



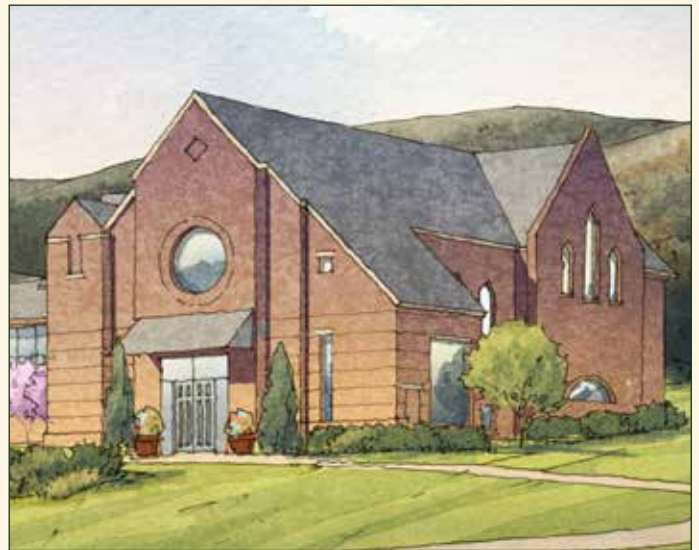
Dear Friend:

Christmas 2014

Over the years we have chosen various Christmas carols as a theme for our yearly letter to you. This year's choice is especially fitting, for we have much joyful news to share!

Ever since 2012 we have been planning the new church – for our monastic community and for the many guests who come regularly to worship with us. This has involved many months of conferring with architects, contractors and others in our on-going refining of the design and plans. It has also involved much effort in the way of fund-raising – and we want once again to express our gratitude to all whose generosity is enabling this endeavor to take shape.

This will be much more than another construction project, since the whole life of our community revolves around the church. We gather there seven times a day in our communal worship, to praise and thank God and to intercede for all the human family. From the church we go out to our various forms of work here at the monastery, and to the church we return for our most essential work – the life of prayer. You are present and a part of this life of prayer.



On August 31 we had a Blessing of the building site with special prayers for the safety of all who will be working on the church. As this letter goes to the printer we are expecting any day now the actual beginning of digging the foundation! We ask your prayers and continued support of this endeavor – and we will have more news and pictures for you in the spring.

On November 1, we had the joyful event of the Monastic Consecration of our Sr Maria! Her parents and several of her family members were able to come from Spain, and we were also joined by many of our local friends and neighbors.



For those called to the monastic way, the Solemn Profession of Vows is both an ending and a beginning. It concludes a long period of discernment on the part of both the community and the candidate, to determine whether God is indeed calling this person to this place. It begins a new phase in the life of both the community and the newly-professed Sister, as she takes her full place in its life and mission, its earthly and spiritual concerns, its joys and sorrows – and most importantly, its seeking to follow our Lord Jesus Christ ever more closely.



This year we also had the joy of welcoming two new members – both southerners! Jo Ann came from South Carolina and Joan from northern Virginia. We are now 15 Sisters, and are expecting another candidate soon.

Like all of you, we have followed recent world events with both anguish and hope. So much suffering! The path towards peace has been and is so arduous. And as on the world level, so within families and local communities. We too experience the demands of this. Our community has been called together by the Lord from many different countries and backgrounds. We are challenged daily to make room for the other, to welcome differences and to be enriched, not threatened, by these differences. We often reflect on the responsibility each of us has to be a peacemaker, a peace-bestower, wherever we are. It does not just happen; we have to work at it – in our own hearts first of all. Only then can it radiate outwards to the world so much in need of this peace and the joy it brings.



*With gratitude for your friendship, we wish you an abundance of peace and joy at Christmas and throughout the coming year.
The Sisters at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery – Crozet, Virginia*



*Front: Srs Francis, Maria, Kay, Mother Marion, Srs Kathy, Sophy, Claire
Back: Srs Joanna, Jan, Linda, Mary David, Jo Ann, Barbara, Myriam, Joan*