Sisters of Charity of Saint Augustine

Images

Fall 1996

God's Call:
to prayer

Sitting on a hillside, nestled peacefully near the pines, the CSA Hermitage overlooks the front lake at Mount Augustine. The words: “Be still and know that I Am God” (ps.46:11) on the Hermitage brochure, remind us in our busy world of the need to slow down and make God the center of our lives.

What is a Hermitage? It is a “special place - a desert place where one can be alone to listen in silence to God’s still voice. It is in silence and solitude that one can be free from many distractions. Here one can try to face the Truth and respond freely...It is the Spirit of God within us inviting to draw closer in prayer. And so, one responds in faith to God’s invitation.” (Sr. Alicia Wagner, CSA)

The CSA Hermitage was built as a Jubilee gift to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Mount Augustine on the grounds in Richfield. This year it was renovated. It is now equipped with heating, plumbing and a small kitchenette. The main room has a bed, table and chair, a crucifix and Bible. In the main building on the grounds, which is within easy walking distance from the Hermitage, are a chapel with daily Mass, library and a dining room for optional meals. A guest may bring a supply of

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A message Sr. Cabrini, as Mary Ferritto, learned early in life was that "the shortest one is always the leader" - at least in processions! From the time she was in the first grade through her elementary years, she was first in line if the criteria was height. The Angel choir, the First Communion class and eighth grade graduation featured Mary in the lead.

Born of a family that had its roots in Rionero Sannitico in Italy, Sr. Cabrini was the youngest of five children. Her parents valued education and made many sacrifices to send all the children to Catholic grade schools and, when possible, to Catholic high schools. She was born and reared in a very Italian neighborhood on the East Side of Cleveland. Sister shared these fond memories from her youth, "When I was eleven I was trusted to ride two trolleys every Saturday for a year to go from Woodhill and Quincy to Ansel Road to watch two children, ages six and seven. Times were different then. At age twelve I had the responsibility to clean a neighbor's house every week. Five dollars a week was quite a bit of money at that time. I began to work at St. Ann Hospital at age fourteen, preparing milk for the newborns and food for the children in the center. It was here that I met our sisters."

Sister continued to work with the Sisters at St. Ann and later at DePaul Home. After graduation from Ursuline Sacred Heart Academy in June, 1950, she entered the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine.

During her years as a Sister of Charity of St. Augustine, Sister Cabrini taught in the primary grades in three parish schools. She became a principal in 1969 and has been in various leadership positions in schools. When reflecting on this experience, Sister said, "The parishes in which I had a leadership role were warm and caring environments. It is also encouraging to see that the love of God and service to others has been shown by many of my former students who have volunteered for lay missionary work beyond college."

Sister Cabrini reflects on the time she was elected to Chapter and commented that she was overwhelmed with the awesomeness of the responsibility. The movie "Man for All Seasons" was released at the same time as Chapter elections. Thomas More was an inspiration to Sister and a line from the movie helped her see her role as a person who could learn to put God first in any leadership task.

Presently, Sister Cabrini serves as a council member. Leadership in the community for Sister Cabrini, has meant wonderful companionship shared with her sisters in leadership. "There is a genuine community among the team that inspires, energizes, confirms, challenges and supports one in the service to the congregation. We are in this together with all of CSA as we focus on the mission of Jesus now and into the future."
“Spotlighting... The Vocation Committee”

The Vocation Committee’s purpose is to give leadership to the community regarding vocation ministry in CSA.

On September 14, 1996 the committee presented a CSA Vocation Day entitled “CSA CATCH THE FIRE”. Sisters and Associates who were able to attend, found the day to be thought provoking enlightening and inspiring.

The afternoon panelists were Sisters Kathleen Barnes, Mary O’Grady and Joan Nicholas who shared their hopes for the future of religious life and the future of CSA.

Small group discussion centered on the following questions:

- What are your hopes for the future of religious life?
- What moves you to continue to choose religious life?
- What are your hopes for the future of CSA?
- What generates the deepest passion in you about the CSA congregation?

A special highlight of the day was a presentation on religious vocations given by the CSA Vocation Director, Sr. Ruth Ann Patrick.

Comments from the large group discussions included:

- The need to be proactive as a religious community and a catalyst in society.
- We strive as religious not to be influenced by the values of the world
- We are called to be spiritual leaders...prophets for the voiceless.

Sister Ruth Ann chairs this dedicated and enthusiastic committee.

Note to Former Members:
You are cordially invited to some up-and-coming events
- Day of Prayer sponsored by the CSA Associates Saturday, December 14, 1996
- Day of Prayer with Wayne Simic, May 3, 1997
Call: Akron (330) 253-9509; Cleve. (216) 659-4161.
Sisters Celebrate Diamond and Golden Jubilees

Proclaiming as their theme, “God’s Faithful Love”, ten CSA sisters celebrated diamond and golden jubilees on September 22 at Mount Augustine with a Mass presided over by Bishop Edward Pevec who also preached the homily.

Jubilees are a time to remember and give thanks, and the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine recall with gratitude the dedication of the ten jubilarians. In reviewing the 60 years of service of the diamond jubilarians, it is noted that they shared a common ministry, that of teaching.

For Sister Margery Freese, it was teaching dietetics and nutrition to students in the congregation’s schools of nursing and at St. John College. In addition she supervised the dietary departments in CSA hospitals and at Mount Augustine for 25 years. She now serves as treasurer for that local community and does clerical work.

Sister Juletta Murray looks back at 57 years as a primary teacher in the CSA operated elementary schools. For the past ten years, Sister has tutored primary students at St. Luke School in Lakewood. Recently she retired to Mount Augustine.

Another diamond jubilarian who taught in the community’s schools is Sister Beth Pierik. During her 36 years of teaching, she taught both elementary and high school students. Before transferring to parish ministry, she taught religion at St. Augustine Academy. Sister was involved in parish ministry at St. Luke Church and, for the last 13 years, at St. Christopher’s where she presently is in ministry.

Sister Dorothy Surgala spent 29 years of her religious life teaching biology and home economics at St. Augustine Academy before becoming a Pastoral Care Associate at Timken Mercy Medical Center where she served for 19 years. Sister has retired to Mount Augustine where she volunteers as needed.

The six golden jubilarians represent a variety of ministries although four of them served primarily in CSA health care institutions.

Sister Corinne Baker remembers the many years she worked in the cashier and payroll offices of CSA’s Cleveland and Akron hospitals. Those years were followed by 25 years supervising the health insurance for the congregation at Mount Augustine. During these years her interest in art flourished and resulted in many paintings now exhibited at the motherhouse.

Health care institutions’ business offices were the sites of Sister Catherine Browning’s ministry. She worked in CSA sponsored hospitals as treasurer for many years and as treasurer and Vice President of St. Thomas Hospital in Akron before coming to Mount Augustine to serve in its business office. Sister Catherine is now enjoying retirement at Mount Augustine.

Sister Catherine Coan retired in July of this year after completing 19 years in St. Vincent Charity Hospital’s admitting office where she served as an interviewer. Previous to that she worked at St. Augustine Manor as discharge coordinator and at Parmadale as buyer, foods manager, and cottage supervisor. In her retirement, she volunteers at St. Vincent Charity Hospital.

For Sister Rene Doyle, her memories are of many years devoted to supervising X-ray departments at CSA hospitals in Cleveland, Canton and Providence Hospital in South...
"All I Have Needed, Your Hand Has Provided. Great Is Your Faithfulness, Lord, Unto Me."

Pictured from top left to right bottom:

Sr. Julettta Murray,
Sr. Edna Lodge,
Sr. Margery Freese,
Sr. Rene' Doyle,
Sr. Corinne Baker,
Sr. Elizabeth Schur,
Sr. Catherine Coan,
Sr. Catherine Browning,
Sr. Beth Pierik,
Sr. Dorothy Surgala
Sister Virginia Durkin to Pronounce Final Vows

On Sunday, December 8, 1996 at Mount Augustine Sr. Virginia Durkin, CSA will pronounce her Final Vows as a member of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. The ceremony will take place during a Eucharistic Liturgy at 2 PM with Rev. Neil Kookoothe presiding. Sr. Judith Ann Karam, Major Superior of the Congregation will receive Sr. Virginia's vows in the name of the community.

The words “In you Lord, I have found my peace” have taken on special significance for Sr. Virginia as she rejoices in being able to unite her personal journey with the journey of CSA. Sister’s Final Profession ceremony will be followed by a reception for members of CSA, family and friends. Sister Virginia presently ministers part-time at Edwin Shaw Hospital in Pastoral Care. She resides at Mt. Augustine where she volunteers as a member of the Communications Department.

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food and prepare meals in the Hermitage. The spacious grounds are available for quiet walks.

Ellen McIntyre was the first to make a retreat in the Hermitage after its renovation. Her reaction: “As always, I am tremendously grateful for this special place and heartily approve of the recent additions.”

Through this place of prayer, CSA invites all who wish, to pray in simplicity and solitude for a world of peace and justice.

“Come, by yourself, to an out-of-the-way place and rest a little.” Mark 6:31

For Information/Reservations, call or write: Hermitage Ministry/ Mt. Augustine/ 5232 Broadview Rd./ Richfield, OH 44286 Phone: Akron (330) 253-9509; Cleve. (216) 659-4161.

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Carolina. She also worked in Admitting and Medical Records at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron before retiring to Mount Augustine.

Sister Mary Edna Lodge cooked for the sisters who taught in the schools operated by the congregation. Among these were St. Luke and Assumption schools and St. Augustine Academy. She also served in the laundry and dining room at Parmadale. Sister is now in retirement at Mount Augustine where she is a valued companion to many sisters as they go to their appointments.

To Sister Elizabeth Schur goes the distinction of having served the longest in the same position. After teaching for five years in the elementary grades, Sister was assigned to St. Augustine Academy where she taught art for 39 years and headed the Art Department for 20 years. She is now using her many talents at Regina Health Center as a member of the Activities Department.

There is a universal feeling on the part of the jubilarians that is expressed in their words of joy and gratitude for these many years. They give praise and thanks to the Lord for God’s continual presence in their lives.
Update on “Focus on the Future”

In the Spring, 1996 edition of IMAGES the theme was “Focus on the Future”. Since that issue, three meetings have been held at Mount Augustine with Sisters and Associates gathering to focus on the future of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine.

On July 6, 1996 three topics were considered; namely, Centrality of Mission, Resources, and Leadership. On July 28th the topics explored were Membership, Relationships, and Planning. At each meeting, the participants had the opportunity to enter into a focus group on two of the three topics. From these focus groups, key learnings emerged.

The Focusing Our Future Committee reviewed the learnings and developed a listing of twelve basic needs for CSA. Each participant was asked to select the top four needs and put in writing reflections flowing from the phrase: “In order to meet this need, what do I/we need to do?”

On August 25, the final meeting in the series was held and Sister Andree Fries, CPPS facilitated the meeting. After a presentation entitled “Where Have We Been” the participants presented their top needs resulting in the following priorities:

• Corporate Commitment to Ministry
• Governance and Leadership
• Communal Identity
• Dealing with Diminishment
• Commitment to Seeking New Members

These priorities will be the focus as the community now begins the process of preparing for the 1997 Elections and Chapter of Affairs.

“We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.”

Archbishop Oscar Romero
"Why did you enter religious life?" was a question asked me by a friend of mine at Duquesne University almost thirty years ago. I remember the moment so vividly because I really had to stop and pause quite a while and think about my response. It was very difficult to share the "why" of what was so personal, so deep as a life choice, especially when I was right out of the novitiate! Thirty years later I find it easier to share why I was called and why I stay!

Probably a good number of us who were raised in the 1950s in Catholic elementary schools had at some time considered religious life or the priesthood. My own personal call came from an attraction to the life of the sisters I worked with at St. Vincent Charity Hospital before I entered the convent. Their life of prayer, community and ministry to others was a source of both inspiration and invitation. I had a gift in my mentor, my boss in the Pharmacy - Sr. Mariel, who spent time with me in sharing about God and life as we closed the department each night. I saw real self-giving on the part of the Sisters in both caring for the poor that came to our Outpatient Department and also meeting the health care needs of the patients in the hospital. I saw everything in their lives stop when it was time to go to community prayer, Mass and communal gatherings. I wanted to be part of it!

As I entered religious life in 1964, I was welcomed into a community of women who shared a common vision and spent their time in prayer, community living and ministry. Through all of the ups and downs of life, the changes in religious life and in the Church, the letting go of companions who walked the same journey with me in community and the welcoming of others, I have found that I have no regrets for choosing religious life. I have been able to live my life in community with wonderful women who have chosen God as their center, have been leaders in the Church, and have walked with the people of God in ministry.

Responding to the call of God has grown over the years because my relationship with God has grown. Just as in the vocation of marriage, relationships need to develop, grow and deepen. The simplicity of my spirituality as a child was a result of my mother's death to leukemia just when I was going into third grade. I was convinced that if I prayed to Mary she would directly "take the message" to my mother just as she interceded for us on behalf of her Son. During my lifetime, I have had struggling times when I perceived that God was very far away. Yet, God was always there with unconditional love, forgiving, supporting and prodding me along my life's journey. I just needed to talk to God "taking my message" directly to the source, and I received answers that confirmed, strengthened and gave me peace in my vocation.

An excerpt from a prayer of Thomas Merton that has always meant a great deal to me is the following:

My Lord God I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I wish that I could again meet my friend in Pittsburgh who asked me almost thirty years ago, "Why did you become a sister?" I wouldn't pause as long and I would have a lot more to tell him. I have seen the road behind me and yes, I do not see the road ahead of me, but I believe that the desire to please God does in fact please God. I hope that I continue to have that desire in all that I am doing because I know God will lead me along the right road.