

FRATERNITE

NOTRE DAME

Thanksgiving 2023

Dear friends,

This is the time of Thanksgiving.

God is good; He is merciful for us all, and may we not forget that our giving thanks must be expressed each day in our lives, for this God of Love holds us in his hands and ardently desires that we may live for Him.

For Him of course, but He also requests us all through our life that we would help others; those around us, those with whom we live day after day, but also all the other people who suffer in their heart or in their body.

Do not forget that the hand stretched out is the hand of Christ; that the poor or the sick person's gaze, is the gaze of Christ.

May you have a compassionate heart, a heart that suffers with those who suffer; that cries with those who cry; thus, peace shall reign into your hearts and you will always remain in thanksgiving!

Also, let us behold the Virgin Mary, singing her Magnificat, her thanksgiving; this Thank You which still resounds into our hearts, to this very day.

To each and every one, I wish a joyous Thanksgiving celebration, so that you may be able to spend, together as a family, some hours of joy and happiness.

*Most Reverend Bishop Jean Marie +smd
Founder of Fraternite Notre Dame*

Happy Thanksgiving



- In Peoria, IL assistance to the homeless -



Chicago, IL long line of the poor -



- Detroit, MI food pantry
for families in distress -



- Wisconsin, clothes and food
assistance to needy families -

Dear friends,

A 4-year-old boy said to his mom every time he passed our church in Scranton, Pennsylvania, “*Daddy’s in that church!*” After insisting, the mother came to see us. In fact, the father had been killed in Honduras two years earlier, in front of the little boy. The mother, after this tragedy, fled to the United States. When she met our Nuns, she told them her story and her desire to be baptized. A few months later, the baptism took place, officiated by His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie, after the inauguration ceremony of our Scranton, PA church.

Now, during the baptism, the little boy saw his dad, all in white, smiling at him and going up to the top of the church; then he disappeared. The little one started looking for his daddy everywhere in the church pews. His mother was crying, so happy, because she knew that her husband had went up to Heaven.

In this new church of Scranton, many ceremonies took place during the month of July. The baptism of an adult, and many other baptisms of children. But also and most of all, the Reconciliation of this house of God - dedicated to Our Lady of Fréhou – and entirely renovated by the religious of Fraternite Notre Dame. This church, which was once sad and dark, has received a real brushstroke to become a magnificent Marian Sanctuary, under the name of Our Lady of the Assumption. His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie is the author of this magnificent change. He saw and planned every detail, from the small frame of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the large Crucifix that dominates the entrance. Although the sanctuary is large, there is a feeling of closeness. Marble colonnades surround the Blessed Virgin as well as golden angels. The choir is very light and colorful with shimmering mosaics, in the grand traditions of the church. It is both simple and grandiose. We feel good in this holy place, under the gaze of Mary.

All this was solely made possible through the hard work of the religious of Fraternité Notre Dame, who deploy an impressive number of activities on a daily basis. For example, 100,000 onions planted at our Hermitage in Wisconsin, for the benefit of our works; hundreds of cakes made by our Pastry Sisters, all handcrafted and organic; hundreds of pies! This hard work is meant so that we may realize the projects that His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie undertakes with courage. The Blessed Virgin asks a lot of him in this age of the end times! The poor cry out for help and come from everywhere. They are suffering; they must be fed and comforted. We also ought to restore hope and lift up the discouraged hearts. This is why churches are so important: safe havens where God can be found.

In Scranton, we had the grace to attend the Vesture Ceremony for two of our Nuns. Our young Sisters proceeded

- Assistance to the Homeless :
- San Francisco, CA (on the left)
- New York, NY (on the right)-



into the nave, wearing full wedding dresses. Then, they attended the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, under their light veil of snowy tulle. It was very moving to see these young girls give themselves to Jesus Christ, fully aware of their approach and overflowing with joy. Outside, before the ceremony, a plane passed over our church steeple, pulling a large banner that read: "Fraternite Notre Dame – St Mary Assumption". This surprise was signed by Bishop Jean Marie, who always does his best for the glory of God, and also to please the people.

The next day, one of our Deacons, Brother Louis Marie de Jésus, was ordained a priest. Thus, two new little novices and one new priest. We so much need zealous Nuns and Priests, working toward the salvation of souls, in these days when hardly anyone thinks about the eternal truths. His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie constantly reminds us that we must save our souls; shun the web and its traps; lead a holy life and love our neighbor.

Loving our neighbor is what our Peoria, IL Priests and Nuns do when they serve the homeless in the street, at night. The distribution of the meal never begins without the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, which the poor demand. A lady on the street told them, "I'm fine, because I have God with me." However, she has nothing and she is all by herself. This gives food for thought...

A long line of people surrounds our church in Chicago for the weekly food pantry distribution. Literally hundreds of people! Among them,

many immigrant families from Latin America, fleeing their country where terror wreaks havoc. The young children made the journey on foot with their parents, all the way to the United States. Charity urges us to help them and also to help those in the neighborhood who lack everything. The food package will delight them, as will the fruits and vegetables. The children run up and down the long waiting line. Little hands and very cute faces smile at us and tell us that they are hungry. A little girl from Ecuador who was given eggs, wants something else and makes big gestures. We finally understand that she wants oil: "You give me eggs; but I need oil too!"

The food distribution in New York City also accommodates hundreds of families. It is difficult to gather enough food for so many people. One day, the Nuns had barely any vegetables. Very embarrassed and bothered from the fact, they began the distribution anyway. Suddenly, a truck comes up to deliver them a hundred boxes of fresh vegetables! Providence is watching.

At our free restaurant in San Francisco, a dad testified that, thanks to our regular help providing them with meals, his family was able to get by. They now have an apartment in which to live. The dad has a job and their life has become normal anew, even though they were on the street. This food was essential for them. See, dear friends, how important it is to support our charitable works!

Another case is of a family, living on the street in Detroit, MI, very close to our mission. The

aunt lives in her car because she had an argument with her husband. The niece, who is pregnant, is in a moldy, broken camper van, with her two young children. This is another complicated situation, where hatred and misery go hand in hand. During the waiting period to obtain a suitable apartment before winter, the Nuns provide them with everything they need to survive: hot meals; clean clothes and supplies, and the little girls actually attend their after-school program. As I write these lines for you today, I learn that the young mother has lost her baby...

Also in Detroit, a gentleman had seen our church vandalized, and was praying for someone to take action. Much, much later, his sister had a doctor's appointment and as he entered the doctor's address into his GPS, the device took him directly to our church, which was not in the same area at all. So, they saw our renovated church. They found this incredible and took it as a sign from the Good God.

Our schools are booming. They educate poor children who discover the value of work performed properly; effort and good humor. If it were not for Bishop Jean Marie, they would never

have been able to learn all of this. How sweet it is to see these little ones, happy and grateful!

At our Hermitage in Wisconsin, how many poor families were helped through our visits! Elderly people; children. Our less fortunate good friends come to collect their packages from the weekly food pantry distribution. There, they also meet new people and meet up again over the weeks. Joy lives into their hearts despite their problems. They feel deep gratitude towards our good Founding Father, His Excellency Bishop Jean Marie from whom they receive so many benefits; and his prayer definitely assists them.

Dear friends, we live in difficult and uncertain times. The future appears to be gloomy, but charity shows us the path to follow. It expands the heart as much for the one who gives alms as for the one who receives them. We need your help; we need your compassion. Help us to come to the aid of so much misery. Our world will become a better place, and you will have your share of the Blessings of the merciful God.

*Sister Marie Virginie
of the Epiphany of the Lord +snd*

- Detroit, MI: Visit to a pregnant woman living in a moldy, broken camper van, with her two young children. -



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