

# The Portiuncula JOURNEY

VOL. 6, No. 1 • WINTER 2012

## New Leadership Marks Jubilee Year of St. Clare

**R**t. Rev. Michael Jennrich, OFM, Provincial Vicar of the Sacred Heart Province to which the Franciscan Monastery of St. Clare in Omaha belongs; was in Omaha January 22-26, 2012. He conducted the visitation of the monastery in preparation for the elections held on the 25th of January at 10:30 am.

Sister Theresina R. Santiago, OSC was unanimously elected to serve as the 13th Abbess of the Poor Clare Sisters in Omaha. Sister Mary Clare Brown, OSC, who had completed 4 terms of three years as Abbess, was elected Vicaress; and Sister Maria Benedicta Czerwien was elected Councilor. Immediately after the election, Sister Theresina was officially installed Abbess by Rt. Rev. Michael Jennrich, OFM.



Sr. Theresina R. Santiago, OSC  
Abbess



Sr. Mary Clare Brown, OSC  
Vicaress



Sr. Maria Benedicta Czerwien, OSC  
Councilor



*The Poor Clare Sisters  
are grateful to all those who offered gifts  
at the Christmas Concert,  
and to all who sent in donations during the  
Christmas Season.*

*You are all remembered in their prayers,  
and your donations  
are a great help to the monastery under construction.*

*They wish you God's protection and  
Blessings all through this Year 2012.*



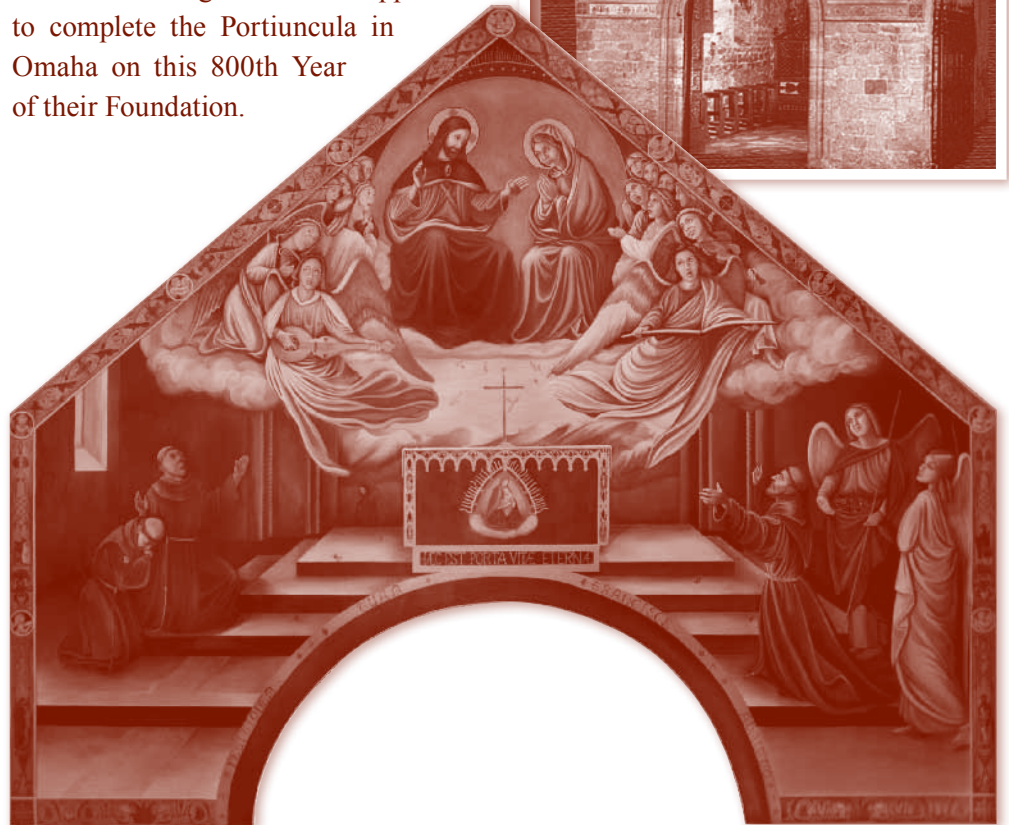
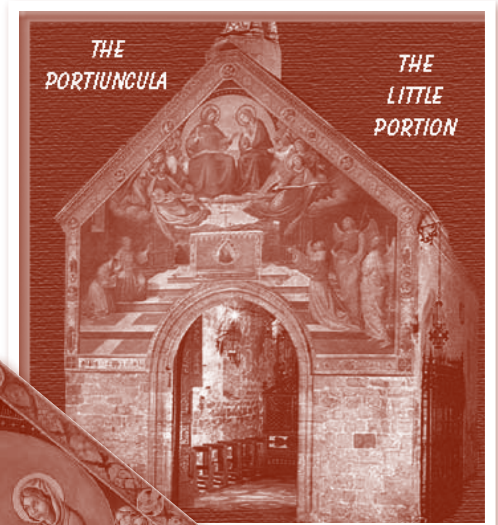
# Portiuncula Façade is Now Ready!

The canvas painting of the Portiuncula's façade has been completed by Dottie Mueller, and delivered to Omaha on December 11, 2011. The oil painting measures 12'5" x 10'1.5". It will be installed in the replica of the Portiuncula in Assisi which will be inside the new monastery chapel, and serve as the altar of the Blessed Sacrament.

This painting is a copy of the fresco on the façade of the Portiuncula, which depicts Saint Francis at the lower right, imploring Jesus and Mary at the top to grant Pardon. It was done in 1829 by Friedrich Overbeck. The inscription in Latin on the painting, which is above the door of the Portiuncula says: "This is the door of eternal life." This recalls how Saint Francis felt and considered the Portiuncula to be "a piece of heaven on earth" that is worthy of love, honor and veneration.

Angels in the painting show why the little Chapel of the Portiuncula is found today inside the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels. It is also told that the

singing of Angels in the Portiuncula was heard by Saint Francis and others. It is the "holy place" where Francis started to live the Gospel, where he wrote the Rule, where the Order of St. Clare was founded at the investiture of Clare Favarone on Palm Sunday of 2012. It is the hope of the Poor Clare Sisters of Omaha to receive enough financial support to complete the Portiuncula in Omaha on this 800th Year of their Foundation.



## Prayer and Faith: *"Ask, and you shall receive..."*

*Dear Sisters,*

I have been trying to sell an item for nearly six months... without success. So I decided to enlist God's help. I prayerfully offered to split the profit with Him in return for His intercession.

Today the item was sold. I think I heard God say, "Send my share to the Poor Clare Sisters".

Here you are... along with my loving gratitude for all the blessings you have sent my way.

Best wishes to you all!

Clare

*Dear Sister Theresina,*

Thank you for all your prayers for my intentions. They were answered.

God bless you!

Michael G. Dawson, M.D.



# We Sang In Exultation!

The Christmas Benefit Concert of the Poor Clare Sisters held the 6th of December 2011 at Christ the King Church was a well attended and successful one. Led by the Frontier String Ensemble of the Omaha Conservatory of Music under the direction of Ruth Meints, the audience took active part in singing of the Christmas songs in the program.

Bruce McGregor, Program Directory of Spirit Radio KVSS was principal narrator, with Sister Theresina, OSC, providing the voice of the angels, shepherds and kings, and Beth Doty, that of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Annunciation story. Beth Doty of St. Leo's Parish also had the role of cantor to lead the audience in the singing of the favorite songs that brought out the significance, the spirit, and the joys of Christmas.

Ruth Meints gave an expressive and touching rendition of "Mary, Did You Know" with the violin accompaniment of Mary Heldridge. The 33 young violinists could not have been more inspired.



*It was a meaningful and joyful evening of music and singing in exultation.*



*And the violinists added their inspired and joyful commentary in music.*



*Narrators Bruce McGregor, Beth Doty and Sister Theresina brought the prophecy, and the story of Christmas to life...*

*Canon D by J. Packabel set the tone of the group's professional performance, at their processional to the sanctuary.*



*We stood to sing in exultation, "Angels We Have Heard On High" Our hearts were prepared to celebrate the Birth of Jesus, and to adore Christ the Lord!*



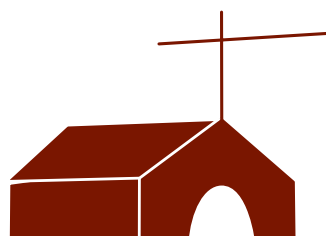
*Ruth Ann Popp and Connie Cosentino spoke for the Poor Clare Sisters, the importance and need for prayer that they provide, and the urgency of bringing their monastery project to completion. They appealed for free willing and tax deductible donations, a Christmas offering to God, through the Sisters.*



*Six of the Sisters walked down the aisle passing the baskets which were emptied in a red sack.*



*Sister Theresina, who spoke the words of welcome, spoke at the end to thank Ruth Meints and the violinists, Father Stillmunks and Christ the King Parish, to thank the audience for their presence and active participation, and for their precious Christmas offering for the building project. She reminded everyone that Emmanuel is God with us. We can continue to be strong, to take courage and to trust, and to be joyful!*



**Publisher:** Franciscan Monastery of St. Clare  
3626 North 65<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Omaha, NE 68104-3299

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# Formation Update

## Franciscan Inter-Community Formation Program

Sister Rosalie and Sister Kathy had the opportunity of meeting Franciscan novices and postulants at the Franciscan Inter-Community Formation Program held November 8-11, 2011 at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, New York. Clare A. D'Auria, OSF gave the group of Third Order Franciscans, Poor Clares and Friars; five sessions on the theme: "A Single Branch of Flame": Discernment in the Franciscan Tradition.

*Sister Theresina with Sister Kathy and Sister Rosalie, at right.*



*There were 57 participants, representing 17 countries of origin.*

## Sister Kathy Receives the Habit

Sister Kathleen Raiti Hawkins received the Poor Clare habit at the Investiture held on the 8th of December 2011. Rt. Rev. Abbot Theodore Wolff, OSB was celebrant for the Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception at 9 am; and presided at the investiture that followed immediately.



*Sister Kathleen received the name, Sister Mary Kathleen of the Good Shepherd, and is shown above with Abbot Theodore, OSB and Carm Cosentino, her sponsor.*

## Sister Marie Receives the Postulant Dress

The Poor Clare Sisters of Omaha received Maria C. Bautista into the Postulancy on the 24th of December 2011.



*Sister Marie received the Postulant dress from Sister Mary Clare at Evening Prayer of Christmas Eve.*



*It was as a Postulant that she attended the Christmas Vigil Mass!*

## IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE

The Poor Clare Sisters pray for your Beloved Departed

Jan Cohen  
Daniel J. Duffy  
Deacon Anthony Filipic  
Deacon Robert Jergovic  
George J. Lenihan, Jr.  
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Charlie Williams  
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Fred Wolski, Sr.

# You are the Living Stones building up this dwelling of God!

List of donors from November 2011 to January 2012

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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Brother Sun ...  
through whom you give us light!*

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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the  
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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Brother Wind ...the  
air and every other kind of weather through whom  
You give sustenance to your creatures!*

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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is  
very useful, humble, precious and chaste!*

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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through  
whom You light the night; he is playful, robust and  
strong!*

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*Praise to You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us and protects us and produces fruit, colored flowers and herbs!*

## **SISTER MOTHER EARTH**

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