

\* Our beloved foundress, Sr. Mary Wilhelmina (Lancaster) of the Most Holy Rosary, born in St. Louis Missouri, died May 29, 2019 at 95 years of age.

\* With the preparation of our St. Joseph altar underway, and after much prayer, we decided the rightful place of our holy foundress was in the Church. This practice is very common in religious communities, even before their cause has been introduced. Note that the altar will be considered a shrine only, until the day Sister's status is raised, and Mass can be offered over her body.

\* Sister had been buried in the ground in a simple wooden coffin, without any embalming or vault, with a puddle of water at the bottom of the grave.

\* On April 28, the Feast of St. Louis Marie DeMontfort the Sisters exhumed her. The top of the coffin had caved in at the time of burial, so a good amount of dirt had penetrated and lay over her remains for four years.

\* We discovered that not only was her body in a remarkably preserved condition, but her crown and bouquet of flowers were dried in place, the profession candle with the ribbon, her crucifix, and rosary were all intact. Even more astounding was the complete preservation of her holy habit, made from natural fibers, for which she fought so vigorously throughout her religious life. The veil, made of synthetic material, was also perfectly intact, while the lining of the coffin, made of similar material, was completely deteriorated and gone.

\* The careful process of cleaning and removing the dirt and mold began, and the body began to lose volume since the initial exhumation with exposure to air. Thus some shrinking and darkening took place. All facial features were visible, but as falling dirt had caused some damage, especially to her right eye, we carefully crafted a wax mask to cover the face. We also put a protective cover of wax over her hands.

\* Once the popular cultus is well established, her cause for sainthood may be introduced so that Sister's holiness may eventually be recognized officially by Holy Mother Church.

\* If you would like to stop by her original grave to the northeast corner of the property, it is in the back right corner of the field along the wall as you look toward the road. You may take a little dirt with you.