

FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

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*Valley of Our Lady Monastery*



# A LIGHT ENDURING

*"I have made you a light to the nations, that my salvation  
may reach to the ends of the earth."*

*~ Isaiah 49:6*

As the world surrounding Valley of Our Lady Monastery sleeps, the sisters arise each morning before dawn, the light of their chapel illuminating the darkness. Their sacred vocation, a gift from God that has been a source of goodness and grace throughout the ages, is today perhaps more necessary than ever.

With their days ordered around the liturgy, personal prayer, study, and manual labor – all within the silence and enclosure of the monastery – their vital role may not at first be obvious to their contemporaries.

But look closer!

These women come from across the globe, forming a rich tapestry of backgrounds, personalities, and talents. Sharing in the joys and sufferings experienced by every human, they embrace with quiet zeal God's will for them: to give their lives to praising Him and to interceding for the salvation of mankind.

Far from isolating themselves from others, they strive to live in deep spiritual communion with them. In their closeness to God and to His people, they allow His redeeming love to pour out more freely upon all creation, helping to heal and sanctify the Church. Their steadfast witness to the power of prayer in the life of the Mystical Body is a radical response to a fallen world at war with itself, a radiant sign of hope.

And so, at 3:30 am, the sisters let shine a light that extends far beyond their tiny valley. In a time when we are told that faith is fruitless and that nothing lasts, here is evidence of the eternal, and of the good. Here is a vibrant community of diverse women both young and old, unified in their commitment to Christ. Here is evidence of beauty, and of life-giving devotion.

Here is love.







# GUIDED BY OUR LADY

*"A heart once truly seized by love is no longer at its own disposal."*

*~ St. Bernard*

In 1957, six sisters journeyed from their home in Switzerland to establish a contemplative monastery at the invitation of the bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Madison. They arrived in Prairie du Sac with the centuries-old traditions of their Cistercian Order and a commitment to living them out faithfully in Wisconsin.



Through God's grace and their own hard work, the pioneering sisters soon began to welcome women from across the United States and around the world to the monastery, which they had converted from an old residence. In time they came to embody for the local church the role Jesus entrusted to His mother, that of embracing in loving prayer all His brothers and sisters.

## *A Community in Need*

As they have striven to follow Mary in her pure and courageous response to the divine call, the flourishing community has outgrown their borrowed and adapted home. Never intended to be a permanent monastery, their current buildings are so deteriorating that further repairs and renovations are unreasonably expensive.

The sisters now need a new monastery. They need room for the young women who continue to ask to join them; they need a church designed for a community of prayer; they need a home that is safe, healthy, and protected from encroaching development in the area. After years of careful prayer and discernment, the nuns of Valley of Our Lady are ready to embark on a journey just as challenging as that of their foundresses: to build a Cistercian monastery in the Diocese of Madison.



*In all they do, the sisters give special honor to Mary, their mother and exemplar. Her loving and watchful care for the community, which recently experienced an unprecedented growth in numbers, continues to be a source of strength and comfort for them.*



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“In these dark days in our world, country and even our Church, Valley of Our Lady serves as an island of hope. Years ago I had the privilege of making a retreat with them, witnessing firsthand the sacred rhythm of their days, attending Holy Mass, and touring the altar bread facility. I remain profoundly moved by the experience and am glad to report that with most religious orders in decline, they have seen a rise in vocations!

I am deeply honored to be a participant in this project. I know from my time there the critical need for a new monastery. The buildings, which they have lived in since 1957, are in terrible condition, beyond repair and dangerous. I cannot think of a better cause to support. Our world needs these good sisters now more than ever, and the sisters need our help. Let us build them a monastery that truly gives glory to God!”

Kurt Kellogg  
Campaign Committee Leader

## The Urgency

- **The sisters** are crowded with 22 members and anticipating further growth;
- **The buildings** are not conducive to liturgical functions, community ceremonies, and handicapped accessibility, impeding core functions and welcoming of guests and visitors;
- **Physical conditions** are worsening and increasingly dangerous: The walls are sinking and foundations crumbling; the roof and exterior elements are failing; the house is full of mold and asbestos; with insufficient insulation, temperature and humidity control is nearly impossible; and electrical and mechanical problems abound.

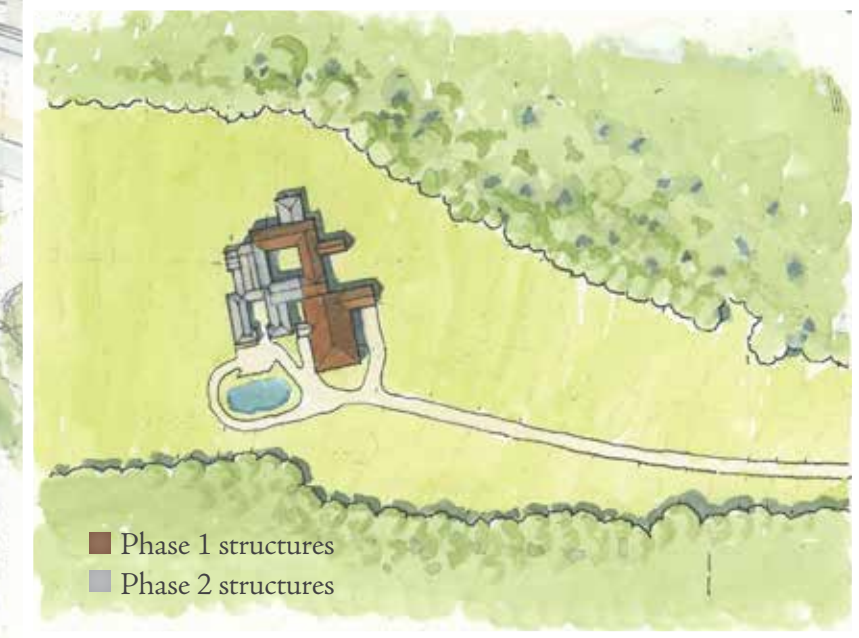


## The Campaign

*“... for the praise of His glory...”*

*~ Ephesians 1:6*

The total cost estimate for the new monastery is \$18 million. To expedite their move, the sisters are seeking to raise \$10-12 million for Phase 1. This phase will provide sufficient living quarters with room for growth; an altar bread workshop where the sisters can continue to work to support themselves; and a temporary chapel and guest quarters. Phase 2 will complete the building with a beautiful church and guesthouse.



*The design for Valley of Our Lady Monastery blends old and new. Adhering to the Church's teaching on ecology, sustainability, and care of the environment, the new monastery will also embody the Cistercian values of light, simplicity, balance, and austerity – all working together to create a transcendent beauty in the midst of a secluded 229-acre farm in Iowa County.*



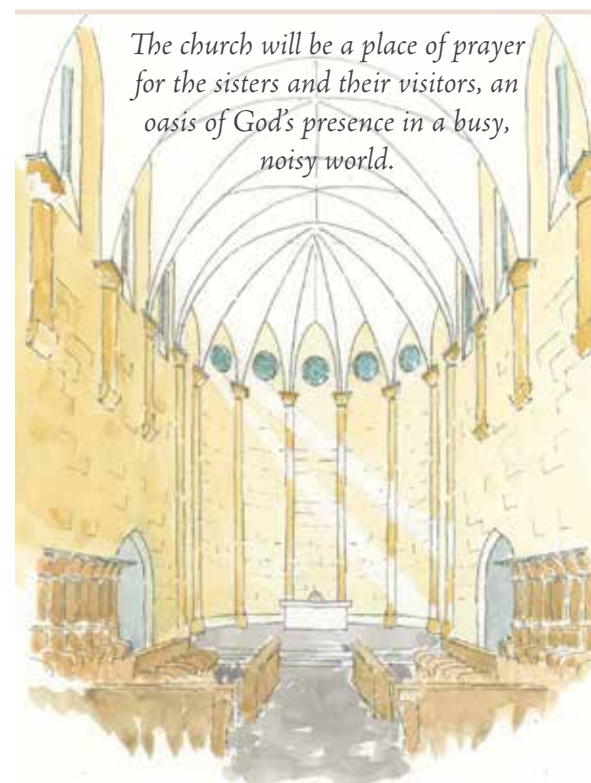
# ORA ET LABORA

Pray and work: This motto of Benedictine monasticism sets the twofold rhythm of the sisters' days. Prayer is the primary privilege and responsibility of their lives, which they joyfully fulfill through the official liturgy of the Church, chanted seven times daily in Latin, as well as through their personal prayer and reading.

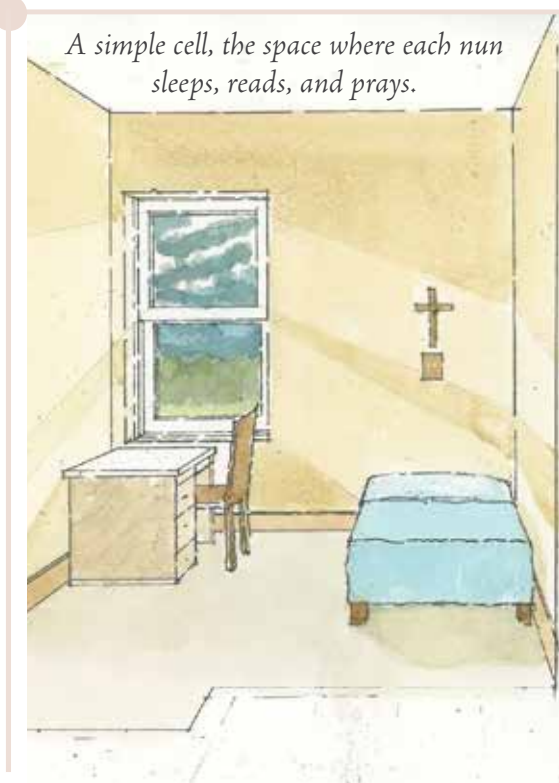
But the nuns also support themselves financially by making altar breads, supplying about 13 million breads annually to churches around the country. The sisters use the latest technology as well as their own hands, praying as they work to produce what will become at Mass the Body of Christ.



*The new altar bread workshop will allow the sisters to work more efficiently.*



*The church will be a place of prayer for the sisters and their visitors, an oasis of God's presence in a busy, noisy world.*



*A simple cell, the space where each nun sleeps, reads, and prays.*

## The Power of Prayer

“ I first came to know the sisters while caring for one of them in 1993. Over the years, I have brought my son and daughter for visits, and asked the sisters to pray for my patients and my family. Each time we have been blessed by their support. Once I introduced a patient with metastatic cancer to them. She was not Catholic but fell in love with these holy women, and she died in peace knowing of the prayers that were carrying her to Heaven.”

Dr. Maureen Murphy  
SSM Health

*The sisters touch the lives of many: visitors, oblates, neighbors, and customers. Their primary and most powerful outreach, however, is hidden and silent: their prayer.*





# BEAUTY EVER ANCIENT, EVER NEW

*"Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new,  
late have I loved you!"*

*~ St. Augustine*

Beauty is at the very core of Catholic theology and is indispensable in God's creation. Beauty speaks to us of our origin and invites us to return – back to God, back to the source of all that is good and beautiful – and in this way helps revitalize faith and restore light in the world.

People of all walks of life are profoundly impacted by what they find at Valley of Our Lady, for what they find is beauty, a sure sign of grace, in a world that hungers for and is often starved of these transcendent realities. Indeed, the sisters' life of prayer and sacrifice is in itself beautiful, their communion with Him who is Beauty a powerful conduit of that beauty in our world.

The sisters who embrace this life, who do the work of helping to restore light, are real people with real physical needs. For over sixty years, they have made do with what they were given, and they now turn to us for our support. Let us help them build a beautiful monastery, a physical environment that can truly nourish the hidden treasure of their vocation, for the good of the Church and of the world.

Few of us can live the life the sisters live. But supporters of this project will, in a very real way, have a rare opportunity to share with them in the essential work of salvation, in Christ's ongoing labor of redemption and re-creation. Together we can build something beautiful, a place where the church bells will ring for generations, calling all of us home to our eternal destiny in God.



*"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

*~ John 1:5*



*"Oh come, let us sing to the Lord!  
Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;  
Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.  
For the Lord is the great God,  
And the great King above all gods....  
Oh come, let us worship and bow down;  
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.  
For He is our God,  
And we are the people of His pasture,  
And the sheep of His hand.  
Today, if you will hear His voice:  
Do not harden your hearts..."*

*~Psalm 95*

