



DOMINICAN MONASTERY OF ST. JUDE
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CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2017

Come, Thou Long Expected Savior! Advent season has begun, and with it our many devotions helping us unite in spirit to prepare for the birth of our Savior. He is the Prince of Peace, and how we beg our Lord to bestow His mercies and graces on our troubled world, so much in need of Our Savior's presence in its midst.



"Once upon a time...." Don't you love a good story? We certainly do! Thanks to the monastic custom of hearing spiritual reading during our meals in the Refectory, we listen frequently to lives of the saints and other books on the spiritual life. Recently we enjoyed the life of St. Vincent de Paul. Nothing was too much for this man on fire with the love of Christ and His Mystical Body, the Church. He preached missions in long-neglected country parishes, directed retreats for priests and the laity, educated seminarians for the priesthood, advised the queen on matters of religious reform, ministered to the sick, poor, and imprisoned, and established orphanages. He also founded the Congregation of the Missions (Vincentian Fathers), and the Daughters of Charity. St. Vincent's story inspires us to imitate his boundless dedication to following Christ's heroic charity, with the hope of sharing in His glory. No story ever had a better ending. It can truly be said of St. Vincent and the other saints that "they all lived happily ever after."

Each spring the wild muscadine vines adorning our woods send out clusters of little white buds that portend an abundant crop. This year, regular showers throughout spring and summer brought us a profusion of grapes, round, ripe and aromatic, hanging tantalizingly in the trees 20 or 30 feet in the air. Armed with a long extension pruning pole and drop cloths, we brought down the grapes like a sweet summer rain. Many hands helped with making the luscious jam from this fruit. Blessed be God, who has brought grapes and good work to fulfillment.



This past fall could be designated the "Autumn of the Wasp." Vast numbers of wasps swarmed in the Infirmary. We were quite unprepared for the buzzing multitude and even more puzzled because their entry was unpredictable. The wasps continued to enter the room, zoom through the air, and expire due to wasp poison, no matter how we taped up every possible entry point. Finally, a Sister spotted the entry way – the metal conduit on the power pole to our main electrical cabinet. When we opened up the cabinet, what horror to find the box full of wasp nests! Mystery solved; wasps eliminated; no one stung.

Sister Baker was getting her plans together to make the cake for a grand celebration. Another Sister looking over her plans remarked, "I don't think you need to make a tier cake for the big occasion." Sister's reply was: "Oh, no, Sister, I'm not going to make a *tear* cake – I plan to make it with *joy*."



Our Archdiocese of Mobile joined in a historic day of prayer on October 13th, in honor of the last public appearance of Fatima. Our Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi asked for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on that day and for all to take a moment to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. This day of prayer was for our world, nation, state, communities, families, loved ones and ourselves; and we were reminded to pray that God's will be done in our lives. It was Archbishop's hope that this "day of archdiocesan observance honor the Immaculate Heart of Mary by honoring her Son, Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of sinners and the hope of salvation;" and that this day would "remind us of our need to pray, to repent, to do penance and to renew our resolve to live in the dignity of the children of God." We joined in wholeheartedly.

Please know that we enfold you and your intentions in our prayers. May our gracious Infant King grant you many blessings and peace of heart this Christmas.

Mother Mary of the Precious Blood, O.P.

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