

# Seeds of Hope

*A prayer Association Newsletter  
for Laity and Religious*



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## FROM THE EDITOR:

### **Holy is His Name (Lk 1:48)**

The Feast of the Visitation of Mary on May 31st is a celebration of hospitality. It is a day of joy and thanksgiving as we contemplate the wonders of God's love throughout the world. All generations have shared in the greatness of Mary's love. We live and have real experience of the visitation of God in our daily life.

The Church commemorates the most Holy Body and Blood of Christ on June 6th proclaiming that the sacrifice of Christ was for our salvation and that of the whole world.

The solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus celebrates God's saving love. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is a wonderful way to express the Church's mystery of Christ. The Heart of Jesus not only calls to conversion and repentance, but also to love and gratitude. He daily brings us forgiveness and grace. Lifted high on the cross, Christ gave His life for us because He loves us so much. His Sacred Heart calls to our hearts to trust Him. On June 11th the Church honors this Heart of Jesus.

The next day June 12th, it is mostly appropriate to celebrate the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This generous young woman kept the Word of God in her heart pondering its deep meaning as it transformed her life and relationship with her Son's work of salvation. As we celebrate the Immaculate Heart of Mary, there is special joy and gratitude for us Sisters. At the beginning of our Congregation, the people called us the Good Shepherd Sisters, but our foundress, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart chose our name to be Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



May your hearts yearn for the peace and joy only God can give as you enjoy the warm days of summer with family and friends. We remain close in prayer.

God bless you!

**Sr. Dorina Chasse, s.c.i.m.**

## DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART

Jesus came on earth to light the world on fire, to reveal and to communicate the fire of his love to everyone. The outstanding characteristic of Jesus when he lived among us was his compassion, his tenderness toward those in need. His heart went out to the poor and the suffering.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus can be traced to the 13th century. It developed through the spirituality of a Benedictine nun, Sister Gertrude of the Sacred Heart. On January 27, 1281, she had a vision of the Sacred Heart.

Catherine of Sienna also had a vision of the Sacred Heart. She heard these words: "My daughter, I have taken your heart from you and given you mine instead so that you may live in me always".

In 1635, Jesus revealed himself under the form of the Sacred Heart to Marguerite Mary of the Incarnation, four years before she arrived on the shores of the St. Lawrence River.

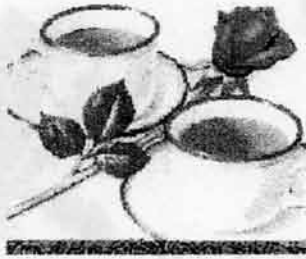
It is thanks to these great saints that on August 23, 1856, Pope Pius IX declared the Feast of the Sacred Heart as a universal feast. What is so marvelous about devotion to the Sacred Heart is that the Heart of Jesus is made of flesh and blood. This gives us a renewed appreciation of the mystery of the Incarnation and our humanity.

From 1850 onwards, the spirituality of Madame Roy and her companions was shaped by the spirituality of the 19th century. The small community, composed of these first foundresses, dedicated the second Sunday of the month in honor of the Sacred Heart. The religious name of "Mary of the Sacred Heart" was chosen by Marie Fitzbach, linking her to both Mary and Jesus. The Divine Heart is the fountain from which the Sisters receive the patience, the tenderness and the compassion needed to work with the poor and the needy.



**Sr. Dorina Chasse, s.c.i.m.**

**TAKE**



**FIVE**

Let us take time once again to update the effectiveness of our mission in life. How can we (at this point) hope to bring about a better understanding of prayer, or a greater compassion for the needy or a fuller service of God and our Neighbor?

By now, we have come to know how Wonderful and Majestic God is, in all his splendor! How Delightful and Awesome is His Presence among us! How Powerfully and kindly He provides for our needs . So for all of this, we offer our heartfelt Thanks!

We are linked together by our very existence as companion human beings on this earth. We are united as sharers on this "Faith Journey", through our kinship with God and the quality of compassion which we succeed to communicate to persons around us. How we relate to the "events" that occur will depend on our degree of confidence, trust and love.

Were we to express this in a modern-day Psalm, it might go something like this: Sunny days and starry nights, bless the Lord ... Flowering trees and chirping birds, bless the Lord ... Billowing seas and quiet streams, bless the Lord ... Praise and exalt Him forever.

But recently, we could add: Floods and tornadoes, bless the Lord ... Erupting volcanoes, bless the Lord ... Quakes and Tsunamis, bless the Lord ... Coal Mines and Oil explosions ... bless the Lord ... Praise and exalt Him above all forever.

Many have met the Lord now, through pain, loss and sacrifice. Some have had to contend with great inconveniences. Others spent hours and days, just waiting patiently - while still others rendered caring services: feeding, sheltering, consoling and encouraging the hungry, the injured, the fearful and the weary.

Whatever the cost, could we have done as much - or better? We are not informed of the day or the hour when we may be visited in similar a manner. May the Lord have mercy on us all and come to our aid, enabling us to continue fulfilling our "Mission" and still manage to "sing His Praises".

**Sr. Marita Pelletier, s.c.i.m.**



## THE MISSION CORNER

### My Missionary Life in Lesotho

1954 to 1994

#### **Chapter 5: More Animal Life in Africa**

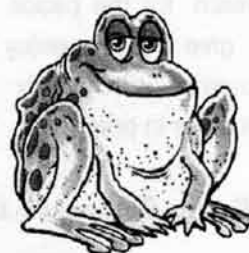
Hurry, don your **kobo**, (woolen cape, blanket-like, very colorful, worn by our African brothers and sisters, to ward off the cold). I am bringing you back to Lesotho, and winter is fast approaching there.

In our last sharing session, I intimated, through my description of the butterflies, that insects and animals are larger in size on the continent than they are in the western hemisphere. Let me, please, reaffirm that. The frogs, numerous, big and noisy, are another example, as are also the snakes. One day, upon their return home from school, some of our boys caught sight of a boa constrictor that had been rolled over by a passing vehicle. Unfortunately, the head had not been crushed, and the serpent was still alive. They finished it off with rocks and sticks, and brought it to the Mission for us to see. It measured 51 inches long. Imagine, being pulled into its embrace! I shudder at the thought.

Some of us, missionaries, had their own experience with the treacherous creatures. We had equipped a hut to serve as a classroom, and a sister was using it to teach sewing to our young boarders. The old-fashioned, manual machine was set against the outside wall. One day, Sister stormed out of there, calling out "There is a snake behind the wall, I can hear it moving". The men were summoned and, promptly, went in search of the intruder, armed with shovels and rocks. In no time, they located it, under the linoleum, exactly where Sister's sewing machine was sitting. The poor thing was quickly sentenced to death, executed and cremated. As for Sister, she returned to work as though nothing had happened. Silence was golden in those days, and one did not break it lightly, not even for a poisonous snake.

To be continued...

**Sister Theresa Labrecque, s.c.i.m.**



## THE APPARITIONS AT BANNEUX

On the evening of January 15, 1933, Mariette Beco was in the kitchen with her mother in Banneux, a Belgian village. She looked out of the window to see if her brother was coming and was surprised to see a young lady out in the yard seemingly made of light. Mariette could see a white rose on her right foot and a rosary hanging on her right arm.

Mariette told her mother about this who became frightened and closed the curtain. Mariette took another look and taking courage began to pray the rosary. She saw the apparition move her lips. The lady beckoned her to come outside but her mother locked the door.

Mariette went to Mass and catechism class which she had evaded for a long time. Father Jamin was surprised and asked for the reason of her recent interest in her religion. She told him about the apparition which he did not believe.

On January 18, Mariette knelt in the yard to say the rosary while her father watched. Suddenly she raised her arms as she saw the Blessed Virgin descend towards her. She joined Mariette in prayer.

The Lady beckoned her to come forward until she arrived at a ditch, placing her hands into some water there. Bystanders heard her repeat aloud: "This stream is reserved for me".

Next evening, January 19, Mariette went outside and knelt in the snow to pray. After a couple of decades she again saw the Lady, stretched out her arms and said: "Oh, she is here!". Before asking her who she was, she heard the Lady say: "I am the Virgin of the poor". She then took the same path to the spring by the ditch. Mary spoke to her: "This spring is reserved for all the nations--to relieve the sick".

Mariette continued on subsequent evenings to pray. Her father joined her. After three weeks the Lady appeared again on February 15, when Mariette's mother and several women were together in the garden. The rosary was recited and again Mariette saw the Lady. Mariette told the Lady that the priest wanted a sign. On February 20, Mariette again made her way to the spring. Mary left her saying: "Believe in me, I will believe in you. Pray much".

The final apparition took place on March 2, 1933. In reply to Mary's words, "I am the Mother of the Saviour, Mother of God, pray much," Mariette could only say: "Yes, yes". Mary then blessed Mariette as she had done before and indicated that this was, indeed, the last apparition by saying "Adieu", instead of "Au Revoir" as before.

Banneux was investigated from 1935 until 1937 by an Episcopal commission, after which the evidence was submitted to Rome. Meanwhile growing numbers of pilgrims came to the shrine and in May 1942 Bishop Kerkhofs of Liege



approved the cult of the Virgin of the Poor. In 1949 the apparitions were finally approved.

A little chapel was built as Mary requested, but now a basilica stands near the spring where pilgrims flock to pray.

Devotion to the Virgin of the Poor is very special to our Sisters in Lesotho and South Africa. Two missionary Sisters visited Banneux and had the privilege of meeting with the people involved in the apparitions and the devotions spreading out from this small village. The priest met with the Sisters and on hearing about their work with the poor, offered them a life-size statue of the Virgin of the Poor. He did keep his word and soon after their return to Lesotho, a beautiful white statue of Our Lady of the Poor arrived at St. Rodrigue Mission. The statue since stands in front of the chapel where Sisters, students and villagers stop to pray.

**Sister Dorina Chasse, s.c.i.m.**

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## WHY DO CATHOLICS BELIEVE IN VOCATIONS

God created each of us to love and serve Him in a particular way. This calling or destiny is our vocation. Faithfully fulfilling our vocation will lead to eternal happiness.

Catholics can fulfill their vocations through the priesthood, the diaconate, the consecrated life, the single life, or in marriage.

God has a unique plan for each of us and we all fit into his greater plan of salvation. Discerning our vocation, understanding the place we have in God's plan, can only come through continual prayer.

Our diocese is in urgent need of priests, Brothers and Sisters. Let us unite in prayer begging the Lord to call many young people to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

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## RETREAT MUSINGS

So often in my life, I would wonder if I was really doing God's will, if I was where God wanted me. I feared that I might not have heard when he called, or misunderstood where God wanted me to be, or did not know where God was calling me in the future.

This particular day, I was on retreat at the camp, looking over the water. I watch two people go by paddling a canoe. This is how God answered my prayers:

### Canoeists

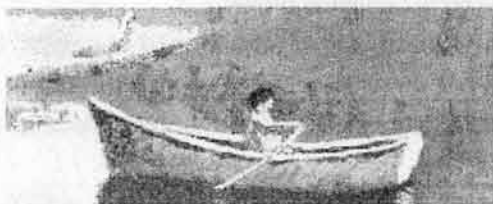
*Two canoeists just gliding by,  
moving so gracefully.*

*I recall my experience in a canoe:  
the one in front paddles  
on either side, no matter,  
the one in the rear adjusts,  
maintains the course.*

*Oh, God! That's how you are with me!  
No matter how I paddle,  
fast or slow, hard or easy,  
this way or that,  
you keep me going  
in the direction of my calling!  
You make use of all my actions  
in guiding me gently  
on my journey.*

*Help me to worry less,  
paddle more joyfully  
and, most of all,  
trust you, with me,  
directing me  
to where  
my inmost self  
yearns to be.*

Sister Joanne Roy, s.c.i.m.



## FLASHBACK

It would seem that our personal history is also part of Salvation History. If we take the time to sit quietly and look back at different times in our lives, we will see the hand of God at work. Like all history, it is only after a stretch of time can we fully see the "real meaning" of past happenings.

And so I revert back to July of 1975. I was at Boston College for summer courses in theology. Our professor asked us to write a Reaction Paper on how our past experiences contributed to our present view about God and the world. Here is what I wrote:

As I try to focus my thoughts this afternoon on some one idea in order to write a reaction paper, I find myself slipping into the past, "reliving" some childhood experience, which has contributed to my present views of God and the world.

Indeed, I lived without fear for I trusted my parents implicitly. They were my embodiment of God. Dad, tall and strong, yet so soft spoken; Mom, petite and fragile-looking, yet so firm. They were always there to boost me, "faith" me in my "make-believe" as well as in my "real" world.

I recall one particular instance, one fall day when I was about five years old, coming into the house carrying a scrawny, dirty, little white kitten and telling my mother the fantastic story of how the kitten had spoken to me. It had actually walked up and said: "I'm lost and sick and very scared; will you bring me to your home and care for me?" (In my memory even today, that kitten really talked to me). Now, my mother could have reacted like this: "You know that cats don't talk and take that dirty flea-bitten animal out of the house!" Instead, she picked up the kitten, looked it over and said something like: "Yes, poor little thing, it does look sick and hungry, too. Why don't you give it some milk, and then take it to the barn so that Mr. Morneault can look at it." (Mr. Morneault was a veterinarian who boarded at our house and whose office was in our barn.)

According to Mr. Morneault, the kitten had a sore throat. So he asked me if I would leave the kitten with him for several days while he treated it. Thereafter, the story melts into many other childhood memories, but one thing had happened, my world had expanded. My mother had "believed" me, and because of that a kitten had "more" life than before (and obviously, all of us had more life). That kitten became the most beautiful white "coon" cat I ever owned.

A seed had been sown in my life to greater openness of heart to all possibilities.