined the community as a postulant. Welcome, Sister Haley!

On September 8, Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Postulant Sister Sara Schliess received the Holy Habit and the new name, Sister Jeanette Marie of the Father's Merciful Love. Her family was present to rejoice with the community at the investment of our new novice.

What a gift they are from a God who loves us!



We are growing!

We are pleased to announce that Our Lady of the Angels Monastery is taking a new step toward a thriving future. By mandate of the Holy See, St. Joseph Adoration Monastery in Charlotte, NC, is merging with Our Lady of the Angels Monastery under the leadership of Mother Dolores Marie, PCPA, who is presently the Abbess of St. Joseph Monastery.

The two monasteries belong to the same order of Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, but that is not all we have in common. Mother Dolores Marie and three other solemnly professed nuns of the Charlotte community started out as members of Our Lady of the Angels here in Alabama. Altogether, the arrival of the six nuns from Charlotte increases the membership of the newly merged community in Hanceville to 10 solemnly professed nuns, including Mother Angelica, Abbess Emerita since 2009, and 6 Sisters in formation. What a gift from the God who loves us!