



THE RAY

The newsletter of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center

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Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center
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From the Desk of Mary...



Greetings from Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center. These past few months have been busy and blessed. We enjoyed autumn and look forward to the special feasts that we will celebrate in the coming weeks.

As we journey towards Christmas, the Church celebrates many wonderful saints including Saint Lucy, Saint Juan Diego, Saint John of the Cross and, of course, Saint Nicholas. Then, during the Christmas Octave, the joy resounds with the feasts of Saint Stephen on December 26th, the Holy Innocents on December 28th, and others. One of them—the 16th century Carmelite priest and mystic, Saint John of the Cross, is a special patron of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center. We highlight him in this issue in an article entitled, *A Spiritual Director for the Ages* and offer for your Advent and Christmas reflection, a translation of five stanzas of his lovely poem on the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Also in joyful anticipation of Christmas, we've included the lyrics of the well-loved Christmas carol, "Good King Wenceslas". Saint Wenceslas of Bohemia, martyr (d.935), was known for his generous outreach to his subjects especially on December 26th, the Feast of Saint Stephen. The verses were composed in England in 1853 by John Mason Neale to correspond to the tune of a 13th century Latin spring carol. The Christmas carol as we know it provides a snapshot of the generous spirit of Saint Wenceslas. By extension, as represented by his page, the carol illustrates how our persevering kindness towards those in need not only assists them, but always enriches us as well, helping us to become saints.

Speaking of generosity and kindness, for all the many ways in which you have supported Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center during the past year, we are so very grateful. Together in mission with you, we are honored and blessed to joyfully carry out this important work for Our Lord.

From all of us at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center, from our hearts to yours, we wish you and those you love a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Masses for Your Intentions in 2023

In gratitude for your support, Holy Mass will be offered in 2023 at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary for all of our benefactors, directees and volunteers on the following Marian feasts: February 11th, May 31st, September 8th and December 8th.

Board Memberships—Gratitude and Welcome

We are so grateful to Ms. D'Ann Fisher who served with dedication for the past two years as Secretary and Treasurer of our Board of Directors. D'Ann was of great service to the Center during the difficult years of the pandemic. We are very happy that she will continue as a volunteer at Our Lady of Grace overseeing our newsletter mailings twice a year.

We are delighted to introduce you to our new Secretary and Treasurer, Miss Carla Dal Santo. Carla works at Holy Hill where she helps manage the gift shop at the National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Hubertus, WI. She has two Master's Degrees—one in Business Administration and another in Theology. We are delighted to welcome her to our Board of Directors and look forward to working with her in the coming years.



Ms. D'Ann Fisher



Board of Directors (left to right) Mr. Timothy Tarpey, Vice President; Miss Mary DeSantis, President; Miss Carla Dal Santo, Secretary and Treasurer

Serra Club of Milwaukee, Thank You!

In June we received a generous grant from the Serra Club of Milwaukee to cover most of the rent of our office space over the next year in recognition of the spiritual direction and vocational discernment we offer young adults who come to us at Our Lady of Grace. Serra Clubs worldwide are known for their prayers, activities, and fundraising efforts to foster and support vocations to the priesthood and vowed religious life.

 *As Always...* 

This newsletter is made possible through the generosity and skills of Miss Nicolette Bardele.

Our Trusted Accountants

We are profoundly grateful to Mr. Daniel Glomski, CPA, ABV, CVA, MST a Principal at SVA Certified Public Accountants in Brookfield, WI for nine years of pro bono work for the Center. Dan's generosity and kindness have been exemplary. We thank you so very much, Dan, for your loyal support and professional service all these years. We wish you God's choicest blessings always.

We are honored that Mrs. Kathy Hoffman, a Certified Public Accountant at Andaloro, Smith and Krueger, LLP in Waukesha, WI has agreed to volunteer her time in taking over Dan's responsibilities at the Center. Kathy is married and has three adult children. She is a Trustee at Saint Dominic Catholic Parish in Brookfield where she and her husband, Tom, both serve as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and Ministers of Hospitality. We extend a warm welcome to Kathy.



Mr. Daniel Glomski, CPA, MST



Mrs. Kathy Hoffman, CPA

Good King Wenceslas Lyrics by John Mason Neale (1853)

1 Good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.
Brightly shone the moon that night, though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight, gath'ring winter fuel.

2 "Hither, page, and stand by me, if you know it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he? Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence, underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence, by Saint Agnes' fountain."

3 "Bring me food and bring me wine, bring me pine logs hither,
You and I will see him dine, when we bear them thither."
Page and monarch, forth they went, forth they went together,
Through the cold wind's wild lament and the bitter weather.

4 "Sire, the night is darker now, and the wind blows stronger,
Fails my heart, I know not how; I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps, my good page, tread now in them boldly,
You shall find the winter's rage freeze your blood less coldly."

5 In his master's steps he trod, where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure, while God's gifts possessing,
You who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing.

A Spiritual Director for the Ages

Saint John of the Cross is widely regarded as one of the greatest spiritual directors in the history of the Church. He is sometimes referred to as the Mystical Doctor in recognition of the vast scope of his writings on the soul's union with God.

Born in 1542 at Fontiveros, Spain, the experience of great poverty in his childhood left a huge imprint on John. As a Carmelite priest he was known for his tender solicitude toward the poor and sick. "But his deepest concern was for those who in their spiritual life were suffering. The needs of souls undergoing interior trials prompted him to write the books *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night*."¹

Printed below are the last five stanzas from one of his beautiful poems, "Romance 8—The Incarnation" that makes for a wonderful Christmas meditation—so simple and easy to read, and at the same time so profound as to invite rich and deep contemplation on the mysteries of the Christmas Feast.

¹*The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, Intro. By Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. Institute of Carmelite Studies, Washington, D.C. 1979 p.29.

Romance 8. *The Incarnation* (continued)²

1. Then He called
The archangel Gabriel
And sent him to
The virgin Mary,
2. At whose consent
The mystery was wrought,
In whom the Trinity
Clothed the Word with flesh.
3. And though Three work this,
It is wrought in the One:
And the Word lived incarnate
In the womb of Mary.
4. And He who had only a Father
Now had a Mother too,
But she was not like others
Who conceive by man.
5. From her own flesh
He received His flesh,
So He is called
Son of God and of man.

²Excerpted from *The Collected Works of Saint John of the Cross*, trans. by Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. and Otilio Rodriguez, O.C.D. 1979 by ICS Publications, Washington, D.C. Used with permission of the publisher.

We are so grateful for any donation to the Center. All donations are tax-deductible and may be made payable to **Our Lady of Grace** and mailed to:

**Our Lady of Grace Catholic Spirituality Center
c/o Josh Gentine
1912 NW 21st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73106**

Or, if you prefer, kindly visit our online giving site at:
<https://snwbl.it/OurLadyofGrace>