

**The
STARR COUNTY**

December 2007 – June 2008

Benedictines

Journal of the Benedictine Monastery of the Good Shepherd
Rio Grande City, TX 78582





KSGS 99.9 LPFM

Go, tell the Good News—99.9!

As Catholic Christians it has always been part of our calling to evangelize. Never did we realize that we would do it in the wonderful way of radio!

In 2001 Michael Swartz, of Harlingen, encouraged us to apply for an LPFM radio station. With hesitation, but with much faith and excitement, we did so.

We then also contacted Othal Brand Jr., owner of a tower in Rio Grande City, to see if he would help us with the placement of a radio antenna, if the day came that the FCC would grant us a license. Mr. Brand was accommodating to our need back then, and his “YES!” still stands today!

Seven years later our plans are becoming a reality. On April 7, 2008, we received a message on our website from Mike Dorner, editor of the Catholic Radio Update Newsletter. He said, “Congratulations, Sisters, on your new LPFM station construction permit.”

We were in awe about this announcement! And to add to our awe, Mike Dorner contacted Jim Enger from the Chicago area who is a Catholic broadcast engineer regarding our engineering needs. Mr. Enger has helped many owners of Catholic radio stations in Illinois and Iowa. He has agreed to help us also, and so he is adding Rio Grande City to his list of ventures to spread the Good News.

The station, which should be up and running in about 18 months, will be able to broadcast for about a five mile radius. The call letters are KSGS-LP. The SGS stands for Sisters of Good Shepherd. The frequency is 99.9.

We will be sure to make an announcement when 99.9 is on the air!

For all of these super happenings we give thanks to Jesus, our Good News and his wonderful servants!



**Tuesdays Are Now:
Sisters’ Private Day**

We will be reserving Tuesdays as a day off for internal affairs for our monastic community. This will allow for on-going formation studies, in-house meetings, desert prayer days, perhaps a private picnic. We have set apart one weekday at the encouragement of some who know our life commitments and needs. We trust we will be refreshed through our Tuesdays alone. You are welcome to leave a message on our voice mail. Fr. Jerry Felion, our chaplain, has graciously agreed that he would be available to speak with you and/or visit you, should you so desire on Tuesdays, or any other day too, of course. His number is 486-2773. The adoration chapel will remain open as usual.



On the WEB

We will notify you of monastery events through The Diocese of Brownsville and our own websites: www.cdob.org and www.starrcountybenedictines.org

Retreats Held Here

- +Private retreats.
- +ACTS Teams, men and women
- +Lay Carmelites annual retreat
- +Youth retreats preparing for the Sacraments
- +Lenten retreat for the Religious of the Brownsville Diocese.
(We were blessed to have Bishop Pena with us)
- +Roma CDA retreat
- +Post-abortion retreat
- + Annual Retreat for the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy Sisters from Nigeria



Guests From Afar

+Prioress, Sister Lenore, Sisters Mary Jean, Kathleen, Joan and Cecilia came for extended visits from our founding monastery in Crookston, Minnesota.

+Fr. Duane Pribula from Crookston, our diocese of origin.

+Jeanette and Richard Eklund, and Gert and Chuck Solum, family members of Sisters Luella and Fran who came to work and pray with us.

OUR PRAYER SCHEDULE (Remembering you in a special way)			
6:00	Vigils	9:30	Mass
6:45	Lectio Divina in the Adoration Chapel	11:45	Noon Praise
7:30	Lauds in the Adoration Chapel	3:00	None and Divine Mercy
8- 9:30	Quiet time	5:30	Vespers
		8:00	Closing night prayer

*Sunday – slight changes in schedule, 3 p.m.
Fountain of Life Chapel for all*

The first long-awaited retreat for those burdened by abortion, their own or another's, was held here at the monastery.

Mary Ann Parks, director of Project Rachel for the San Antonio Archdiocese, was able to be our mentor for this two-day retreat. Phyllis Young, Sr. Nancy Boushey and Fr. Larry Wiesler assisted her.

It was a blessing to bring into the light those matters hidden for years. New freedom was experienced by all.

Please call the monastery at (956-486-2680) if you know of someone who could benefit from these retreats.

We will do all that we can to help men and women who suffer from the effects of abortion to regain new hope and peace.



Retreat Team

See what abortion is and what the mass media resists showing viewers:

www.priestsforlife.org

***“Truly you have formed my inmost being:
you knit me in my mother’s womb.”
Psalm 139:13***



Fountain of Life Adoration Chapel



People from the area continue to come during the day and into the night, for time with Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament. They are finding peace and refreshment for their lives.

“This divine heart (of Jesus) wishes to be absolute master of yours...It has loved people so much that it utterly spent itself on the tree of the cross to prove its love, and continues to do so in the Blessed Sacrament. -St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Dia de los Reyes

An afternoon open house, music, pork sandwiches, and a silent auction were the highlights of the **Tres Reyes** celebration on January 6th. We thank the development council and oblates who did the organizing with such zeal.

Trail Ride

About thirty men and several women on horseback participated in an eight-mile ride into the monastery, which included going to Presa Placida, our pond. After the ride, the riders enjoyed a wonderful meal. They gave a generous donation to the monastery. Rolando Mancha was the organizer behind it all.

Fr. Larry Wieseler

We opened the doors for another priest from our diocese of origin in Minnesota. Fr. Larry worked in Venezuela in very economically deprived areas for a total of nineteen years. He stayed with Fr. Jerry

for two months and is temporarily in Minnesota to assist at a parish. We look forward to welcoming him back.

Indianapolis students return

In May we welcomed Holy Cross Parish students, (11th year) and in June, St. Roch Parish students returned for their annual visit. (10th year) Both groups joyfully went into the Mexico border towns, offering gifts, painting houses and clearing land for a new chapel.

Paisano Festival

This is the second year in which we had a day full of music, food and game booths for the people of the area. We are grateful to our development council, oblates and friends who did the work.

Looking for a good book?

Maybe this will be of interest to you. *Gross National Happiness - Why happiness matters for America- and How We Can Get More of It.*

“Arthur C. Brooks has a reputation as one of the nation’s premier students of American society. He offers an authoritative account of the social bases of happiness. It is a fun read, and should put a smile on the face of even the most unhappy among us.” -Bill Donohue

Montecassino Renewal Center

The final touches are being made and soon we will be ready for retreats, conferences, and days of reflection.



First Benedictine Pilgrimage considered, “*Fantastic*”!

The roads to Torreon and Parras, Mexico were covered with joy and spiritual renewal. We, Sisters Luella and Nancy, and thirty friends, half of which were Benedictine oblates, spent three days (June 7-9) in beautiful and inspiring places.

In Torreon, we toured, “The New Jerusalem,” an amazing replica of the Holy Land. After the Eucharist there, we visited special chapels. We were able to relish the magnificent statue of Cristo de Las Noas. Our second stop in Torreon was to the **Pan de Vida Benedictine Monastery** where we participated in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We had an inspiring sharing with the Sisters and their Benedictine Oblates. We all would love to live closer to each other so we could visit more often.



Winery

In Parras, we toured the oldest winery in the Americas. Events included wine tasting, purchasing of their famous wines, and participating in a very educational tour of the winery.



San Lorenzo Chapel

Most special was to celebrate Eucharist in the winery’s own old chapel of San Lorenzo. We used the Mass wine that they make for world-wide distribution for that liturgy. In the city of Parras we were able to shop for Mexico’s famous candies made from locally grown pecans.

We were blessed to have our Padre Lorenzo as the celebrant for the Masses throughout the pilgrimage.



Here are some reflections from our pilgrims:

“The pilgrimage was fantastic...so much peace and serenity and so much love.” -Shirley Boerger (Mission)

“Lucy and I have traveled to many places during our 35 years together, and this trip was the most relaxing of all. - Al Fernandez (Weslaco)

“The pilgrimage has made me more mindful of our identity, role and activities as Christian pilgrims

on our life journey: daily rosary, daily Mass, morning praise and reflections. -Cipriano Cardenas (Brownsville)

“I have felt very blessed to have organized this pilgrimage and to have traveled with all the wonderful people who went!” –Irma Gomez (McAllen)

“My most memorable moment was standing at the foot of the huge statue of Cristo de las Noas...and was reminded that we are all prodigal sons and daughters who need His presence in our lives.- Sally Penafiel (Harlingen)

“My experience was that of the love of God in the beauty and wonders of nature. Most of all, an awareness and appreciation has deepened for me regarding Christ’s presence in my brothers and sisters and how He bonded us together in His love.- Enedelia Garcia (Pharr)

To help us reach our pilgrimage goal of transformation we prayed the Liturgy of the Hours, Rosary, and Divine Mercy Chaplet. During the trip we also viewed several movies – *Bella* and *Guadalupe*. Both movies were indeed created from the hearts of our beloved Mexican neighbors. We also had personal inspiring reflections and, of course, some good jokes.

We give thanks to Irma and Arturo Gomez, who are on our development council, for coordinating the many logistics of this event. Plans for the 2009 pilgrimage are already in the makings. It will be lengthier and further into Mexico! Again it will be a kind of a “pilgrimage-retreat on wheels.”

We give thanks to **Viva Mexico Tour Company** for being so helpful in making this an extraordinary experience.



Most of all, may **God be praised!**

Vocations Coming Along

We share with you a follow-up from last November’s journal regarding the status of vocations for the Monastery. The Scripture quote from Galatians 6:9 is a message for us all to continue with the work and prayer that the Lord has called each of us to do. **“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”** Also, we are called to **“walk by faith and not by sight.”** 2 Cor. 5:7

It was in 2007 that Rosa Maria, from near Monterrey, MX became very interested in coming here to further discern her vocation. She has done all that she can do to submit the documents required for her to receive a visa. Yet, she has received no word from the U.S. officials who deal with this matter. Our response is “Jesus, we trust in You.”

Since November, we have also been blessed with another woman, Cristina Ramos, from Kyle, Texas, who has shown great interest in our monastic life here at Good Shepherd Monastery. Here is a little message from her: *“I didn’t know what I was searching for in a community until I found it here at the Monastery. Yes, it is a Holy Place, but more importantly for me, I found my Jesus here...I experienced a feeling of coming home, and can’t wait for the day that I finally do call it Home.”*

God-willing you will soon be able to meet her, if you didn’t get to meet her at our Paisano Festival, where she pitched in to help make it the great day that it was.

A Benedictine Living Experience for Single Women at Monastery

Special announcement: An opportunity for single, Catholic women ages 19-40 to join the Sisters in their community life of prayer and work in Starr County. Take time to reflect on the call of Pope Benedict XVI’s “to bring to all a living witness of the love and mercy of God” through life as a religious. No charge or obligation for the experience. When: July 18-20, 2008. Mail: P.O. Box 1501 Rio Grande City, TX 78582

It is necessary to call to confirm your participation. (956) 486-2680 **WELCOME!**



Nigerian Sisters on Retreat



Trail Ride



Paisano Festival



Indianapolis Students



Dia de Los Reyes



Benedictine Sisters of the
Good Shepherd
P.O. Box 1501
Rio Grande City, TX 78582
(956) 486-2680
E-mail: sanbenito@granderiver.net

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 42
Rio Grande City, TX
78582

Return Service Requested

In Closing

We conclude this six-month journal by expressing our gratitude for your being in our life! New guests are in awe as to what has happened here and also inquire how all of this happened. The basic answer is that the Good Shepherd loves all of us and has worked in the hearts of so very many people to build and maintain our monastic life here. It IS God's work. He is our banker, our planner and has done an amazing work here in our midst. Thank you for responding to His call through your prayer support, your financial contributions, and your visits to the Fountain of Life Chapel. Thanks too for sharing your talents, participating in events that we sponsored and extending your warm friendship in Christ Jesus! What next? Continue our prayer and work In the near future we will put asphalt on our road, build a one-room hermitage, set up the LP radio station and offer hospitality at the new Montecassino Renewal Center.

May God bless and keep you!



Visit us on the web:
www.starrcountybenedictines.org