

Letter 60
from the cloistered Dominicans
of Saint Joseph Monastery

Ave Maria
b

Nativity of Our Lord 2021



The Annunciation (Cathedral of Autun, France)

“Jesus’ origin is not like ours.

He is not born as we are of *the will of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man* (John 1:13); bringing to humanity the secret and the power of being born again in the Spirit, he is born of the woman and of the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God is the sovereign force. He orders the general evolution and presides the organized and progressive movement of the universe. Just as he intervened in chaos and matter to produce the being that feels, in the animality to produce the being that thinks, he will intervene in the being that thinks so that *Earth gives her fruit* (Ps. 66) and so that humanity sees *the Savoir budding forth, the Holy One, the Son of God*. (Luke 1:35)

The result of the divine intervention was only a creature; this time, the result is equal to the Infinite. (...)



Nativity from the Pyrenees

Jesus’ humanity comes only from his mother. He who comes to inaugurate the new race of the sons of God, escapes from the torrent of earthly generations: it is not a man who engenders him, it is the Spirit who summons him from the chaste womb of the Virgin. (...) The highest aspiration of humanity found in the Son of man a realization that surpasses it. God has become man; and the human nature, in Christ, has become the nature of a God. This being will be the center of all religious movement. Whosoever wants to reach God will rally themselves to him. He is the rock (Rom. 9:32) that rises up in the middle of time. Those who fall upon it will be broken; those who build upon it will no longer falter, they will form little by little the building, the city, the kingdom of God which is the supreme goal of all creation and for which all things await, long, and suffer.”

Reverend Father Didon, O.P. (1840-1900)

Community events

On August 6, in union with our sisters of the Monastery of the Immaculate and our teaching sisters with whom we have shared many Dominican “presents”, we celebrated the jubilee of the eight-hundred years of the death of our blessed Father Saint Dominic by different festivities in community.



Each one of us had the joy of receiving a holy card with the image of an illumination painted by one of our sisters and which represented one of St. Dominic’s nine manners of praying. Afterwards we performed a skit composed for the occasion during which the cross of the rosary opened the gate of Heaven as St. Peter’s keys had been stolen by the devil.

And a delightful surprise arrived from our dear Carmelites from Spokane. Under the coats of arms of our two Orders intertwined in the Sacred Heart they wrote: *Our Lord himself said to the Madre: “Rejoice with my friend” and he showed her St. Dominic... that is*

what we are going to do with all of our heart, united with all of you.

To close the day, after Compline we knelt at the choir-grill and sang the litany of our blessed Father before his icon exposed in the sanctuary.

During the month of September, Father Raymond, O.P. (superior of the traditional Dominican community, Brothers of Our Lady of the Rosary in Saint-Paul-de-Serre, France) preached our annual retreat. He used as guide the remarkable work of Fr. Lemonnyer O.P., *A l’exemple de notre Père.*

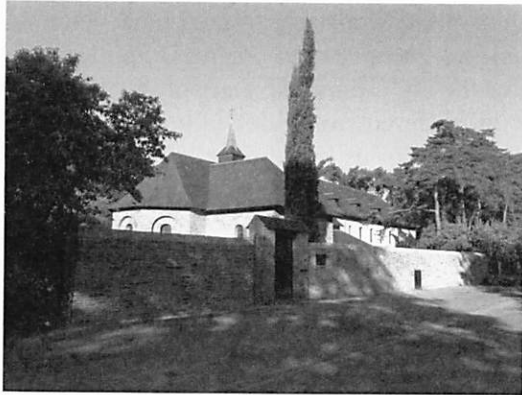
Mr. Bévillard, our Gregorian professor, came for a 5-day workshop to help us continue to improve our chant.

We conclude with a joyful event which crowned this year of Dominican jubilee: the entrance of a new postulant, under the gaze of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. We confide her to your prayers.



Updates on our projects

Phase ① finished: it covers all of the section non-cloistered of the Monastery, that is the church, the faithful's nef, the parlors.



Phase ② almost completed: it includes the buildings where the sisters live, all the way to the "Providence" (the cabin for the little daily deliveries).



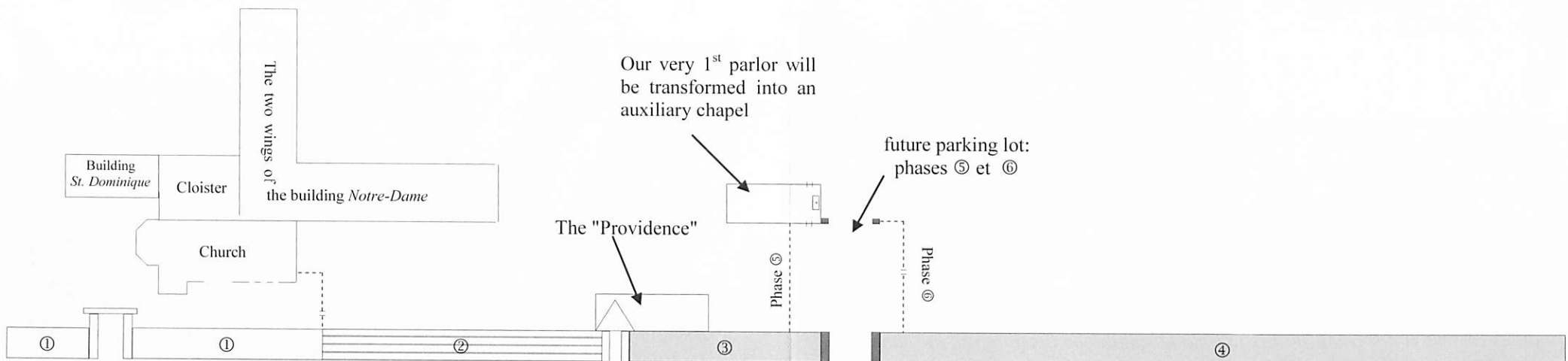
Phase ③ : from the "Providence" to our entrance gate.



Phase ④ : from the gate until the end of the property.



Construction of our cloister wall



For the feast of St. Francis, it is with an immense gratitude that we welcome the return of our masons who continue the cloister wall after a years halt. There are three of them and they work so quickly that we can see the wall growing before our eyes. Before Christmas, the second phase will almost be finished. In March, when winter weather has passed, the wall will receive its cap and the last coat of mortar.



Valiantly, the sisters clean up the wood cleared by our faithful "lumberjacks": the dump truck put at our disposition is soon filled ...

We live this grace of the unceasing ebb and flow of charity in the communion of saints. Already we offer you our profound gratitude!

The roofer came to repair several leaks in the roofs of two of our buildings that were due to moss and dirt having worked their way between the slates at the gutters' junctions. There was so much moss that while climbing down the roofer exclaimed: *It's a garden up there!*



... and well stuffed by two sisters who almost fall through the branches into the bin several times!

In the vegetable garden, things could only get better... If the 4 cantaloupes et watermelons were no bigger than tennis balls, the cucumbers regularly filled our plates, and even then we had enough to make pickles.

Two of our workers assisted at Compline and one of them shared with us his impression: *It's a chant that is not made simply for listening to, but that is made to elevate those that listen to it.*

*Monastère Saint-Joseph
10 avenue Jeanne de Laval
49240 Avrillé
FRANCE*



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Please consider making us beneficiaries of a will or life insurance: to the order of **A.M.D.A.** (**A**mis des **M**oniales **D**ominicaines d'**A**vrillé) We are most grateful. This remains the surest way to assure our daily needs and the permanence of our life consecrated exclusively to prayer.

Prayer requests can be sent to **PrayerIntentionsMSJ@gmail.com.**

*To preserve our life of silence and prayer, we do not reply, but be assured
that your intentions are remembered in our daily prayers.*

“Joseph understood the role that was confided to him in the birth of Jesus; he considered himself to be the guardian of two holy frailties, the virginity of his wife and the infancy of He who was to be born of her.



Saint Joseph (Cathedral of Autun)

Honest and gentle figure, this simple worker will have the glory of passing among the Jews as the father of the Nazarene, he will remain the model of abnegation, devotion and fidelity. His name will be added to the two names that are most loved on this earth, the name of Mary and the name of Jesus. The Christian Church does not separate them in its Liturgy; in the middle of its trials, throughout the ages, weighed down by its human frailty, the Church will lift its eyes to this predestined and will call him its invisible protector.”

Reverend Father Didon

Dear Friends,

The depth of these beautiful texts lead us to the secret of Christmas: to the Little One. With his elect, the shepherds and Wisemen, let us linger at his feet, let us never forsake Him. He who only knows how to love is the ultimate beggar of Love. Today more than ever.

Mother Prioress