

# The New Wine

FALL 2013 NEWSLETTER  
SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

bringing Our Lord's personal love to people,  
*one person at a time*

## Obedience

*During our Community Days, we dove into our Thematic Goal for the year, Obedience. At the end of our Days, we were put to task: to take one letter at a time from the word Obedience and compose a statement that we could pray for over the next 9 months. We share with you what we composed and invite you to join us in prayer.*

ObeY the superiors and pray for them every day that they may have merciful hearts.

Be docile to the Holy Spirit and be ready to surrender your will in order to remain united with God and united with the community.

Exercise a spirit of charity and service (when calling forth obedience and when given the opportunity to exercise this virtue) in imitation of Christ who came not to be served but to serve. (Mark 10:45)

Decide to obey without strings attached; to obey the Lord no matter what He chooses to speak, whatever way He chooses to speak it, and before we ever know what it might be. Trust. For Christ was obedient unto death. (Phil 2:8)

Intentionally smile and say "Yes" to God's will mediated through your superior.

Ensure your heart's intention is to not break unity with your superior and with community.

Never forget that Mother Mary is the perfect example of what it means to have an obedient heart.

Call on the Holy Spirit through the intercession of Our Lady, for the graces to desire obedience and to be obedient.

Engage your will and act in the freedom that Christ our spouse has taught us as He learned obedience from what He suffered. (Heb 5:8)



# CANADIAN DESERT

Last year I was on quite a journey. It was like the story we hear in the Old Testament with Moses and the Israelites during their Exodus. Just as the Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians, I too could relate. I saw how in different ways I was a slave to the world and its many allurements. And I too felt like the Lord was calling me into the 'desert.' I was a little reluctant at first but my desire to follow Him was greater. Of course this wasn't your typical desert with sand, camels, and cactus. This one had an abundance of trees, rivers, and lakes. This 'desert' I had arrived in was called Canada. I had a great desire to grow deeper in prayer, because to me, this meant a closer relationship with God. So in following Him into this vast country, I arrived in Ottawa with the Servants of the Cross in 2010.

As I continued down this journey in the 'Canadian desert,' I began to complain, just as the Israelites did when Moses led them out of Egypt. "Lord, why am I not a saint yet? What is taking so long? Why do I do the things I do not want and do not do the things I should do? Why am I still a sinner?" These were only a few of my many complaints. And so with these complaints, I too like the Israelites, began to forget God's great mercy and love. I became so focused in trying to answer these questions myself, that I forgot to ask God in prayer. **Was this not** the reason I had come in the first place, to grow closer to



*Lizette with guests at Madonna House*

God in prayer? Well I had somehow forgotten and it was then that the Lord sent me a little reminder. I was sitting in our living room one day praying in front of the icon of the Good Shepherd. And it was then that I heard Him say in my heart, "**Why are you here?**"

These four little words pierced my hardened heart and immediately I responded, "because of You (God), because I love you." It was then that I was able to put aside all my questions. The desire to follow Him blindly was rekindled in my heart because this time He was leading me into a much smaller desert within the desert.

This was how I arrived in Combermere, Ontario at Madonna House. What was this Madonna House thing? I had no clue. How long did God want me to be there? I hoped only a few short days. What was my purpose there? I wasn't completely sure, but I believed that the Lord wanted to heal me by showing me a glimpse of who I am (in Him) and from freeing me of self condemnation. This required taking a long hard look at me but only by and with the grace of God.

I entered into Madonna House feeling a bit overwhelmed. I'd met 100 people my first week and couldn't remember a single name. I was hoping to be in and out of there quickly, but I ended up being there a total of 9 months. What happened during my time there? Lots! Thanks be to God that it didn't take too long to get accustomed to the daily routines. This helped to ease a little of the nervousness of being somewhere completely new and not knowing what to do or where to go. Every day was typically the same involving prayer, breakfast, lunch, dinner, dishes, work, tea, mass, a bit of recreational time, and sleep. I thought this would eventually become quite mundane, but I was taught that all things, including work can be transformed into a prayer; a place where the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

*... cont'd on next page*



I recall sweeping the dorm area and entrance every morning for a week. As I was sweeping, one of my dorm-mates commented, “Why do you do this every day? If it were my job, I would have blown it off.” I pondered her question. Then the Lord revealed to me why I did this seemingly insignificant job. I did it out of faithfulness; for if I can be faithful in the small things of life, then perhaps one day I can be truly faithful to God in all that He asks of me. Also, I did it out of obedience. If I can be obedient in the things that seem mundane and useless, then maybe one day I can be “obedient unto death” as Christ was for me. And finally, I did it out of love. This small simple act of sweeping was something I could offer to the women whom I shared a dorm with, a little act of love. And

of course, I prayed for the woman who asked me this question and gave thanks to God for her, because had she not asked, I would not have seen the extraordinary in my ordinary task of sweeping the floor.

Now that I was settled in, I was ready to discover the Lord’s purpose for my being at Madonna House. And so it began. Like Moses seeing the Israelites committing idolatry, so too I beheld the many sins I had committed in my life. I began to ask God how He could possibly love me or the Israelites after seeing all this. What was He thinking showing us His mercy? Who am I to deserve all of this from Him instead of His wrath? I pondered all these questions for a long 9 months at Madonna House. My time there was about being still

before the Lord to discover who I am in His eyes. And in three words I can capture my time in this ‘small desert’:

***I am me.***

**I am** created by God’s infinite love. **I am** blessed, chosen, a child of God, redeemed, forgiven, and lavished with His grace. And with these discoveries, I was able to receive healing in experiencing God’s infinite mercy. I was then able to forgive and show mercy to myself especially in moments of self-condemnation. It has been a challenge but I am discovering a freedom I had never experienced before. So in the words of St. Paul, “*I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me.*” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

## ***Houston Mission Trip ~ May 2013***



*Above:* Sr. Melinda shared her testimony with Felicia at Women’s Vocation Breakfast - Catholic Charismatic Center | Women gathered for our Cena Vocación (Vocation Supper) at Queen of Peace | School and Youth Group presentations in Corsicana, TX with Fr. Jason Cargo (NET team member of Srs Anna and Monique)

*Below:* Spent the day in Galveston - Lizette couldn’t resist but to feed the Galveston dove (seagulls) |Our final goodbye to the Trevino family - until next time!



## Support Your Sisters

- I would like to support the sisters, Servants of the Cross, in their mission of evangelization.  
I have indicated below the option of my support.

### Personal Information (please print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Support Options

### One Time Donation(s)

#### Donation by Cheque(s)

Payable to the Servants of the Cross

Cheque in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
is enclosed.

Post-dated cheque(s) in the amount(s) of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ is/are enclosed.

Donation by Credit Card

Visa  MC Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Monthly Donations through Bank

\$25  \$50  \$100  Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I have attached a VOID cheque.

I may revoke my authorization at any time, subject to providing notice of 30 days. I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this Pre-Authorized Deposit agreement. To obtain more information on my recourse rights I may contact my financial institution or visit [www.cdnpay.ca](http://www.cdnpay.ca).

### Monthly Donation by Credit Card

\$25  \$50  \$100  Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  MC

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Prayer Request

*We invite you to send your special intentions  
and we will join you in prayer.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

### \*Please Complete:

I hereby authorize the Servants of the Cross to arrange automatic withdrawals from my chequing account or credit card,

on the \_\_\_\_\_ (1st or 15th) day of each month  
for payment of my pledge. I understand that I may  
cancel this authorization at any time with advance  
written notice.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your generous gift!** We will send your tax receipt in the new year. BN 83634 8813 RR0001

Dear Benefactors,  
We invite you to prayerfully consider helping us meet our needs. One way would be to support our schooling in Theology and Philosophy. The effectiveness of our evangelization flows from being equipped with the knowledge to speak truth to all those we serve. (Currently Sr. Anna is enrolled at Christendom College, VA and Sr. Melinda is enrolled at Dominican College, ON.)



## *Introducing Our Newest Applicant*

*Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope."*

My name is Penelope Nguyen and I was born in a small town in Southern Vietnam. To have a better education, my parents moved our family to Saigon when I was ten years old. We then all moved to the United States in 2000.

I had set plans for my life: become an accountant, open my own business and get married... But things didn't work out quite the way I expected, I must admit. These plans were not satisfying. I felt empty. One Sunday after Mass ended, something happened in me. I sensed that I was thirsting for something more. At that time, I was at the lowest point of my life filled with sadness and pain. I sought help and met a Redemptorist priest. He unwearingly answered all my questions.

Shortly after, I made my way to Houston and was presented to the Catholic Charismatic Center where the Companions of the Cross priests serve. It was there, while going to confession and Mass that I was guided to surrender my life to the Lord. That was what God wanted! He wanted me to surrender to him so he could work! My heart softened towards Him more and because I was open to His Spirit, things began to change and move!

I decided I needed to be open to where the Lord was leading me in my journey. With a bit of encouragement and a heartfelt discernment process, I decided to contact Sr. Anna. And in November 2012, I arrived in Canada for a "Come and See." I was aware of my fears, preferences, and tendencies. Amidst my concerns, at the bottom of my heart, I sensed that the spirituality of the Servants of the Cross was the one I was looking for. I knew that this community was the one for me.

Since joining the Servants, my heart has been filled with peace and hope in an unusual way (being that it's so cold in Canada)! I'm excited to see God fulfilling his perfect plan in my life. Thanks be to God!

***Check out Penelope's full testimony on our website:  
[www.servantsofthecross.ca](http://www.servantsofthecross.ca)***



August 22 - Penelope and Lizette arrive



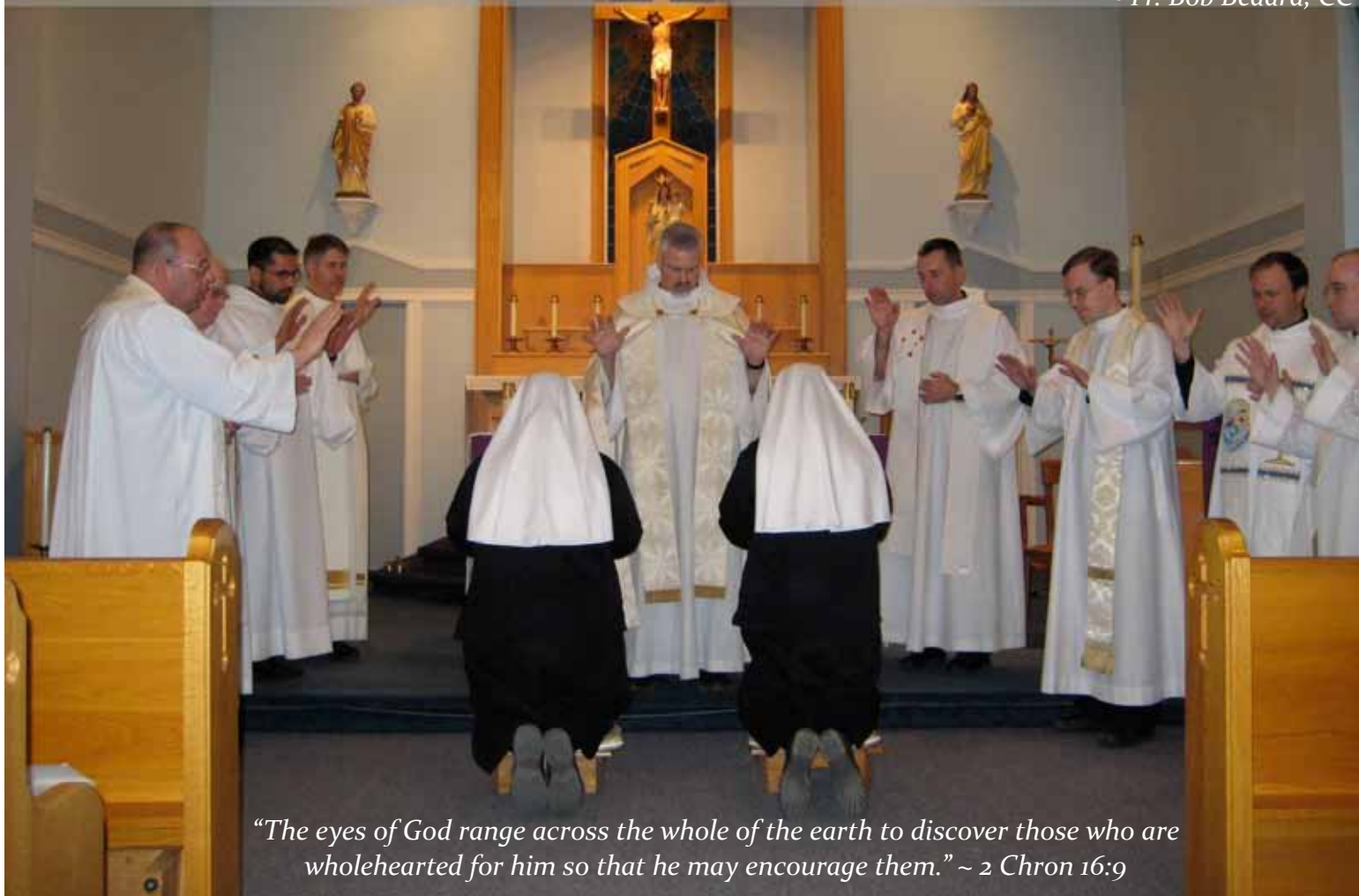
Sister Shower - "spice contest"



Penelope learns a new game!

*God is recruiting. He's looking for people who will give their whole lives to him so that he can build what he wants to build upon them.*

*~ Fr. Bob Bedard, CC*



*"The eyes of God range across the whole of the earth to discover those who are wholehearted for him so that he may encourage them." ~ 2 Chron 16:9*

*Have you booked your  
Women's Vocation  
Breakfast?*

*Encourage  
your pastor  
to book  
today!*



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