

YOU'RE INVITED:

AUGUST 24 - RITE OF DEDICATION MASS

Join us on August 24, 2025 at 9:30 am for the Rite of Dedication Mass for the New Monastery Oratory.

RSVP Required. Unfortunately, there will be **Very Limited Seating.**

Sign-ups will be first-come, first-serve; sign-ups open July 19 at 9:30 am (CT).

There will be two congregations: one live in the guest nave and one remote in the parlor that will watch the livestream ceremony and receive the blessings with holy water and incense and will be able to receive Holy Communion.

Sign up with the link found on our contact page or the QR code here. Use the code: ForGloryGod

When you sign up, please indicate:

- Which congregation you will join (and remember this sign-up)
- Whether you will be joining us for the reception and luncheon following the Mass of Dedication

The event will be livestreamed - find the link on our news page.

If you have trouble signing up or if you do not have Internet access, call us and leave a message at 608 643 3520 ext 4.

We are accommodating as many people as possible for the Dedication Mass, but unfortunately, there will not likely be room for all who are interested. Please consider joining us for one of the following events:



SEPTEMBER 14 - EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS SOLEMN VESPERS

Join us for Solemn Vespers for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the Monastery Oratory on Sunday September 14th at 4 pm. A relic of the True Cross will be displayed for veneration. **Please RSVP** due to limited seating in the Oratory. Find the link to sign up on our Contact page or use the QR code here.



NOVEMBER 1 - ALL SAINTS DAY RELIC VENERATION

In honor of All Saints Day we will have a day of public veneration of our relic collection on November 1st. Mass will be offered at 8 am in the Monastery Oratory. Veneration will begin in the parlor at 9:30 and will be open throughout the day until 4:30 pm. Vespers will be prayed at 4:45 pm. A small presentation will be offered on the hour and half-hour throughout the day. **Please RSVP** for the Mass due to limited seating in the Oratory. RSVP encouraged but not required for veneration. Find the link to sign up on our Contact page or use the QR code here.



Among the relics will be:
The True Cross, the Shroud of Turin, & the Table of the Last Supper
The Veil of the Blessed Virgin Mary & the Mantle of St Joseph
Several Apostles or Evangelists including St Peter, St Paul, St Jude, & St Luke
Many Doctors of the Church, including St Athanasius, St Ambrose, St Augustine, St Anselm, St Anthony, St Catherine of Siena, St Teresa of Avila, & St Therese of Lisieux
Many Martyrs including St Lawrence, St Cecilia, St Agnes, St Maximilian Kolbe, & St Maria Goretti
And many other Saints including St Anne, St Martha, St Mary Magdalene, St Monica, St Benedict, St Patrick, St Dominic, St Francis of Assisi, St Thomas Aquinas, St Peregrine, St Gertrude, St Rita, St Margaret Mary, St John Vianney, & St Bernadette

DECEMBER 8- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS

Join us for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Monday December 8th at 8:00 am for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. **Please RSVP** for the Mass due to limited seating in the Oratory. Find the link to sign up on our Contact page or use the QR code here.



VALLEY OF OUR LADY MONASTERY
SUMMER 2025



Cover: *The New Jerusalem* by Aidan Hart

consecrate

Valley of Our Lady Monastery
7320 Urness Road
Hollandale, WI 53544



ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

March 8th marked our one-year anniversary at the New Monastery! We observed the occasion as as day of prayer, offering our thanks to God and asking Divine blessings on all who had a hand in bringing this monastery into being. We look back on the past year with humble gratitude, and look ahead with hope for a long future for our Cistercian community here at the New Monastery.



ALTAR, AMBO, AND TABERNACLE INSTALLATION

With much excitement, the crates arrived from Italy bearing the new altar, ambo, and tabernacle. The crates were filled with pieces of marble that had to be assembled like giant puzzle pieces. These new sanctuary furnishings were installed at the end of March. The Oratory is now one step closer to being complete with the beautiful new altar, ambo, and tabernacle in place.

Now that we have a permanent altar, we are able to dedicate the oratory to be an edifice *For the Glory of God*. The dedication is scheduled for August 24th. In this newsletter we will explain the reasons why the Church dedicates buildings and consecrates altars, explaining the significance of each part of this solemn rite.



SOLAR ARRAY INSTALLATION

Included in the New Monastery project's original scope, the solar array was among the many fatalities of budget cuts. Happily, with your generous support, we were able to add it back this year and the installation is underway. One hundred and twelve modules form the 61.6 kW (DC) / 53.7 kW (AC), tilttable, ground-mounted array. We are incorporating five batteries to prolong the availability of solar power and will tie them into our emergency power system so that we can maintain essential functions long past what our small generator would support. We are grateful this addition will increase the sustainability of the New Monastery - helping to conserve natural resources, reduce our energy costs, and increase our energy independence. Many thanks to Solar Legacy for their consultative guidance, All Sky Energy for the installation, and ETI for their engineering support. See our news page for more photos of the installation.



The order of creation demands that a priority be given to those human activities that do not cause irreversible damage to nature, but which instead are woven into the social, cultural, and religious fabric of the different communities. In this way, a sober balance is achieved between consumption and the sustainability of resources.

Popo Benedict XVI

Now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever; My eyes and My Heart also shall be there always. Chronicles 7:16

WHY DEDICATE A CHURCH?

The Rite of Dedication of a Church is one of the Church’s most solemn liturgical acts and follows an ancient custom. It is the means of consecrating a church exclusively to God, making it a fitting place of prayer, praise, the celebration of the sacraments, and the reservation of the Eucharist. The church building is a visible sign of the Church, that is, the People of God who are the Temple of God made of living stones, a spiritual house built upon Christ, the cornerstone (see 1 Peter 2:4-6). Central to this rite is the consecration of the altar, which stands as a sign of Christ, who is the priest, the victim, and the altar of His own sacrifice.

This solemn Rite of Dedication is remembered with joy annually on the anniversary of the church’s consecration to God, observed as a solemnity.

A dedication is particularly significant for a monastic community, as the Oratory forms the heart of the monastery where we gather seven times a day to pray the Divine Office, daily to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass, and throughout the day to seek Our Lord’s Eucharistic Presence. The rite also recalls each nun’s consecration to God when she became a bride of Christ, enfleshing the bridal identity of the entire Church, a living temple of God’s presence in the world. We also see it as deepening our roots here at the New Monastery now that we will have a permanent Oratory, as well as giving expression to our life of stability in this place where our lives are hidden with Christ in God.

BLESSING & SPRINKLING OF WATER

After the entrance procession, the bishop blesses holy water. He then processes through the church, sprinkling the people and the walls and finally the altar. This rite is a sign of re-creation in the water flowing from the side of Christ. The materials taken from the earth to create this sacred space are cleansed through the paschal mystery. This cleansing is a preparation for the consecration with oil. The people too are a temple of God; throughout the Dedication ceremony blessings over the altar and building are repeated on the people to convey this reality. As St. Bernard encourages, “Those things that have visibly taken place within these walls should therefore be fulfilled in us spiritually.”

PLACEMENT OF RELICS

Following the Liturgy of the Word, the Litany of the Saints is chanted, invoking the prayers of all the Saints. Then the relics of martyrs are solemnly deposited and sealed into the altar. Our altar design did not allow us to deposit the relics during the Dedication Mass; rather we had a separate ceremony to solemnly deposit the relics when the altar was installed.

From ancient times the Church has built altars over the tombs of martyrs and placed relics of martyrs into altars, recalling the vision in the Book of Revelation.

It is your festival today, dear brothers, your very own. You are dedicated to the Lord; He has chosen you and made you His own.

*Saint Bernard.
Sermon for the
Dedication of a Church*

Let these triumphant victims be brought to the place where Christ is the victim. But He upon the altar, who suffered for all; they beneath the altar, who were redeemed by His Passion. Let us, then, deposit the sacred relics, and lay them up in a worthy resting-place.

Saint Ambrose

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Now surrounded by the choirs of Angels and in the company of all the Saints, the bishop invokes God’s blessing on the church and the altar through a lengthy Prayer of Dedication. Here are a few excerpts:



*This house brings to light the mystery of the Church,
Which Christ made holy by the shedding of his blood,
So that he might present her to himself as a glorious Bride,
A Virgin resplendent with the integrity of faith.
A Mother made fruitful by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Blessed is the Church,
God’s dwelling-place with the human race,
A holy temple built of living stones,
Standing upon the foundation of the Apostles
With Christ Jesus its chief cornerstone.*

*Here may the flood of divine grace
Overwhelm human offenses,
So that your children, Father, being dead to sin,
May be reborn to heavenly life.*

*Here may the joyful offering of praise resound,
With human voices joined to the song of Angels,
And unceasing prayer rise up to you
For the salvation of the world.*

*Here may the poor find mercy,
The oppressed attain true freedom,
And all people be clothed with the dignity of your children,
Until they come exultant to the Jerusalem which is above.*

ANOINTING THE ALTAR & WALLS

After the solemn Prayer of Dedication, the bishop pours holy Chrism on the altar. By anointing the altar with Chrism the altar is made a symbol of Christ, who is the Anointed One, the true High Priest, and the one who on the altar of the cross offered the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. After the bishop anoints the altar, twelve anointings are made on the walls of the church, in accordance with ancient tradition and recalling the Apostolic foundations of the Church. This anointing sanctifies the space, signifying the church is entirely and perpetually given over to Christian worship. Each of the anointing locations are marked on the walls with a tile and adorned with a candle. We are using marble tiles made by the same artisan who crafted our altar and engraved with the cross design that is used on our altar bread, adding significance to the already rich symbolism.



What is God’s altar if not the soul of those who lead good lives? Rightly then, the heart of the just is said to be the the altar of God.

Saint Gregory the Great



INCENSATION OF ALTAR & CHURCH

Following the anointing with Chrism, a brazier is filled with incense and placed upon the altar. The incense offering signifies that the Sacrifice of Christ, which is perpetuated in mystery upon that altar, ascends to God as a pleasing fragrance. The incense is also a sign of the pleasing and acceptable prayers of the faithful that rise up to the throne of God (see Rev 8:3-4).

After the altar is incensed, ministers are sent throughout the body of the Church to incense the congregation and the walls, dedicating both the people and the walls to God and forming both into a house of prayer. The People of God are living stones and temples of the Holy Spirit. The very air of the space is made holy, lifting up the entire cosmos and consecrating it to God.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God ~ this is your true and proper worship.

Romans 12:1

LIGHTING OF ALTAR & CHURCH

The altar is then fittingly prepared and adorned for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The nuns will dress the altar and prepare it for the Lord’s Supper. They will be united with the Blessed Mother who lovingly dressed the Christ-Child and placed the shroud on His broken body.

Then, like the Easter Vigil, the altar and the Church are lit, reminding us that Christ is the light of the world, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, of whose brightness shines out in the Church. The altar candles are lit, followed by the candles marking the Chrism locations, and the space that was only dimly lit up to now is brought into full brightness. The candles represent the Risen Christ, the Church as a vigilant Bride waiting for His return in glory, and the grace in the souls of the baptized.

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

It is the presence of Christ that truly consecrates the altar. The celebration of the Eucharist upon the newly anointed altar is the principal part of the whole rite. This Eucharistic Sacrifice is the foremost end for which the church was built and the altar erected. Furthermore, the reception of the Holy Eucharist sanctifies the hearts of those who receive it. Thus, it is fitting that this first Eucharistic Sacrifice on the new altar be the height of the celebration of the dedication of the Oratory.

The altar is an object of wonder: by nature it is stone, but it is made holy after it receives the Body of Christ.

Saint John Chrysostom