



Rejoice!

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Newsletter

Fall 2012

Dear Family & Friends of IHM,

What do farmland, windmills, farm cats and horse barns have to do with promoting devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Perhaps Sisters, novices, discernment retreats, shrines and CYO picnics provide an answer. On June 13th of this year IHM purchased 80 acres of farmland with the express purpose of permanently establishing our roots in the fertile ground of the Wichita Diocese.



Plans, ideas, hopes and dreams for the new land are soaring. In addition to having space for the Sisters when they come home for retreats, holidays, days of recollection, weekends, and summer we will have ample space for discernment retreats, public novenas, outdoor shrines and much more. Plans are in the works as we place all our prayers, aspirations, and apostolic works in the hands of our Blessed Mother.

The outpouring of love and support from all of you bolsters our courage and strengthens our determination to do something beautiful for Our Lady. You are in our hearts and prayers as we make our plans to carry out the Lord's work. Enjoy the articles and pictures found inside our newsletter. Please keep us in your prayers as we begin this new chapter in our religious family.

Gratefully in the Heart of Mary,

Mother Mary Magdalene, IHM

Mother Mary Magdalene, IHM



New Beginnings

The Church teaches that religious life begins with the young woman's entrance into the novitiate. After six months of postulancy, Anne Sthulsatz became Sister Mary Lucia on February 11, 2012, beginning her two year novitiate and joining Sister Mary Francis and Sister Rose Marie. The three novices are studying the vows, the IHM Constitutions, Philosophy, Prayer, Moral Theology, and the Vatican II Constitutions. Coupling the study with 3-4 hours daily of prayer, fraternal life in community and manual labor, the novices are introduced to all the essential elements of religious life and strive to learn the ways of the Lord, being docile to His Spirit.

On September 15, 2012, Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, Jennifer Barrow entered our community as a postulant; she is the eldest child of Mary Lu and David Barrow of Riverview, FL, with a sister, Heather, and a brother, David. Jennifer is a graduate of West Pointe and comes to us after serving several years in the Military Intelligence Corps of the U.S. Army, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. During her deployments she was often solicited to lead Bible studies and faith discussion groups, an activity she particularly enjoyed. After her discharge from the Army, she visited several religious communities and felt attracted to the Mary-like littleness she found with the IHMs. She is especially looking forward (after her initial formation) to teaching, especially the Faith.

In mid-August Melissa Augustine, daughter of Donna and Luther and twin sister of Megan, all of Colby, KS, moved in and began a time of candidacy with us. She is currently substituting in the Wichita public school system in order to lower her educational loans. Please pray that her loans will soon be reduced enough to allow her to enter as a postulant.



FAR LEFT: Sister Mary Lucia Stuhlsatz, IHM. MIDDLE: Postulant Jennifer Barrow. RIGHT: Candidate Melissa Augustine

New Website

The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary of Wichita have teamed up with Solutio, a name familiar in the diocese of Wichita, to create their new website. It is our hope that this website gives glory to God and shares well the message of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Being very vocation minded, it is also our hope that the new website will serve as a tool for young women who may be called to give their lives to Christ through the charism and apostolate of the IHM Sisters of Wichita. We also plan to use the new website as a means of communication with all of you, our family and friends!

Please visit our site, sistersihmofwichita.org. Once you see it you'll understand why we are so enthusiastic about it.



IHM Catechetical Institute

The first Immaculate Heart of Mary Catechetical Institute was conducted this past summer. Mother Mary Magdalene, General Superior of the IHM Sisters, stated the purpose of the Institute: "We want to do all we can to help catechists form Christ in those entrusted to them, as well as be able to instruct their students in authentic Church teachings."

Catechesis, the explanation of the Faith to people of every age, appealed to teachers who wished to deepen their own faith and improve their ways of imparting it. Catechists from 10 parishes participated.

Thanks to Fr. Stuart Smeltzer, pastor of St. Joseph Church, Wichita, the Catechetical Institute was held in the Parish Hall with classes on methodology in the morning and content in the afternoon. Sister Mary Ann, IHM, taught the Creed in the afternoon session and the morning presenters for methodology were Sr. Mary Faustina, Sr. Maria Jacinta, Sr. Mary Clare, and Sr. Mary Catherine.

The plan for future semesters is to offer a full curriculum on a rotating basis, offering Catechetical Methodology every summer. Other classes will include Scripture, both Old and New Testament,

Moral Theology, Church History, Prayer and Liturgy, Apologetics and Christian Vocations.

The late Blessed John Paul II wrote, "The more the Church gives catechesis priority over other works, the more she finds

a strengthening of her internal life as a community of believers and of her external activity as a missionary church." We plan to do all we can to realize Pope John Paul II's statement, especially during this Year of Faith.



ABOVE: Sister Mary Faustina explains catechetical principles.

BELOW: Sister Mary Clare dazzles participants with possible paper projects.



IHM's Claim Homestead!

Pioneers or explorers? Not with covered wagons nor with any commission save their own, but with an adventurous spirit and a hope to find the perfect plot of land, the Sisters set out searching, time and time again until ... voila! We found it! We are so very thrilled to convey our great delight in the purchase of our Motherhouse property.

Driving down 167th Street West on a bright, warm Spring day in March, Mother Mary Magdalene and Sister Marie Bernadette spotted the sign they were searching for ... a "for sale" sign! We hurried home to call Fr. Tom Hoisington, pastor of St. Mark Parish, to ask if he knew anything about the land.

George passed away, he stated, "The Blessed Virgin was with me all the way; it wasn't luck, it was the Blessed Virgin who brought me back."

On June 13, 2012, we realized a long awaited milestone and purchased these 80 acres of land just 20 minutes west of our present location in central Wichita. The land is currently divided between farm land, pasture and the "homestead."

Having been a horse farm, and not having been used in a while, there was much to be done. With the expert assistance and guidance of IHM families and friends we have had four work days at the farm, removing old fencing, cutting down

chest high weeds, cleaning out the horse barn, cutting down and trimming trees, and oh, so much more! The farm has been transformed and as our new neighbor said, "looks like a park!"



And, yes, the land had a story: For 100 years the land had been owned by the Markus Simon family; the last family member to be living on the farm was George Simon, WWII vet, and he had passed away in October of 2011. George was one of a group of 47 parishioners of St. Mark who had gone to war and had come home safely. Not that he was never in danger – but he knew he had been saved by the Blessed Virgin. On a YouTube Video filmed by Fr. Hoisington only a month before

IHM's Claim Homestead!

Our present action plan includes building a Marian shrine resembling the Capelinha at Fatima, replacing the farmhouse and preparing a picnic area with shelter and bonfire pit. Preparations are currently underway to build our House of Formation which will include three large rooms where we can gather as a community: a Chapel, a dining room w/kitchen, and an assembly room. We will have a bedroom wing for the novitiate and resident Sisters as well as a few necessary rooms such as classrooms, offices, laundry, etc. Moving the novitiate to "the farm" will allow space, quiet and a peaceful atmosphere for the "work of formation" which is vital to religious life. Phase II will see the building of the Motherhouse and cemetery.

We will also be able to host an additional array of functions, such as discernment retreats, 'nun runs' and IHM auxiliary retreats and days of recollection, CYO and Youth Group activities. Even such events as catechetical workshops and Marian devotions will have adequate and appropriate space.

Everyone who knew George has said that he would be thrilled to know that we had purchased his horse farm to become our own "homestead." It had always been our hope to move to the Catholic country of the St. Mark/Colwich area and now we will!



1: Future home of our Fatima shrine

2: The Capelinha at Fatima. Under the red roof, to the left of the door, there is now a pillar and statue marking the spot where grew the holm oak tree on which Mary stood.

3: Pre-purchase "inspection"

4: The first official visit to our homestead was on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. To start things off right, we gathered to pray a rosary.

5: We already have a bee hive!

6: Work Day!



JHMs Claim Homestead!



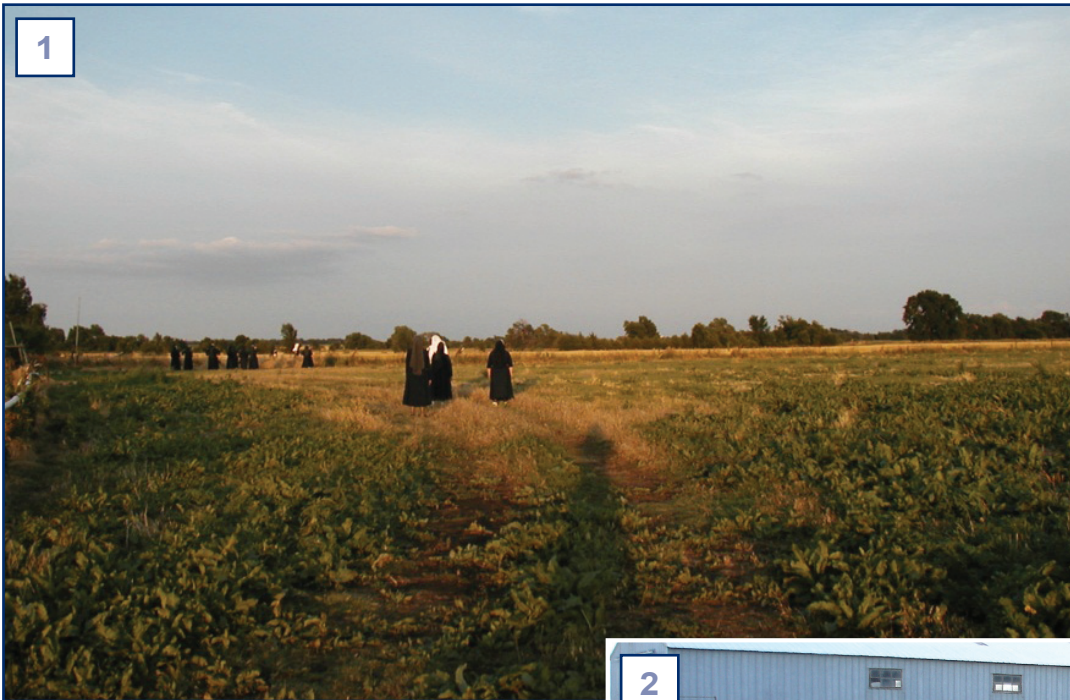
1: Sisters looking at different versions of a master plan, discussing the pros and cons of each

2: Future home of our Rosary garden

3: "Hi-ho, hi-ho, it's off to work we go!" The KMC football team volunteers a few hours of heavy lifting.



IHMs Claim Homestead!



1: 80 acres provides ample space for walks.

2: Campfire fun on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

3: IHM work crew reporting for duty



SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY OF WICHITA

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In Gratitude!

There are times when our expression of gratitude seems sorely inadequate. Now is one of those times; yet, the simple words, "thank you," are best for relaying the gratitude we so deeply feel for you, our families and friends, our greatest benefactors. So many of you have helped us with your expertise, your time, your hard work and your timely gifts. Special mention must be made of:

**Our Families
St. Mark Parishioners, St. Mark
Sacred Heart Parishioners, Colwich
IHM Auxiliary
The Knights of Columbus
The Kapaun Mount Carmel Football Team
... and countless others!**

Humbled by your assistance we say with St. Paul, in all sincerity, "*We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Thes1:2)

God bless you all!