First Fruits

“The women applaud, for in another time it was a woman who was the imprudent occasion of sin, now too it is a Woman who brings in the First Fruits of salvation.” (St. Andrew of Crete)

Sancta Dei Genitrix

Holy Mother of God

Son of God and Son of Mary

Both God the Father and the Blessed Virgin Mary profer the same truth: Ego hodie genui te. “Today I have begotten You.” (cf. PSALMS 2:7; HEBREWS 1:5; 5:5)
We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generous support of our growing community!

About the above image: The medallion with Madonna and the Christ Child is framed by a Crown of Thorns, marked by the many instruments of His Passion, hanging on the Cross, the same Cross the Child is pointing to with His right hand. The caption above Mary’s head: “Est Mater mea” highlights that she is not only the Mother of the Savior, but “my Mother.” Christ is destined to be the Savior of the world [cf. Genesis 3:15].

The lower half of the engraving shows the Nativity scene. The message of the angel to the shepherds and to us, is: “Today a Savior is born to you.”

Most gratefully in the Divine Infant,

Mother Mary Augustinus O. Praem.

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Norbertine confere Fr. Alphonsus Mary of St. Michael’s Abbey, on spiritual maternity and on holiness and the integration of all the aspects of our human nature: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical.
According to tradition Norbert [c. 1080-1134] and his companions knelt down before the Newborn Savior and laid their profession document at the feet of the Child Jesus [at Christmas 1121]. In the abbey church of Oosterhofen [Germany], now a minor basilica, there is, in the choir area in front of the present people’s altar and in front of the former communion rail, a star embedded in the marble floor. At solemn profession, the candidate is said to have prostrated there on the star when the Litany of the Saints was sung before the profession. The star embedded in the floor [photo at lower right] is exactly under the Christmas ceiling fresco [photo right]. The prostration takes place in memory of and as a sign of the kenosis and the profession with the promise of obedience signifies approaching the obedient, humbled Jesus. But in this Christmas event it is a matter of God’s Incarnation, which was attained not without sacrifice, obedience, and self-divesting. The life of the monastery is nothing other than a human life dedicated to God first in becoming man through total dedication and alignment with the Lord on the way to God, on the way to becoming one with God. Here, the life of the monastery is closely linked with the Incarnation and interpreted by the Christmas mystery.

On the ceiling fresco in the Asam church of Oosterhofen-Altenmarkt [above], Norbert, dressed as a canon [see arrow and description at above right], is kneeling before the Newborn Savior with outstretched arms. On the open book that lies before him next to his crosier and biretta you can read: “VOTA MEA psal...”. Angels who are singing and making music frame the entire manger scene. In this way Norbert’s handing over of himself on Christmas is emphasized pictorially. With the vows, the professed hands himself over to the “Church of Oosterhofen”, as he places the profession document on the altar. Here in the fresco, the manger becomes the altar, which symbolizes Christ Himself. The profession is the handing over to Christ, “offerens trado meipsus”, it is immersion into the framework of the life of the Lord Who Himself lived poor, chaste and obedient. The profession is the juridical, mutual and lifelong acceptance and binding of candidate and community, at the same time the complete transfer to the life form of “vita consecrata”, which measures up to Christ and comprises a life in “conversion of my life, life in community, above all poverty, consecrated celibacy and obedience.” The canonical profession, which frequently was described as a second baptism, insofar as we have been baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection under the aspect of the Christmas event, bring this kenotic content especially into focus.

The root of Jesse has blossomed; the star of Jacob has risen; a Virgin has brought forth the Savior.

Our God, we praise You.  
[St. Leo the Great]
May God reward you for helping to build this first American foundation of Norbertine canonesses!

Welcome to our gift shop. Our hours are:
10:00-11:30am & 2:30-5:00pm every day.
Our inventory includes religious goods & books; home-made biscotti, jam, honey, & apothecary items; aprons, baptismal baby blankets; & dried flower, calligraphy & other greeting cards.
Ask about our gift certificates & prayer enrollment cards.

To find out more about our cloistered contemplative Norbertine way of life, to make prayer requests, to find out about our vestments, gift shop inventory and hours, or Bethany Guest House, you are welcome to phone (661) 823-1066 or use our email accounts: pray_req@cybersurfers.net or MotherMaryA@aol.com (If you do not receive an acknowledgement of your message, please resend it or call.)

Also, please kindly assist us in updating our address and email database by sending us your current information!
Please check www.norbertinesisters.org for the downloadable version of this newsletter in color.
Thank you to all who make this newsletter possible! References are available upon request.

The Norbertine Sister’s Monastery Gift Shop

- BETHANY GUEST HOUSE -

Sharing with you the Norbertine charism of prayer and hospitality

For parents visiting from afar, for those discerning religious vocations, for anyone seeking a time of more intense prayer and solitude...it’s for you. (day visits and overnight stays are possible)

Call now to schedule your visit and for details (weather, dress, etc.): (661) 823-1066

Exploring Artisan Cheese-making

Thank you for your continued support of our seasonal wreath fundraiser—our best season ever!

If you are interested in purchasing our vestments made by the sisters (BELOW), please contact us at: (661) 823-1066 or e-mail at MotherMaryA@aol.com

Some Pre-Construction Work (Pray that all may be in place for “ground-breaking” in the spring!) numerus prayers were said for a safe landing of our modular trailer Novitiate building.

Numerous prayers were said for a safe landing of our modular trailer Novitiate building.

[The engravings and commentary of “Sancta Dei Genitrix” and “Mater Salvatoris” (slightly adapted here for this newsletter) are from the University of Dayton’s Marian Library.]

Thank you CAL POLY Newman Center work party volunteers!

THE NORBERTINE CANONRY OF THE BETHLEHEM PRIORY OF ST. JOSEPH
17831 Water Canyon Road
Tehachapi, CA 93561-7686 USA

10-25-2014

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