

Blessings

CONGREGATION OF SISTERS OF ST. AGNES

MAY 2008

a newsletter for benefactors and friends of the Sisters of St. Agnes



*Sister Miriam
Therese Putzer*

Welcome to the celebration of a CALL, a DREAM, a VISION
And the unfolding of that vision over a span of
One hundred-fifty years.

Today, as we proclaim the Sesquicentennial
Of the Sisters of St. Agnes

We ponder with joy and gratitude,
That God-given gift to our courageous three:

Caspar, Agnes and Francis.

Struggling with human fragility,

With unforeseen setbacks,

Yet with undaunted faith in a God-vision they could not see

Our founders brought to birth in 1858,

On the pioneer soil of Barton, Wisconsin,

A new religious congregation -

The Sisters of St. Agnes.

Trusting in that same Divine Providence and ministering, today
In 17 states and 3 countries, we, too face a future hidden from our eyes

But one we know to be held securely in the plan of God

And so we say to one another, and to the Church and to the world:

Wait for the vision though it may delay

Be patient it will surely come, it will surely come.

Proclamation written by Sister Miriam Therese for the Sesquicentennial Celebration January 20, 2008



The Development Ministry of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes exists to broaden awareness of and gain additional resources for furthering the mission and ministries of the congregation.



Dear Friends...

This year of celebrating our 150th anniversary, *Courageous Initiatives - Legacy for the Future* is going fast. Several of our sisters have enjoyed the hospitality and good wishes of the parishioners of St. Mary's Parish in Decatur, Indiana, St. Joseph Parish in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and St. John the Evangelist Parish in Defiance, Ohio. Renewing past friendships and making new friends is very life-giving for our sisters as we give thanks for the privilege of ministering to and with you in building the kingdom of God.

Many of you have been very generous to our development funds of United States ministries, Latin American sisters and ministries, and our retirement fund. The Hurricane Felix fund has been especially blessed by your giving. Your gifts are being carefully and wisely spent to restore the schools in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.

Our 150th anniversary has been celebrated in Latin America. It was a celebration in a country where faithfulness to the gospel has come with a price, and joy. We have entered into the fabric of women's lives in Latin America and they have entered into the fabric of CSA as community members and leaders.

We are grateful for your continued support of CSA's mission. Your generosity provides CSA with opportunities to minister to the economically poor both in the United States and Latin America. It supports CSA in giving a quality life to its elderly sisters who spent their youth educating and healing so many of us.

We hope you continue to enjoy reading *BLESSINGS* and are moved to help us remain faithful to the mission of Jesus.

Sister Deborah Walter
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Solidarity and Spiritual Rejuvenation

On January 6, 2008, a perfect, sunny day at Cantera in Managua, Nicaragua, the Sisters of St. Agnes in Latin America and their guests initiated the observance of CSA's 150th anniversary of its founding. The liturgy, concelebrated by two bishops and three priests; the music, enhanced by a small marimba choir; the processions consisting of sister jubilarions, all contributed to the prayerful thanksgiving of those who joined the celebration. One could relate the journey of the Three Kings (Los Tres Reyes Magos) with the quest of the three founders of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes. Father Caspar Rehrl, Mother Agnes Hazotte, and Father Francis Haas, like the kings, courageously followed the way to Christ, sought advice along the way, and changed direction as necessary.

Strengthened by the spirit of the founders and each other, many sisters returned to their mission sites during the next few days. For several sisters, it was time to prepare for a new school year. For others, it was time to return to the ravages of Hurricane Felix - classrooms that were no more, families living under tarps, lands stripped of the trees and crops.

Hurricane Felix hurled a direct hit on the Maureen Courtney School, the only school in the area for handicapped children, founded by Sister Katie Schilling, CSA. The hurricane claimed one entire building and whipped off roofs from other structures. Months after the storm there is standing water on classroom floors due to missing windows. Ceiling tiles dangle from their frames, warped bulletin boards protrude from their places, and paint peels from walls.

At Niño Jesús School, four classrooms and an auditorium on the second story are no more, taken by Felix. With the roof and top story gone, classrooms and halls are filled with debris. Desks, books, supplies, machines are all destroyed. Sister Petrona Herrera, CSA, director of the school, is overseeing the reconstruction while trying to find replacement furniture, books and equipment.

The solidarity and spiritual rejuvenation from the 150th celebration will sustain the sisters who, like the kings and early members of the congregation, will continue the journey and will serve the people even when the star seems to disappear and the road seems impossible.

- Sister Diane Bauknecht

A Peaceful Journey Into Eternity



Sister Claude Feldner with Sister Joann Samb

Sister Claude Feldner, 109 years old, received her wish for a “peaceful journey into eternity” on April 2, 2008. At her 100th birthday celebration she shared her wish and nine years later it was granted as she was supported with a bedside vigil of her Sisters of St. Agnes at St. Francis Home in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Sister Claude entered the congregation in 1912 at the age of thirteen and

professed her vows in 1917. She celebrated her 90th Jubilee in 2008. “The blessing of Sister Claude’s long and faithful life among us multiplied our joy as a community of sisters,” said Sister Joann Samb, general superior of the Sisters of St. Agnes.

Sister Claude was the daughter of a shoemaker/cobbler growing up in St. Cloud, Wisconsin. She attended a two-room school staffed by the Sisters of St. Agnes from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Her admiration for her teachers grew and at a young age she decided she wanted to become one of them.

Her home life was filled with music. Her father played the violin and her mother played the reed organ and piano.

Sister Claude was an original member of the Marian College faculty when the college first held classes in St. Agnes Convent. She served as novice directress at St. Agnes Convent for forty-one years. She taught music to the young novices at the motherhouse.

Her most recent residence was Nazareth Court and Center, a retirement facility for members of the congregation until her health necessitated further care and she moved to St. Francis Home. Until the past month Sr. Claude could be found playing the piano in the evenings.

“One of Sister Claude’s legacies was her love for life,” Sister Joann said. “She was interested in all that was around her. Even up to her death, she kept in tune with the issues facing the congregation.”

A memorial has been established in her name for the retirement needs of the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes.



A Channel of God’s Love in Spanish Harlem

Leaving the Midwest after years in general leadership for the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes, Sister Patricia Hayes began her new ministry on 9/11/06 in Spanish Harlem, New York. “I was very excited about arriving in New York. I was looking for a change where I could return to nursing and use my Spanish speaking skills,” shared Sister Pat. “I have fallen in love with direct service; it is so meaningful to be able to work directly with people who are in poverty. I am part of a team of eight nurses who make home visits for prenatal, post-partum and asthma assessment, teaching and follow-up,” continued Sister Pat.

“I see myself as a channel of God’s love. Every day I witness people who live without heat, food, elevators, and in crowded living conditions with upwards of three families in one apartment. The women I serve are strong

physically and emotionally; they have to be to survive and to care for their children. I see these women blossom as they learn English and meet other women just like themselves. They grow in their own sense of self worth. They teach me what hope is really all about every day,” said Sister Pat.

“This experience has made me re-examine what living a vow of poverty calls me to. It has given me a new perspective. I am delighted to be part of a team and an agency that looks at the whole family and strives to keep it healthy and intact,” concluded Sister Pat.

– Sister Patricia Hayes



ONLINE DONATIONS: Secure online donations are now possible at www.csasisters.org. For more information on supporting CSA’s ministries, please contact Sister Deborah Walter, CSA at 920-907-2311 or dwalter@csasisters.org.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

MAY 3

Auction & Bake Sale
St. Peter Claver Parish
Sheboygan, WI

Proceeds to be used for Maureen
Courtney School in Puerto Cabezas,
Nicaragua

MAY 25

CSA Open House
Fond du Lac, WI

Public is invited to events at
St. Agnes Convent honoring
the 150th Anniversary

MAY 31

Human Race Run/Walk
Fond du Lac, WI

Sponsored by the Volunteer Center

JUNE 6

Windhover Benefit Concert
Fond du Lac, WI

Proceeds to go to the Center for
Spirituality and Healing and to the
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes

NOVEMBER 3-10

Nicaragua Mission Trip

For more information contact Ellen
Swan at 920-907-2318

To sponsor a sister in the Human Race Run/Walk on May 31, 2008, please
contact Sister Deborah Walter, CSA at 920-907-2311 or dwalter@csasisters.org.



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

320 County Road K
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

www.csasisters.org
To be added/subtracted
from the mailing list
call 920.907.2319 or email
development@csasisters.org



Sister Helen (Dominic) Mueller

October 24, 2007

*For almost 40 years she taught children
the love of God and of music.*



Sister Irene (Fabian) Gussert

November 7, 2007

*For 50 years middle and high school
students were endeared to her because
of her sense of humor.*



Sister Paula Mand

November 20, 2007

*She had a gift for working with students
who found learning difficult.*



Sister Laurretta Ann Neder

December 8, 2007

*Her abilities as both educator and
administrator were deeply appreciated.*



Sister Vera (Allen) Bittel

December 10, 2007

*She served as teacher, parish minister
and pastoral care giver, never afraid to
take on new challenges.*



Sister Catherine (Mary Joseph) Boland

December 17, 2007

*Teaching was the center of her life and
her calm, gentle manner made her
loved by her students.*



Sister Alice (Evangelist) Meis

February 10, 2008

*With humor and laughter, she created
tasty meals for the Sisters with whom she
lived.*



Sister Mary Agreda (Adice) Julienne) Touchett

February 27, 2008

*She ventured into nursing, nursing
education, administration and hospice.*



Sister Claude (Esther Mary) Feldner

April 2, 2008

*Music was at the heart of her, giving
lessons and enriching the communities
of Sisters with whom she lived.*



Sister Mary Victoria (Agnes) Gertrude) Pozorski

April 14, 2008

*She was an educator for more than 50
years after her profession of vows in 1938.*

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

In Memoriam... walking with God