



## MONASTERY IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

"Unexpected Guests"

The affectionately called "Castle on the Hill", a long-standing landmark watching peacefully over the town of Ferdinand, recently underwent an exciting restoration and dedication of their new domed church. The serene lifestyle the 195 Benedictine sisters are normally accustomed to became rather hectic after their common practice of spreading incense in the church set off a number of smoke alarms and sent several unexpected guests, otherwise known as the town's local firefighters, scrambling to respond to what was supposed to be a solemn dedication between the sisters, their neighboring Benedictine monks, and specially invited guests. On any other day, the sisters welcome the presence of guests to tour their distinctive Romanesque dome, which stands 87 feet from the floor, 13 and a half feet in diameter, and depicts a multitude of stained glass windows and more than 94 angels. Built from 1915 to 1924, the church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been designated as an Official Project of Save America's Treasures.

### *Snippets of other information:*

- The Monastery is home to the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, one of the largest Benedictine communities of women in the United States.
- The sisters lead guided tours of the Monastery, including the majestic domed church, outdoor Stations of the Cross, Lourdes Grotto, and Rosary steps.
- The sisters also run *For Heaven's Sake* gift shop, which offers handmade crafts from the sisters and their missions in other parts of the world and other unique spiritual merchandise.

