



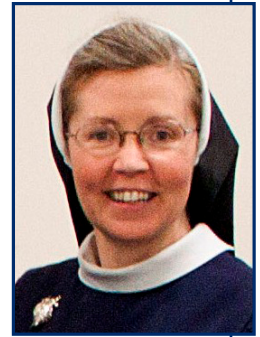
# Rejoice!

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Newsletter

Advent 2018

*Dear Family and Friends of IHM,*

*“Glory to God in the highest; and on earth PEACE  
to men of good will.” Luke 2:14*



With the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations it may seem a little insensitive to be speaking of peace at one of the most hectic times of the year. And yet, Peace is Christ's gift to us, now during the Christmas Season, and always. Scripture tells us that Christ is our peace, the origin of peace in all our relationships beginning with our Heavenly Father. Peace, the fruit of prayer, overflows into our relationships with others, instilling in us Christ's peace which in turn we can extend to others.

It must have been glorious to witness the heavenly host of angels singing “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will.” But did the shepherds pause to consider the meaning of the angelic salutation, “peace to men of good will”? Being of good will as a prerequisite for attaining peace should give us pause, if not provocation to ponder the meaning of “good will”.

Fr. Jacques Philippe writes, “A necessary condition for interior peace is goodwill. It is the stable and constant disposition of a person who is determined more than anything to love God, who desires sincerely to prefer in all circumstances the will of God to his own, who does not wish to consciously refuse anything to God.”

Perhaps we need to look at our willingness to surrender everything to God, to allow God to do anything He wants with us: to hold nothing back and to trust Him with our life. We could take the Blessed Virgin Mary, the humble handmaid of the Lord as our model. Not knowing what the future entailed, she gave herself completely into the hands of God: “Let it be done to me”! May our Christmas gift to the Infant Christ be one of self-gift: I give you my life, it is entirely Yours!

May we all beg for the courage and the grace to make this great offering of love to the Father, holding nothing back in our gift of self as we abandon our lives to God.

Merry Christmas!

In His Peace,

*Mother Mary Magdalene O'HM*

Mother Mary Magdalene O'Halloran, IHM  
General Superior

# Sister Maria Kolbe's Profession



**1:** Standing before Mother Mary Magdalene, Sr. Maria Kolbe publicly requests permission to profess the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience according to the Constitutions of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita. Sr. Maria Kolbe's profession took place on Saturday, October 27, 2018 in the Our Lady of Sorrows chapel in the Novitiate House in Colwich.



**2:** With her hands placed in Mother's hands, Sr. Maria Kolbe professes her vows while Sr. Marie Bernadette and Sr. Cecilia Marie act as witnesses. By professing vows, a Sister gives her life to Jesus, her Bridegroom. The vows are a triple expression of a single "yes!" in response to God's call.

**3:** Mother Mary Magdalene and Sr. Marie Bernadette place the blue scapular on Sr. Maria Kolbe. This scapular is a sign of Mary's constant, maternal protection from evil. Pinned to the scapular is the badge of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which reminds the wearer to strive to imitate Our Lady's virtues, specifically her humility, purity, and obedience.

**4:** Mother Mary Magdalene and Sr. Marie Bernadette replace Sr. Maria Kolbe's white veil with a black veil. The white veil of the novice symbolizes newness, whereas the black veil is a sign of consecration, of being set apart for God alone.

**5:** Sr. Maria Kolbe's black veil is adjusted. In the background are Fr. Jim Weldon, the celebrant of the Mass, and Fr. Michael Peltzer.

**6:** Joseph and Carolyn Schaeffer, parents of Sr. Maria Kolbe, bring up the offertory gifts of bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. Fr. Jim Weldon receives the gifts as Fr. Kenneth Schuckman, a concelebrant, looks on.

**7:** Sr. Maria Kolbe kneels before the altar as the Sisters sing "Totus Tuus." When translated, the words mean, "I am all yours, my Mother, my Queen." The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are consecrated to Jesus through Mary and seek to imitate Mary in all they do.

**8:** Originally from De Pere, Wisconsin, Sr. Maria Kolbe is the third of four children. Some relatives and friends were able to travel to be present at the profession. Pictured here are (bottom row) Mr. Joseph Schaeffer, Sr. Maria Kolbe, and Mrs. Carolyn Schaeffer, and Sr. Maria Kolbe's brothers (top row) Luke and Josh.



# *Sister Maria Kolbe's Profession*



# Sister Mary Monica's Perpetual Profession

## His Forever

At the hour of Divine Mercy on November 24, 2018, at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, a very joyful Sister Mary Monica Augustine, IHM professed perpetual vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience as a Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita.

Bishop Carl Kemme was the main celebrant for the Mass of religious profession. During his homily, Bishop Kemme spoke of how attending a religious profession is like "receiving a Catholic booster shot," where one is reminded of the truth, goodness, and beauty of our Catholic faith, and where one can be encouraged by the example of a young woman who has dedicated herself entirely to God.

During the ceremony, Sr. Mary Monica was solemnly consecrated to God. The solemn prayer for consecration, prayed by Bishop Kemme, contains the line, "Strengthened by the vows of consecration may she always be one with you in loving fidelity to Christ, her only Bridegroom." The ring that Sr. Mary Monica received after the consecration prayer signifies this spousal relationship with Christ.

"Our Lord can never be outdone in generosity. I experienced this on the day of my perpetual profession

of vows. He gave me so many spiritual graces and natural gifts, including the beautiful Church, the music, the flowers, and the fall weather, which all pointed to the reality of God's constant love for His bride. Throughout the Mass, it was as though He placed a joy in all who were present and there was a profound sense of Christian happiness, something that must be similar to what the saints and angels experience eternally in Heaven," Sr. Mary Monica said.

Sr. Mary Monica, originally from Colby, Kansas, is the daughter of Luther and Donna Augustine. Many family and friends were able to attend the ceremony, including three priests from the Diocese of Salina, and five priests and several seminarians from the Diocese of Wichita.

A dinner was served afterward in the parish hall, where the joy and celebration of religious life continued. Family and friends were able to greet Sr. Mary Monica and extend their congratulations.

Sr. Mary Monica will continue teaching at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Wichita, where she will strive to live out the words of the final blessing: "God inspires all holy desires and brings them to fulfillment. May He protect you always by His grace so that you may fulfill the duties of your vocation with a faithful heart."



# Sister Mary Monica's Perpetual Profession



**1:** All 28 Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary line up outside of St. Mark the Evangelist Church as they prepare to process in to the church for Sr. Mary Monica's perpetual profession of vows.

**2:** Sr. Mary Monica leads the procession into the church. The Sisters carried candles, which is symbolic of the virgins in Scripture who wait for their Heavenly Bridegroom with lamps alight.

**3:** Mother Mary Magdalene receives Sr. Mary Monica's perpetual vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience while Sr. Marie Bernadette and Sr. Cecilia Marie act as witnesses.

**4:** Sr. Mary Monica signs her profession of vows while Mother Mary Magdalene looks on. The vows are signed on the altar, and the sheet of paper is then placed under the corporal during the consecration of the Body and Blood of Christ, signifying that the oblation of the Sister's life is made in union with the Holy Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross, re-presented on the altar during each Mass.

**5:** Bishop Carl A. Kemme, the main celebrant, extends his hands over Sr. Mary Monica as he prays the prayer of solemn consecration.

**6:** Mother Mary Magdalene places the ring on Sr. Mary Monica's hand. The ring is worn on the ring finger of the right hand, which is the custom in Spain where the community was originally founded.



# Let's Be Saints Together!

## JEAN-PIERRE DE CAUSSADE

Although the book *Abandonment to Divine Providence* is well-known throughout the world, the now-famous books had humble beginnings. No image of the author exists; no one knows what he looks like, yet his spirituality has influenced countless numbers of people for three centuries.

The book is a compilation of letters and conferences given by Jean-Pierre de Caussade, a simple Jesuit priest who lived in France from 1675-1751.

Around 1729 de Caussade became the spiritual director of a group of Visitation nuns in Nancy, France. The spirituality of the founders of the Visitation order, St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane Frances de Chantal, had an influence on de Caussade. The themes of "holy indifference" and "detachment" are prominent in de Sales' writings, and the same themes by the names of "abandonment" and "duty of the present moment" are found in de Caussade's writing.

De Caussade was also influenced by the writings of St. John of the Cross who had recently been canonized.

There is also well-founded speculation that de Caussade would have influenced a French family of saints who lived in the following century: the Martins (specifically St. Louis and St. Therese). De Caussade's work would have been popular in France at the time, so it is likely that devout Catholics such as the Martins would have read it. St. Therese's "Little Way" of confidence and trust in our Heavenly Father's goodness and love is similar to the principles found in *Abandonment to Divine Providence*.

Although profound, de Caussade's spirituality is not new. Firmly rooted in the Commandments and the Gospel, it is similar to what nearly every saint has lived.

According to the translator of the book, what is original about de Caussade is that he said we need do no extraordinary works, show no unique devotion, behave in no uncommon manner. All we must do is our Christian duty continually. De Caussade wrote this because he first lived it and wants others to share his peace and joy. If we pay attention to him, we very well may!

## A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS.

About fifteen years ago, a book series by this name became very popular. In it, two teenage orphans and their baby sister experience, well, a series of unfortunate events. As the book series progresses, they come to discover how every person they meet, every place to which they are sent, is interconnected and *planned*, designed by their loving parents before they died, leading to their happiness, a deeper love for one another, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Why did readers—children and adults alike—devour these books...all *thirteen* of them? I would argue that it is because one of the fundamental longings of the human heart, a deep desire, is to know that life is not a string of arbitrary events.

This is one of the main points in Jean-Pierre de Caussade's spiritual classic, *Abandonment to Divine Providence*.

## SIMPLY PUT, ABANDONMENT TO GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS HAVING A CHILDLIKE LOVE AND TRUST IN GOD OUR FATHER.

Holiness consists of complete loyalty to God's will, either actively (by obeying the laws of God and His Church and fulfilling the duties of our state in life) or passively (by lovingly accepting all that God sends us at each moment of the day.) In this way, holiness is very simple, though not always easy, and is possible for all. People have recourse to too many other means to seek holiness and do not use this simple, straightforward way.

Our life consists of countless trifling actions, yet God is satisfied with them, for doing them as they should be done is the part we have to play in our striving for perfection.

"All our moments are made productive by our obedience to the Will of God, which reveals itself in a thousand different ways, each of which successively becomes our immediate duty" (de Caussade). His will is revealed a thousand ways, and He can use anything. He uses things we don't expect, and

# Let's Be Saints Together!

doesn't use things that we *do* expect. How many times this has happened to me...I am often sure that *this* time of prayer, *this* obligation, or *this* situation will be filled with God's presence or He will answer my prayer or question. Then, it is totally dry, and He uses an entirely unexpected situation or encounter with someone to show me His presence.

AND AS DE CAUSSADE  
ASKS, "IF WE ARE NOT  
SATISFIED WITH WHAT  
GOD CHOOSES, WHAT  
ELSE WILL PLEASE US?"

A striking line from de Caussade states, "Do you for one moment imagine you will find peace by resisting the Almighty?" My thoughts went back to a situation I experienced in September regarding college. I was so attached to my own will, trying to figure out how to present the situation in my own light, worried and discouraged. I *knew* that I was being disobedient and not docile; I knew that I felt miserable and had no peace at all, so I finally made the willed choice. It took a day or two of consistently correcting my thoughts to be in line with God's will, and there were a few temptations that arose over the next few weeks, but after that I have had so much peace and joy about the opportunity. And how true it is when de Caussade says, "It is only right that if we are discontented with what God offers us every moment, we should be punished by finding nothing else that will content us."

My worry about the fact that I would have an additional two or three semesters of college was calmed when I read, "All the time spent in fulfilling these duties is most precious and profitable to us, as we can be sure that we are obeying God's holy will." I saw this as a setback. "However, we would be ashamed if we knew what setbacks, upheavals, disturbances and annoyances really are. Therefore, complaints about them are no less than blasphemies." Besides, "the more naturally repugnant something is, the more meritorious it is." And looking at



# Let's Be Saints Together!

Jesus' life, He spent thirty years in humble obedience in preparation for His public ministry, a ministry that He did not begin until He was thirty and which lasted only three years. Therefore, religious formation, spiritual formation in obedience and docility to God's will is the best apostolic preparation, much more important than secular studies, however necessary they may be.

HOW FREEING IT  
IS TO NOT MERELY  
WISH OR HOPE BUT  
KNOW THAT  
EVERY DETAIL OF  
OUR LIVES IS  
WITHIN THE  
PROVIDENCE OF  
OUR TENDER,  
MERCIFUL FATHER  
WHO LOVES US  
AND CARES FOR US.

Observing the increase in agnosticism and the secularization of society, in a country founded by Deists (who do not believe that God takes an interest in the details of an individual's life), it is no surprise that there is now an increase in anxiety disorders. According to the National Health Service in 2018 three percent of adults in the U.S. have generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), which involves unreasonable anxiety, and *one in five* adults have an anxiety disorder.

However, as I was studying the topics of stress and anxiety in my psychology class, I began to realize that nearly every anxiety problem can be solved, or at least greatly helped, by abandonment to Divine Providence. When we perceive a potential stressor, we must examine it. If it is perceived as being potentially harmful, we then ask ourselves if we have the resources to cope. If we renew our trust in God and recall the truth of the blessing of abandonment to His providence, we will know that we have adequate resources to cope with the stress, and we will not be worried or anxious.

According to de Caussade, our attitude should be one of fearlessness. Novelists are able to successfully lead their heroes out of the most dangerous situations in unexpected, fascinating ways, and God is infinitely greater than even the best novelists. God leads us through perils, even through hell itself, with more strange and lovely stories than theirs (de Caussade).

I naturally struggle with obedience, so I frequently remind myself, especially when I find it difficult to obey, that I have *never* regretted being obedient. I ask, 'Have I *ever* regretted doing God's will?' No. 'Has *anything* bad ever come out of being obedient?' No. 'Am I *always* the happiest when I obey God's will?' Yes. Then why on earth would I not want to obey this time?!

As de Caussade says, "Because of it [obedience], all my life seems lived in Heaven; I can know no greater bliss." And I am beginning to understand. It is also striking that "everything guides you to perfection except what is sinful or *not a duty*" (de Caussade). This shows the primacy of obedience, how one should always put acts of obedience or duty above anything of one's own devising, however small.

Obedience is one aspect of the active part of abandonment; another necessary aspect is generosity. Abandonment involves the most heroic generosity (de Caussade). A few weeks ago, every time I began to do my homework, something unexpected would happen. We had to clean out the fountain after night prayer, I was asked to clean out an LG unit, to cook meals, to run various errands and perform various favors for Sisters. I discovered that if I wanted to be called upon to do something, all I needed to do was open my textbook! When frustration crept in, I reminded myself of the line in our vows, "I give myself unreservedly to my community." And as de Caussade says, "This state of abandonment is a gift of our entire being to God for Him to use as He pleases." When we are generous, we "find the fullness of divine life, not offered drop by drop, but engulfing it instantly" (de Caussade).

## *Let's Be Saints Together!*

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# EVERY EVENT OF OUR LIFE IS MOLDING US INTO GOD'S MASTERPIECE.

De Caussade frequently uses the analogy of the sculptor and his work upon the stone with his chisel. Every blow makes the stone feel as if it is being destroyed. However, it must experience these blows in order to become beautifully formed. Elsewhere he says, "By the same stroke God kills and gives life, but the keener the pains of death, the more intensely does life flow into the soul." On the natural level, one can think of electricity. Coming into contact with too powerful a flow of electricity can kill someone. But it is also used to restart the beating of someone's heart.

Difficulties, darkness are a necessary part of the spiritual life. God seems to blind the abandoned soul, but, in fact, He is guiding it very safely. The more God seems to take from the abandoned soul, the more He is really giving it. As He strips us of natural things, He showers us with supernatural gifts. "Our very fear and sense of desolation are verses in this hymn of darkness. We delight in singing every syllable of them, knowing that all ends with the 'Glory be to the Father'" (De Caussade).

Being abandoned to the loving providence of our Heavenly Father, who knows our needs and cares for us, is a necessary part of being a Christian so that we can come to recognize how God uses every moment of our lives so that they may be, when looking at the whole of our lives, a series of *fortunate* events.



# Remember the Church

## A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

BY BRONWEN LEWIS



One popular devotion among Catholics is to imagine that each time a Hail Mary is prayed, a rose is placed in Our Lady's crown. Each Hail Mary, each rosary prayed, Mary's crown of roses becomes fuller, more beautiful and more fragrant. This is, in fact, the origin of the word "rosary". In his book "The Secret of the Rosary," the French Mariologist, Saint Louis De Montfort, explains the symbolic meaning behind each of the fifty "roses" of the rosary. The book was written over 300 years ago and is still a magnificent read today. Roses are my favorite flower ... they are so beautiful and fragrant. The fuller the rose—the more petals on it—the more its beauty and fragrance. I am always reminded of Mary when I think of roses or enjoy them in my garden. One of the many delights of strolling through the grounds of the Motherhouse property is to go

beyond the natural beauty of God's creation, and to be taken in by a more spiritual fragrance—the heavenly fragrance of religious life and the beauty of God's providence in religious life. Although every religious community has its own story to tell, the journey of "our Sisters" is one wrought with courage, perseverance and holiness, as well as beauty and fragrance.

In this month of December, I am reminded of how Juan Diego was guided to Mount Tepeyac to meet Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was Our Lady's perseverance and grace that gave Juan Diego the courage to be Her messenger, which led to the conversion of millions. When Juan Diego asked for a "sign" what did Our Lady show him? She instructed him to climb up a hill at Mount Tepeyac—yes, in December, in the freezing cold! When he arrived at the top of the hill, an overpowering fragrance of roses guided him to the spot where She instructed him to pick the flowers in bloom.

If a Hail Mary can be thought of as a rose on Mary's crown, imagine what a vocation to the Sisters, a new bride of Christ, could mean to Our Lady ... perhaps a billion roses or more? She must view a vocation to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary as an even more beautiful, perfect, and fragrant gift of God's wonder. The Sisters are now 28 and growing. The more vocations the Sisters reap, the fuller their devotion to Mary will be...the more perfect their devotion and adoration of God. As their community grows, each of us will be able to delight in a greater and greater sense of divine fragrance.



## Remember the Church

I write these articles in *Rejoice* to remind us all of the Sisters' ongoing needs: the financial resources necessary for their day-to-day activity, and those resources necessary for their continued growth—a short-term, immediate component and a long-term component, if you will. The Sisters rely upon charity—your charity—to provide these resources for them. Your financial gifts are the Hail Mary's, the rose petals, that allow the Sisters to thrive and grow and do all of the wonderful things they do each day. Your gifts help take the financial burdens and worries off the Sisters' shoulders, allowing them to focus on teaching our children and grandchildren, and reaching out for more vocations. Please continue your support of the Sisters in any way that you can. Annual gifts, whether small or large, are the most important financial support you can give to the Sisters, especially for their educational needs. But please keep at the forefront of your mind the knowledge that the day is rapidly approaching when the Sisters will need a Motherhouse. The Motherhouse will complement the Novitiate House, providing room for growth and many other necessary facilities.

Building the Motherhouse will be expensive, requiring many gifts that will, like seeds, eventually bear great fruit. If you are one of those individuals or families enjoying a significant financial gain at this time (or anytime in the future), please remember the Sisters as

generously as you can. Or, if you plan your charitable gifts through your IRA, Will, or Trust, please consider providing for the Sisters in this manner. Estate gifts, small and large, are so very important to the Sisters ... and so easy for you to do. Gifts of appreciated securities, land and other assets can be easily converted into cash for the new Motherhouse.

I am so blessed to be around the Sisters often. Over the past few years, I have learned so very much from them about our Catholic faith, and I have found spiritual fortification merely by being in their presence. I wish all of you could walk in my shoes, experiencing the joy that these remarkable women radiate every day. The children in the schools where they teach, the priests for whom they pray, and you and I, members of the Catholic Church, are so very blessed to have the Sisters in our midst. I love them so much.

May you continue to enjoy and add to the fragrance and beauty of the roses of Mary's crown. This Christmas season pray for an increase in vocations for the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita, so that, by the witness to God and His divine plan, religious life may thrive once again.



*Thank you so very much!  
Please keep praying!*

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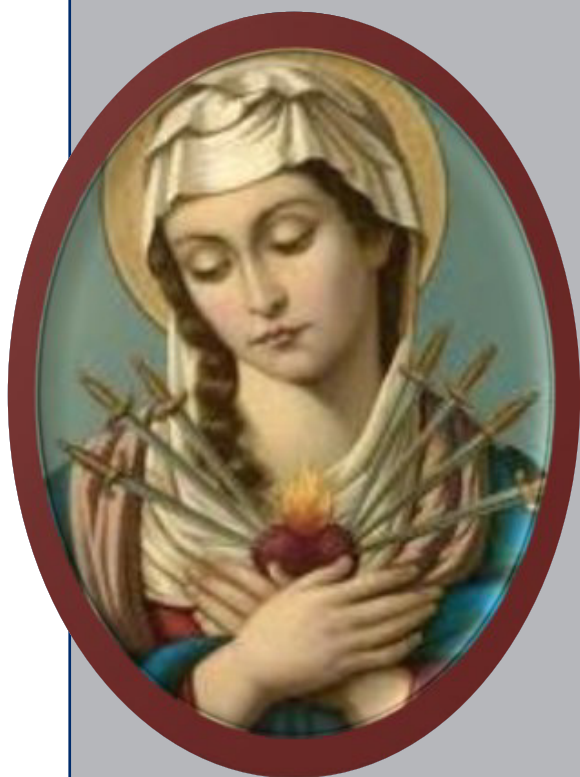
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