



Our Sisters Get a New Statue of Our Lady

If any of us has any doubts as to the Loving Providence of God, read the following true story and we will realize He **always** answers our prayers!

When we settled in Rockford a few months ago and converted the existing family room into our chapel, the one thing we were missing was a suitable statue of Our Lady. We had a corner carved out for her and since she is our Community's patroness, we felt the lack of her physical image. Each day we prayed that somehow we would be able to find a statue that would be both beautiful **and** affordable. We also put out the word among our friends and supporters to keep their eyes peeled - the search was on!

A couple of weeks later we received an e-mail from a Maryland couple, John & Lucy Amb, who had heard of our fledgling group and wanted to wish us well and offer their prayer support. John also mentioned that if there were anything else we needed to let him know. Of course the statue came to mind! We shared our need with him and he promised to keep an eye opened. A short time later we received another e-mail from the Ambs, titled: "**Found: Statue of Our Lady.**" We don't think John & Lucy would mind if we reproduce that letter for you here:

Sister Neri,

I don't know whether you have already found a statue of Our Lady for Good Shepard Chapel, but I have a very unique statue in mind. There is a very old and quite beautiful statue of Our Lady sitting down holding the Christ Child. It came from the Catholic Church in Heron Lake, MN. A Protestant farmer rescued her, and she eventually fell into the hands of a small group of orthodox Catholics in Slayton, Minnesota--including my mother and father-in law. She has been in families' homes for a number of years, but everyone would like to see her in a proper church or chapel. The statue is in fairly good shape--a few paint chips here and there, but that's about it. The base of the statue was cracked a little, but the faithful in Slayton banded it strongly, and you can't really notice it. She's a bit larger than your specs: she's at least 4 ½' tall, probably just under 5 feet. She really is beautiful. The best thing is, no cost to you, Sister! She would be donated to you, and any shipping costs would be paid by your friends in Baltimore. Please let me know if you're interested in the very unique statue tucked away in Minnesota. If you select that statue, it may be several weeks before we can deliver it to you. Let me know, Sister.

Sincerely in Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament,
-John & Lucy Amb

Well, needless to say, we accepted joyously! It turns out that the statue was next in line for destruction from the parish priest who was "modernizing" his church and had already smashed several statues to smithereens! The farmer saw Our Lady and saved her from the same fate!

When Lucy's parents, Jim & Barb Surprenant learned of our wish to accept the statue, they went into action! Despite the cold and snow we had in Rockford, on Dec. 30th they made the 8 hour drive from Slayton with Our Lady in their van. With the help of 2 strong neighbors, Dan and Mike, they got Our Lady safely situated in her reserved spot! We could all only look in awe, for she seemed like she was made for the chapel! The Sisters sang "*Alma Redemptoris Mater*" while everyone looked on in reverent silence.

Not satisfied with their generosity to this point, Jim & Barb insisted on going out to the local home store and buying bricks and plywood to construct a platform to raise Mary up! What warm and wonderful friends we made that day!

For the next 2 weeks, our own Sr. Montfort worked a labor of love in retouching, repainting and refurbishing the statue to restore her to her original pristine beauty!

Now our chapel is complete, thanks to so many good people: the Ambs, Surprenants, Dan and Mike, Chuck Brunning of Slayton who most recently had the statue, all the good people of Slayton, and all the others who had been looking and praying for our need.

Never doubt that the Loving and Provident Lord will give us all we need if only we ask!

You can see more pictures of the statue as well as learn more about the Sisters by visiting their website at:
members.aol.com/sistneri