

# Tridentine Community News

August 4, 2013 – Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

## *Tridentine Travelogue: A Visit to EWTN and the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament – Part 1 of 2*

For many visitors to Los Angeles, a trip to see one of the major movie or television studios is a must-do item on the agenda. In-depth studio tours are offered by Warner Brothers Studios, Paramount Studios, and Sony Pictures Studios, while more theme park-style tours are available at NBC Studios and Universal Studios. This writer recommends the VIP version of the Warner Brothers tour for a particularly fascinating and detailed glimpse behind the scenes of movie production. While the scale may be substantially smaller, visitors are similarly welcome to tour the studios of the Eternal Word Television Network in Irondale, Alabama, just north of Birmingham.

EWTN occupies the grounds of the former Monastery of Our Lady of the Angels, on a wooded campus nestled in rolling hills near the wealthy suburb of Mountain Brook. EWTN foundress Mother Angelica is one of our era's great Catholic entrepreneurs, having not only founded the world's largest Catholic broadcast enterprise, but also having grown her order of nuns, the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration, and having built an impressive new monastery for them.



Many viewers have a vivid mental image of Mother Angelica and her nuns actively helping to run EWTN. Photos exist of them behind cameras and of Mother sitting at the massive control room console. Those days are, for better or worse, behind us; the nuns are no longer present on the campus of EWTN. However, members of the order of priests the Mother Angelica founded, the Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word, still live in a friary on-site: Their ministry is primarily to serve EWTN.

The Chapel of Our Lady of the Angels, once the convent chapel, remains the centerpiece of the property. Surprisingly small, with

only seven rows of pews, this familiar building is the site of the televised daily Masses.



The former cloister has been converted into office space. Staffers occupy small offices in the former nuns' cells. Bars remain on the windows, symbolizing the self-imposed separation from the world of cloistered life.

A building approximately the size of a gymnasium is the multi-purpose studio. Inside there are multiple sets for various shows, easily reconfigurable for flexibility. The popular EWTN Live and Life on the Rock shows are shot in one corner of the studio, with a surprisingly small seating area to accommodate a studio audience of around 30 people. Of interest to techies will be the state-of-the-art master control room, where all of EWTN's channels are managed and fed to satellites and the internet.

EWTN operates English, Spanish, and German television channels; a radio service fed to AM and FM affiliate stations; and a shortwave radio station, WEWN. Live streams of the channels can be heard on [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com), as well as via Android and iOS apps. Their web site includes blogs maintained by several EWTN personalities. A few years ago, EWTN acquired the National Catholic Register, one of America's largest Catholic newspapers.

A destination like this wouldn't be complete without a gift shop, which in this case is called the EWTN Religious Catalog.

The "Visit Us" section of the EWTN web site contains comprehensive information for pilgrims, including a schedule of Masses and liturgies in the chapel and information about tours and obtaining tickets to be in the studio audience for certain shows.

Next week: The new home of Mother Angelica's nuns.

### *Tridentine Masses This Coming Week*

Mon. 08/05 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *St. Josaphat* (Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major)

Tue. 08/06 7:00 PM: High Mass at *Assumption-Windsor* (Transfiguration of Our Lord)