

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

Valley of Our Lady Monastery

Autumn 2023 Campaign Newsletter

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- Advent & Christmas blessings

THE NEW MONASTERY - WHAT'S IN A NAME?

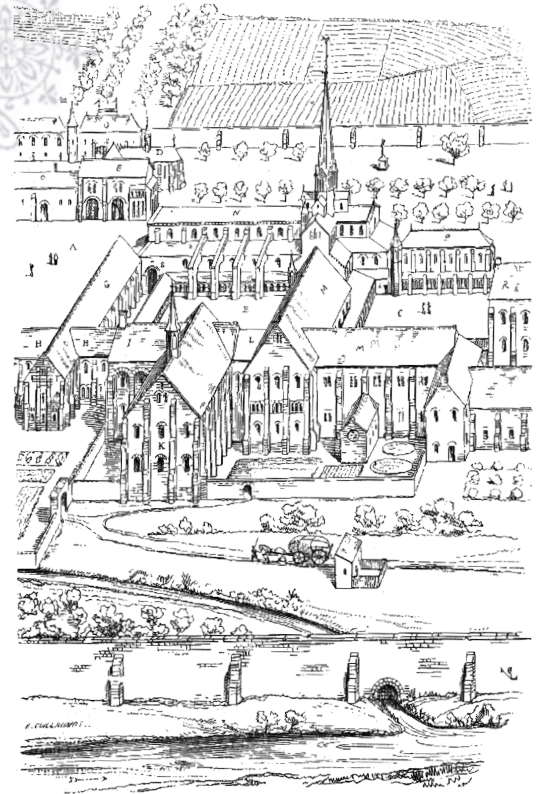
After more than 20 years of discernment, prayer, planning, designing, and fundraising, through the prayers and generous support of many, the New Monastery is becoming a reality. We remain humbled and grateful for the support of all our benefactors.

God willing, we will move to the new location in late January. We find it fitting that our relocation coincides with our Founders Day which commemorates the beginning of the Cistercian Order when the first monks set out for what was dubbed 'The New Monastery', from which we gleaned our project title.

More than 900 years ago, when Saints Robert, Alberic, and Stephen left to found a monastery, they did not intend to begin a new religious order; they only sought to found a community in which they could serve God with greater fidelity to the Rule of St. Benedict and the fervor of Benedict's forbears, the Desert Fathers. This community became known simply as 'The New Monastery.' Even official documents for the monastery's first 20 years exclusively used this title.



An icon of Saints Robert, Alberic, and Stephen - the three founders of the Cistercian Order whose feastday is celebrated on January 26.



An early engraving of the Abbey of Citeaux. The original Cistercian community was referred to simply as 'The New Monastery.'

Many were attracted to the monks' zeal and their way of life which was both old and new. Old, in that it was a return to the sources of monasticism, a more genuine living out of the Rule of St. Benedict, and a shedding of later adaptations that the monks regarded as unfaithful or encumbering to true monastic observance. But a newness too: the introduction of a general chapter and visitations. These innovations made the Cistercians the first true religious order in the modern sense of the term. In their first statutes, the Charter of Charity, they balanced the independence and autonomy of individual monasteries with a unity of observance and bond of charity among the growing number of Cistercian monasteries.

The early Cistercians were known for their simplicity of monastic observance, an emphasis on a balanced life of prayer and manual labor, a desire for evangelical poverty and detachment from the world, and a common life based on love.

Blessed to have received their legacy and tradition, our community, in turn, hopes to pass on these gifts to future generations of nuns. May Our Lord grant that this house be a light and blessing to the Church and the world as was the original New Monastery.

*"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house," says the LORD Almighty.
"And in this place I will grant peace," declares the LORD Almighty. ~ Haggai 2:9*

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

MATCHING CHALLENGE

Fundraising has gone remarkably well, thanks to supporters like you. Far exceeding expectations, we are on the cusp of reaching our goal. The project cost came in just over \$26 million. The New Monastery Fund stands just over \$25 million. By the grace of God, generous benefactors have offered a matching challenge – they will match up to \$500,000 to complete the fundraising effort by the end of the year. Thus far, contributions toward the challenge have amounted to \$200,000. We encourage you to prayerfully consider a contribution while your gift counts double.



LEFT: "There we saw the Nephilim; in our own eyes we seemed like mere grasshoppers, and so we must have seemed to them." (Num 13:33) Workers on stilts put the final touches on the drywall

RIGHT: "In My Father's house are many dwelling places." (John 14:2) A nun searches for her assigned cell.



LEFT: "Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels." (Ps 48:12-13) Arched bulkheads will adorn the cloister walk; this corridor around the interior courtyard has not only functional but liturgical use.

RIGHT: The cloister walk houses four statue/icon alcoves that will be the stations during liturgical processions.



ABOVE: Ora & Labora: Showing the future altar bread production area; with walls and ceiling complete now the flooring is being installed.

RIGHT: "Sing a new song to the Lord." (Ps 98:1) The nuns christen the chapel with the prayers and psalms of the Divine Office.



"I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?" (Ps 121:1) Sisters enjoy the views from the third floor (LEFT) and the first floor (ABOVE).

THE NEW MONASTERY PROJECT



ABOVE: View of the monastery looking east.



ABOVE: "Praise Him with resounding cymbals!" (Ps 150:5) The bell-tower nears completion; thanks to generous donors it will soon house three bells.
BELOW: The architects inspect.



"How lovely is Your dwelling, O Lord of hosts! Happy are they who dwell there; they never cease to praise you."

Psalm 84:2.5

BELOW: View of the monastery looking southeast.



ABOVE: "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Pet 2:5) Stone cladding rises on the chapel exterior.



"You have also workmen in abundance, hewers of stones, and masons, and carpenters, and of all trades the most skillful in their work." (1 Chr 22:15)



LEFT to RIGHT: Cutting, Lifting, Building



RIGHT: Construction workers complete the refectory exterior siding.



ABOVE (2): "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths!" (Luke 3:4) Equipment prepares the area for pavement in the garage area; concrete is poured and smoothed for sidewalks.

BELOW: "She is a garden enclosed, My sister, My bride; a sealed fountain." (Song 4:8) The cloister courtyard will have planted areas, walkways, and a fountain.



Late have I love you, O Beauty, ever ancient, ever new! ~ Saint Augustine

An excerpt from a Christmas sermon by Blessed Gueric of Igny

Unto us a Child is born. A Child who is the ancient of days. Child in bodily form and age; ancient of days in the Word's eternity past understanding. And though, as the ancient of days, he is not a child, still he is always new; indeed, he is just as new as newness itself which remains always in him and renews all things.

Every single thing grows old just so much as it recedes from him, and is renewed in the degree that it returns. The newness of this temporal birth is that the Child is born to renew us. The eternal birth certainly is more full of glory, but the temporal more lavish in mercy, in that, it is on my behalf who needed mercy.

Show your mercy to us who are not yet fit to see your glory; let the kindness and humanity of God, our Savior, appear to us so that through it we may be fit and worthy for the majesty and divinity of God, our Creator, to appear to us too. Show us, Lord, your mercy, cloaked in our misery and working the cure of the miserable by a new kind of mercy drawn from our very misery.

Unto us therefore a little Child is born, and emptying out his majesty God has taken on himself not merely the earthly body of mortal men but even the weakness and insignificance of children.

O sweet and sacred childhood, which brought back man's true innocence, by which men of every age can return to blessed childhood and be conformed to you, not in physical weakness but in humility of heart and holiness of life.

Thank you for supporting our contemplative, monastic life.
Know of our on-going prayers for you.

Let us keep watch this Advent Season, and prepare our hearts
to receive the Christ-Child and be renewed in His mercy.

**We will remember you and your loved ones in a
Novena of Masses beginning on Christmas Day.**

Please note: Beginning February 1st
our mailing address will be:
Valley of Our Lady Monastery
7320 Urness Road
Hollandale, WI 53544

