

THE INCARNATION:

Key to the Church

Christmas is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Lord. In this moment, the mystery of the Incarnation, until then hidden in the Immaculate womb of the Virgin Mother, becomes visible to the world. At first, only a few are aware of the unfolding of the Divine Plan of redemption: Mary, Joseph, the humble shepherds. Then, from far, the three wise men, representing the nations and the world of power and learning, are divinely guided to the crèche in Bethlehem and see the miraculous union of the Divine and the human in the babe dressed in swaddling cloth. However, even in this first stage of revelation, the mystery is fully present. It is the mystery of the Church.



Indeed, the union of God and man in the Divine person of Christ is unique. There is no other union of the Divine and the human alike to the hypostatic union. His humanity, though, imbued of divine force like a linen is imbued of a precious oil, continues to operate in the Church. Foremost, the humanity of Christ

is present in her sacraments and in the human words of divine wisdom she administers in her infallible doctrine. Through these, the whole of the ecclesiastical life gradually is penetrated by Divine grace.

The Liturgy of the Church with its venerable gestures and ceremonies, the holy signs and devotions, the law and discipline she uses is all an outcome of her contact with the Divinity, coming to her through her invisible head, the God-man Jesus Christ. Like a channel, his humanity brings the consequences of the grace of union in various forms and on various levels to us, if we only keep our own humanity open to the influence of our Savior in the Church.

Thus, we understand that the stable of Bethlehem, like the house of Nazareth, together with the mystery of the Incarnation contained also the mystery of the Church. Finalized by the sacrificial immolation on the Cross, the triumphant resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the apparition of the Church as the continuation of the Incarnation of God in this world began in the Holy Night, seen by a few, but operating already for the salvation of the many.

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz

FROM THE SEMINARY

As a seminarian, people often ask me why I have chosen the Institute of Christ the King for my formation within the Catholic Church. Simply put, Divine Providence led me here. However, as I think about it, several reasons render the Institute a particularly desirable community for me.



Above all, the fraternal charity desired by our Heavenly Father is sincerely and diligently exercised by our superiors, canons, and seminarians in a manner that I have not experienced elsewhere. Our superiors care for the seemingly minutest details of our seminary existence as a father would for his sons. The seminarians, in turn emulate this edifying care for each other and eventually their future faithful.

Then, there is the serene care for prayer and the liturgy. The holy Mass is literally at the center of our day at 11:30am. Christ is at the center of our existence in a tangible fullness that I have never before encountered.

Finally, I find our intellectual formation to be unabashedly Catholic in a world increasingly hostile to Christ and His Church. The courses are taught by priests and other intelligent instructors who love the Church as much as I.

These qualities enumerated above are common to every member and apostolate of the Institute that I know. There is a definite common identity shared among her members that they humbly strive to preserve. By the grace of God, it is my wish to fully enter their ranks as a priest one day.

Abbe Benjamin Coggeshall

UPCOMING EVENTS

• **April 25-26: Pilgrimage in Lourdes, France, with His Grace, Archbishop Raymond L. Burke**, Monsignor Wach, Monsignor Schmitz, Institute priests and seminarians. The Pilgrimage includes two Pontifical High Masses, spiritual conference of His Grace, candlelight procession, Stations of the Cross, Solemn Te Deum and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. For details visit www.institute-christ-king.org. For travel arrangements, you may contact Mrs. Odette Page of Clio Travel Agency at (+33) 1.53.68.82.63 or odette.page@clio.fr.

• **On Saturday, May 23, 2009, please join us for a Pilgrimage to the Basilica of Holy Hill**, the National Shrine of Mary, Help of Christians near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Monsignor R. Michael Schmitz will celebrate a Solemn High Mass in the Basilica. A family picnic will follow.

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.

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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!

For the second time, the wonderful ceremony of the solemn Consecration of a Church building was celebrated in one of the apostolates of our Institute. First it was performed at St. Mary's Oratory in Wausau, Wisconsin, a gem of sacred art, by the current Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura in Rome, His Grace Archbishop Raymond L. Burke. This time, our newly restored Oratory of Old St. Patrick's in Kansas City Missouri was consecrated by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph. We are exceedingly grateful to Bishop Finn for this beautiful Oratory and the ceremony of consecration, described in detail in this newsletter.

The consecration of a church can well be seen as a symbol for what the Blessed Lord wishes for our world as a whole which is to consecrate the entire humanity through the sacramental service of His mystical spouse, Holy Mother Church, again to the Divine Father. The Divine plan had initially made this world a temple of His presence, but the human race left the Garden of Eden through presumption and pride. Christ has come to re-consecrate the entire creation with His precious blood through the Liturgy of His Church.

The Institute of Christ the King wants to contribute to this consecration of the world through a special care for the liturgical mystery. We ask you to help us in this important task through your prayerful support and your generosity. Every Church and chapel where the Canons of the Institute can show to the world that the divine order still prevails over the forces of the chaos will strengthen you and your loved ones in your wish to live Christ's order in your own family.

May God bless you for your generosity in prayer and sacrifice!

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





SOLEMN CONSECRATION

of Old Saint Patrick's Oratory in Kansas City

On October 25th, Old St. Patrick's Oratory in Kansas City, Missouri, was filled to capacity. As the sacred melodies of Gregorian Chant filled the church, the faithful looked on in prayerful silence. They were there to witness one of the most remarkable rites of the Church's ancient tradition, the solemn consecration of a church. The Gospels tell us that two thousand years ago Our Lord Himself had written with His finger in the sand. On this day, His Excellency, the Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, Bishop of Kansas City, with crozier in hand traced out one by one the characters of first the Greek and then of the Roman alphabets to signify the universality of the Catholic Church, and the coming of the Word to us.

At the beginning of this most impressive five hour long ceremony, the exterior of the church was blessed on all sides, and then the procession of clergy entered the church. The Litany of the Saints was chanted, after which the interior walls and floor were blessed with Gregorian water – a blessed mixture of water, ash, salt and wine. His Excellency anointed with chrism the twelve crosses upon the walls of the church in the Name

of the Lamb and of Saint Patrick. Finally incense was burned directly upon the altars, after which they were clothed, and a beautiful Pontifical High Mass celebrated.

This solemn dedication Mass and ceremony was the culmination of an extensive three-year restoration project. So many hard-working volunteer members of the Oratory had labored with an exemplary, tireless energy right up until the very hours preceding the ceremony. Priests and Oblates of the Institute came from far and wide to prepare for this exceptional event.

Originally built in the 1870's, this historic church in the heart of Kansas City now continues with renewed beauty to serve as "a house of God" and a gateway to heaven for countless Catholics attracted to the Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite according to the spirituality proper to the Institute of Christ the King. Canon William Avis of the Institute of Christ the King is the Rector of this Oratory in Kansas City, Missouri, 806 Cherry Street (Sunday Masses 8.00 and 10.15 am)



NEWS from the Vineyard

St. Francis de Sales Oratory 100th Anniversary



On November 23rd, the 100th Anniversary of the dedication of St. Francis de Sales church, over 1,200 faithful gathered at St. Francis de Sales Oratory in St. Louis, Missouri, to assist at a Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Robert J. Hermann, Administrator of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. From the powerful beginning of the "Premiere Symphonie" of Guilmant to the soaring lines of the closing hymn of "To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King," the

orchestra filled the magnificent Neo-Gothic edifice of St. Francis de Sales church. The overwhelming turnout was a testament to the thriving youthful community of faithful at the Oratory.

Apostolate in the Holy Father's Hometown

Exciting International News: the Institute is now blessed to offer Holy Mass every week in the German town of Traunstein, where our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, spent many of his younger years. The Holy Father attended minor seminary here, and even offered his first Mass in the parish church of this beautiful town.



SHRINE OF CHRIST THE KING

Families from throughout the Chicago area came to celebrate the Birth of Our Lord at the Shrine, which was decorated in a manner truly befitting our Infant King! The music of Palestrina was a moving accompaniment to the Solemn High Midnight Mass celebrated by Monsignor R. Michael Schmitz, Vicar General of the Institute. *Venite, Adoremus Dominum!*

On January 11th, His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph N. Perry, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, celebrated a Solemn Pontifical High Mass at the Shrine. This Mass was also the culmination of the Gregorian Chant Workshop directed by Canon Wulfran Lebocq, the Choirmaster of the *schola cantorum* of the Institute's Seminary in Gricigliano. The workshop was a success—every available space was filled by students of Chant who had come from around the country!



The restoration of the Shrine of Christ the King continues to progress. As we move forward in the improvement of the mechanical aspects of the church, please keep us in your prayers and consider supporting the Shrine today. Help us make a home worthy of the Divine Infant King! **Donate at www.infantking.com**