



Dear Friend:

*Christmas 2012*

The diminishing days, the lengthening nights – such is the common experience of winter in our northern hemisphere. Into this darkness breaks the light of Christmas. *I am the Light of the world.* The lights on our Christmas trees and in our windows are a symbol of this – a statement of the goodness of the light, an affirmation of our belief (perhaps only implicit) in the victory of light over darkness. The Gospel according to St John says this dramatically: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.* In most of us there is a mixture of light and darkness. Christmas invites us once again to welcome the One who comes to draw us out of darkness and make us children of the light.

*Long is our winter, dark is our night;  
O come set us free, O saving Light!  
O come dwell among us, O saving Light!*

(Anonymous German Carol)



*Srs Mary David, Barbara*

This year witnessed some special celebrations. There was the Silver Jubilee of our monastery on May 1, with much grateful reminiscing about the past 25 years, both the ups and the downs – each a blessing in its own way. Two of the original foundresses are still with us, so it was also a day of thanking them for their perseverance – Srs Mary David and Barbara - affectionately known locally as our two old bricks!



*Mother Marion, her sister Linda,  
brother-in-law Richard*

July brought the Golden Jubilee celebration of Mother Marion's Profession. Many members of her family joined us in honoring her liturgically and otherwise! Mother Marion has been the much-loved Superior of our community for the past 20 years, so it was a special joy for us to thank her for that, and to share in her gratitude to God for the graces of her 50 years of monastic life.



*Sr Kay*

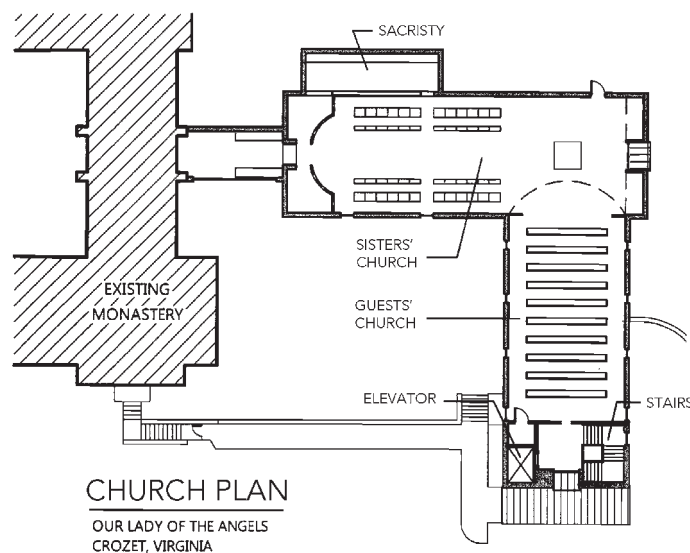
Those of you who come to worship with us will have noticed a new icon of Mary the Mother of God – *Theotokos* – in our chapel. This beautiful image was created by our Sr Kay at a special icon retreat workshop this year. We are blessed to be the recipients of Sr Kay's many gifts – as our 2<sup>nd</sup> Superior, bookkeeper, work list arranger, grounds keeper – and now student of iconography!



Another item of interest to share with you is the happy realization that our community has become quite international. Represented among us now are America, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, Middle East and Far East. You will notice this in the new faces in our community picture this year. Sr Nnaemeka came from our sister house in Nigeria (those of you who receive our cheese brochure have already seen her lovely smile there). Myriam Saint-Vilus came to us from Haiti via Florida, and entered as a postulant on June 15. Two other women spent a month here in our Observership program and hope to enter the community as postulants soon.

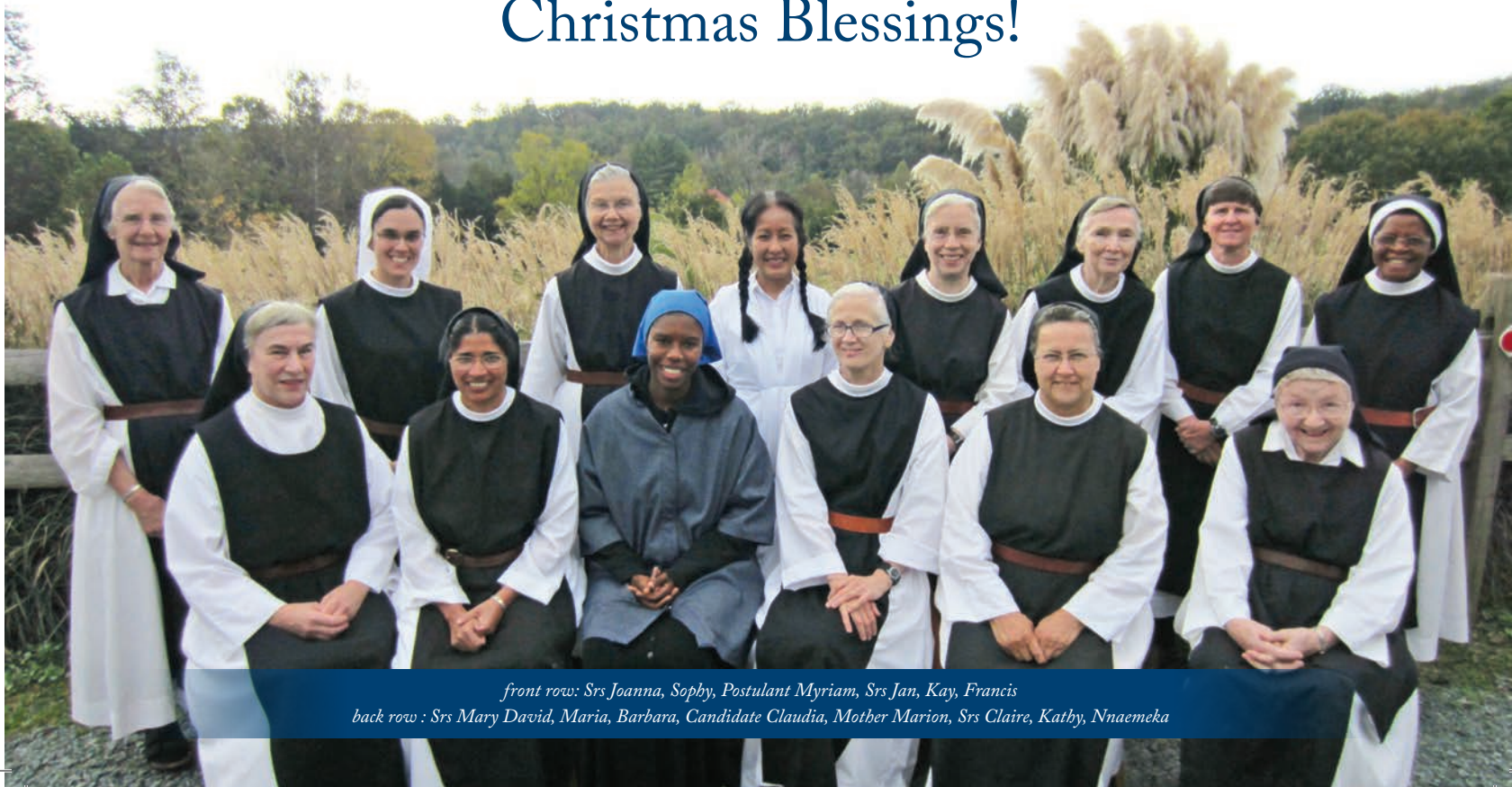
*Postulant Myriam*

With the increase in numbers, all the places are filled in our small chapel. So we are beginning in earnest with plans for a Church large enough for our growing community and our many guests. Our building committee has met with the architects over the past year, and we are moving towards a final design. The Church will have an east-west orientation and will extend out onto the hill on the right side of our present building. Under the Church we plan to have the Sisters' library and a welcome center for guests. Before we can proceed further we will have to obtain contributions to supplement the savings we have been able to put aside. We invite you to join us in building this house of prayer. Any financial contribution you can make will be gratefully received, and you will have a perpetual remembrance in the lives of all the Sisters. And as we move forward with this project, your prayers will be very much appreciated!



We began this letter with some reflections on darkness and light. Most of you have probably had the experience at night of seeing the glow from Church windows beaming out light into the surrounding darkness. This is an apt symbol of what Christian life is meant to be. It is what we try to do here, just as you seek to do this in your particular calling. In this *Year of Faith*, together we can help bring the light of Christ to the world.

## Christmas Blessings!



*front row: Srs Joanna, Sophy, Postulant Myriam, Srs Jan, Kay, Francis  
back row : Srs Mary David, Maria, Barbara, Candidate Claudia, Mother Marion, Srs Claire, Kathy, Nnaemeka*