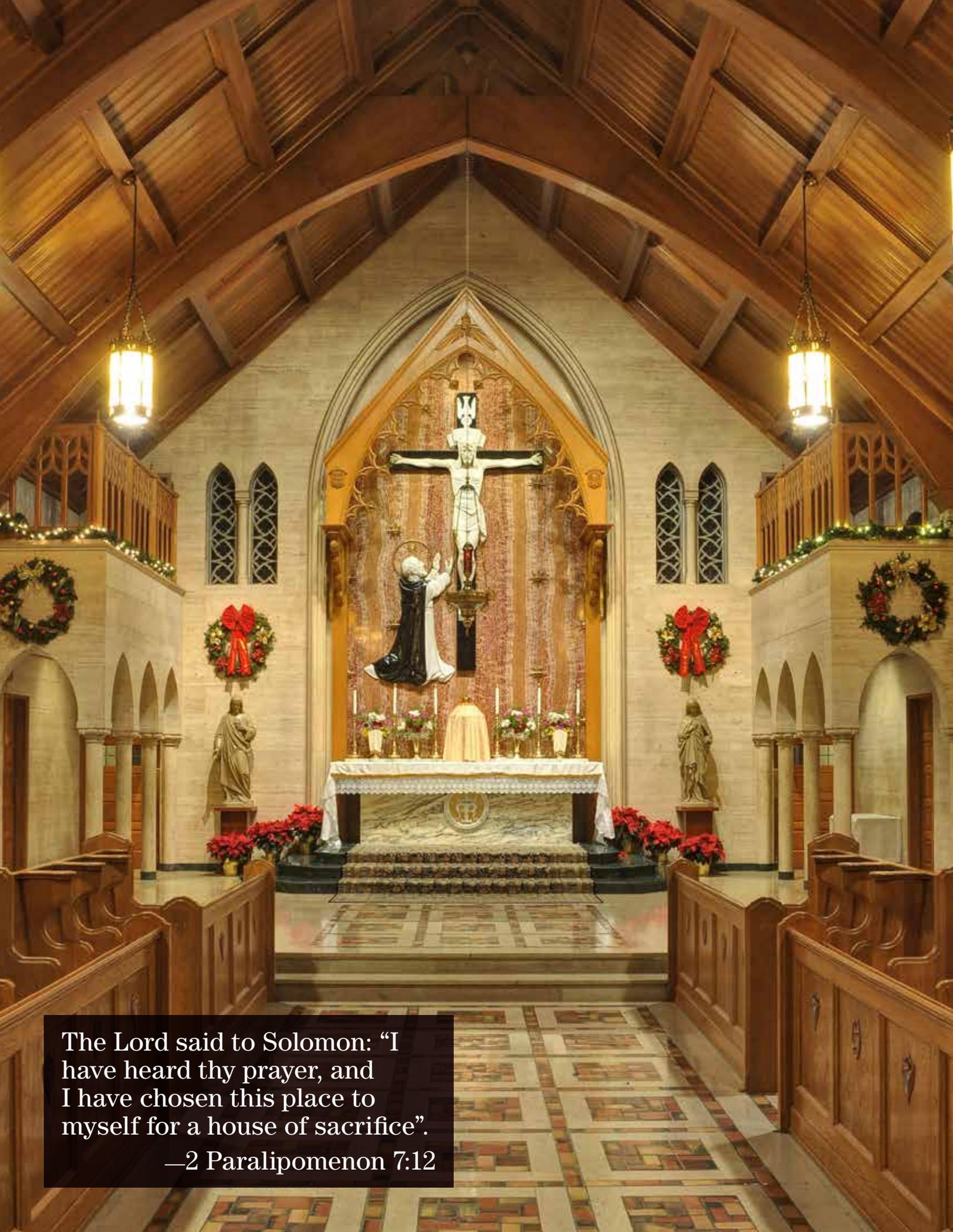




S S P X



Holy
Angels
Novitiate



The Lord said to Solomon: “I have heard thy prayer, and I have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice”.

—2 Paralipomenon 7:12



Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The Prince of Peace is born! St. Ambrose tells us at Christmas Matins, that the birth of Christ is the beginning of the nascent Church. What was the grand picture concerning the coming of our Savior? It was to establish in the world His Messianic Kingdom, a spiritual Kingdom. It is a Kingdom in which He would rule by grace, by charity, by truth, and by humility. A Kingdom in which mankind, using his own free will here on earth, would choose to live in this Kingdom with Christ as head.

In the Old Testament there are prophecies, telling of His lineage, the time of His birth, the place of His birth, His future suffering, and even a future grace, which would be given to mankind...a cleansing of mankind and a regeneration. Sin was not always to be predominating among men. God would sprinkle them with clean water and infuse a new spirit within them to transform their hearts. Now this knowledge was already something, but as compared to the New Testament this was very limited knowledge of the Savior.

Blessed are we who now live in the time of the New Testament. We are beyond privileged. Being born in the time of the New Covenant is such a blessing. We now know thousands of details written in the scriptures of our God and Savior... His words, His actions, His parables, His miracles, His prophecies and often detail events of the angels, of His apostles, His mother, the holy virgin, His foster father St. Joseph and the list goes on.

The Child has come to spread His Kingdom. Its extent is universal, all lands, seas and peoples. It is a Kingdom of humility, peace, tranquility, order, joy, life, and happiness. We are children of God. He is born so that we can be members now in His family. He wants to share His Divinity with us. He gives us special help to improve, to walk, to advance closer and closer to Him. This is His Spiritual Kingdom. We as Catholics are all a part of it.

Are we advancing? Do we work with Jesus to save souls daily? Our morning offering should be dedicated to His service, whether we are at prayer or at work or caring for children. Again, we are privileged to know all about Our Savior in this time of the New Testament. Learn more about Him, read the gospels. Each day we can reflect on His goodness, His mercy, His example. Thank the Savior for allowing you to be a part of His Kingdom. The time of grace is now. Continue to celebrate His arrival. Come let us adore Him.

Be sure to read Father Dean's excellent article: We are saved by Hope. Currently we are saving our money to make repairs to our outdoor staircases which have taken a beating from the winters here in Winona. We are also saving money to purchase a new van in order to transport priests, brothers and retreatants. In April we will have a priests meetings for ninety priests.

We are most grateful for your support and sacrifices made on behalf of our religious brothers and priests. So, we trust in your continued support to upkeep this beautiful property for our religious brothers. The brothers pray the rosary daily for our friends and benefactors. May God grant you many blessings in this new year to assist you and your families to imitate the virtues of Our Lord and His Holy Mother.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,
Father Charles J. Ward
Rector

We are Saved by Hope

By Fr. Kenneth Dean

“We are saved by hope.” This short, but striking statement comes to us as the Word of God, penned by St. Paul to the Romans (8, 24). It is all the more striking when we realize that hope is not the greatest of the Christian virtues. “The greatest of these is charity”, says St. Paul, “which is ‘the bond of perfection’”. Also a certain primacy must go to faith, since without faith it is impossible to please God. And then there is hope.

Hope is the least of the theological virtues. But this does not mean it is unessential or unnecessary. In fact, hope is absolutely indispensable for us to reach eternal life. Here we must recall that all three virtues: faith, hope, and charity have God Himself as their object and end. This means that we directly believe God, hope in God, and love God; and God Himself is the reward of believing, hoping, and loving Him. This is incredibly important for us to understand. Our faith, hope, and charity are not based on, or rely upon anything other than God Himself. And when it comes to hope this truth cannot be over-emphatized because the consequences are crucial.

“We insist here, that the foundation of Christian hope is not one’s own merits, but the infinite merits of Christ; not one’s own goodness and justice, but the infinite goodness and mercy of God,” says Fr. Eugene Boylan. And he adds, “We hope in God, because it is upon His infinite power that we rely to bring us

to Himself, and because it is upon His goodness and mercy that we count to move Him to do so, and not upon our own merits.” “...we cannot hope with a sure confidence for happiness except from Him Whom we know to be able and to be willing to give it...” To this we can add the beautiful words of St. Thomas Aquinas: “Hope is not based upon grace already possessed, but upon the Divine omnipotence and mercy, by which even he who has not got grace, can obtain it so that he may reach eternal life. Anyone who believes in God can be certain of the omnipotence of God and of His mercy.”

The real beauty of these words is in the fact that they are true. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, hope reaches out to God, relies upon God, and attains God. We hope for the infinite good which is God Himself, and we rely on the infinite power – which alone is capable of leading to infinite good, and this power is God Himself. This is why we can truly say that “we are saved by hope” – this is saying that we are saved by God, by relying upon God; while salvation itself is the attainment of God.

And yet... hope is also concerned with this world. We are not speaking here about human hopes, no; these are merely natural desires. We are speaking about the virtue of hope which also reaches for anything that is needed or useful to attain our ultimate



Vows Ceremony in late September. Seven members receive the habit. Brother John Evangelist made his 1st Profession and Brother Boniface made his perpetual vows.

end, which is God. According to the Venerable Louis of Grenada: “There are four principal matters about which hope is concerned. The first is the happiness of the life to come; the second is the pardon of sins, which are impediments to attaining eternal life; the third is the granting of our petitions; and the fourth is the assistance of God in the midst of our labors and temptations. The virtue of hope pertains to all these matters and to those things that are related to them...”

The importance of hope becomes obvious when we consider how ubiquitous is the lack of hope. This lack of hope can take two forms, and both are devastating for the soul – presumption and despair. Presumption is not, as some may think, an excess of hope. In fact, we can never have too much hope, because hope is founded in God, not ourselves. Presumption is rather a distortion of hope. It can take two forms: when we consider eternal life is attainable by our own efforts without the help of grace; or when we expect to be saved without repenting of our sins. Both these forms are common in the modern world where heaven is simply thought of as something that is owed to everyone.

Sometimes it might seem like a fine line between confidence and presumption – but they are really the result of completely different spirits. One is self-centered – presumption; while the other is God-centered

– confidence. Can my confidence in God be misplaced? Yes, if it is based on error. For example, if I don’t believe God hates sin, then I won’t consider sinning as anything serious, and will think God brushes it off without thinking much of it. True confidence is not deceived about anything – neither the infinite goodness of God; nor the gravity of sin. Yet it realizes that the first is so much greater than the second.

Despair as a sin is a lack of hope. According to Josef Pieper: “Today when we speak of despair we are usually referring to a psychological state into which an individual “falls” almost against his will. However, as a sin, despair refers to a decision of the will – not a mood, but an act or decision. Hence not something into which one falls, but something that one decides.”

True despair results from thinking that eternal salvation is impossible to attain because of one’s sins or sinful tendencies. Despair is the sin that the devil wants everyone to fall into. Why? Because it removes from us the very real chance or hope of salvation. One who loses hope will no longer try; one who loses hope will not make the acts of hope needed to be saved. A despairing soul has relied too much upon self, and self has utterly failed. The answer is not “you need to try harder”; no, the answer is to turn from self to God. Hope is not based on our own efforts or merits; but those of Jesus Christ. Despair comes about

from a wrong orientation: looking at self too much and relying upon self too much. Hope looks at God and His infinite goodness and mercy. Hope relies on the passion and infinite merits of Jesus. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven; so long as we don't lose hope. St. Thomas Aquinas says, "If sin could truly *not* be forgiven, then it would *not* be a sin to doubt the forgiveness of sin."

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, while presumption and despair are both mortal sins (if fully consented to), yet despair is the greater sin. "Because of His infinite goodness, it is more proper to God to spare and show mercy than it is to punish. For mercy belongs to God by reason of His nature, while He only punishes because of our sins."

Hope is often compared to an anchor. "In this tempestuous sea of life, where new storms arise every hour, hope is the anchor by which we must be safely secured." No matter what happens in this world, nothing can make us lose our hope of eternal life, because it does not rely upon anything in this world. Hope keeps us fixed on God and immovable, as an anchor does for a boat.

Hope may also be compared to a buoy or life vest. It keeps us afloat so we won't get submerged by discouragement or despair. In the words of Ven. Louis of Granada: "The Christian needs the virtue of hope because sin has left him poor and naked and there is no other remedy but to lift his eyes to God and hope for

divine assistance in the midst of so many evils, many of which cannot be cured except by God." Hope lifts us up in this world by keeping our eyes fixed on the real remedy for all evil: the goodness of God, and the merits of Jesus Christ.

In a religious house, hope finds its place in everyday life. A religious has made his or her own the task of becoming spiritually perfect. A daunting thing, no doubt. After all, who is perfect? And who thinks they can ever be perfect? This does not happen simply by our own efforts – no way! But this is where hope comes to the rescue. A faithful religious remembers that, although he must do his part, he cannot *rely* on his part to be perfect, or in fact, to be anything at all. He must rely on the merits of Christ, and the infinite goodness and mercy of God. And, yes, all things are possible with God – even perfection, or we might say, especially perfection.

And the faithful religious who has given his life for Christ, remembers the promise of Christ, "And everyone who has left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or lands for my sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting." A religious is relying on God and His explicit promise, to get to heaven – but also to enjoy a kind of heaven on earth – the "hundred-fold". This comes from giving up everything for God, and the close union with God and His will. And all this *is* possible – but only through hope.

There are many remedies today which claim to be good for various conditions affecting our health – physical remedies, herbal remedies, pharmaceutical remedies, etc. Yet the most universal of all of remedies is the one given by God – the virtue of hope. As Ven. Louis of Grenada said, "*Hope is one of the greatest treasures in the Christian life, for it is the common remedy for all the miseries of this life.*"



Our community of Brothers is growing.



Our parishioners helped us process more than 100 crates of apples from our orchard.



Brothers work on processing lambs in our new butcher shop.

Holy Angels Novitiate is the house of formation for the Brothers of the Society of Saint Pius X in the United States.

The Brothers of the Society are religious dedicated to the glory of God through the service of His priests. They accomplish this primarily through the observance of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—the foundations of Catholic religious life through the centuries—by their prayers and by their example. They also assist the priests of the Society in their apostolates in many different ways according to the needs of each individual priory. Brothers are currently engaged in teaching catechism, serving Mass, maintaining sacristies, and directing choirs. They also care for the material needs of the priests by cooking, performing maintenance, accounting, and completing innumerable small but useful tasks.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, founder of the Society of Saint Pius X and its Brothers, recognized the dignity and value of the Brothers' vocation when he exhorted them to be the "guardian angels of our communities." It was his wish that each priory of the Society would eventually have a resident religious Brother. This wish can only be realized through the selfless response of many souls to Christ's call together with the generosity of our benefactors. God will certainly reward all of them abundantly.

Donation Information

Please make out checks or money orders in US dollars only to: "Holy Angels Novitiate."

Holy Angels Novitiate

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Upcoming Events:

- Men's Ignatian Retreat:
June 3rd - 8th
- Young men's vocation retreat:
July - dates TBA

Visit Our New Website:

www.holyangels-novitiate.com/en

—Please do not send cash since this is against US Postal Regulations.