



News Release

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Sisters discover sweet smell of success

Clyde, MO.—There's nothing small about this small business.

Monastery Scents, the brainchild of Sister Cathleen Marie Timberlake, a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Mo., has become a valuable source of income for the sisters with its line of handcrafted soaps. And as the holiday season approaches, business booms even more.

Founded six years ago, Monastery Scents began when she decided to pursue her interest in soap making as part of the sisters' devotion to St. Benedict, who stressed the importance of work and prayer. Armed with nothing more than a recipe and a photo taken from the Internet, she jumped in and never looked back.

"I love creating something the sisters can use and benefit from," she said. "Monastics are encouraged to live by the work of our hands and that in all things God might be glorified."

Business is going so well, in fact, that the sisters are constantly renovating their soap shop to accommodate new equipment and expanding product lines, including personalized wedding favors and guest soaps.

The boom in business is the result of many factors, including glowing testimonials from satisfied customers, sisters stepping outside the monastery walls to attend trade shows and the launch of their new e-commerce site, www.MonasteryCreations.com.

Soap making isn't an easy process. Sodium hydroxide can be dangerous if not handled properly. Perhaps the drop of holy water Sister Cathleen Marie adds to each batch of soap serves as some protection.

"I often wondered in the beginning how I could make the connection between our ministry of prayer and the work of my hands," Sister Cathleen Marie said. "I realized one day that I could add holy water to the soap and pray for everyone who used it."

Packaged in light brown muslin bags and sealed with a drop of red wax and the congregation's logo, the soaps look right at home in exclusive gift shops, wineries and bed and breakfast businesses, many of which are located in the Kansas City area.

To keep up with business, she relies on volunteers who donate materials and time to sew thousands of the bags. Also helping out are local schools and organizations that sell the soap as a fund-raiser. The soaps have even found their way around the globe, usually given as gifts by people wishing to pass along a prayer.

"Folks have ordered the soap to ship overseas to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan," Sister Cathleen Marie said. "The circle of prayer has widened more than I ever dreamed, and I am humbled for that." For more information about Monastery Scents and a complete list of products, please log onto www.MonasteryCreations.com or call Sister Cathleen Marie at (877) 672-7627.

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