



# FAITHFUL

## Christ Child Shrine Blessing

Story and Photos By Ambria Hammel

*Used with the permission of the Catholic Sun*

Jesus openly welcomed children and told His crowds that they must become like a child to enter the kingdom of heaven.

A couple of mini statues at Mount Claret Retreat Center depict saintly children to aid with such meditation. There's one with St. Joseph and an infant Jesus and another of St. Anne and a young Mary.

Both stand along a small meditation garden and sit rather low to the

ground, not quite knee-high. Now, there's also a much more public way for people of all ages who visit Mount Claret for retreats — including several school and youth groups — to meditate on becoming childlike in their faith.

Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted dedicated a new five-foot statue of the Christ Child Jan. 8. It stands atop a waterfall and overlooks a new meditative seating area *continued on page 2*





## The Christ Child Shrine PROJECT



between Mount Claret's chapel and sleeping quarters.

It was fittingly dedicated on the feast of the Epiphany, Bishop Olmsted said. The example of the magi personally inspired him to spend an hour in Eucharistic adoration daily the last 43 years. Their example should also inspire all Catholics, he said. There was something about the risky and lengthy journey to personally encounter or adore the infant Christ that made it worth it.

"It has something to do with silence and with action within the heart," the bishop said, noting that Adoration tunes the heart to what the eye cannot see.

"We're never the same after we encounter Jesus. The creator keeps recreating over and over," the bishop said. That's why following Adoration and a dream, the magi departed another way for their home lands.

The ability to contemplate Jesus at a key moment in His life, around the age of 12, is a multi-fold gift, the bishop said. It allows children and parents to

reflect on the value of family, others to intercede to the Christ child for protection of the unborn and still others at a life's junction to intercede to the Christ child at the age he was found in the temple "about His Father's business."

"That happened because of a deeper call that he heard at that stage to be in His Father's house. That awareness, that, even though we are given to one another, we're called to love one another, we have obligations to love one another ... our higher obligation is always to God," the bishop told a small crowd during the dedication which followed the regular Sunday Mass.

The Christ Child name got attached to the shrine out of convenience after a workroom the Christ Child Society once used was no longer viable nor needed and cleared away for the project. Funds from a widower, in honor of his late wife, got the project started.

Members of the Christ Child Society, a 30-year-old ministry who have

“ We're never the same after we encounter Jesus. The creator keeps recreating over and over. ”

— BISHOP OLMSTED

operated out of Mount Claret the last 22 years, helped purchase the 5-foot statue. Community donors also pitched in to create the landscaping for the shrine. Memorial bricks are also available.

Tom McGuire, director of Mount Claret, has received positive feedback about the shrine's design. He also complimented its lighting features which give it a special feel at night.

"We've already seen people who are here on retreat weekends taking

advantage of the space," McGuire told The Catholic Sun days after the 300-pound statue's installation.

The project marked the end of the first part of a three-phase master plan to upgrade Mount Claret's property. An updated chapel is on the horizon as is reworking of the outdoor area and parking lot to create a more cohesive feel between the southern building and the rest of the property.



# THE *Christ Child* SHRINE



## BE A PART OF THE SHRINE!

Memorialize a loved one, or pay tribute to your family name on a paver in the walkways of the Christ Child Shrine.

The Christ Child Shrine provides an opportunity for memorializing or paying tribute to a family name by purchasing an engraved paver with your loved ones name or family name. The pavers will be placed along the walkways of the newly completed Christ Child Shrine. Please contact our office at 602-840-5066 for more information. Registration cards are also available in the back of the Chapel on the bookshelves, or fill out and clip the below information and mail it to our office.

## I WOULD LIKE TO PURCHASE A BRICK!

Please fill out this card and return it to Mt. Claret Retreat Center, along with a check for \$150, to order a brick with your everlasting message.

Check this box if you wish to pay using a credit card. We will contact you.

Please fill in the below lines with your message. Each line can only be 15 characters (including spaces). Please print legibly.

FIRST LINE (All lines will be centered to each other)

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

SECOND LINE

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

THIRD LINE

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check payable to: MT. CLARET RETREAT CENTER



# Annual Fund



Historically, we have conducted our Annual Fund for Mt. Claret from the week following Easter until June 30th which is the end of our Fiscal year. The Annual Fund is a critical part of our Development work as it is the foundation support for our operational budget that address's maintenance and upkeep needs, equipment replacement, and other critical components of our retreat center. While our retreat groups all pay their own way there is always a budget gap to maintain this



beautiful campus. It is our joyful responsibility to be stewards of this beautiful property as well as stewards of the generous treasure we receive from our donors. Please look for an additional mailing the middle of April with more information.

## St. Patrick's Day Dispensation

In view of the fact that St. Patrick's Day this year falls on a Friday of Lent, I hereby grant a dispensation from the Church's law of abstinence for all in the Diocese of Phoenix. I also request that all who avail themselves of this dispensation perform some other work of penance, for example:

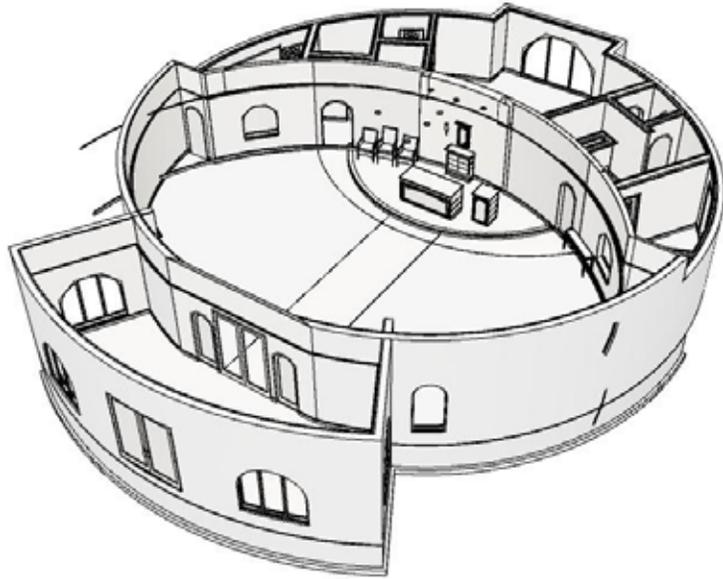


- a prayerful visit to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament
- fasting from watching a television show
- visiting someone who is sick or in prison

We do penance in imitation of Jesus' fast of 40 days in the desert, eager to draw nearer to Him in love.

+**Thomas J. Olmsted**—Bishop of Phoenix

# A LOOK AHEAD PHASE II



Mt Claret has developed a 3 Phase Master Plan for our campus. The first phase, now completed was the Christ Child Shrine. Phase II is the updating and refreshing of the chapel. Some of the features we plan to address with the Chapel include:

- Create a vestibule from the north facing glass window
  - Remodel the bathrooms
  - Remodel/enlarge sacristy
- Remodel the confessional/ create a second one if possible
  - Close off sanctuary from Adoration Chapel
    - Raise the sanctuary space
      - New lighting
      - New interior paint
    - Try to return to wood stain woodwork
- Create some treatment to the roof line to make it look like a chapel
  - New altar furniture and accessories

## PHASE III

We will keep you updated on our progress! Following the completion of the Chapel work, we will move into Phase III of our plan which will include:

- Relocate the stations of the cross
- Widen and improve the driveway access
- Cut down on the amount of asphalt (not reduce parking!)
- Increase the amount of shade trees around the parking area

These enhancements to our sacred spaces and overall campus environment will insure Mt Claret remains a spirit filled lovely place for retreats, reflection and healing through the gift of our Faith!





4633 N. 54th Street • Phoenix, AZ 85018

