



December 2006

Dear Friends of the Institute of Christ the King,

A full year has gone by since we issued our first bi-monthly newsletter and we are again at the threshold of a new Year of Grace, making ready for the coming of the newborn King. As we prepare our souls to be a fitting dwelling for the Divine Child, we reflect with gratitude on the many blessings and graces we received through his Divine Providence and Mercy, both in those events that have been of joy and pleasing to us, as well as those that He has permitted to happen in our lives for the good of our souls, so that we may be ever more attentive to Him and ever closer to His most Sacred Heart.

We must be deeply grateful to Our Lord for developments throughout the year at our Shrine of Christ the King Sovereign Priest in Chicago. A year ago we celebrated Christmas in the small choir chapel of our priory. The ever growing number of faithful mandated that a solution for more seating space be found until such time as the imposing vast church building is ready for occupancy. Accordingly, part of the basement of the priory was transformed into an attractive chapel



just in time for Holy Week. Corpus Christi saw our first outdoor procession and first use of the church building, where Benediction was celebrated at a temporary altar. For the patronal feast of Christ the King we again held a procession into our church. **There, your many intentions for the novena in preparation for the Feast were offered before Christ the King in the Most Blessed Sacrament,** and there before Him, we conducted our first Act of Consecration to Christ the King, the still-gutted interior and bare walls reminding us, in many ways, of the stark surroundings into which the Infant King was born and which He filled with His Glory and Light.

In addition to the ever more active life of Faith at our Shrine, we also had the opportunity to foster what is an essential component of the work of the Institute of Christ the King – harmony between Faith and Culture. This we try to achieve through activities at all our apostolates, such as the



Annual Seminar of the Latin Mass Community of Rockford. In Chicago, a fascinating conference by Dr. Alice von Hildebrand in May was followed, in October, by a talk given by architect William C. Heyer on the classical element in the work of the renowned architect Henry Schlocks, who over 80 years ago designed our church in Chicago, now a historic landmark. Mr. Heyer is the architect in charge of the restoration of the Shrine, as well as one of the architects working on the renovation of our Old St. Patrick's Oratory in Kansas City. This month Mr. Heyer will also be speaking at St. Francis de Sales Oratory in St. Louis, where we have yet another of the several restoration projects entrusted to the Institute by Divine Providence, in Whom we trust to obtain the wherewithal to carry them out.

In Oakland, faithful of our Latin Mass Community were recently privileged to receive the instruction of Dr. William Mahrt, Associate Professor of Musicology and Early Music at Stanford University and President of the Church Music Association of America. Professor Mahrt spoke about the melodic structure of chant and how that correlates to the different parts of the liturgy. He also provided much-appreciated coaching to members of the our choirs on how to properly sing Gregorian chant.

Father Olivier Meney of Wausau and Father Jean-Marie Moreau of Green Bay jointly gave a talk on the encyclical of our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI on *God is Love*, as preparation for the annual Pilgrimage of Restoration to the Martyrs' Shrine in Auriesville. Faithful from several of our oratories participated in this pilgrimage, closed with a Solemn High Mass at the Shrine celebrated by Father Moreau.

The same signs of vitality found in the Institute's work in the United States are also evident overseas at our many apostolates throughout Europe. Our American friends of Irish descent will be interested in knowing of **the Institute's arrival in Limerick, Ireland**, where a monthly Mass has been offered now for nearly a year, with prospects of this becoming a full-time apostolate.



Another cause for rejoicing and thanking Our Lord is the growth in grace and in numbers of our Sisters Adorers of the Royal Heart of Jesus Christ. In early October five postulants, two of whom are American, formally joined the young community and entered religious life, receiving the holy habit and their new name in religion, in a ceremony presided by the Most Rev. Luciano Gionvanetti, Bishop of Fiesole. With four postulants still in their period of discernment and formation, the sisters now number thirteen. The Sisters Adorers were established in June 2004, in the Archdiocese of Florence where they have their convent. Their day is centered around prayer – Holy Mass and the Divine Office in the Classical Latin Rite, one hour of mental prayer and one hour of adoration in the evening, Rosary, etc. Punctuating this rich life of prayer are periods of manual labor and intellectual training, including instruction in Gregorian Chant, Latin, Spirituality, Philosophy, Theology, as well as the learning of crafts such as sewing, lace-making, and the care of liturgical ornaments and altar linens. As the community expands, it is foreseen that foundations will be made alongside the apostolates of the Institute of Christ the King, where the Sisters will support the apostolic work of our priests. **Counting already with three sisters from the United States, we can hope and pray that soon one of the Sisters' foundations will be on this side of the Atlantic.**



The ceremony of vestition at our chapel in Gricigliano, where five young women received the habit of the Sisters Adorers of the Royal Heart of Jesus, now five happy novices.

We greatly rejoice in humble gratitude to God for preserving our Father Vittorio Mazzucchelli amongst us, after his near-fatal car accident last January. On behalf of Monsignor Gilles Wach and all the members of the Institute of Christ the King, I would like to express our **deep-felt thanks to all our friends throughout**



Father Vittorio Mazzucchelli surrounded by Msgr. Gilles Wach, his mother Mrs. Mazzucchelli, and Father Jean-Marie Moreau.

the world, whose prayers no doubt brought about what the doctor's have repeatedly described as a miraculous survival and recovery. **For some time now Father Mazzucchelli has already been able to perform his priestly duties, celebrating Mass and hearing confessions from his wheelchair.** He is currently successfully undergoing rehabilitation, and while the care required still keeps him from returning to his administrative duties at our Seminary and Motherhouse in Gricigliano, he receives daily visits from his confreres.

Finally, we are most grateful to you, our friends, who through your generosity are instruments of Divine Providence, supporting the mission of the Institute of Christ the King through your donations, your prayers, and your time and volunteer work. Thanks to your help, our priests can conduct their apostolic mission in Our Lord's vineyard, our seminarians can engage in their studies and formation toward the Sacred Priesthood, our Sisters can continue in their pioneering work in religious life, and the sacred treasury of the Classical Latin Rite continues to benefit more and more souls. We have experienced your goodness, dedication, and friendship throughout this year. May the Infant Jesus reward you abundantly, and bless you and yours with much grace for the coming Year. From all of us at the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, our best wishes for a grace-filled Christmas, and a Blessed New Year.

Yours very truly, in Christ the King,

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz
Vicar General & Provincial Superior for the United States

PS: Thank you very much for the generous response to our appeal in the October newsletter. May God reward you. With more young men joining our pre-formation program in the United States, your supportive Christmas gift and prayers are ever more deeply appreciated.



INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

THE HIDDEN PRESENCE: THE HOLY FAMILY

God acts for us every day. The Almighty does this not only by sustaining, preserving, and directing our world and its history, but also – which often is not enough acknowledged – through an overwhelming number of interventions and operations intended to help our way to Him. In the Church, He continuously bestows on us innumerable graces if we are only open to receive them. Sometimes, He even breaks through the rules of His ordinary dispositions for this world through extraordinary events, showing us clearly His attention for humanity as a whole.

God's loving interest in the personal, daily, modest life of every individual person is beyond doubt. Miracles, in a large sense, be they small or great, seem to happen every day. Even if they do not always break the natural laws we are familiar with, but remain subtle and often humble in appearance, they are part and parcel of our life, as God's power and His grace are part of it.

Nothing shows this truth more strikingly than the life of the Holy Family. The Trinitarian God could have chosen any other setting for the unutterable event of the Incarnation. The whole Universe could have been the stage for this turning point in history which, in that case, most probably would have been preceded by cosmic signs like the final coming of the Lord. God decided otherwise. He chose a family, a young couple in Nazareth, as background for the greatest of all Divine operations in this world, which could scarcely have been more humble and hidden.

When the Angel came into the humble room of the Virgin Mary to announce the Incarnation of the second Person of the Holy Trinity in her womb, this event was certainly of a definite cosmic meaning, but did not appear as such for a long period of time. For thirty years, the enormous graces of the Incarnation would be lived in the Holy Family, shielded from the knowledge of the world. Way before becoming public and obvious for all men of good will, the mystery of Christmas was protected and concealed by a day-to-day family life. The Divine gifts to the Blessed Mother and her chaste spouse must have been innumerable. Mary and Joseph could endure crosses and hardships because their humble faith made them aware of the Divine Presence in their Son.

The Holy Writ does not give us many details about the long life of the Holy Family centered on the Mystery of Christmas. However, what we do know reveals that their life was focused on the Humanity of Christ forever inseparably united to His Divinity. Everything He did and said was revelation to them, as it still is to us, and their lives became constantly directed by His mysterious Presence bestowed on them as parents, guardians and faithful.

Thus, the Almighty wanted to show, as He had done already many times in the Old Covenant, that God does not despise the ordinary, the silent, the humble, the hidden or the small. He can certainly reveal himself as the God of Power, as on Mount Sinai, but his power and glory are too great to halt before the ordinary life. His Presence is everywhere, and especially after the Incarnation, It makes use of all signs, symbols, and details of our ordinary human life.

The Holy Family was the wonderful beginning of this endearing closeness of the Divinity to us. This propinquity continues every day in the life and mysteries of the Church, and, strengthened by the latter, in our own lives. If we think that God is only in the extraordinary, we should again contemplate the Mystery of Christmas. To believe that we have to search God in the uncommon and surprising is a misunderstanding often based on an unconscious pride. To achieve the astonishing and unusual in order to please God may lead us nowhere, because we try to do this with our own forces while overlooking the many small signs of His operating grace in our daily life.

The Holiness of the family of Nazareth, for thirty years, was lived in the Mystery of Divine Incarnation experienced in the simple events of every day life. Thus, Mary, Joseph and the Child revealed the sanctity of God amongst and in themselves. We can do the same. The Incarnation never will end. It is a reality in the life of Holy Mother Church. It can become ever more present in our own lives, if we do not forget about the presence of Divine grace in the human, the small, the humble events and challenges of daily life. To recognize the Mystery of Christmas in our midst is the secret of every "Holy" Family, and also of our own.

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz