



## Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will



“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs.” *Luke 18:16-17*



### ADVENT...we don't have to wait!

Let's face it...we're always in a rush. We wish our lives away, hurrying towards what we think is better, what we think will make us happier. Who wouldn't gladly swap the five day work week for a two day weekend? Christmas shopping begins and decorations go up before Thanksgiving leftovers have even made their way back to the dinner table. And in essence, there's nothing really wrong with that. The Sabbath rest was made for man to enjoy and the birth of Our Savior is certainly something to yearn for. However, if the reason for our hurry is sincerely to encounter God as quickly as possible, we don't need to break the speed limit any longer. Holy Mother Church, in Her great Wisdom, prepares us for the coming of Our Infant Lord with Advent – a season that purposely celebrates the idea of *waiting*, not rushing – because She knows that in the waiting, we can also find Christ. Just take it from St. Joseph...

*“What must have coursed through Joseph during those months when he had at his side and under his very eyes the hidden God! Can we doubt that Joseph must often have adored Jesus hidden in the pure tabernacle of Mary? How fervent that adoration must have been...He saw nothing, yet he believed; his faith had to pierce the virginal veil of Mary. So likewise with you! Under the veil of the Sacred Species your faith must see Our Lord. Ask St. Joseph for his lively, constant faith.” ~ St. Peter Julian Eymard*

### Oh Come Let Us Adore Him...

Beginning on December 25<sup>th</sup>, as a birthday gift to our newborn King, the Benedictine Daughters will be kicking off all-day Eucharistic Adoration at the parish of San Lorenzo in Talamello. Owing to the famous 14<sup>th</sup> century painting from the school of Giotto that hangs above the main altar, the church – also known as the Santuario del Santo Crocifisso - receives several visitors everyday who seek to pray before the reportedly miraculous crucifix. In honor of the Feast

of the Triumph of the Cross, we initiated a daily afternoon schedule of Adoration at the Sanctuary back in September, hoping to draw both pilgrims and local residents who still may feel a bit shy coming to pray before the Blessed Sacrament in our own convent chapel. However, this Christmas we want to do more for Jesus. By extending the schedule to include morning hours of Exposition as well, more people will have the opportunity to spend some time with Our Eucharistic Lord.





Taking our cue from the angels in Bethlehem, we want to proclaim “good news of great joy that will be for all

the people.” For the Word has been made flesh and really and truly dwells among us in the Blessed

Sacrament, waiting to be visited, loved, and adored by all.

Currently we have enough sisters to maintain six hours of Eucharistic Adoration in the parish church and five hours in our private chapel. With four new vocations on their way in the next few months, we hope to be able to expose Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for nine hours daily in each location. Please pray that our community continue to grow, for the more sisters Our Heavenly Father sends us, the more we can adore His Son.



## When you’re little, you don’t make mistakes...

That’s what our newest postulant learned, anyway, when a case of mistaken identity led her exactly where God wanted her. 28-year old Annunziata Ciricosta, native of Calabria, had spent the past six years in London, originally seeking adventure but inevitably discovering a deep love for Lord and the Catholic faith with which she was raised. Contrary to popular belief, though, adventure and faith don’t have to be mutually exclusive. In fact, they’re usually not. There, “Nunzia” met people from various cultures with whom she could share and strengthen her relationship with Christ. She uncovered the joy of daily mass and Eucharistic Adoration, learned a new language, studied photography, and traveled the world ...even to the point of walking where Jesus walked in the Holy Land. But Nunzia made her most influential pilgrimage last summer when she visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland, meeting a community of sisters dressed in white that would change her life. Nope...not us.

The Polish sisters counseled her a bit regarding the spiritual life and the discernment of her religious

vocation, suggesting that she look into a religious community with white habits from Italy who visited the shrine a year earlier and had very much impressed them. Still not us. However, when they jumped online and researched together, that’s when our website popped up...though no one realized the mix-up. Falling in love with the Benedictine Daughter charism, Nunzia contacted us immediately. She didn’t even seem fazed once the situation was clarified, peacefully trusting in God’s mysterious ways. For her, this was indeed the answer to a 54-day Rosary novena she had made to Our Lady of Pompei, asking the Blessed Virgin to show her the path she must take. After various emails, skype conversations, and a vocation visit, Nunzia officially entered the Benedictine Daughters as a postulant on the evening of November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Feast of All Saints.



**Sister Nunzia and Mother Gabrielle Marie preparing the Thanksgiving turkey**

When we entrust everything to Jesus and Mary like little children, we, in fact, can’t make

mistakes. Either Mom and Dad fix whatever we mess up or the “mistake” is all part of God’s plan. So cast away any doubts, fears, and indecision and instead choose to “trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” (*Proverbs 3:5*)

## Another little house of Nazareth...

...at least with God's grace, that's the goal. Thanks to your prayers and the generosity of our bishop, Msgr. Andrea Turazzi, the Benedictine Monks of Divine Will have been provided with a monastery to set up their own little house of Nazareth in our diocese – *La Pieve di Carpegna*, translated as the rural church of Carpegna. Striving to model their lives after the Holy Family, our brothers, like us, seek to accomplish nothing "big" on the outside. Our greatest ambition involves simply learning to love God and neighbor as Jesus, Mary and Joseph did in Nazareth, fulfilling God's Most Holy Will in all things.

"The guys", as we affectionately like to call them, officially began their "little" mission with an entrance mass celebrated by Father Elijah Joseph on the evening of October 6<sup>th</sup>, feast day of St. Bruno, founder of the Carthusian order. The millennia-old church,

now entrusted to Fr. Elijah and his community, was packed with both old and new friends, including three priests from the diocese who concelebrated the mass and wished to offer their prayers and fraternal support. Two young men, Ander Andreani and Michele Magini, received the Benedictine crucifix as a sign of their commitment to the community, said good-bye to their family and friends, and started on their monastic adventure together.

Since then, Fr. Elijah has been able to bring daily mass and Eucharistic Adoration back to the country church as well as introduce weekly Divine Will prayer meetings, all while forming the two new monks under his care. If you feel the Lord may be calling you to be a part of their family or just want more information about the Benedictine Monks, you can contact Father Elijah Joseph at [padreelijah@gmail.com](mailto:padreelijah@gmail.com).



La Pieve di  
Carpegna



*A big shout out to the 45 pilgrims from Texas who honored us with their visit on the last day of their Italian pilgrimage back in November. The afternoon we shared together is one we will never forget. Thank you for everything!!!*

## Every little bit helps

The renovation process on our convent is now approaching the two year mark. We didn't have enough funds to repair and update everything all at once, but thanks to your responses to our pleas for help, little by little we have been able to transform our aged house into a more suitable place to live. However, as the work moves forward and we continue to prepare for our growing community, more

necessary adjustments seem to keep popping up.

Being right in the center of the town without much private outdoor space, we are currently trying to turn our modest backyard into an adequate substitute for the cloistered grounds that most monasteries enjoy. A simple, safe place where our sisters can spend some quiet time outside, grow vegetables, cultivate flowers for our chapel, or pray before the statue of Our Lady. At this point, we still need to make the pathway leading from our basement to the yard a much safer area to walk through, including the total reconstruction of all the steps. A centuries-old wall in the yard itself has begun to collapse and must be rebuilt before it completely falls into our garden. Once these projects are finished, our roof also requires repairs that we have tried to put off for as long as we could.



Basement stairway



Backyard entrance

In addition to the cost of renovations, our winter utility bills have also become a heavy expense (despite keeping our heat as low as possible to conserve energy). Would you prayerfully consider helping us to meet these needs with a financial contribution? We greatly appreciate any assistance you can afford, for in the eyes of God, no amount is too small. You can make a one-time donation by credit/debit card or sign up for automatic monthly payments on the "Donations" page of our website ([www.benedictinesofdivinewill.org](http://www.benedictinesofdivinewill.org)). Or simply send a check or money order to the address of our non-profit organization listed to the right. . .

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Please be assured that each and every one of you will be remembered in all of our prayers this Holy Advent and Christmas season. If you'd like to unite with us in praying a novena in preparation for Holy Christmas beginning on December 16th, you can download *The Nine Excesses of Love in the Incarnation of the Word* from the "Family Tree" page of our website. Just scroll down to Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta.

**A Merry Christmas and Blessed  
New Year to you all!**