

Benedictines

Journal of the Benedictine Monastery of the Good Shepherd

Rio Grande City, TX 78582

**THE LORD IS OUR SHEPHERD
THERE IS NOTHING WE SHALL
WANT!**

Our great God has done it again!
We will soon have a chaplain back at the
monastery.

Father Larry Wieseler will be with us in
January to care for the sacramental needs of
the monastery and those of our guests.
Father Larry had been in Venezuela over a
span of 17 years and had many years of
priestly ministry in the Crookston Diocese in
Minnesota, so he brings a rich history of
experiences. He will take up residence in our
Casita Blessed Marmion. Welcome, Father
Larry!



MONASTERY BLESSED

Our Bishop Raymundo Pena, from
the Brownsville Diocese, was here on
November 23rd for a beautiful
celebration to bless the monastery and
its auxiliary renewal center and casitas.

The monastery's development council
and oblates were the main hosts of the
events. As the Bishop blessed the
various buildings, the guests were lead
in a sung Litany of Saints in order to
call on our sisters and brothers in
heaven to be part of the journey of all
who visit, make retreats and live at the
monastery. It was a day made it
Heaven!



MONTECASSINO RENEWAL CENTER COMPLETED

Montecassino is now ready for retreats, conferences, prayer meetings and other gatherings. Herbey Pena, our faithful employee, worked all summer fine-tuning the remaining projects: cabinets were finished; mirrors and dispensers were hung; and paint touched up. The beautiful new interior decorating was headed up by James Rodriguez from ROFA Architects.

Bobby Garcia, LFD, donated leather furniture, kitchen appliances and mattresses. Rosa Valencia donated many beautiful styles of tables and sofas.

We are grateful for all who have given of their time, talent and treasure to make the building of Montecassino a reality. And as St. Benedict exhorts us “...every time you begin a good work, you must pray to him most earnestly to bring it to perfection.” We praise our Lord Jesus Christ for Montecassino’s completion.

UPCOMING EVENTS & RETREATS

Benedictine Life Experiences

Dec. 27-Jan. 1

January 23

March 6-8

April 9-12

Jan. 4th Tres Reyes celebration
Silent Auction, Open House

April 18th 3rd Paisano Festival

March 6-9 Post-Abortion Retreat

Retreats in the Making:

For those suffering from abuse; Women’s and Couples

Please let us know your preferences – we will contact you. 956-486-2680

ACTS RETREATS

ACTS is an acronym that stands for Adoration, Community, Theology and Service. These four themes that are the focus of the activities that brings participants together in a four-day retreat with inspiration from the Holy Spirit and the love and sacrifice of many individual team-members. Retreats are available separately to men, women, and teens, and are life-changing in many instances. Words cannot explain what a person encounters at one of these retreats, so we invite you to seek one out and experience it for yourself!



The Team from a recent Men’s ACTS Retreat

When Hurricane Dolly damaged the retreat facilities that many parishes had reserved for their retreats, ACTS found its way to our facilities. Since August, we have hosted 95 teens making a teen retreat; we also hosted a men’s retreat in September and December, and a women’s ACTS in November.

Our facilities are also being used for other types of retreats, prayer meetings and conferences. How grateful we are that we can be a prayer support for those who come here to seek the Lord!

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.” – ACTS 2:42

VOCATIONS

We continue to hold our Benedictine Life Experience weekends for women who are interested in learning about and experiencing our way of life. Most want to continue discerning with us in order to know the path to which God is calling them. For those who are unable to come on the weekends we “tailor make” the experience to fit their schedule. Cristina Ramos, who was planning on entering in October, had major surgery and needs time to recuperate and to sell her home. We ask that you continue to pray for vocations with us for “The harvest is ready; the laborers are few!” Might you have a vocation? Call us 956-486-2680.



MONASTIC CHAPEL

Now our little monastic chapel has a greater dignity about it! The pews that were in use in the mission church when we lived in El Sauz were replaced by new and larger pews when the church was enlarged. We bought seven of the original ones for our chapel which now replaces the chairs that we once had.

Also, thanks to Dollie Olson, we have a unique new altar and lectern. They are made out of mesquite wood found in the Rio Grande River. Now there's mesquite inside with a history and the beautiful ones outside that wave in the wind glorifying our Lord with us.

“Let us come before him, giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord.” – Psalm 95

Thank you for being a part of our lives in 2008!



Youth Guadalupanas



Pro-Life Rally



After Cardinal DiNardo's Visit



Mary's Garden



**Oblate Josie De La Rosa
with Cardinal DiNardo**

SISTERS HAPPENINGS

Federation Meeting

From July 3-9, 2008 Sister Fran attended a meeting of the Federation of St. Gertrude in Beech Grove, Indiana. The theme of the meeting was "Embracing the Universe with Hope." The topic of the keynote address was, "*The Mystic-Prophetic Dimension of Monastic Life*," given by Sister Christine Vladimiroff.

The interaction among the Sisters from the sixteen Benedictine monasteries that comprise the federation was very life-giving, encouraging and hopeful.

Sister Joella Kidwell of the Immaculate Conception Monastery in Ferdinand, Indiana was elected as president of the federation to serve for a term of six years.

Serra Club Convention

Sister Nancy was a guest speaker for the Region X Serra (Vocation) Club Convention in McAllen, Texas on October 24-26. The theme of the convention was, "*Harvesting the Lord's Vineyard*." Sister Nancy shared her vocation story and the history of the Benedictine Monastery of the Good Shepherd.

Holy Land Pilgrimage

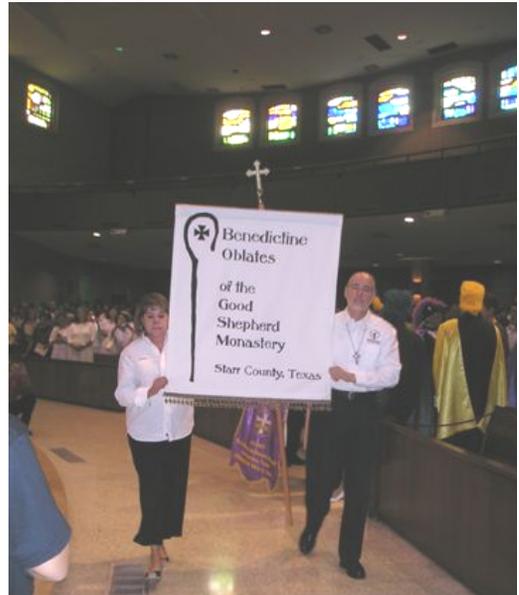
From November 5-16, 2008 Sister Nancy was blessed with a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and also had a bonus day in Paris on the return flight. She participated with 42 pilgrims from throughout the diocese; and Sister speaks of the experience "...that will impact the rest of my life as I continue to ponder the Scriptures and seek to live them out in my daily life."



The Visitation - Holy Land

OBLATE NEWS

Our Benedictine Oblates, lay members from our monastery, were privileged to participate in a diocesan event at the Basilica of San Juan on August 16th. Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, from the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese, was present as guest celebrant and homilist for the celebration of the Eucharist.



Several oblates walked in procession, carrying the oblate banner along with the other Lay Ecclesial groups.



After Mass, a luncheon gathering was held in the rectory courtyard and all enjoyed visiting with the cardinal, taking pictures and receiving a special blessing from him.

MONASTIC LIBRARY



Our Sister Laurian Lasha, from our founding monastery in Crookston, Minnesota was with us to organize our library of 1,000 books. She is a professional librarian and shared her gifts to the max for the good of our community and for incoming vocations. Thank you, for your joyful, persevering presence, Sister Laurian. We miss you!

TUESDAYS

In our last Starr County Benedictine Journal we shared how we are setting aside Tuesdays for the internal needs of the monastery.

It is a day when we will not be receiving guests and phone messages may be recorded.



“Be still and know that I am God.” – Psalm 46