

The Santa Rita Newsletter

Newsletter of the Trappist Cistercian Nuns of Sonoita, Arizona

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December 2013

Dear Friends,

This newsletter comes to you with our warm wishes for a most blessed Advent and Christmas Season for you and all your loved ones, along with wishes for a blessed Hanukkah for all our Jewish friends. May you all experience the tender love of God in your heart and in your daily life, and may you be a channel of that love, life, and peace to others. May the New Year 2014 bring our country and our world closer to justice and peace for all peoples!

Here at our monastery the big event of 2013 was the Solemn Monastic Profession of our Sister Catherine Lee on June 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Sr. Cathy came to us from Korea in November 2008. She had belonged to a group of Korean missionary Sisters for over twenty years when God called her to embark upon a new path, a journey into the contemplative life of the desert. After several years of formation and experience in our monastery, Sr. Cathy was accepted for solemn profession. Her mother, Maria, eldest sister, Cecilia, and her brother-in-law traveled from Korea to be with Sr. Cathy for this important step in her life. Also attending the solemn Mass were Fr. Ambrosius and three women from the Korean parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea in Tucson, and many of our monastery friends. *See inside for photos of that joyful occasion.* We are grateful to God for His gift of Sr. Cathy to our community. May she have a long, happy and fruitful life in our midst!



Our most recent community photo was taken in early September. From right to left: Sisters Jacqui and Esther, Fr. Robert our summer time chaplain, Sister Clare, Mother Victoria, Sisters Miriam and Kate, our newly solemn professed Sr. Cathy, Sisters Rita, Pam, and Margarita.

Sr. Cathy's Solemn Monastic Profession, June 8, 2013



From left to right across both pages: Abbot David Altmann of Holy Trinity Abbey in Utah presided over the profession Mass. In the first photo above, Mother Victoria invites Sister Cathy to make her solemn profession while Fr. Ambrosius looks on. After pronouncing her solemn vows, Sr. Cathy signs her profession schedule on the altar. On the next page: Mother Victoria assisted by Sr. Rita, clothes Sr. Cathy in the Cistercian cowl and black veil; and a radiant Sr. Cathy poses with her mother, sister, and brother-in-law.

Other Monastery Happenings

www.santaritaabbey.org: Launched in January 2013, our website is completely redesigned and expanded, featuring Sister Miriam's popular Abbey Journal, Altar Breads, Our Community, Retreats, Vocations and lots of photos. We hope to make artistic cards available for web orders in 2014. Look us up!

U.S. Regional Meeting, Feb 20-26: The next General Chapter of our Order will be held in September 2014; in preparation, our international Order is meeting in regional conferences. The 17 Trappist Cistercian monasteries in the U.S. held their regional meeting at New Melleray Abbey. Iowa in February is not for the faint-hearted, but Mother Victoria and Sr. Pam (our community delegate) braved the cold and snow. Dom Eamon Fitzgerald, the Abbot General of our Order, his secretary, Fr. Thomas, and Dom Bede of Abbaye N.-D. du Calvaire in Canada also attended, and added their experience and insight to the fruitful discussion.

Chaplains: Every year we enjoy the services of a team of rotating chaplains. Fr. Bernard celebrated New Year 2013 with us before returning to New Clairvaux Abbey in CA. He has been our Advent and Christmas chaplain every year

since 2000. He is no longer able to travel, and we are missing him. We are so grateful to Fr. Bernard and to his community for his many years of generous service to us. * Our annual Holy Week & Easter chaplain, Fr. Matthew of St. Joseph's Abbey in MA, was here for a month in March and April. Fr. Robert of Assumption Abbey in MO, our summertime chaplain, was here for July and August. Fr. Brendan, the newly retired abbot of New Melleray, came for a month in the fall, and gave us our annual week-long community retreat. This Christmas & New Year we are looking forward to the services of a monk from St. Benedict's Abbey in Snowmass, CO. * When we are without a chaplain, we attend Mass at the local parish of St. Theresa's in Patagonia and Our Lady of the Angels Mission in Sonoita, where we are warmly welcomed by Fr. Bill and the parishioners.

Our Retreat House had to be closed for several months in 2012, but has been open throughout 2013. It is an important part of our contemplative mission to offer this quiet and beautiful facility to all who seek time apart for solitude and prayer. Due to rising costs, we now suggest a donation of \$40.00 per night for each guest. Retreat house reservations may be made with Sr.



Margarita via phone (520-455-5595) or email (sracommtty@gmail.com).

Cistercian Altar Breads: Eight of our Sisters and two laywomen employees work five days a week to bake, cut and package our 100% whole wheat breads for use at Masses in over 300 parishes across the US. Altar breads can be ordered for your parish by phone (520-455-0481 or the toll free number 888-878-1622), by email (cistercianab@gmail.com) or by using the order form on our website (www.santaritaabbey.org).

Rosemont Copper: The permitting process continues for the highly controversial open-pit copper mine being planned by Rosemont Copper, a subsidiary of the Canadian investment firm, Augusta Resources. This mine would be a disaster on several levels for southern Arizona. We Sisters are doing whatever we can from within our contemplative vocation: constant prayer above all! In June Rosemont opposition activist Frances Causey brought leaders from Earthworks, Save the Scenic Santa Ritas (SSSRs), and the Mountain Empire Action Alliance to meet with us. In July photographer Brian Powell took photos of our monastery and Sisters for the multimedia exhibit "Lens on the Land" which goes on tour in 2014; see www.lensontheland.com for more information. Tucson's KGUN 9 TV sent a news team to interview Mother Victoria for a "9 On Your Side" feature which aired on August 9. In October, Morris Farr, vice-president of SSSRs, gave us an update

on the status of Rosemont Copper's permitting process (far from finished) and the many levels of opposition currently in operation, renewing our hope that our monastery and the wider area around us can be saved from destruction.

Wish List: One of the realities of having a forty-year-old monastery is that its maintenance costs increase. 2013 was an expensive year as several unforeseen problems arose with our water pumps, sewage pipes, and in-house water lines. And now our trusty yellow golf cart (used to ferry Sisters and supplies to the retreat house and back) has reached the end of its functioning life. If anyone has a gently used golf cart they'd like to donate to us, we'd be most grateful! Contact Mother Victoria by phone (520-455-5595) or email (sracommtty@gmail.com.)

God bless you, one and all!

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