Starr County Benedictines

Monastery of the Good Shepherd
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October 1, 2026

Our dearest friends,
PAX be with you

We send you heartfelt greetings from the Monastery of the Good Shepherd! As we look back upon another year, our hearts overflow with gratitude to God for His abundant blessings and for the gift of each of you. We pray that you and your families are well and that the Lord continues to surround your homes with His peace, grace, and loving care.



With grateful hearts, we continue striving to live our Benedictine calling of *Ora et Labora—Prayer and Work*—offering our daily lives and prayers for the salvation of souls and for your intentions. We are especially thankful for our resident priest, Father Henryk, whose faithful ministry blesses and sustains us in countless ways. He offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation to visitors and pilgrims and celebrates Holy Mass for us each day. By request and donation, Father offers Gregorian Masses—a series of 30 consecutive Masses—which may be arranged for your beloved deceased. We are profoundly grateful for his loving service and for all the ways God continues to provide for our monastery through him.

We received word that our dear Sister Fran was photographed by a fellow pilgrim, Gail Johnson (who is Sister Luella's niece) this last year and her image won a blue ribbon at the Hamilton County fair in Webster City, Iowa. While we are overjoyed with the blue-ribbon award, we are ever so grateful for our real trophy, Sister Fran with whom we have lived together for forty-one years.!



On Thursday, September 24, 2026 our monastery was host to a valley wide collaboration of Catholics of all ages who pledged to help make 75,000 rosaries to be distributed at the beatification event of Archbishop Fulton Sheen. **Our wonderful rosary makers made 1700 rosaries**! We enjoyed being a part of the World Mission Rosary Crusade!

Each gathering at the Monastery is an invitation to **pray, gather, grow, and belong**. From our Grief Retreat and Oblate Retreat to an uplifting evening of song and praise, Running to Bethlehem- 5K, Rosary Makers, and weekly Movie Nights, we cherish every opportunity to bring people together. It is our joy to be a place of connection—where friendships are formed, faith is strengthened, and together we grow in knowing and sharing God's love.





We are especially joyful to welcome eighteen new first-year Oblate Candidates in January, 2027.

In addition, fifteen candidates who have completed their two-year formation will be making their final oblation at our annual retreat on November 13–15, 2026. Our monastery is deeply grateful for our many faithful Oblates, whose generous gift of time, talent, prayer, and service helps support our mission and keeps so much of our monastery life and facilities running each and every day.

This year we hosted many faith-filled retreats such as youth revival camps, women and men ACTS retreats, Rachel's Vineyard retreat and Staff Planning.

Our Benedictine Oblates sponsored the following retreats: Grief, Benedictine Silence, Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Spiritual Journaling. New this year--we began to host Homeschooling Information Sessions. These Sessions are for parents or anyone interested in conducting homeschooling.





In celebration of America's 250 birthday and to join the nation's bishop's consecration of our nation on the fourth of July, we co-hosted together with the Catholic Daughters of Rio Grande City a patriotic rosary for our country. In addition, for the remainder of this year will have a banner posted at our entry gate celebrating the great United States of America on her semi quincentennial anniversary.

We are filled with much gratitude to our donors for the construction of our new **San Jose Renewal Center.**

Over the years, we have long felt the need for a forty to fifty group space for gatherings.

This new building will fill that gap, providing a welcoming home for mid-sized meetings, conferences, days of reflection, and retreats. We look forward to opening its doors this coming year.



This year**, seven hermitages** received a beautiful fresh coat of paint—they look brand new! Our hermitages are available for weekend stays, personal retreats, and short getaways, offering guests a peaceful place to step away from the busyness of everyday life and enjoy the quiet beauty of the monastery.



We have also created an Amazon Wish List of regular practical items most needed for daily life and ministry at the monastery. If you are interested in ordering and gifting any items, we would be most grateful. **Below is the link:**

https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/2BCT4RMO32VVO?ref_=cm_sw_r_cp_ud_ggr-subnav-share_ZTKOJB89V9BM3D3YHWIC

As our monastery continues to grow and serve God's people during these challenging times, **we humbly ask you to prayerfully consider supporting our mission.** Every prayer, gift, and act of generosity—large or small—helps us continue to welcome others, maintain our sacred grounds and facilities, and faithfully carry out the work God has entrusted to us.

Most especially, **we would like to pray for you and your family.** All benefactors' prayer intentions will be included in **our Novena of Masses on January 1 to 9, 2027**. Enclosed are prayer intention and donation cards along with a return envelope. If you prefer, attached is our Zelle QR code. Please use memo/note on Zelle indicating your donation is for the 2026 Annual Campaign.

Zelle

With humble and grateful hearts, we thank you for walking beside us and ask God to bless you abundantly for your kindness. We Sisters lovingly remember you in our daily prayers. Keep us in your prayers as well. **May the coming Thanksgiving, Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day and Christmas seasons be very grace filled for you and your family!**

Peace and prayers,
Your Good Shepherd's Handmaidens,

Sisters Frances and Nancy