

# The Santa Rita Newsletter

Newsletter of the Trappist Cistercian Nuns of Sonoita, Arizona

Vol. XXI, No. 1

December 2015



Dear Friends,

With joy your Santa Rita Sisters greet you during this new Advent, Hanukkah, and Christmas season! Our joy comes from deep in the heart of God where all the world's pain is gathered up and transformed into new life. May all peoples and all creation experience this joy in the One who is still creating this amazing universe in which our planet Earth is just a tiny blue jewel and yet is at the same time the dwelling place of the incarnate God.

The year 2015 was full of visitors to our monastery—sisters from other communities of our Order, priests from all over the country, and family members from near and far. The highlight of the year was the celebration of our Sister Kate's Golden Jubilee of Vows. If you've been following our website Journal page, you've already read about and seen photos of many of these guests and of Sr. Kate's joyful day. We can only cover a few highlights in this black and white paper newsletter, so take a look at <http://www.santaritaabbey.org/abbey-journal/>.

We've made a few additions to our website this past year: a Prayer Times page where we post our current Mass schedule and any special services; an entirely new set of photos for the "View the Abbey" slide show linked to the Our Community page; and brand new "Tour the Altar Bread Bakery" slide show page at <http://www.santaritaabbey.org/altar-bread-tour/>. To see the full-color edition of this newsletter, go to <http://www.santaritaabbey.org/newsletter/>. Please note: for address changes or to sign up for the environmentally friendly email version of this newsletter, write to the newsletter editor at [sragoodnews@gmail.com](mailto:sragoodnews@gmail.com).

***Our community photo above was taken in August:*** (left to right) Srs. Pam, Margarita, Fabiana, Fr. John, Srs. Nettie, Eleanor, Miriam, Rita, Jacqui, Mother Vicki, Srs. Clare, Kate, and Esther. Sr. Fabi is from Monasterio Santa Maria de la Paz in Nicaragua. She is staying with us for a year and studying hard to learn English. Fr. John is a monk of the Abbey of the Genesee in New York; he was here to preside at the Jubilee Mass for our Sister Kate. Sr. Eleanor of St. Mary's Abbey, Glencairn, Ireland was here for the summer. She got a kick out of our excitement over even a few 1/100th's of an inch of rain—that's Arizona!

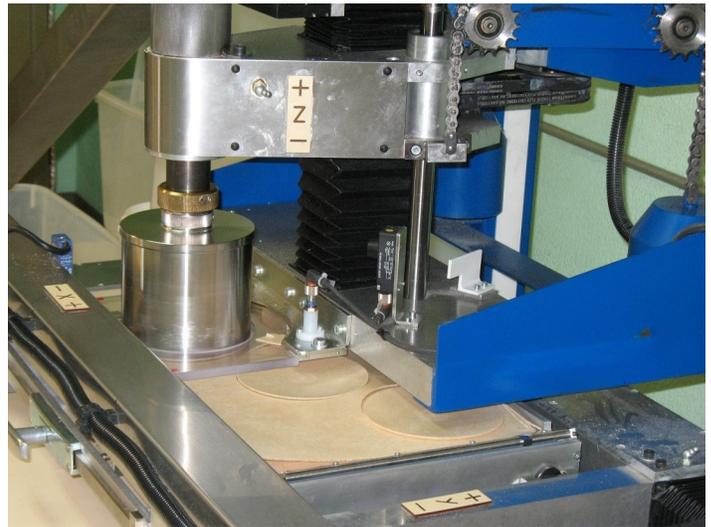


*Sr. Pam welcoming visitors to Sonoran Spirit.*

**Coworkers of the Vineyard:** From March 5-7 we participated in the Diocese of Tucson's Catholic Conference, Co-workers of the Vineyard, held in downtown Tucson. Our beloved Bishop Gerald Kicanas, several keynote speakers, and numerous workshops offered a wide variety of inspiring topics. We Sisters of Santa Rita, along with other artistic Sisters & Brothers in the diocese, were invited to be part of the **Sonoran Spirit Art Exhibit** in the exhibit hall during the conference. Our booth at the art exhibit featured iconography by Sisters Clare and Cathy, sculpture by Sr. Esther, poetry by Sr. Miriam, and photography by Sr. Pam. Being contemplative nuns, we don't often participate in diocesan-wide events, so we were especially glad to be able to join in this special weekend. It renewed our sense of belonging to the Church of Tucson, and gave a face to the people whom we've long supported by our prayers. Special thanks to our friends Juanita, Judy, Katie & Bob, Monika and Clare for their assistance with the exhibit.

**Cistercian Altar Breads:** At the abbey we earn our living mainly by the production of whole wheat altar breads, while any creative art work is only a part time activity. Both areas of work fit well with our Cistercian tradition of each monastic community supporting itself by the work of its hands. The making of altar breads requires specialized equipment. The mixer, baker, and computerized cutter we have

used since 2000 came from France. This spring the Coremat company sent two technicians to our bakery to rebuild and upgrade the computerized cutter. Our local repairman, Rich, was on hand to assist with the work, and our friend Juanita provided assistance as translator during the ten-day process. The upgraded machine now cuts all five sizes of our altar breads, whereas the previous model cut only two sizes, requiring us to cut the other three sizes on the old manual machine. We are very grateful to the anonymous donor whose generosity provided the necessary financial support for this project! Information about our altar bread sizes and prices can be found on our monastery website, <http://www.santaritaabbey.org/product-category/altar-bread/> Churches may use the online order form, submit orders via email to [cistercianab@gmail.com](mailto:cistercianab@gmail.com), or call the bakery at 888-878-1622.



*The upgraded computerized altar bread cutter now cuts our 5-1/2" concelebration hosts!*

**Knights of Columbus volunteers:** Another blessing for us this year has been the generous Knights of Columbus from Green Valley and Rio Rico. They've traveled from the other side of the Santa Rita Mountains for two volunteer work days this year—in May, to assist us with grounds keeping, and in October to help us with outdoor painting. May God bless them and their loved ones most abundantly!

## Sister Kate's Golden Jubilee:



*Mother Vicki presents Sr. Kate with a special Jubilee cross.*



*Sr. Kate with her family: Carolyn, Eileen, and Jeff.*

On August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we celebrated our Sr. Kate's 50th anniversary of religious vows. Eileen and Jeff Whittock, Kate's sister and brother-in-law, and Carolyn Ewald, her niece, traveled from Pennsylvania for the occasion, while Fr. John Denburger came from the Abbey of the Genesee in New York to preside at the Jubilee Mass. Sr. Kate renewed her religious vows during the Mass, and then her sister and brother-in-law renewed their wedding vows. It was a lovely ceremony to have both renewals together, beautifully expressing the truth that marriage and consecrated religious life are each a blessed path to God. Many of our local friends also attended the Mass, adding to the joy of the occasion. Later in the day, we Sisters enjoyed a festive meal with the Whittock family.

**Chaplains:** As always, we are grateful to our monks' monasteries for lending us a priest for several weeks at a time. This spring we once again celebrated Holy Week and Easter with Fr. Matthew from St. Joseph's Abbey in MA. This summer Fr. Casimir from Holy Trinity

Abbey in Utah spent two months with us. We look forward to having Fr. Casimir with us again from late November until New Year's.

**Community Retreat:** this October Fr. James Palmigiano from St. Joseph's Abbey gave us our annual community retreat. His retreat conferences centered on God's tender, intimate and extravagant love for every person. Jesus longs for us to entrust ourselves completely to him. "Just do it!" says Fr. James, "Surrender!"

**A new phone system in 2016:** This year our Christmas wish is for donations towards replacing our antiquated, expiring telephone system with a new model. Anyone who would like to contribute to the phone system fund may send a donation to Santa Rita Abbey, 14200 E Fish Canyon Rd, Sonoita, AZ 85637-6545. Thank you! **May God bless you, all our friends, this Christmas and throughout the New Year with the fullness of His un-failing Mercy and Love!**



*The Knights of Columbus work crew in May.*

**Santa Rita Abbey  
Cistercian Altar Breads  
14200 E Fish Canyon Rd  
Sonoita AZ 85637-6545**

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