



Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

— *building Saint Benedict Center's future*

**NOTE: This appeal is very urgent
and has a deadline of March, 2012.**

If you read nothing else, please read this summary:

1. We have an urgent need for more room. Currently, our chapel regularly reaches its maximum capacity allowed by state fire codes.
2. We had to sue our town government in order to get permission to build a new chapel.
3. We won the lawsuit but had to spend the funds on legal fees and repairs that were absolutely necessary on our current buildings.
4. We have a very small window of time in which to raise the funds and build this chapel. The current price is good only until the end of March of 2012. After that, the amount is certain to increase. **Whatever the cost, the building must be built within two years.** Once this window of opportunity ends, **it will be lost forever.**

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

As you are aware, we have never been one of those many groups who “cry wolf” in order to raise funds. We would not be sending you this letter unless our need were so urgent and a deadline so rapidly approaching.

Saint Benedict Center in Richmond, New Hampshire, is the headquarters of a congregation of religious brothers and sisters dedicated to the conversion of America and the restoration of Catholic doctrine, especially the dogma, “no salvation outside the Church.” We Slaves of the Immaculate



Side elevation of proposed new IHM Chapel



Saint Francis de Sales House:
Classrooms, office space, Brother Francis Archives

“Cheerfulness in sacrifice is the mark of generosity.
This is why God loves the cheerful giver.”
— Brother Francis, M.I.C.M., *The Challenge of Faith*.



Saint Philomena's Convent, donated to the Sisters in 2009



Our Priest in Residence, Father David Phillipson



Saint Augustine's Priory: Brothers' residence, purchased in 2006

Heart of Mary work hard at this apostolate headquartered at our monastery, convent, chapel, and school in the Granite State.

In our chapel, only the traditional rites of the Church are offered. Our resident priest, Father David Phillipson, has been a great blessing to this community, and is here to stay for a long time, God willing.

A Necessary Building Project

Our present Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel is too small to accommodate our expanding numbers. In fact, each week we reach the maximum capacity allowed by the fire code. But more people want to attend. For this reason, the brothers and sisters have been working with excellent architects and engineers to design a proper sanctuary for Our Lady's Heart — one that can accommodate more than two hundred worshippers. Because of the nation-wide economic downturn, building activity has come to a near halt, and construction costs have plummeted with the hope of securing contracts. A respected New England contractor has given us a price tag of only \$750,000 for our project — a very reasonable amount.

But our nation is in an economic downturn. Many of our dear benefactors are no longer secure in their own homes, jobs, or investments. And frankly, the “good price” we have been offered is the result of these very hardships and uncertainties.

So why would we propose such a major building project now, you ask?

The timing, dear friends, is not our own. In fact, in light of recent events, **we would be negligent if we failed to press you right now for your financial assistance** with this Chapel project.

Please Help!

Our laity donate generously according to their means, and give of their time as volunteers, but a project of this size is not something they can completely shoulder at this time. Most households here are large, single-income families considered “lower middle class”; some are just above poverty level. Saint Paul used to ask more affluent churches to assist those that were less so. In that spirit, we appeal to all our supporters to help build up the spiritual “mission control” of this congregation dedicated to a Catholic America.

Please Contact Us

If you would like to discuss making a major contribution, please call me. During regular work hours, I can be reached at the office: (603) 239-6485. My email address is bam@catholicism.org. I also have a cell number: (603) 762-2148.

Our bookkeeper, Russell LaPlume, is authorized to discuss details of our finances with potential major donors. Upon request, he can also send financial statements prepared by a New Hampshire C.P.A.

A Fight for Religious Rights

Some background on this project is important. In 2005, we approached our town planning board for the necessary permits to erect a new chapel. We hired professional architects and, in 2006, submitted a site plan to the town. After nearly two years of meetings, which were turned into outrageous public spectacles, the town approved our project, but only after imposing more than thirty conditions on us — including **illegal, impossible, and financially burdensome conditions.**

Evidence entered into the court record revealed that the chairman of the planning board was anti-Catholic, and had participated in a campaign to malign the Center. This man,

a dues-paying member of the notorious Southern Poverty Law Center, drafted several of the onerous conditions. He also e-mailed other town officials expressing his disgust for our beliefs, stating that



Saint Joseph's: Bookstore, Chaplain's Residence on the near side; multi-purpose hall with upstairs offices on the far side.



“The restoration of a Catholic civilization must begin with the discovery, evaluation, and — especially — the appreciation of the principles which made Christendom in the first place. It is the Mass and Faith in the Real Presence that built the great cathedrals; it is devotion to Mary that made the beauty and sacredness of consecrated life; and, before all, it is uncompromising belief in the one true religion revealed by God that made the martyrs, without whom Christendom would not exist.”

— Brother Francis, M.I.C.M., *From The Housetops #60.*



Saint Paul's House: current IHM Chapel, school classrooms, main kitchen, offices and work rooms for the Sisters



IHM School 2011-2012 students and teachers

our positions on abortion, homosexuality, pornography, and divorce were “abhorrent.”

In June 2007, we filed suit against the town.

A Major Legal Victory

In a landmark civil and religious rights case in New Hampshire, a Cheshire County Superior Court judge ruled that the conditions made completion of construction impossible and constituted a substantial burden on the free exercise of our religion. The judge did this in a summary judgment order. It took a long time, but rather than allow the case to go to trial, the town elected to settle out of court. The settlement included a cash payment from the town’s insurance carrier.

All combined, we fought six years to secure our right to build. Those years were very costly for us. The protracted site-plan review necessitated that we have a lawyer, engineer, and architect appear at more than twenty public meetings. And then there was the litigation itself. Due to the expense of all this, we got into debt and our present complex of buildings fell into disrepair. Even with the cash settlement in hand, we could not build the chapel, because

Part of the Crusade of SBC

The new IHM Chapel is part of the overall work of Saint Benedict Center.

- The liturgical apostolate is part of the work of our congregation: Promoting the traditional Latin Mass along with the doctrine and culture that accompany it.
- It is necessary for our educational apostolate. Our students attend daily Mass.
- When the new chapel is built, we strongly believe that it will attract increased attendance, which means more steady support for our work.
- With the chapel paid for, we will also be able to direct our energies and resources to new publications, such as Brother Francis’ philosophy books. Other publications are also being considered.

The Urgency is Real

Zoning Tyranny. The same people who violated our rights in the first place have changed town zoning ordinances to forbid the erection of a church in our locale. Due to our successful litigation, our project is safely “grandfathered in” — but only for a small time.

Legal Deadline. This window of opportunity is about two years, during which time we expect that anti-Catholic bureaucrats will continue to contrive delays, attempting to torpedo the project.

Cost Deadline. Besides that, the \$750,000 price tag I mentioned is only good if we start construction this spring. We expect prices to go up after that, thanks to an increase in new construction in our region.

Capacity. The size of our present chapel, roughly half its hoped-for replacement, is far too inadequate. We simply do not have sufficient space to accommodate new arrivals.

the litigation was not yet over, and it would be another year before the town dropped the outlandish conditions the planning board imposed on us.

For that reason, after paying our attorneys, we invested most of the settlement money on needed building repairs and maintenance of our present property. We were grateful to have the funds to do these things; we feel a genuine sense of responsibility to protect and maintain these buildings which are the result of the generous contributions from our loyal supporters, like you.

Now everything is finally over, appeals and all — after two agonizing years of site plan review and four years of litigation — and Our Lady has prevailed through her Slaves.

We’re Going to Build!

With our rights thus vindicated, we will proceed with this project. We own the land, have very acceptable blueprints, and we are ready to build as soon as the New England winter comes to an end. **All we need are funds for the project.** While \$750,000 is not a lot for an edifice of this nature, it is a lot for us!

We Need Your Help Now!

In the new IHM Chapel, the brothers and sisters will memorialize our major gift donors with a large plaque at the entrance. We will arrange your names according to the order of the nine choirs of angels, as shown to the right.

In the name of the Queen of Angels, whose Immaculate Heart this chapel will honor, we are asking you to join the celestial choirs. In these days, when church closings are a sad reality for dioceses all across the nation, is it not a blessing to erect a new church for the honor of God and the exultation of the Blessed Virgin Mary?

The great Monarch of heaven and earth, Our Lord Jesus Christ the King, deserves our homage and service. We hope that the offering we make of all that we are and all that we do, through Our Lady's Immaculate Heart, is acceptable to Him. Now we're asking you to help us build Him a proper chapel so that He can be enthroned, not only in our hearts, but also in a beautiful new sanctuary. "Let us rise up, and build" (II Esdras 2:18).

Join the Angelic Choirs!

Seraphim ... \$100,000 or more

Cherubim ... \$50,000-\$99,999

Thrones ... \$40,000-\$49,999

Dominions ... \$30,000-\$39,999

Virtues ... \$20,000-\$29,999

Powers ... \$10,000-\$19,999

Principalities ... \$5,000-\$9,999

Archangels ... \$2,500-4,999

Angels ... \$1000-\$2,499

In the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Br. André Marie

Brother André Marie, M.I.C.M.
Prior



The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Brothers and Sisters