

The Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King

1409 E. Meyer Blvd Kansas City MO 64131

<https://ssp.org/franciscansisters>

Fall 2021

CONVENT NEWS AND VIEWS...

Everybody loves a winner. We Sisters do not follow sports, but just a few years ago, even we could not help noticing the sea of blue surrounding us as we drove to the post office. Flapping blue flags protruded from both sides of the hood, roof, or trunk of vehicles. Men, women, and children, young and old, wore blue t-shirts with the names and numbers of their new-found heroes, or blue hats, or blue jackets, or even blue face-paint. Blue flags of various sizes, shapes, and prices hung from the balconies of houses. Dogs of all breeds sported blue bandannas or little blue shirts. We found cakes, cupcakes, and- was it cantaloupe? -- all dyed blue. Even the sky was blue.

The Kansas City Royals had made it to the World Series. Gone were the days of driving past a handful of yawning spectators in the top row of a nearly empty stadium on the way to the dentist. Gone were the days of the usual array of clothing colors that make up the background of one's every day experience. Blue was the color. The Royals were winners. Then they won the World Series. The victory parade that followed reached astonishing proportions; vehicles parked right near St. Vincent's Academy and fans walked several miles to the epicenter of the action. Some even climbed to the rooftops of nearby buildings to get a better view.

We will not pretend that we tried to ignore the entire event. The Sisters enjoyed watching the children talk excitedly about each game-- even those Sisters who did not know which way the batter is supposed to run, or which player is actually the batter. The enthusiasm that flows from victory is contagious, especially the enthusiasm of children, and we would hardly be human if we did not acknowledge that fact.

We just cannot help noticing an interesting phenomenon. Even before the virus, there came about the almost sudden turn-around in apparel, the absence of blue. We could check the statistics, but we presumed that the Royals stopped winning. Enthusiasm is



much harder to generate in such situations. Indeed, on the way to the dentist, the stadium was once again empty.

Let us change scenes and look back at the life of Our Lord. When He worked miracles, throngs of adoring fans followed him everywhere He went. One man's friends could not bring him close enough to Jesus, so they climbed the roof of the house and cut a hole in it to let down the man who needed healing.

Everyone followed Him. On Palm Sunday, the pennants were green, the parade glorious.

In the garden, Peter pulled out his sword. He knew Jesus could defeat the enemies before them without any difficulty. He had just watched them all fall to the ground at the mere sound of Our Lord's voice. He called out a question which was really a statement, a statement of "Let's get 'em!" He launched into the attack with zeal and made a mess. Our Lord cleaned up the mess and said to him in effect that this time, fighting a glorious hand-to-hand battle was not the answer. This time, they had to look like losers.

We all know what happened. Peter ran away. So did everyone else.

What about us? Are we ready to carry the colors of Christ through good times and bad? Are we ready to look like losers? Our Lord's message in the garden to the sleeping apostles was very clear— watch and pray. He warned them. He warns us. We cannot solve the problem our own way. We must watch and pray and let Him act in us. We are

all too quick to pull out the sword of our own will, especially in the most trying circumstances. The test is, what do we do when we realize that Our Lord wants us to put that sword back in the scabbard and face the enemy without a fight, looking like a loser? Watch and pray.

A non-believer looks at the crucifix and sees a loser. A Christian looks at the crucifix and sees The Winner. What do we see? Will we follow, and ignore the jeers of the Pharisees, or even ask forgiveness for them, as we hang on the cross God nails us to? Will we hide His colors in times of trial? Let us watch and pray. We are following The Winner, and it will be worth it.

Retreat and Ceremony



This year, Sister Cecilia Marie (right) took first vows, Sister Mary Immaculata and Sister Mary Elizabeth Rose (lower left) took final vows. Sister Imelda Marie (inset) also took final vows with our community.



Our two new novices: Sr. Michaela Marie of the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart (left,) and Sr. Maria-Agnes of the Blessed Sacrament (right.)



**THANK YOU
TO HIS EXCELLENCY,
BISHOP BERNARD FELLAY,
WHO PREACHED OUR RETREAT
AND CONDUCTED OUR CEREMONY.**

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In Memoriam



It felt like Good Friday when we heard that our confessor, Fr. Dominique Bourmaud, had died. Fr. Bourmaud spent eleven years in Kansas City, and for most of that time he served either as our regular confessor or as our extraordinary confessor. A Frenchman, he taught us classes, sometimes reading to us in English a book written in Spanish, without a single hesitation. He took us through his excellent book *One Hundred Years of Modernism*, humbly stating to us “the author says here that...” When the COVID restrictions prevented Bishop Fellay from entering the country in 2020, Fr. Bourmaud stepped in, preached our retreat, and conducted our ceremony. He always made jokes, with perfect understanding of American idioms. Father, “the priest with the peach-colored hair” as one kindergartner called him, went about his many duties quietly and efficiently. If you would like to unite with us in praying some or all of the suffrages our constitutions prescribe for confessors, they are: five Masses and communions, five stations of the cross, and five rosaries. Father’s unexpected death is no defeat. While we know that only Holy Mother Church can pronounce canonization, there are three facts that no one can deny: 1) Fr. Bourmaud made the First Saturdays. 2) Fr. Bourmaud died on First Saturday. 3) The Blessed Virgin Mary keeps her promises. *That is victory!*



On their way to ordinations, Sisters stopped in Lexington, KY at a non-descript section of a cemetery. They walked up and down the rows, checking the years, until at last they came upon the marker for Tom Penney. As will happen to all of us, his story has faded into the background of time, except to those in the Lexington area still living who might remember his name, or to anyone who has read the remarkable book *God Goes to Murderer’s Row*. Tom Penney, a notorious criminal, was executed in 1943 for the murder of a well-known golf pro. He converted to the Faith in prison and walked to the electric chair embracing his penance in a true spirit of contrition. His story is well worth reading and should inspire us with the hope that God can reach any soul.

In your charity, please also pray for the repose of the soul of Mr. George P. Dengler, father of Sr. Mary Clare, who was not Catholic, and who died September 19th.

Thank you to the Denver girls who helped us move books and paint this summer.



An outing with the new novices included a stop at the stunning confluence of the Mississippi (left) and Missouri (right) rivers. Lewis and Clark started their voyage at the confluence, which was in a different location at the time.



Loading up to drive to school! Nine Sisters are teaching Grades K-2, 7/8 Religion and Science, Art for various grades, and High School Religion, Literature, and Science.



Due to current construction conditions and the limited pool of rolled-tile roofers, we are still looking for an acceptable estimate and contractor for replacement of the roof on the Northeast corner of the convent building and the east sacristy area roof. We will keep the money set aside and watch the weather in hopes of finishing the job before winter.

Mother has decided that it is time to try again to finish painting the transept of our chapel. The transept tower is about 64 feet tall. After numerous discussions with those who favor lifts and those who favor scaffold, we have decided to erect scaffold.

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