

SPIRITUALITY

*Christmas and Passion
- Linked Mysteries*

During this liturgical year, Christmas and Lent follow each other so closely that Septuagesima Sunday is celebrated two weeks before Candlemas. The message of this quick passage teaches us that the Mystery of the Incarnation leads directly to the Mystery of the Passion, for the Lord assumed our flesh and was born in Bethlehem to sacrifice Himself for our Salvation. Hence, not infrequently sacred art depicts the Infant King embracing a Cross.



The Passion and the Cross, however, are again not a final goal but instruments of salvation.

They lead the Redeemer of the human race to His Resurrection and His final triumph over death and the devil. Thus, the bliss of Christmas is deepened and the morning of Easter reveals the glorious aim of the Mystery of Christ.

This is an important reminder for our own life. Some of us, if not all, would like to live in a constant Christmas joy never diminished by any foreboding of a harder reality. We know, though, from painful experience, that in this valley of tears this is not possible. For sure, in every life, there are moments of rejoicing, but these are given by Divine Providence to strengthen us for the strife and struggle of life, necessary for our purification and finally for our salvation. In our life, Christmas and Lent follow each other constantly.

Neither human bliss nor human suffering, though, show the final sense of a Christian existence. If, fortified by the Mystery of Incarnation, we recognize the Mystery of penance and passion as a collaboration with Christ's will for our salvation, we will also partake in the reality of Resurrection and our reward will be where the joy of Christmas blends with the triumph of Easter for all Eternity. All else is passing, but the happiness of Heaven never ends!

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz

FROM THE SEMINARY



At Gricigliano, the superiors and seminarians of the Institute celebrate Christmas as a family. The Villa Martelli, our home and seminary, is decorated with Nativity scenes and Christmas trees. The office of Matins is sung before Midnight Mass, which is immediately followed by the office of Lauds, and another Solemn High Mass is offered during the day. In the evening the celebration continues with Christmas carols, short Christmas plays and a buffet dinner. We put as much as we can into making our hearts and home a suitable dwelling place for Our Lord, the Infant Jesus, following in the footsteps of Saint Francis de Sales who had a special preference for the feast of the Nativity of Our Divine Savior and the Mystery of the Incarnation: *Et Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis!*

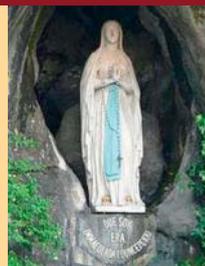
Abbé Jason Apple



After a day filled with prayer and liturgical celebrations, the seminarians gather in the evening for some Christmas caroling and a skit by the first-year class.

JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE to LOURDES
March 29 - 30, 2008

This year Holy Church commemorates the 150th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady, the Immaculate Conception, in Lourdes. Join the Institute of Christ the King on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. For details visit our website at www.institute-christ-king.org.



THE INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

is a society of apostolic life whose goal is the honor of God and the sanctification of priests in the service of the Church and souls. Its specific aim is missionary: to spread the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ in all spheres of human life. Our work is carried out under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception, to Whom the Institute is consecrated.

The Institute was founded in 1990 by Monsignor Gilles Wach and Father Philippe Mora in Gabon, Africa, where we still have missions. Today, the motherhouse and international seminary of the Institute is located in Gricigliano, in the Archdiocese of Florence, Italy.

Recognizing the importance of a deep harmony between faith, liturgy, and life, and the power of beauty in attracting the human senses to the things above, an integral part of the Institute's charism is the use of the extraordinary form of the Latin Rite according to the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*.

Great care for a solemn liturgy, complete fidelity to the doctrine of the Church and the Holy Father, and awareness of the central role of Grace, especially Charity – these are essential elements of the Institute's spirituality, which is drawn from its three co-patrons, St. Benedict, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Francis de Sales. Our motto, taken from St. Paul, is "Live the truth in charity".

The Institute operates in more than 50 places in 12 countries, where our priests focus on the care of souls in many different ways. To assist our priests in their apostolic work, the Institute also has clerical oblates. In 2004, a community of religious sisters was canonically established to aid the priests in their mission through prayer and apostolic work.

AMERICAN OFFICES

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CHRISTUS
REGNAT

INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST



Christ reigns

Letter of the Vicar General

Dear Friends of the Institute of Christ the King,

The year of the Lord 2007 has ended with a memorable event at our Shrine of Christ the King in Chicago. On December 29th, the Archbishop of Chicago, Francis Cardinal George, in a splendid ceremony, crowned the statue of the Infant King. This image of the Divine Savior is now enthroned on our provisional High Altar. When the building restoration is at last completed, the Divine Infant King, real symbol of God's Truth and Charity, will remain the center of the Shrine of Christ the King Sovereign Priest.



The New Year of the Lord 2008 begins with joyful challenges for our young Institute. Yes, we are now in our Shrine and we celebrate daily and Sunday Masses in its imposing interior temporarily decorated to honor the Divine presence! However, substantial funds are urgently needed to complete this House of the Highest, which already is a center of pilgrimage and adoration of the Infant King for those who come from far and wide, like the three Holy Kings. Please, help us through our capital campaign to create a home for the Infant with your sacrificial gift!

I heartily thank those who have already so generously responded.

Another joyful challenge is the increasing number of our American vocations. Our International Seminary and our formation program in the United States are filled with zealous young men who desire to dedicate their lives to Holy Mother Church through the traditional Latin liturgy as priests and oblates.



Many of them depend on the generosity of benefactors wanting to give to a holy cause such as theirs! Thank you for your readiness to help and sacrifice. You and your loved ones are always in our prayers!

With grateful wishes for a Blessed Year of the Lord 2008,

Michael Schmitz
Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz
Provincial Superior for the United States



CROWNING OF THE KING

at our Shrine in Chicago

Saturday, December 29th was a day of immense grace at the Shrine of Christ the King Sovereign Priest. His Eminence Francis Cardinal George came to our Shrine to solemnly crown the statue of the Divine Infant King. The ceremony was followed by a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Msgr. Michael Schmitz, at which His Eminence assisted from the throne. Over 400 were present, not only from Chicago; friends gathered from several Midwestern states, and from areas as far away as New Jersey, Florida and California. They came to attend what was essentially the inauguration of our church -- even before it is restored -- as the coronation and Mass were held inside the church building.

Only a few weeks prior, our church had been a gutted shell. It was with awe that the faithful of Chicago -- who so far had been attending Mass in the ever shrinking rectory basement chapel -- saw their building as if miraculously transformed for the occasion. The first step was to have

the necessary provisional heating and electrical wiring installed. Then, draperies, rugs, cleverly fitted temporary altars, donated pews and altar rails, and a magnificent faux reredos (previously used in one of our chapels) were all assembled by members of the Institute and dedicated volunteers. The result was a beautiful abode fit for the King of Kings. Now Holy Mass is no longer held in the basement. It has returned to the precincts of this historic landmark still awaiting restoration, where the Divine Infant King now rules from above His temporary high altar.



The newly fitted sanctuary.

His Eminence, with Msgr. Michael Schmitz and Fathers Meney, Moreau, Lenhardt and Talarico



The Solemn High Mass



At the reception, His Eminence enjoys a visit with one of our families.



Veritatem Facientes in Caritate - Live the Truth in Charity

NEWS from the Vineyard

Our new apostolate in Milwaukee was inaugurated with a Solemn High Mass on the Second Sunday of Advent, celebrated by Msgr. Michael Schmitz with the assistance of Father Olivier Meney and Abbé Kevin Kerscher. Many came for the occasion from well beyond Milwaukee to participate in this event at St. Stanislaus Church, where Mass in the traditional Latin form is now offered on Sundays at 10:00 am under the care of the Institute of Christ the King.



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Confirmations in Kansas City took place on December 2nd, the First Sunday of Advent. His Excellency Bishop Robert W. Finn conferred the Sacrament, in the extraordinary form, on twenty faithful.



On Epiphany Sunday, in Wausau, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our dear Abbé Kevin Kerscher, oblate of the Institute, together with his family. His service is very much appreciated by all.



ON PILGRIMAGE to Mexico

November 26 - 29, faithful from different areas of the U.S. assembled in Mexico City on pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Led by Father Jean-Marie Moreau of St. Joseph's Oratory in



Green Bay, they had three very intense days of prayer and devotions. On the first day, after the awesome experience of venerating the miraculous image of Our Lady imprinted on St. Juan Diego's tilma, they were able to hold Mass celebrated by Father Moreau in the small chapel built upon Tepeyac hill, the very spot of Our Lady's apparitions in 1531. The group was joined on the second day by Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz, who

celebrated the traditional Mass inside the Basilica of the Shrine with the image of Our Lady fully in view. On this day, the pilgrims also venerated the relics of Blessed Miguel Pro, who 80 years ago had been martyred crying "Viva Cristo Rey!" "Long Live Christ the King!" Perhaps the crowning moment of the pilgrimage was the High Mass offered by Msgr. Schmitz at the main altar of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Mexico City on the last day, arranged by Una Voce Mexico. This was the first time that Mass in the extraordinary form of the Latin Rite had been celebrated in that venerable building for nearly four decades.

After a sojourn of much grace, all regretted parting, having developed a holy bond in such little time, thanks to our common Faith and shared love for Holy Mother Church.



www.institute-christ-king.org