



CONGREGATION OF BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION
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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDITORS - For high-res photos, contact Kelley Baldwin at kelley@bspa or call (660) 944-2221.

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Tucson's Benedictine community launches Preserving Our Heritage campaign

Tucson, Ariz.— The Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have launched a \$1 million initiative to raise funds to repair, restore and update several facets of the Tucson monastery.

The Preserving Our Heritage campaign, which includes honorary chair Most Reverend Gerald F. Kicanas, D.D., Bishop of Tucson, has identified three main components that are in vital need of attention: to repair the roof, to upgrade heating and cooling systems and to make general maintenance and safety improvements.

The 87,000-square-foot monastery was built in 1940 and was designed by noted architect Roy Place. More than 20 members of the Benedictine Sisters call the Spanish Renaissance-style building home. The community offers several faith-based opportunities for the Tucson area and has become a vital part of the urban landscape.

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Preserving Our Heritage Committee

Honorary Chair

**Most Reverend Gerald F. Kicanas,
D.D., Bishop of Tucson**

Members

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Michael McDonald
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Tom Smith
Carolyn LeCoq
Sister Lupita Barajas, OSB
Sister Lenora Black, OSB
Sister Ramona Varela, OSB

Honorary Member

Father Van Wagner, Tucson

< Roof work has already begun on the chapel wing of the Tucson Benedictine Monastery. Tiles are stacked and will be used again once the underlayment is replaced. The entire cost to restore the 70-year-old roof will be \$300,000.

“People have referred to our monastery as a Tucson treasure. Roy Place is still talked about as being one of the finest architects who lived,” Tucson Prioress Sister Ramona Varela, OSB said. “He had the ability to create beauty, style and attention to detail and quality. We are blessed to live in such a beautiful, well-built monastery with a chapel that is open to all people of all religions.”

Among the concerns is the crumbling and damaged roof, which has caused water to leak into the chapel and guest areas. Hand-formed Spanish tiles are the main roofing element and have become damaged, particularly near corners and at level changes. Since the monastery has been designated an historical landmark, any restoration must comply with official guidelines.

While the roof is replaced, the Sisters also hope to upgrade HVAC equipment to include four new air handlers, duct work and insulation, which will result in substantial savings in utility costs.

Safety concerns that must be addressed include improvements in fire emergency exits, upgrades to 1940’s-era electrical boxes and the addition of a new elevator.

“I wish there was a way we could let people know how important the Benedictine Sisters are as a powerhouse of prayer for the entire diocese; that was the wish of Bishop Gercke some 70-plus years ago. They have been faithful to that call,” said Father Van Wagner, an honorary member of the campaign committee.

For more information and ways to donate to the Preserving Our Heritage campaign, please call (520) 325-6401 or log onto www.tucsonmonastery.com/preserve.asp.

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Other repairs include (above) heating and cooling equipment that must be upgraded to become more energy efficient and less costly. Estimated cost - \$350,000; and (right) electrical boxes and the elevator dating back 70 years must be replaced to ensure safety. Estimated cost - \$350,000.



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