



In Touch

Pilgrims follow Mary, Model of Consecrated Life at 81st Annual Pilgrimage

Inside this issue:

Pilgrims follow Mary, Model of Consecrated Life at 81st Annual Pilgrimage	1
A Message from Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM	2
Basilian Sisters Gather to Celebrate Jubilees	3
Mount Macrina Manor to hold Live Nativity	5
House of Prayer Program Schedule	5
Photos of the 81st Annual Pilgrimage	6-7
Basilian Sisters Share Vocation Stories at Pilgrimage	8
61st Annual Dormition Pilgrimage	9
Obituary: Sister Dorothy Louise Balock, OSBM,	10
Visitors to Mount St. Macrina	10



Sr. Joanne Lickvar (upper left); Sr. Regina Adams, (upper center); Sr. Monica Husovich (upper right); Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick (lower left) and Sr. Martha Elizabeth Moyta (lower right) share their vocation stories at Pilgrimage.



The 81st Annual Pilgrimage was focused on *Mary, Model of Consecrated Life*. This theme was selected in keeping with Pope Francis' declaration that this year shall be the "Year of Consecrated Life" - a special recognition of all of the women and men who have listened to the call of

the Lord, and said "yes" to serving his Church in this special way.

In addition to Divine Liturgy, candlelight processions, children's procession, Parastas and children and youth programs, the Pilgrimage offered a look at the vocation stories of some

of the Sisters of St. Basil. Enrichment sessions were held on both Saturday and Sunday. Pilgrims heard stories from Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick Sr. Joanne Lickvar, Sr. Monica Husovich, Sr. Regina Adams, and Sr. Martha

(Continued on page 4)

A Message from Sister Ruth

Autumn 2015



Sr. Ruth Plante, OSBM

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Dear Friends,

It seems that only yesterday we were enjoying the summer warmth, the gift of God's glorious creation, and the joys and blessings of our Pilgrimage in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Now, we have torn off another calendar page and wait for its days to unfold.

Here on the Mount construction is continuing on the addition and renovations to Mount Macrina Manor. Each week we see progress as the contractors diligently work to bring blueprints to reality. I sincerely admire the expertise of all involved as they discuss every tiny detail from the size of the bolts and fasteners to the intricate layout of wiring and plumbing. How much more takes place behind the scenes than meets the eye!!

Another important season will soon be upon us – that of Philip's Fast – as we prepare for the beautiful feast of the Nativity of Our Savior. One of the words we most often hear during this time is "busy." Everyone is so very busy running here and there with so much to do in so little time. So often the reality of the coming of God-with-us becomes lost in the midst of all the temporalities.

I recently heard a story which I'd like to share with you. It contains a lesson for all of us who must plead guilty to being so busy. On a recent visit to one of their convents in India an American Sister was recounting her busy schedule to her Indian counterparts. The Sisters told her that they never use the word busy because it has an unacceptable acronym – Bound Under Satan's Yolk. The American Sister then asked what word they do use since certainly they have full schedules. She told her that they say that they are blessed with the fullness of the day... So, you see, we are all blessed with the fullness of our days!!

Be assured that you are always remembered in our prayers. Through the course of our 94 year history, you have always generously and lovingly supported us – and we are truly grateful. Please remember that we are always willingly to pray for your special needs and intentions – just call us or e-mail your requests.

May these seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas be times of special blessings for you.

With our love and prayers,

Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM

Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM
Provincial

In Touch

A biannual publication of
the Sisters of St. Basil

Editor: Susan McCarthy

Contributors to this issue:

Sr. Margaret Kapusnak, OSBM
Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick, OSBM

Fall 2015

Volume 24, No. 2

Basilian Sisters Gather to Celebrate Jubilees



Sr. Barbara Swindells (left), Sr. Leocadia Sevachko (center), and Sr. Martha Elizabeth Moyta celebrate their Jubilees.

In this year, called for by Pope Francis as the Year of Consecrated Life, jubilees are an opportunity for all the Sisters to thank God for the gift of their vocation. After two days of presentations and discussion during their annual Community Days, the Basilian Sisters paused to honor three of the Sisters celebrating

significant years of religious dedication.

Celebrating their 70th Anniversary of religious life were Sister Martha Elizabeth Moyta and Sister Leocadia Sevachko; celebrating her 60th Anniversary was Sister Barbara Swindells. The hallmark of every such celebration is the Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving

offered for the intentions of the Jubilarians. Joyful voices were raised in praise and thanksgiving for the gift of the fidelity of these three Sisters. This joy continued during the festive meal following, a time which is always punctuated by a lot of laughter and reminiscing.

Sister Martha Elizabeth Moyta entered the Sisters of St. Basil from Holy Ghost

Parish, North Side Pittsburgh, Pa. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from College Misericordia in Dallas, Pa. and a Master of Science degree in Religious Education from LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pa. Sister Martha Elizabeth spent almost 25 years in elementary education before being assigned to the Diocesan Religious Education Office in Pittsburgh, Pa. During her years in this ministry, Sister worked with others on the GOD WITH US

Catechetical series where her expertise was methodology. Following her years in religious education both in the Pittsburgh Archeparchy and the Eparchy of Parma, Sister Martha moved on to pastoral ministry in St. Therese parish in St. Petersburg, Fla. before retiring to the monastery at Mount St. Macrina.

Sister Leocadia Sevachko entered the Sisters of St.

(Continued on page 4)

Basilian Sister Jubilarians Celebrate (Continued from page 3)

Basil from St. Nicholas parish in Youngstown, Ohio. She received her Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Carlow College (now Carlow University) in Pittsburgh, Pa., and her Master of Science in Education from LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pa. Sister Leocadia's teaching assignments spanned 57 years in elementary education. Her assignments also included a number of years when she served as both teacher and principal. The first to

enter the community, Sister Leocadia has the distinction of being one of three sisters in community; Sister Dorothy, now deceased, and Sister Bernarda. With her sister, Sister Bernarda, Sister Leocadia continues to serve in catechetical and parish ministry in the five parishes in the Youngstown area.

Sister Barbara Swindells entered the community from St. Mary Church in Chicago, Ill. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education in

1968 from Mount Mercy College in Pittsburgh, Pa., and a Master of Arts in History from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. For 23 years, Sister Barbara's energy was devoted to education from the elementary level through high school, at times serving as principal or assistant principal. Following these years, Sister engaged in ministry in the Religious Education Office of the Archeparchy as well as in the Eparchy of Van Nuys. She was elected to the Provincial Council in 2000 and was

re-elected to a second five-year term. Presently, Sister Barbara is the Administrator of Mount St. Macrina Cemetery and Mausoleum, a position she has held since 2001. For the combined 200 years of faithful service, warm congratulations were offered to the Jubilarians by Sister Ruth Plante, Provincial, and by all the Sisters. May God grant them many more spiritually fruitful, happy and blessed years!

Pilgrims follow Mary

(Continued from page 1)

Elizabeth Moyta. The vocation stories that each of the Sisters told were very different and came from different decades. The common thread that was woven through the stories was that each got a calling and each said "yes".

Read more about their stories on page 8. A pictorial collage of the Pilgrimage can be found on pages 6-7.



*On behalf of the
Sisters of St. Basil,
we wish you a
blessed Thanksgiving
and joyful
Christmas season!*

Mount Macrina Manor to hold Live Nativity Sunday, December 13



Mount Macrina Manor's annual Live Nativity will be held on the grounds of Mount Saint Macrina in North Union Township on Sunday, December 13, 5-7 p.m. More than 25 people are expected to portray Mary and Joseph, the shepherds tending to their flock, the Three Kings, the Little Drummer Boy and angels. The Nativity will be set up along the Friendship Circle, adjacent to the facility. In addition to the volunteers who are participating, there will also be live animals. Several groups will sing Christmas carols. The event is free of charge and everyone is welcome.

*"We must
always walk
in the
presence of
the Lord,
always try to
live in an
irreprehensible
way"*

- Pope Francis

House of Prayer Program Schedule



House of Prayer

Christmas Day of Prayer

Sr. Marian Senish, CDP

Saturday, Dec. 12, 2015

9:15 am - 1:00 pm

Offering: \$30, incl. lunch

Registration Due: Dec. 7

Christmas Day of Prayer

Msgr. George Appleyard

Sunday, Dec. 13, 2015

1:15 pm - 5:00 pm

Offering: \$30, incl. dinner

Registration Due: Dec. 8

Lenten Day of Prayer

Rev. John Chirovsky

Saturday, Feb. 27, 2016

9:15 am—1:00 pm

Offering: \$30, incl. lunch

Registration Due: Feb. 22

Lenten Day of Prayer

Rev. Thomas Dansak

Sunday, Feb. 28, 2016

1:15 pm—5:00 pm

Offering: \$30, incl. Supper

Registration Due: Feb. 22

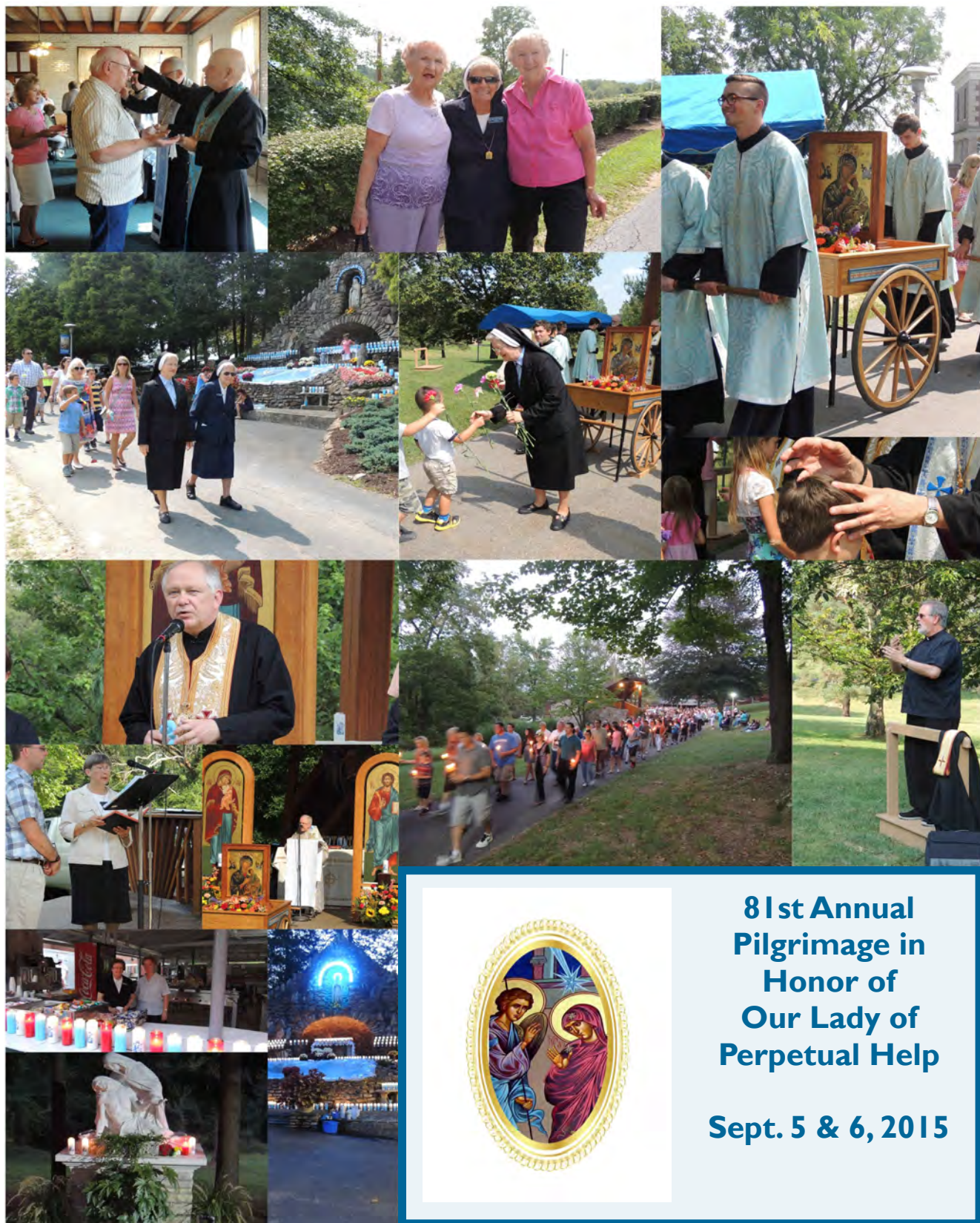
Please register early to prevent program cancellation. For additional upcoming programs, please visit www.sistersofstbasil.org.

The Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer is located at 510 W. Main St., Uniontown, PA 15401. Telephone: 724-438-7149.

Individual directed retreats, personal retreats, group retreats and days of prayer can be scheduled October - July.

A collage of 15 photographs capturing various moments from the 2017 Holy Trinity Cemetery Dedication. The images show a priest reading from a book, a woman speaking at a podium, a procession with crosses, a nun and a woman working at a table, a group of people holding candles, and a large group of people gathered for the ceremony.

Consecrated Life



Basilian Sisters Share Vocation Stories at Pilgrimage

In keeping with Pope Francis' declaration that this year shall be the "Year of Consecrated Life", the Sisters planned a special Pilgrimage enrichment session. The session, which was held on both Saturday and Sunday, focused on the vocation stories of five Sisters.

When **Sr. Regina Adams** was a junior in high school, she took a test for entrance into nursing school. When she went for an interview, the director asked, "Did you every think of becoming a Religious Sister?" Sister admitted that she had thought about it, but had pushed it to the back of her mind. She told Sister to talk to someone about it.

So, she made arrangements to meet Sr. Frances Novak, OSBM and visit Mount St. Macrina. The whole experience ignited a spark in her to desire the Religious Life. She entered a year later.

During her ministry, she has been a principal and teacher. Presently she is in Pastoral Ministry for five parishes in northeastern Pennsylvania, visiting nursing homes, hospitals, and the home bound; leading liturgical singing; and teaching catechetical classes on Sunday.

Sr. Joanne Lickvar also had an interest in medicine and worked many volunteer hours at a local hospital. While volunteering, a lady that she

prostrated before the Eucharist on the holy Altar, Sister Martha felt a deep longing to follow in her footsteps and that urge never left her.

"Religious life is a different way for the fulfillment of your own life – a way where God is the goal, his Word the light, and his Will is the guide." - Sr. Joanne Lickvar

worked with suddenly died. It was then that she realized that doctors can only do so much. Her thoughts turned to the true Physician, the healer of both body and soul.

God's invitation came, but she was not sure that she was open to His call. Through prayer, she knew that she had to try religious life and to see if God was really calling her. She contacted the Sisters and she entered on the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God with no definite expectations, just to try it out. Moreover, 49 years later Sr. Joanne is still trying it and loving it.

Sr. Martha Elizabeth Moyta had the desire to become a Religious from a very young age. This was made stronger when she attended the profession of Sr. Alexandra at Mount St. Macrina. As Sr. Alexandra

At age 15 she was ecstatic when after writing a letter seeking admission to the convent, Mother Macrina responded positively stating that she could enter in August of that year.

She ministered in Byzantine Catholic Parishes from New Jersey, through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana with a stop in Florida. In addition to teaching in our parochial schools, she worked on the GOD

"The only thing that really matters in life is that we do everything with love in our heart for God and all of his Creation."

- Sr. Monica Husovich

WITH US Catechetical series. Presently, she works part time at the Mount St. Macrina Religious Gift Shop.

Sr. Monica Husovich thought about being a Sister when she made her First Holy Communion. Sr. Lubov was her instructor and an inspiration.

Several years later, when she was in 7th grade, she and her classmates were asked to write an essay on their chosen career. She wrote about being a teacher. Then, during her freshman year, she was praying daily for the grace to understand what God wanted her to be. She had a list of possible professions that she would present to the Lord for consideration and the last on the list was to be a nun. By the time that she was a junior, her list shortened to asking God for the grace to be a nun.

She came to Mount St. Macrina in 1958. After she

made the decision to enter, she had great peace of soul, feeling that this is what God wanted her to do.

(Continued on page 9)

Basilian Sisters Share Vocation Stories (Continued from page 8)

After being in the field of education for 28 years, Sr. Monica began to work at Mount Macrina Manor in the business office doing fundraising and other tasks. She became the admissions coordinator and later became the coordinator for all computer usage in the Manor.

At present Sr. Monica is stationed in the Monastery transporting Sisters to their doctors appointments.

In 1963, **Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick** entered the Sisters of St. Basil. She had thought about religious life when she was a little girl, but never thought of it much after she entered her teens and dating and dancing every Saturday night.

At age 16, her homeroom teacher was pressuring her and her classmates to decide about college. Since Dec. 4 was the Feast Day of St. Barbara, she believed that it was best to contemplate it on that day. So, during a Latin Mass, she prayed and the clarity

came to her. She sensed the call to become a Sister.

Sr. Barbara Jean taught in schools in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Connecticut and Illinois. She was also a parish minister at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Church, Uniontown; member of the order's provincial leadership team; and a House of Prayer staff member. From 1989-2001, she served as assistant general superior in the Order's General Administration in Rome.

"I wish other young women would experience this very rich life that is blessed with so many benefits."

- Sr. Barbara Jean Mihalchick

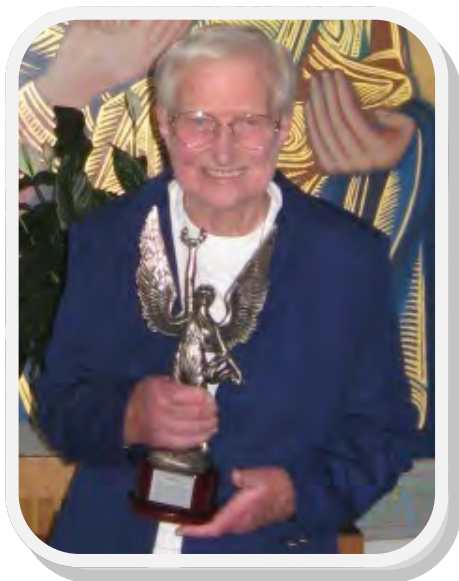
61st Annual Dormition Pilgrimage



In honor of the Year of Consecrated Life, Sisters of various Eastern Catholic religious communities were invited to participate in the 61st Annual Dormition Pilgrimage at the headquarters of the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate in Sloatsburg, New York. The Pilgrimage took place August 8-9. The Communities attended were invited to present a display.

Pictured are Sister Margaret Ann Andrako, Assistant Provincial Superior, Sister Joanne Lickvar, Provincial Councilor, Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick, Vocation Director, all visiting from Uniontown, with Sister Michele Yakymovitch, SSMI, Director of St. Joseph's Home, and Very Rev. Jack Custer, Rector of St. Michael Cathedral in Passaic, New Jersey. The group is standing near the Sisters of St. Basil display.

SISTER DOROTHY LOUISE BALOCK, OSBM ENTERS INTO NEW LIFE



God graciously granted Sr. Dorothy Louise's wish to attend the Pilgrimage one more time. A few days after it concluded, Sr. Dorothy Louise (former Sr. Joachim) peacefully fell asleep in the Lord Jesus at Mt. Macrina Manor on Thurs., Sept 10, 2015. The daughter of the late Michael and Barbara (Reyta) Balock, Sr. Dorothy Louise was born in Patton, Pa. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil from SS. Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Patton, Pa, on Sept. 15, 1950. She pronounced her First Vows on Nov. 27, 1952 and made her Perpetual Profession on Jan. 1, 1956 in the presence of the late Very Rev. George Bonchonsky. Sr. Dorothy Louise spent

the first years of her 65 years as a Sister of St. Basil in the teaching ministry. She then served a term on the Provincial Council and Coordinator of the monastery community. From 1977 until presently, Sr. Dorothy Louise's ministry was in one way or another involved in health care. She served as the Administrator

of Mt. Macrina Manor from 1977 - 1993. For the next few years, Sister resided at the monastery tending to personal health needs. Probably what became her best-loved ministry began in 1997 when she worked as a Spiritual Counselor for what was then Albert Gallatin Hospice. When declining health required that she limit her work hours, she continued to volunteer her services assisting patients and families with addressing their spiritual needs, especially those facing the crisis of terminal illness. As a cancer survivor three times, she was well prepared to walk these paths with those who came within the sphere of her care and concern. Her empathy

with her patients was so well-regarded that she was named as Volunteer of the Year by Amedisys (Albert Gallatin Hospice).

Sr. Dorothy Louise was preceded in death by her parents, her sisters, Elizabeth Somics, Ann Schaefer, and Catherine Pinksaw; and her brothers, Michael, John and George Balock. In addition to her Sisters in community, she is survived by her many devoted nieces

and nephews and their families. The Parastas Service was celebrated by the Very Rev. Robert Pipta. The Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated by the Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich; concelebrants were Rev. Michael Huszti, Monastery Chaplain; Rev. Vasyl Symyon, Rev. Vasyl Banyk and Rev. Mykhaylo Shkyndya. Interment followed in the Dormition Section of Mount Macrina Cemetery.

Visitors to Mount St. Macrina



Last summer, members of the Maronite Servants of Christ the Light stayed at the Mount overnight on a return visit. The new religious community serves the Maronite Church from southeastern Massachusetts. The Sisters and Postulants were on their way from the annual Maronite Church assembly held this year in Cleveland, to the annual Youth Retreat being held at St. Vincent's Archabbey in Latrobe, Pa.

Committed to Loving Care - Construction Continues at Mount Macrina Manor



In April 2015, the Sisters of St. Basil broke ground for renovations to Mount Macrina Manor. The first phase of the eight phase project is well underway. The entire project is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2017.

The upgrades to the Manor include a new rehabilitation addition, expansion of the Manor chapel, and many other essential improvements, the topmost being the installation of new mechanical systems—heating and air conditioning—to provide a safe, comfortable environment for our cherished residents.

For further information about this project or to donate, call the Sisters directly at 724.438.8644.

Visit the Religious Gift & Card Shop at Mount Saint Macrina For Your Holiday Gifts



**Religious Gifts, Icons,
Inspirational Christmas Cards**



530 W. Main St.
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-439-6180
www.sistersofstbasil.org

*Open Tues., 10 a.m.- 6 p.m.,
Wed., Fri., & Sat., 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Closed Sun., Mon. & Thurs.
Additional parking available in the lower lot.*

In Touch
Sisters of St. Basil the Great
500 West Main Street
P.O. Box 878
Uniontown, PA 15401
(724) 438-8644
www.sistersofstbasil.org