

Dear Friends and Benefactors of Mary' Farm,

The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, Fathers Jacinto, Joachim and I want to thank you for your acceptance and your generous support of our community and the retreat center. We are deeply humbled and edified by your kindness and charity that has been shown to the friars since we arrived in February of 2005.

As we approach the Advent season in preparation for the *great Solemnity and season of Christmas* I want to share with you some of the ways in which we hope to return to you some of the love that you have shown to us. Since we are Franciscans with the vow of poverty our way of responding to your love and care for us is by doing what religious do best,--prayer and penance.

We will be conducting our annual Solemn Novena to the Immaculate Conception from November 29th to December 7th and will be remembering for all you in a special way as we approach the celebration of the grace most dear to Our Blessed Mother's Heart, Her Immaculate Conception. **Please notice the times for the celebration of the novena in this newsletter or contact the retreat center if you would like to join us in this special time of prayer in honor of our nature's salutary boast.** We will be having a holy hour every night of the novena with a the special chanting of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary and readings from Franciscan saints throughout the ages on the mystery of the Immaculate Conception.

On December 16th to the 24th we will have the first of two novenas for Christmas, one in preparation and the other during the octave, December 24th to January 1st.

The **novena from Christmas Eve, December 24th to January 1st is our special Christmas Novena of Masses** in which we *offer nine masses for all those who have submitted their intentions*. **We hope that you will send us your special intentions that you would like us to remember during this time.** You may submit as many intentions as you wish and include a free-will offering if you are able. The Christmas Novena of Masses is one of the many ways we as religious try to show our thanks and gratitude for all that you do for the friars and the retreat center.

One other event I wish to point out to you is the **special extraction of patron saints for the New Year that we hold every Epiphany Sunday**. In 2010, Epiphany falls on **January 3rd, 2010**, and it has been a custom in our order to draw our patron saints for the new year. Since the beginning of our institute, we have shared this opportunity with our benefactors and friends, who have enjoyed this immensely. **We will have a special Mass at 11:00AM followed by the extraction of patron saints ceremony and a potluck dinner in the retreat center dining hall. Please join us if possible.**

Finally last but not least we want to **invite all of you to a great event** in the life of the retreat center in the **consecration and dedication of the Sacred Heart Chapel by His Excellency, Archbishop Daniel Buechlein**. We would like to **invite you to participate** in this solemn and rare event which will take place on **Sunday, January 17, 2010 at 1:00PM** and followed by a reception in the retreat dining hall. Please bring a food item to share. At this time *you will be able to see the completed renovations* of the Sacred Heart Chapel that have taken place over the past year.

We hope that you will be able to join us in the coming days for some or all of these grace-filled events here at Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center or Mary's Farm, as it is more affectionately known by many of you.

Ave Maria!

Father Elias Mary Mills, F. I.

Father Guardian, Marian Friary of Our Lady Coredeptrix