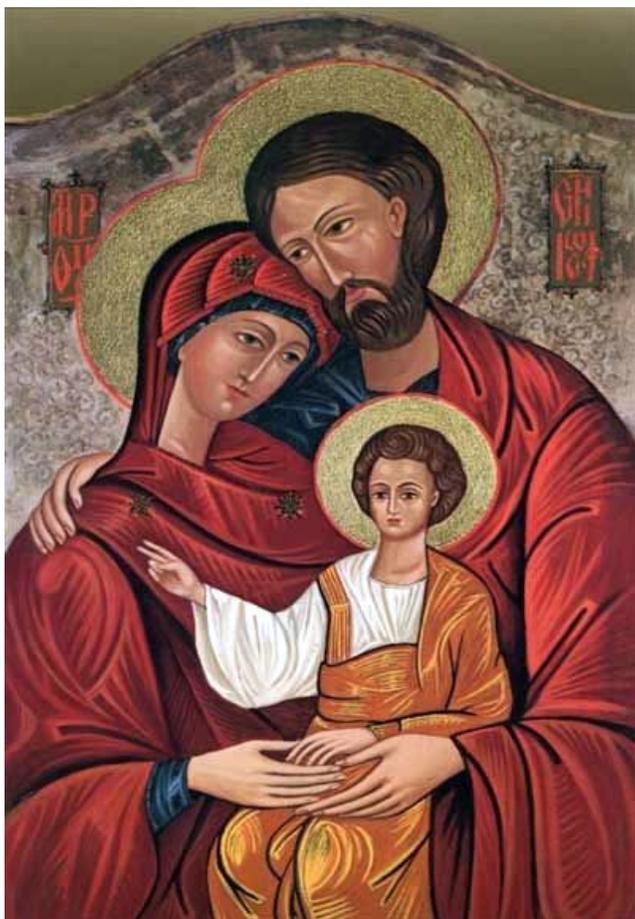


# Benedictines



*Journal of the Benedictine Monastery of the Good Shepherd*

*P.O. Box 1501  
Rio Grande City, TX 78582*



*Dear Friends in Christ,*

During this Christmas Season we pray that you will receive the choicest blessings from our Lord Jesus now and in the coming New Year of 2014.

We thank our loving God for his providential care for us. We also thank each and every one of you for your supportive prayers, warm friendship, and generous in-kind and monetary donations.

**We are also grateful that we have one-third of the funds to build the 1.8 million- dollar, much-needed, additional retreat facility.**

Our monastic life of prayer and work in community at our monastery affords us the opportunity to offer hospitality to all who come to visit, pray, make retreats and/or seek guidance in some aspect of their lives. As you will note in this journal, we have not been wanting in visitors and retreatants throughout the year. WE ARE SO BLESSED, for we see each person as Christ!

As the world's problems continue to mount, let us continue to place all of our trust in Emmanuel, God-With-Us, who envelops us with His love and mercy day in and day

out! May the Christ Child find room in all our hearts this Christmas season and may we joyfully and lovingly make Him present to our neighbor at every opportunity every day of the year!

With love and gratitude for your consistent support, we will continue to pray for you daily. We are having a Mass offered for you the second Thursday of each month at San Pablo Parish in La Puerta, where Fr. Eddie Villa is pastor and where we will be likewise participating. Know that our monastic community is remembering you as we celebrate the Eucharist and as we work and pray together throughout the day.. We encourage you to use the envelope to present any petitions that you may have. Have a most blessed Christmas season and 2014!

*Gratefully and prayerfully,*

*Your Sisters Fran, Luella and Nancy*





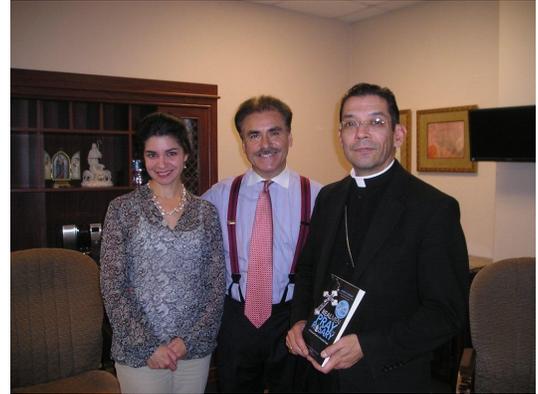
### VICTORY FOR WOMEN AND LIFE!

Our monastery was represented at an historical event at our state capitol, Austin, TX July 9-10<sup>th</sup>. For several days there was an encounter of people standing for life and another group wanting to keep and protect abortion conditions as they stood. The tension was so high that several hundred State Troopers were present to see that all participants would be safe. It was seen how respectful the pro-lifers at the rally remained. HB2 was the law that was passed: it protects babies after the fifth month of pregnancy from being killed, and it ensures that any procedure the woman undergoes is performed in clean, sanitary and safe conditions, by capable personnel. There are too many stories of horrific conditions, reckless doctors, and women getting sick and dying after treatment at such places. Abortion centers will have to abide by state and federal standards, placing women's health above the political advocacy of the lucrative abortion industry. We commend our Governor Perry for leading for life once again! We are also proud of our local House Representative (D) Ryan Guillen for voting FOR LIFE! He is a friend of ours from Rio Grande City. The Catholic Church leaders did something very profound; they led a Eucharistic procession around the capitol and during the blessing with the Blessed Sacrament, the priest held up the monstrance for a long time as it faced the front doors of the capitol. We thank the Lord for this mighty step forward. Also, on January 19<sup>th</sup> we participated in the March for LIFE in McAllen. Join us for next year's (2014) march on January 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Joseph the Worker. Let us push forward with love and trust to the finish line so that ALL PEOPLE will be treated with dignity, from conception to natural death!



### CALL TO PRAYER

It was an exciting moment in May when our Bishop Daniel Flores was presented with the book *Real Men Pray the Rosary* by David and Valerie Calvillo. The Lord used the monastery and renewal center here as the site of its inspiration when David Calvillo made an ACTS retreat. A second fruit of his ACTS retreat was the launching of a very popular FACEBOOK page now used world-wide. We tell our guests that we pray for them before, during and after each retreat! We want the Holy Spirit to make us all NEW! Quote of our Blessed Mother to St. Juan Diego and to all of us: "*Am I not here, I who am your Mother? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Let nothing else worry or disturb you.*" As we pray the rosary may we know that our Lord and our Mother are there with us in our joys and in our sorrows.



### BENEDICTINE OBLATE RETREAT

The annual Benedictine oblate retreat took place on November 1-3, 2013 and was a great success. We were privileged to welcome once again Fr. Jude Brady, a gifted presenter. His inspirational and insightful talks were very well received. Fr. Jude is a monk at the St. Vincent's Archabbey in Latrobe, PA and is presently working with abbeys in their renewal processes and is also the pastor of St. Benedict's Parish in Carrolltown, PA. The theme for this year's retreat was *hospitality*, a key quality of Benedictines. Fr. Jude reminded the oblates of the importance of hospitality in Benedictine spirituality. We were presented with the



challenge to be open and willing to receive our neighbor as we would receive our Lord himself, beginning with those in our own families who feel unwanted and unloved and reaching out to all we meet in life. Monsignor Don Krebs guided the oblates during the *Liturgy of the Hours*, which was a most beautiful time for praise and reflection. The Liturgy of the Eucharist was celebrated with great devotion and joy. A group who had been in formation for two years made their oblation and the oblates present renewed their oblation. The overall organization of the retreat was outstanding. It was indeed a time for spiritual growth and community.



**Pajie Cuevas, our live-in discerner!**



**HAVE YOU WONDERED WHAT HAPPENS HERE BESIDES OUR DAILY PRAYER AND WORK?**

**These are some of our group guests.**

- Benedictine Oblate Deanery Meetings
- Ambassadors for Christ (Young Adult)
- Donna TX, Ministry and Prayer Groups
- Women's Retreat
- Healing Retreat
- Lay Carmelites Retreat
- Our Lady of Mercy Confirmation Retreat
- Couples Retreat
- Brownsville Hospital Catholic Volunteers
- Chrim Mass in San Juan
- 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Paisano Festival
- Opera and Oldies with a meal at the monastery
- Rachel's Vineyard (post-abortion healing)
- First Communion Retreat
- Diocesan Men's Vocation Retreat
- Legion of Mary
- Multiple ACTS retreats
- Benedictine Oblate Gatherings
- Franciscan men's community monthly renewal
- OMI community gatherings
- Regional Lay Franciscan Retreat, Dallas southward
- Women leaders in colonias in Donna area
- Diocesan Catholic Chaplains
- Divine Will Retreat
- Benedictine Oblate Retreat
- Multiple Ora et Labora Discernment Weekends
- St. Roch's Parish Youth and Young Adults, Indianapolis, Indiana



**SEVENTH ANNUAL PAISANO FESTIVAL**

"The annual Paisano (roadrunner) Festival 2013 was a great success. The Benedictine Sisters welcomed many visitors on that sunshiny, breezy April afternoon. It was a time for family fun, delicious food, and Christian community. What a wonderful opportunity during this Easter season to welcome so many friends and neighbors to Good Shepherd Monastery, to share a good time, to enjoy good food, to



listen to good music and even to make some time during the fun-filled day to stop by and visit our Lord in the Fountain of Life adoration chapel. The fund-raising efforts were accomplished due to the Sisters' ability to inspire and attract so many wonderful collaborators in this annual effort. There were numerous details to be worked out and in the end there were enough people for everything that needed to be done, for the glory of God." **Ana Maria Gonzalez**

"I loved being a part of the 2013 Paisano Festival, my first but definitely not my last! Starting the day with Mass was a blessing, followed by the joy of meeting wonderful people! God bless the Sisters and the Monastery!" **Dr. Marty Garza**

"The Paisano Festival gets better every year. It is a fun opportunity to mix with old and new friends. While the Benedictine Oblates and other volunteers put a lot of effort into helping with booths and other activities, the work done is a good kind of work. Raising money for the new retreat center is well worth the effort." **Becky Gonzalez**



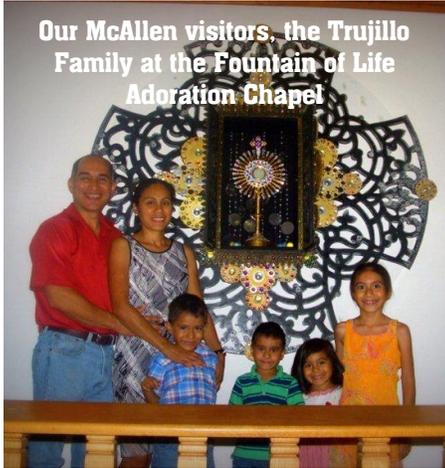
"Let us ring in this holy season and the New Year with joyful songs!"





**Our KSGS Radio Suite where volunteers Roel Smith and Oscar Cepeda spend donated time here several times a week.**

**The upstairs suite is donated by Billy and Rosario Pope! For these four people we give thanks to the Lord!**



**Our McAllen visitors, the Trujillo Family at the Fountain of Life Adoration Chapel**



**“This crucifix is a gift from two of our Benedictine Oblates who made a pilgrimage to Europe. One of their sites that they visited was the Benedictine Abbey of Montecassino in Italy. It is a very historical abbey for Benedictines. This cross was purchased at the abbey’s gift shop.”**



**Oblate Retreat**



**Prayer time outside on a beautiful day**



**Mary's Merry Maids (Many are absent)**



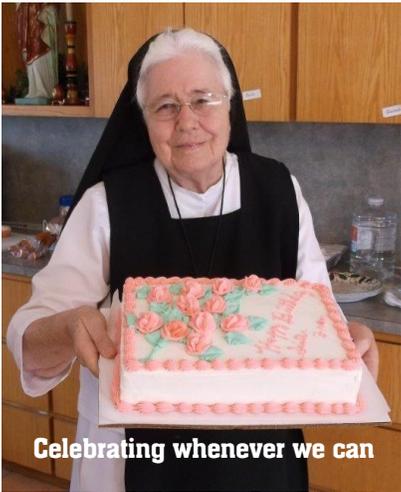
**Resting in the quiet during the**



**Brownsville women's silent retreat**



**Mary's Merry Maids praying Compline with Sr. Luella**



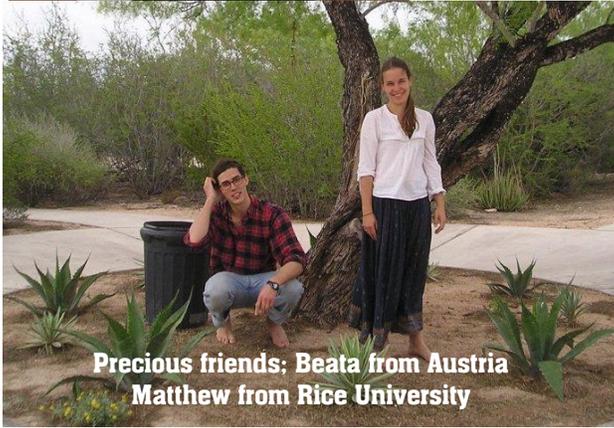
**Celebrating whenever we can**



**Benedictine Oblates are serenaded by Tony Urbina and Beto Escobedo**



**Paisano Festival**



**Precious friends: Beata from Austria  
Matthew from Rice University**



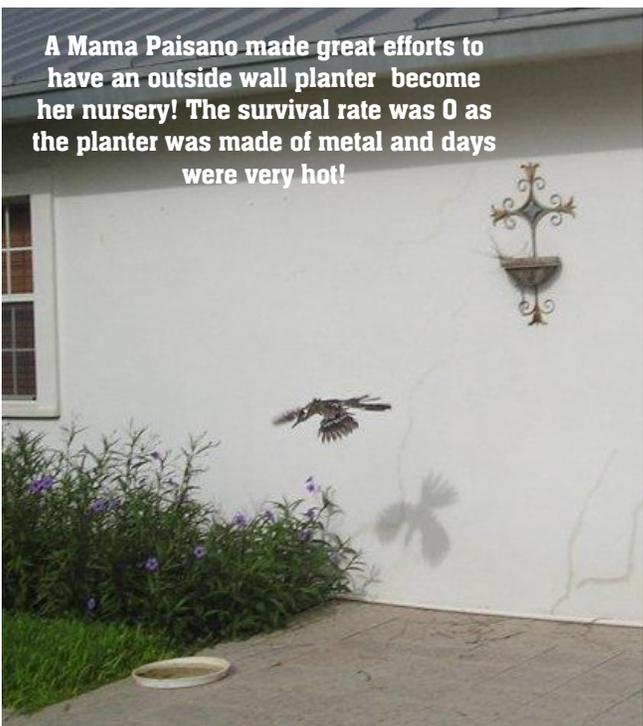
**Women's Retreat**



**Benedictine Oblates**



**Brightening up a family's life by painting their home in a colonia**



**A Mama Paisano made great efforts to have an outside wall planter become her nursery! The survival rate was 0 as the planter was made of metal and days were very hot!**



**Indianapolis youth mission team.  
14th year visit with us!**

## HORARIUM

6:00 Lauds  
6:45 Breakfast  
7:30 Adoration, Lectio Divina  
8:15 Communal Rosary  
12:00 Noon meal  
12:45 Noon prayer  
3:00 Mid-Day prayer and Divine Mercy Chaplet  
5:00 Vespers  
8:00 Compline

DAILY MASS TIMES VARIES IN LOCAL PARISHES

### **"Come aside...and rest awhile!" Mark 6:31**

We try to set aside Tuesdays for our personal and in-house needs so we generally do not have guests on that day. It is helpful if you give us a call before coming in case we are not available for you at the time you would like to be here.

956-486-2680 or [sanbenito@granderiver.net](mailto:sanbenito@granderiver.net)

## PLEASE JOIN US IN 2014

Monthly discernment days for single women

April 26<sup>th</sup> for our 8<sup>th</sup> *Paisano (Roadrunner) Festival*

July 27<sup>th</sup> for our Good Shepherd Night,  
Music and a Meal at the Monastery

October 19<sup>th</sup> A benefit concert with Eric Genuis and  
instrumental ensemble

## THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU!

It has been one grand experience to have twenty-six years of the joy of your friendship, prayers and support in myriad ways.

Our daily prayers are with you,  
*Affectionately as we celebrate the  
birth of our KING!*  
*Your Sisters,  
Fran, Luella and Nancy*



**Benedictine Sisters  
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