

Benedictine Monastery  
**Notre-Dame de Toute Confiance**  
(Our Lady of Complete Confidence)

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Amid this world that is going to ruin, we often hear the questions: "What should we do? Is there anything that can be done?" For centuries man has been evolving between two equally disordered attitudes, which we will sum up by the words "Pelagianism"<sup>1</sup> and "Quietism"<sup>2</sup>. Either man believes that it is he who will procure salvation and that it is up to him to do everything, or else he believes on the contrary that he has nothing to do and that it is up to God to do everything. It is clear that the brothers of Pelagianism are voluntarism and authoritarianism, the human pride which says: "Me, I will save the world!" We also see that the sisters of Quietism are laziness, pusillanimity, and resignation; the human weakness which says: "Oh me? I am not capable!" Between these two extremes, the wisdom of the saints teaches us the

middle path: *Virtus in medio stat* (virtue is in the middle path).

Let us admire Saint Joan of Arc, during the famous and sublime Trial of Rouen. (We just read her life in the refectory in honor of her centenary anniversary as secondary patroness of France<sup>3</sup>). In her simplicity and inspired from on high, she found the succinct formula to the trick question, "But can't God give victory without a battle?" She answered, "The men of arms will fight, and God will give the victory," and also, "God does nothing if man does not want anything." Her contemporaries testified, "She will always do what depends on her." That is the key; everything depends on God and everything depends on man. That is the meaning of the popular adage,



Joan of Arc  
attacking Orléans  
(Lenepveu)



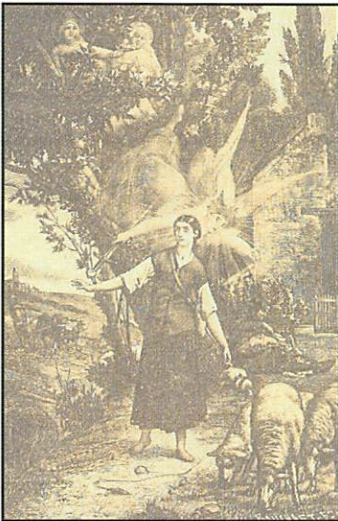
“Heaven helps those who help themselves.” This other adage has the same meaning, “We must pray as if everything depended on God and act as if everything depended on man.” It is as sterile to pray without acting (i.e. without self-conversion, without doing one's duty of state, without practicing charity) as it is to act without praying (because the action will not be made fruitful and super-naturalized by God). “I created you without you; I will not save you without you,” God said to Saint Augustine who himself transmitted to us, “We must do what we can and ask God for the rest.”

Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus says the same thing with a very eloquent image: If a small child tries to climb a large staircase, he puts his small foot on the first step but does not manage to climb; he tries and tries again. After a while, the merciful mother will take him in her arms and help him climb the stairs easily. This little child is an image of us who want to climb the steep staircase of perfection. We



Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus

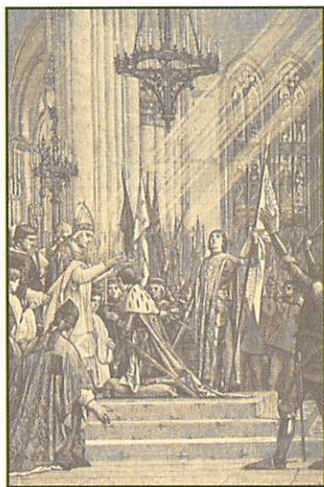
have to continually try without getting discouraged. After a while, the Good Lord will take us in His arms and will lift us up to Him. (But if we don't try, He won't do anything).



St. Michael, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret speak to Joan and send her to France  
(Lenepveu)

Here is another more recent example close to home: our singing teacher has just left us after a week of work during which she repeated, “You have to be relaxed but energetic when you sing.” Here is the problem, we confuse being relaxed with being soft, we confuse energy with stiffness! Poor us! May Saint Joan of Arc help us to find the happy middle path: to combine peace and strength,





Joan of Arc holding her standard at the coronation of Charles VII, in Reims

joy and the cross, gentleness and firmness, trust in God and devotion to His service. And to be encouraged, let us listen to what St. Joan's voices (St. Michael, St. Catherine and St. Margaret) whispered to encourage her, "Take everything in stride; have a pleasant countenance; do not worry about your martyrdom." We conclude with Our Lord's words, "Without Me, you can do nothing," (John 15:5), and finish by saying with Saint Paul, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4,13).

Lift up your hearts! Long live Christ the King!

Sr. Claire,  
Prioress

<sup>1</sup>Pelagianism: heresy of Pelagius, a 5th century monk, who said that man works his salvation through his own strength. Saint Augustine answered him by demonstrating the impotence of man to arrive at salvation without the help of grace.

<sup>2</sup>Quietism: error of a 17th century Spanish priest, Molinos, who taught that the soul, perfect and lost in God, is in such quietude that it no longer has to worry about acting. This error led to the negation of the duties of man and of the duties of the Christian.

<sup>3</sup> Saint Joan of Arc was canonized on May 16, 1920, by Pope Benedict XV. On March 2, 1922, Pius XI, in the same document, confirmed Our Lady of the Assumption as the principal patroness of France and declared Saint Joan of Arc secondary patroness.

### Bibliography:

1. "Joan of Arc by Herself and her Witnesses" by Régime Pernoud
2. "The Trial of Rouen" by Jacques Trémolet de Villers
3. "The Saint of the Homeland" by Mgr. Touchet
4. "The Mission of St. Joan of Arc" by R.P. Humbert Clérissac
5. "The Trial of St. Joan of Arc" by Robert Brasillach
6. "The Posthumus Mission of Saint Joan of Arc" by Mgr. de Lassus  
(The titles are translated from French)



St. Joan of Arc's Coat of Arms

## Pie XII, Encyclical: *Fulgens Radiatur*

In the section "Benedictine Saints" we present an extract from the encyclical of Pius XII on March 21, 1947, on Saint Benedict, to follow up on our last two letters dealing with the life of our blessed Father:

Monte Cassino, everyone knows, was the main residence of the holy Patriarch and the main grounds of his virtue and holiness. From the peak of this mountain, when almost everywhere the darkness of ignorance and vice spread in an effort to cover and ruin everything, shines a new light which, nourished by the teachings and the civilization of the ancient peoples, and above all animated by Christian doctrine, enlightened peoples and nations who wandered at random, recalled them and directed them towards the truth and the straight path. So much so that one can rightly affirm that the holy monastery built there became the refuge and the fortress of the greatest sciences and of all the virtues, and in these troubled times, "the support of the Church and the rampart of faith."<sup>1</sup>

It was there that Benedict carried the monastic institution to the kind of perfection which he had long striven to achieve through his prayers, his meditations, and his experiences. Such indeed seems to be, in fact, the special and essential role entrusted to him by Divine Providence: not so much to bring from the East to the West the ideal of monastic life, but to harmonize and adapt it tactfully to the temperament, needs, and habits of the peoples of Italy and of all Europe. It was through his care then, that to the serene ascetic doctrine which flourished in the monasteries of the East, was added the practice of an incessant activity, making it possible to "communicate to others the truths contemplated"<sup>2</sup> and not only to make uncultivated lands fertile, but to produce, by the fatigues of the apostolate, spiritual fruits.

The fraternal community of the Benedictine family softens and tempers the harshness of the solitary life which cannot suit everyone and sometimes even presents a danger for some. Prayer, work, the culture of the sacred and secular sciences, procure a gentle peace without idleness or disgust. Laborious occupation, far from tiring the mind, dissipating it or distracting it in futilities, soothes, strengthens, and elevates it. Neither an

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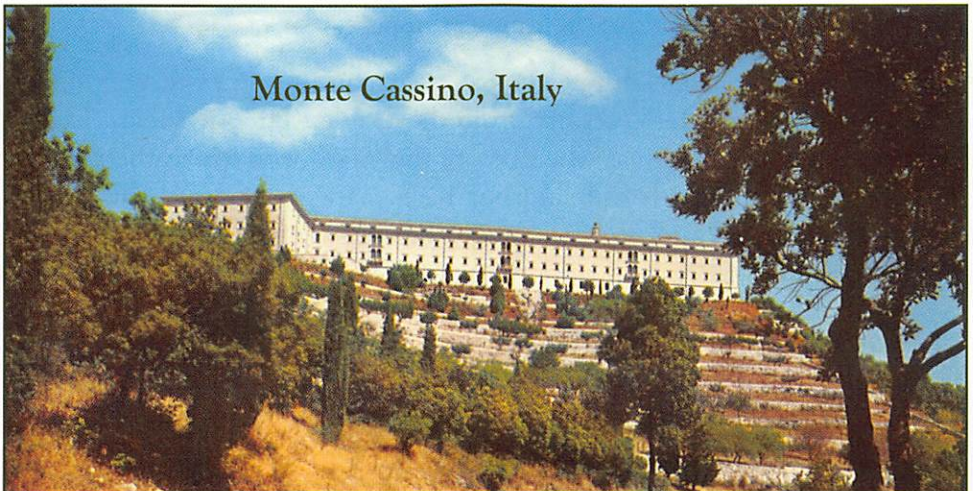
To be neither excessively rigorous, in discipline, nor excessively severe in mortifications, but above all, to have a great love for God and a devoted fraternal charity for all: that is what is ordered. Indeed, Benedict "balanced his rule so that the strong would desire to do more and the weak would not be discouraged by his austerity...He strove to govern his monks by love rather than to dominate them by fear."<sup>3</sup> When he was told, one day, that an anchorite had bound himself with chains and locked himself up in a cave so as not to be able to return to sin and to a worldly life, he reprimanded him gently, saying, "If you are a servant of God, it is not an iron chain, but the chain of Christ which must hold you back."<sup>4</sup>

It is therefore not surprising that all sensible people of today exalt with their praises the "monastic rule written by Saint Benedict, a rule very remarkable for its discretion and for the luminous clarity of its expression;"<sup>5</sup> and it pleases Us to underline it here and to bring out its essential features, with the confidence that We will do a pleasing and useful work not only for the numerous family of the holy Patriarch, but for all the clergy and all the Christian people.

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<sup>1</sup> PIUS X, Apostolic Letter *Archicoenobium Casinense* of February 10, 1913. AAS v (1913) 113.

<sup>2</sup> SAINT THOMAS, *Sum theol.* II-II, q. 188, s. 6.





**October 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>:** This first great reunion of the Oblates of Notre-Dame de Toute Confiance will not be the last if one judges from all these presents that are piled at the entrance of the house and that show us the attachment of our Sister oblates in Saint Benedict to their spiritual family. Sister Agnes is thus well surrounded for her oblation. Each one thirsts to put herself in the school of the holy Patriarch who composed the Rule “for beginners”. Such he considered himself in his humility!

**November 17<sup>th</sup>:** It has been decided, we had a great Community walk today! The Heart of Jesus is the object of our contemplation, and It is also the place of our excursions. It was in this Heart that the novices made us discover Auvergne and its saints, Henri Pourrat and his tales, and Orcival and his Virgin (Our Lady of Orcival) to whom we sang the supplications which ended the trip organized for the feast of the novitiate. No need to go far to discover wonders!

**December 20<sup>th</sup>:** The events that punctuate our daily life, for the most part ordinary because they are steeped in the river of liturgical life, give way to the voice of the Holy Spirit who teaches us all things: It is the invisible realities that matter! Yes, the truth is that God is with us and we live with the inhabitants of heaven. It is a consoling thought for our Mother Mary-Philomena who saw her mother leave this earth so abruptly. Her life was not taken away but changed. Requiescat in pace.

**December 25<sup>th</sup>:** The Liturgy transports us continually from contingent realities to the Unique Necessary, from the visible to the Invisible. This is especially true at Christmas when before the Child who lies in the manger we prostrate ourselves to worship our King. Angels were needed for the shepherds to believe in it! After Vespers, Sister Gratia-Maria receives the scapular of the Oblates and from the hands of our Heavenly Mother a very spiritual present - the joy of knowing that she belongs to the family at Perdechat. At recreation, around a laundry basket filled with brand new aprons, the Community is amazed and everyone tries on these “swaddling clothes” that were sewn with love. A big thank you to our benefactress!



**January 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>:** Father Gélneau, equipped with his piano, presents to us in a few words “allegro ma non troppo” the richness of the Gregorian modality . The sacred music par excellence that is Gregorian chant finds its perfection in great simplicity. Therefore there is nothing sophisticated in our singing which must harmonize with the Benedictine modality - a hymn of praise articulated on three notes: obedience, silence, humility. In the simplicity of childhood, it is the scale which leads right to God. And “singing in silence,” in order to truly pray supposes silencing foreign and perverse thoughts in order to pay attention to the Divine Presence in the psalms.

**February 10<sup>th</sup>:** One, two, three...ten, twenty, one hundred...two hundred and fifty! Our Gardener Mother counted the bulbs of tulips, daffodils, crocuses and hyacinths that she planted, during the good moon. It is a gift that will brighten up each spring, leaving us with the pleasant memory of a soul who knew how to give without counting!

**March 19<sup>th</sup>:** This evening, like every evening, Saint Joseph counts the sheep. What a surprise when he realizes that a lamb has come to increase the number of the flock. He is joyful, no doubt, but he keeps his feet on the ground: “How is this possible? I haven't enlarged the fold yet.” Ah, good Saint Joseph, we know you are so faithful. Yes, faithful, and that is what inspires us with complete confidence. If you started the project, it is to complete it. In the meantime, charity pressed us so hard that we found a place for a tiny little sheep.



**April 18<sup>th</sup>:** The beginning of Lent was marked by a triple invitation of our Mother Prioress: conversion, compunction, compassion. The Mother of Sorrows sent us a call: “Veníte et ascendámus ad montem Dómini,” (Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord) followed by a “Venite adorémus” and a “Veníte exsultémus.” Today, it is in the “Exsúltet” of Mary that that of Sister Lucy and Sister Joan merges as they

renew their vows of obedience and conversion of morals. Conversion is for each day, since Saint Benedict wishes for his monks, a life that is at all times consistent with the observance of Lent. But we also have the joy of Easter every morning, from the first words of Matins, when we wake up from sleep to open our eyes to the deific light and live with the risen Christ, Allelúia!

**May 1<sup>st</sup>:** Saint Joseph is there, not armed with a pickaxe, but with his crozier as a Good Shepherd. He is there and waits with us for God's hour. Are the workers late? Do not impose a deadline. The Master of the work site has the right to his new oratory, placed in the shade, where he likes to live. And we'll gladly stay there with him.

**June:** While we pick the cherries during recreation, the discussion arises from the readings heard in the refectory lately. Anne de Guigné, Saint Philomena, and Saint Joan of Arc are heroines who push us to be “women with great hearts.” Bishop de Galarreta, last month, also exhorted us to a magnanimous life at the school of Saint Teresa of Avila: “To serve the Lord in justice, with virile courage and with humility.”

**July:** The Sisters of the Society of Saint Pius X come from Pointet to visit us, Deo gratias! We try, despite the construction work, to exercise Benedictine hospitality as much as possible, and we are delighted by the simplicity of the sisters who adapt so well to our open-air parlor (we use the construction site!), just as did the Dominican sisters of Notre-Dame de France who came at Pentecost to spend a joyful time with us. We hope that both will return next year. The feast of Saint Mary Magdalene closed a week of work with our singing teacher who has been coming regularly for two years. And as we progress, the noise of the pond fades...How grateful we are to our maestro, and also, it must be said, to our frog fisherwoman who has become an expert, with a record of 80 frogs caught in one day!

**August 12<sup>th</sup>:** This year the feast of Saint Clare, which is also the feast of our Mother Prioress, is particularly well celebrated, since we have the grace of a first mass by the Father de Champeaux. “I ask you, in the name of all priests: Sisters, be perfect!”



## NEWS OF OUR WORK



September 2021, work resumes with the completion of the foundations.



A first delivery for the foundation stones arrives at the end of October. Unfortunately, a supplier problem will block the rest of the deliveries which will be postponed until 2022. We take advantage of this free time to choose the tiles. Near here, the Doyer tile factory, bought by the Ter-réal group, is blocking its stocks, refusing to supply companies, and driving up prices! We are therefore ordering them from the traditional tile maker from Puycheny who is not impressed by the atmosphere of general speculation on materials, because his gas prices for baking the

tiles  
remain  
stable.





## NEWS OF OUR WORK



On March 17<sup>th</sup>, for Saint Patrick, granite deliveries resume, at a rate of two trucks per week. Our neighbor helps us to unload, thanks to his powerful tractor. "Hello, Anthony...Thank you very much!"



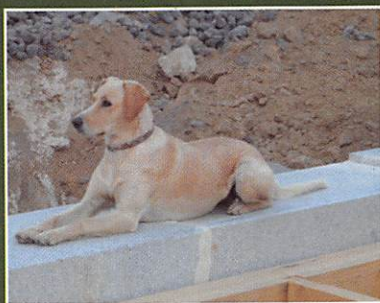
On April 1<sup>st</sup>, it snows on the construction site, which surprises the birds who come to get warm on the edge of a window sill!



## NEWS OF OUR WORK



The company “Les Arts de Pierre” stone cutting, arrives in mid-June and very quickly advances the laying of the granite blocks which weigh an average of 2 to 3 tons! The laying continues under the watchful eye of Tacita our dog.

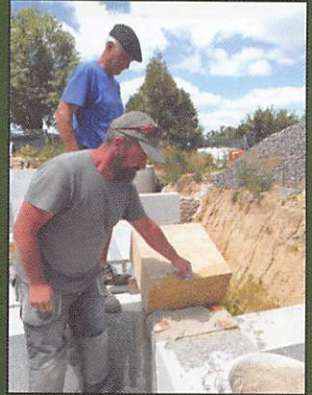




## NEWS OF OUR WORK



June 20<sup>th</sup>: The first truck delivers us the limestone stones of Vers Pont du Gars which will be used for the walls.



July 6<sup>th</sup>: We lay the first stone of Vers. A Miraculous Medal is placed in the lime

mortar to ask the protection of Our Lady on the site.



The companies' summer vacation will allow us to rediscover monastic silence for two weeks. When work resumes, there will remain the second story to build, and the installation of the frame and of the carpentry. We hope, with the grace of God

and your support, to finish the covered enclosure for this Christmas 2022: since as the walls gradually go up, the account goes down!

You can follow our work by reading our "work book" on [www.laportelatine.org](http://www.laportelatine.org) (SSPX French website). We send a big thank you to all of you and assure you of our grateful prayers for your help in building this spiritual fortress.

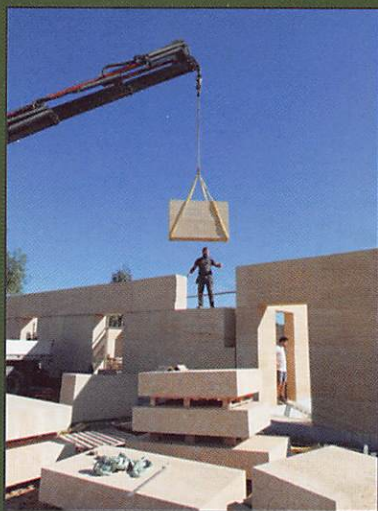


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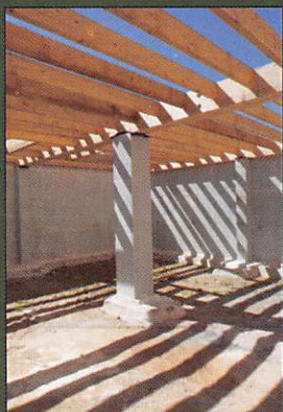
**Mid-July:** One by one the stones (weighing one to two tons a piece!) lifted by a crane, carefully guided into place by a second mason, and mortared by a third. Fifteen to twenty stones can be maneuvered per day by two or three workers, thanks to the crane!

It will take some months for the mortar to completely dry but that does not stop the carpenters and roofers from doing their part!

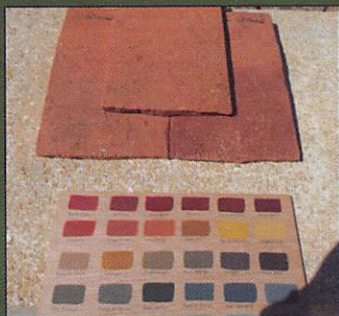




## NEWS OF OUR WORK



Mid-July – August: Tacita continues to supervise the worksite, while the masons and roofers work side by side. Each team is at the opposite end so that their cranes won't get into each others way... The walls are rising quickly!

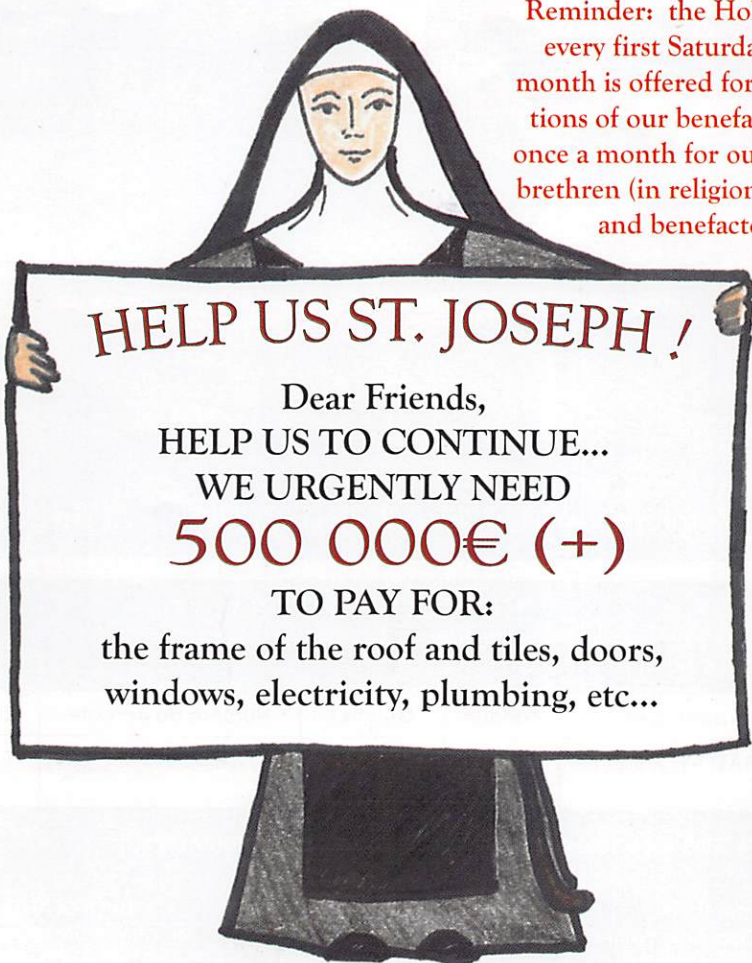


Humm...What color should we choose for our roof tiles and future shutters ?



AN URGENT NOTE FROM MOTHER CELLARER

Reminder: the Holy Mass of every first Saturday of the month is offered for the intentions of our benefactors and once a month for our deceased brethren (in religion), families and benefactors.



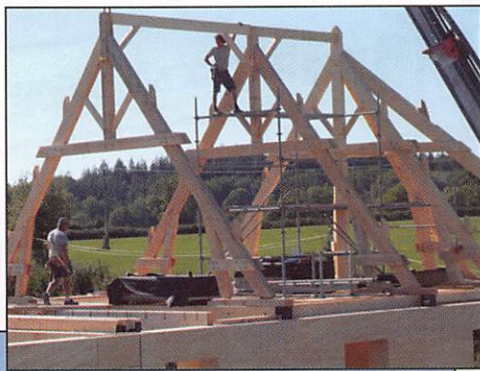
HELP US ST. JOSEPH !

Dear Friends,  
HELP US TO CONTINUE...  
WE URGENTLY NEED

500 000€ (+)

TO PAY FOR:  
the frame of the roof and tiles, doors,  
windows, electricity, plumbing, etc...

THANK YOU SO MUCH!



## HOW TO HELP US:

Direct bank wire in any currency to:

Références bancaires	Banque	Guichet	Numéro de compte	Clé
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