

REFLECTIONS

&
Connections

STORIES OF MISSION
& MINISTRY



CSA

Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Promoting Justice, Building Community

Water, Water Everywhere...

Really?

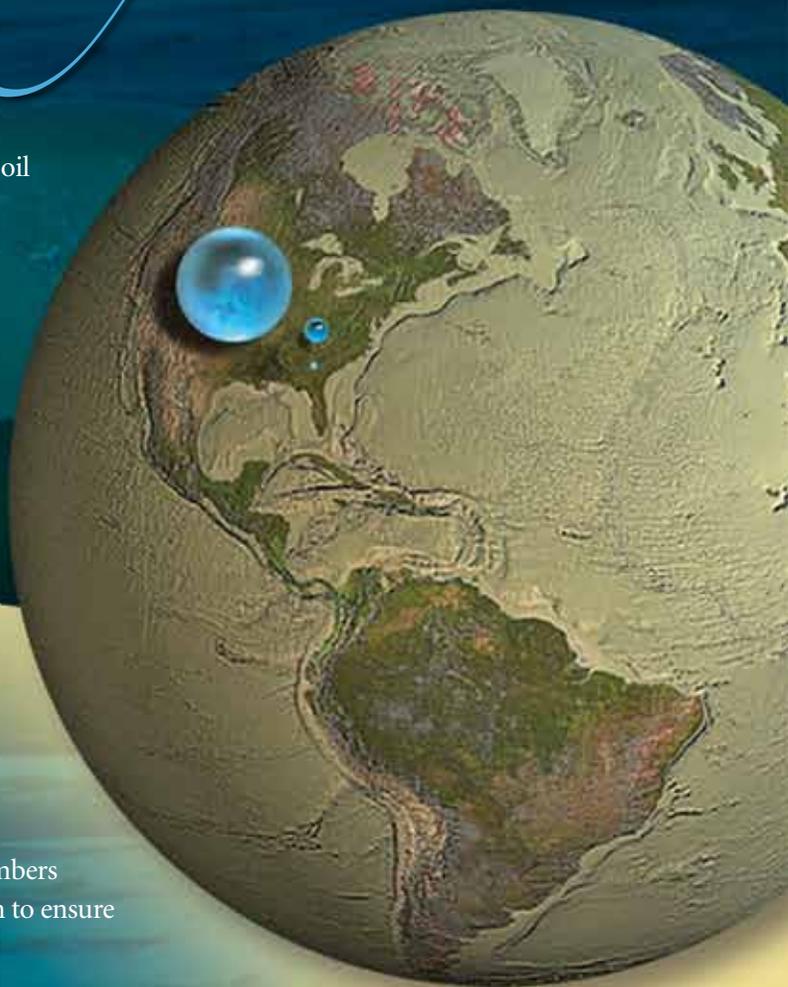
(Part 1 in a 2-part series on
Water Resources)

Often it is said that water will be the future issue as oil is today. There is never enough. The diagram is intended to help us understand how much water really exists. It never increases.

The various blue spheres represent the relative amounts of Earth's water in comparison to the size of Earth. These images attempt to show three dimensions – so each sphere represents “volume.” The largest sphere represents all of Earth's water. Overall it shows that in comparison to the volume of the globe, the amount of water on the planet is very small – and the oceans are only a “thin film” of water on the surface. The blue sphere over Kentucky represents the world's liquid fresh water. The tiny “bubble” over Atlanta, Georgia, represents the fresh water in all the lakes and rivers on the planet. Most of the water that people and life on Earth need every day comes from this source.

The Sisters of St. Agnes participate in the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) Water Committee where members educate one another on water issues and take shareholder action to ensure that corporations include water as a human right.

For a more detailed explanation and the source of this information, go to:
<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/2010/gallery/global-water-volume.html>



Contents

- 3 Community Leader and Activist
Sister Monica Justinger
- 4 Caring for Those Who Have Cared for So Many
- 5 The Divine Gardener!
- 6 The Ministry of Sponsorship
- 7 The Third Cup of Tea
- 7 In Memoriam... Walking with God
- 8 CSA Statement of Mission



Community Leader and Activist

Sister Monica Justinger

As a girl growing up in Defiance, Ohio, Sister Monica worked in her father's hardware store. "I learned to be a problem solver at a very young age, and one of my mentors stated I had street smarts," said Sister Monica. Over her career her skills have paid off in a wide variety of ways, including her creativity in leading and training employees of Berger Health System in the methods of Six Sigma, a method of quality assurance. The payoff to the hospital was a savings of one and a half million dollars the first year.

Currently, Sister Monica is a City Council member; her problem-solving skills are being used to deal with the challenges of high unemployment and loss of industry, and to support changes in the education system of Circleville, Ohio. "My goal as finance chair is to become as efficient as possible while providing needed services and protecting jobs. I see my role with businesses as supportive but also calling forth solutions that protect the most vulnerable in our society."

"I live with Sister Mercedes Geib who is a full supporter of all my commitments. The CSA Mission Statement ~ promoting systemic change for the quality of life, justice for the economically poor, and working in collaboration with others ~ touches me deeply."



Sister Monica Justinger (left), City Council member, elected to represent the 4th Ward, Circleville, Ohio; Chairperson of Finance Committee and active on Economic Development issues; Executive Director of Berger Hospice; President-elect of Rotary; volunteer at St. Joseph Parish.

Sister Anne Matissek
(formerly Sister Wilhelmine)
looks through the names
written in her book. She
still remembers fondly
the students who passed
through her classroom.



Caring

For Those Who Have

Cared

For So Many

Over the course of four decades, Sister Anne Matissek planted and nurtured the seeds of faith in multiple generations of students. Today, as she reads over columns on worn pages in the book where she recorded the names of her grade school students, she remembers smiles on eager faces with the same love that brought her to her ministry.

“I entered the community so that I could teach and be with children,” explained Sister Anne. “It was such a great pleasure to help the children to prepare to receive

“There has always been a deep respect for the profession of religious educators and a love and tenderness for the people, especially children.”

– Sister Anne Matisek

the sacraments. I loved teaching vacation bible school, going from one country parish to another and helping children to learn about their faith.”

Like many of the Sisters of St. Agnes who live at Nazareth Court and Center, a retirement facility for religious in Wisconsin, Sister Anne has spent her entire vowed life in the areas of education (41 years) and pastoral ministry (30 years). Now she participates in a daily ministry of prayer for the special intentions of others.

In an effort to support the sisters in their aging years, CSA Development Ministry has initiated an annual Care of the Elderly Sisters Appeal, with an invitation to friends of CSA to help to care for the elderly sisters – just as they have cared for so many. As other religious did, many of the sisters worked for minimal compensation or volunteered, and now receive nominal funds from Social Security. Today the impact of their work lives on in the hearts and minds of people in the communities where they have ministered.

“There has always been a deep respect for the profession of religious educators and a love and tenderness for the people, especially children,” revealed Sister Anne. “They are an example of joyful witness to everyone whose lives they touch through their work, and I was blessed to be a part of that.”

Please use the envelope in this issue to help us support our sisters in their aging years. To learn more about this appeal to care for the elderly sisters, visit the CSA website and click on How to Help.

The Divine Gardener!

A woman went into a marketplace, looked around, and saw a sign that read “God’s Fruit Stand.” “Thank goodness. It’s about time,” the woman said to herself.

She went inside and she said, “I would like a perfect banana, a perfect cantaloupe, a perfect strawberry, and a perfect peach.” God, who was behind the counter, shrugged and said, “I’m sorry. I sell only seeds.”

– John Shea

God offers us only seeds – this process takes longer, more tending, patience, and the gift of surprise. I’d like to think that God was the first organic gardener who did not use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. Organic gardeners think of the whole system – soil, water supply, people, wildlife, and even insects. Organic gardeners are concerned about building healthy soil and nurturing the connectedness of all things. And so it is with the Divine Gardener – offering us seeds of hope, integrity, risk, resiliency, dreams, purpose, passion, and call. It is up to all of us to provide these seeds with the best environment for germination so we will carry on the creativity and love of the Divine Gardener – and we need not be perfect at this – just willing.



The Ministry of *Sponsorship*

*Extending the Teaching
& Healing Mission of
the Church*

Sister Lucina ministered for 14 years as director of SET Ministry, Inc. (Serve, Empower, Transform) a nonprofit community resource center for inner city residents in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She currently volunteers her expertise and services for nonprofits in literacy, health care, and advocacy.



*W*ith a view of the bigger picture, Sister Lucina Halbur, former administrator, nurse, and educator, embraces her role in sponsorship ministry as an important part of a fundamental tenet of CSA's mission: promoting systemic change for the quality of life. Through her work as a corporate member of CSA Sponsorship Ministry, she helps to extend the teaching and healing mission of the Church beyond the individual to the organization, to the community, and to society.

"We support and guide leadership in these institutions as they carry out the mission, which in turn trickles down to employees, staff, students, patients, and the community itself," explained

Sister Lucina. "It has been such a blessing to see the development of spirituality and the strong sense of mission that has grown in each of our sponsored ministries. These institutions incorporate the gospel values at all levels, supporting families and building stronger communities by reaching out to the vulnerable and responding to needs of the underserved. They offer an environment that nurtures the whole person – body, mind, and spirit.

Committed to mission, CSA sponsored ministries provide quality health care and education to those who might otherwise not have access to services, empowering them to carry on the mission to others, the means by which systemic change spreads from one level to the next.

The Third Cup of Tea

The first time you share tea with someone,
you are a stranger.

The second time you share tea, you are a guest.

The third time you share a cup of tea, you are family.

Wisconsin associate Linda Miller offered this Bali proverb to describe her 15-year commitment as an associate of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes. She is one of thirteen associates from Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, who celebrate their Jubilee this year. The word "Jubilee" is commonly used by religious congregations to celebrate a special anniversary.

The CSA associate relationship began in 1975 and has grown to include 190 women and men in the U.S. and Nicaragua. They commit to extend the charism and mission of God and the congregation in daily life and actions. Nationwide the associate movement encompasses thousands of people and hundreds of religious congregations. During the decade after Vatican Council II, a new sense of universal call to holiness for all people began to emerge. Religious communities became very aware of the impact of such a development on religious life and the life of the Church. The new collaboration that was called forth from Vatican Council II resulted in supportive relationships in ministry, faith sharing, and mutually nourishing faith communities. Out of this movement, CSA's associate relationship began.

Another associate from Pennsylvania, Kay Kuykendall, a 15-year Jubilarian, shared the following thought, "I live my commitment through prayer, my volunteer work, and how I live my life."

For information on the CSA associate relationship, please visit our website at www.csasisters.org



In Memoriam... Walking with God



Sister Kathleen Nelessen

April 6, 2012

Sister Kathleen ministered as a nurse for twenty-two years, served as a regional coordinator for CSA for eight years and ended her ministry giving spiritual care at St. Francis Home, Fond du Lac. For 24 1/2 years, Sister Kathy struggled with cancer while continuing to minister with joy and compassion.



Sister Francesca Reich

April 27, 2012

Sister Francesca entered the Episcopal Community of Sisters of the Holy Nativity in 1954. She became acquainted with CSA while attending the nursing program at Marian College. She converted to Catholicism and was professed a Sister of St. Agnes in 1971. She ministered as a nurse at Nazareth Heights Infirmary and at Home Health Services in Fond du Lac, and with the L'Arche Community in Mobile, AL.



Sister Mary Grace Ollinger

May 8, 2012

Sister Mary Grace was an elementary and high school teacher. She taught in Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Kansas. Later in her life she ministered as the motherhouse librarian and performed office work at Marian College of Fond du Lac.



Sister Judith Smits

July 15, 2012

Sister Judith Smits grew up in Two Rivers, Wisconsin. Her early ministry years were spent teaching. She went on to earn a Masters Degree in Theological Studies and ministered as a Religious Education Coordinator in the southwest. Later in life she received a Social Work, Social Justice Associate Degree and served in Mobile, Alabama, at the Service Center and at the Quest for Social Justice.

For full obituaries go to www.csasisters.org. Memorials can be sent to the CSA Development Office or through the website.



CSA

Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Promoting Justice, Building Community

320 County Road K
Fond du Lac, WI 54937

Ways to connect with CSA:

CSA web site:

<http://www.csasisters.org/>

What's Happening at the UN:

<http://whatshappeningattheun.blogspot.com/>

(in the front page of our web site)

Some Call Me Sis:

<http://somecallmesis.blogspot.com/>

(in the front page of our web site)

Streams 'N Stirrings, Sister Jean:

(in the front page of our web site)

Vocation E-Newsletter

(in the front page of our web site)



<http://www.facebook.com/sasisters?sk=wall>

(in the front page of our web site)



[http://www.youtube.com/user/](http://www.youtube.com/user/TheCSAChannel1)

TheCSAChannel1

(in the front page of our web site)

CSA STATEMENT OF MISSION

WE, THE SISTERS OF ST. AGNES, participate in the mission of Christ by joyful service in the Church, always aware that we, too, are among the needy and are enriched by those we serve. Inspired by our founders—by the missionary zeal of Father Caspar Rehr, the courageous initiatives of Mother Agnes Hazotte, and the spiritual influence of Father Francis Haas—we continue to respond in our own times to those whose faith life or human dignity is threatened.

Rooted in Christ through prayer and worship we serve in both rural and urban settings throughout the United States and in Latin America. We strive to minister with simplicity and hospitality in the fields of

education, health care, pastoral ministry and social service.

We are committed to transformation of the world, the church, and ourselves through promoting

- systemic change for the quality of life
- justice for the economically poor
- furtherance of the role of women in church and society
- mutuality, inclusivity, and collaboration.

Love binds us together, and by sharing our lives and our faith in community, we support one another to live with singleness of purpose: that among us and in our world the Risen Christ be discovered and revealed.