



Blessings

SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

Transforming the World Through Education

SPRING 2009

Hope

S. Kay O'Connell, SSND

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all.

Emily Dickinson's poem gives us a beautiful image for Lent this year. Her little bird sings of the eternal optimism (rather, hope) with which the Church approaches Lent.

We call these 40 special days "Lent," from the Old English word for "lengthening." The word itself is a celebration that, here in the northern hemisphere, the days are getting longer, that winter is over and gone, that spring is just over the horizon.

Lent, at its core, is a six-week retreat that Christians all over the world make together. With more seriousness about prayer, some attempt at fasting, and a huge opening of our hearts to the grave needs of others in almsgiving, we try to turn away from ourselves, from our incessant, clamoring wants. The whole Church is expressing a great hope, that with God's help, we can do better, we can love more.

Lent is, most basically, about Baptism, a preparation for the great moment at the Vigil on Holy Saturday evening, or at Easter Sunday Mass, when we renew our Baptismal

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Hidden in Plain Sight

Carole Shinnick, SSND

In today's media-saturated society with its 24/7 news coverage and "breaking news" alerts, it is easy to forget that life is not one crisis after another. Too often the only persons who make it to the news are scoundrels who deceive us or celebrities famous just because they are famous. Then once in awhile we thrill to discover the unusual hero who lands a jet safely in the Hudson River.

This issue of Blessings features three special women quietly living out the SSND mission. You may never have heard of them. But because of your generous support they can do what they do. Through these women you touch the lives of people all around the globe. Take a look.

Love in a Box

In the spring of 2007, Sister Cathy Bonfield went to an interfaith rally for the people of Darfur. There she learned of Shelter Box, a project of the International Rotary Club. A shelter box is a large, rugged, green plastic container that holds a 10-person tent and a range of survival supplies including blankets, ponchos, cooking equipment, water purification tablets, and even toys for small children. One international agency has called the shelter box "the best disaster relief tool they have seen in...20 years." These



Shelter Box
International Rotary Club with
S. Cathy Bonfield, SSND (center)

units can quickly be deployed to sites of natural or human-made disasters. Immediately Sister Cathy recognized that this was a project for the Association of Student Leaders at St. Martha's School in Sarasota, Florida. Her enthusiasm as one of the group's moderators was contagious and soon the students became powerful advocates for shelter boxes.

They educated themselves as well as their peers in other schools about the on-the-ground needs of desperate families half-way around the world.

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Live in the Lord

S. Caroline Kelley

July 10, 1924 – January 21, 2009
Wilton, CT

S. Jean Renee Lovell

February 4, 1940 – January 17, 2009
Baltimore, MD

S. Catherine Fitzpatrick

August 1, 1921 - December 30, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. Mary Agnes Zierkiewicz

April 3, 1913 – December 26, 2008
Chicago, IL

S. M. Karina Profeta

December 19, 1921 – December 22, 2008
Wilton, CT

S. Anne Ward

November 30, 1918 – December 11, 2008
Wilton, CT

S. M. Inez Kunzenbacher

March 12, 1914 – November 24, 2008
Wilton, CT

S. M. Dorinda Ellinghaus

November 1, 1915 – November 22, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. Alice Catherine Anderson

July 26, 1915 – October 26, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. M. Pierre Newman

February 8, 1919 – October 13, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. Mary Elise O'Hare

June 5, 1910 – October 9, 2008
Wilton, CT

S. Cecilia Agnes Doyle

September 28, 1929 – October 8, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. Marie LeClerc Zeller

April 16, 1918 – September 29, 2008
Baltimore, MD

S. Kathleen Kieran

March 7, 1903 – September 14, 2008
Wilton, CT



A Message from Sister Kathleen Cornell, SSND, Provincial Leader

Dear Friends,

We wish you blessings during this season of Lent, a time of preparing for celebrating the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is a wonderful time of the year to reflect on our Baptismal call and how we live each day. You are in our prayers and we ask for yours as we each continue to respond to God and each other for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ.

The Call to Solidarity which is the directional statement for all School Sisters of Notre Dame challenges us to “claim in a new way our internationality, our ministry of education for the transformation of the world, and Eucharist as the center of our lives.” In

this issue of Blessings, we share three stories that show how we, SSNDs, are reaching out to others in the world and promoting education for all. As we celebrate and live Eucharist, we are “caught up in the love relationship of Christ, with the Father in the Holy Spirit” (SSND Constitution).

We thank you, our families and friends, for supporting us in all that we do. Your generosity is a precious gift to us and we are grateful.

Peace be with you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Cornell, SSND".

Kathleen Cornell, SSND
Provincial Leader
Atlantic-Midwest Province

Love in a Box

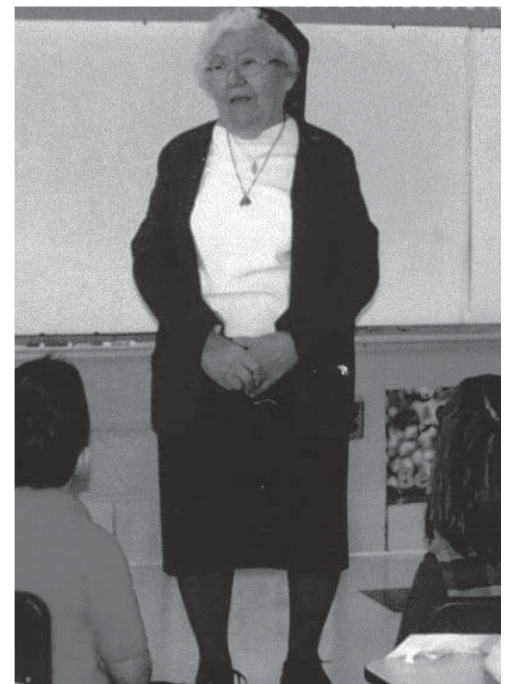
(Continued from page 1)

To date, Sister Cathy's students have raised \$9,000, enough to completely supply nine shelter boxes to house and feed 90 people caught in crisis. Their nine boxes have gone to Pakistan, China, Swaziland and Myanmar.

The children learned about the problem, acted, and then educated others about it. For a teacher it doesn't get any better than that.

A Heart for Creve Coeur

Thirty-five years ago Mother Elred King, the first provincial leader of the Chicago Province, asked Sr. Cor Marie Cielocha to go to Creve Coeur, Illinois outside Peoria, to work with some very disadvantaged children. She could not have chosen a more capable person to deal with the complex problems and multiple needs the children of Creve Coeur, a place whose very name means “broken heart.”



Cor Marie Cielocha, SSND
St. Edwards

A gifted educator and expert in child development, Sr. Cor Marie envisioned an “open policy” school for her students, one in which children would not be separated by abilities or disabilities. Rather they would learn together as well as from each other, bringing normalcy and focus into their often turbulent lives.

The Children’s Center of Tazwell County continues today caring for and educating youth whose parents know prison, addiction and grinding poverty. The truly good news is that Sr. Cor Marie’s thirty-five years of attentive presence has brought light and healing to the children and families of this small Illinois town.

At-Risk and Fragile

Over 140 years ago Sister Irene Fitzgibbons, a Sister of Charity of New York, began the legendary New York Foundling which continues today to serve children most at-risk. In 1987 a medical affiliate of the Foundling was established and was named the



Mary Shawn Kavanagh, SSND
New York Foundling

Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center. School Sister of Notre Dame Mary Shawn Kavanagh began working at the Pediatric Center in 1990 as a LPN, providing specialized care for medically fragile children. They may be premature, severely disabled, or terminally ill. Sister Shawn loves them all. She sees her work – particularly when preparing parents to care for their very ill children – in the SSND tradition of education in the broadest sense.

Although they came from very different cultures, Sister Shawn believes that Sister of Charity founder, Elizabeth Ann Seton and Theresa Gerhardinger, foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame had similar passions. Both were pioneering educators gifted with global vision. Both were deeply committed to serving the poorest of children.

No doubt, as Sister Shawn rides the early morning subway from Brooklyn to Manhattan, the twin spirits of Elizabeth and Theresa travel along with her, accompanying her throughout each full day.

We promote education for all, especially those who are marginalized and forgotten.

From the Call to Solidarity of the 22nd SSND General Chapter

Please Remember School Sisters of Notre Dame in Your Will

We realize these are hard economic times and that maybe you are unable to make a charitable gift to SSND right now. We ask that you consider leaving a bequest to SSND, perhaps as a memorial to a favorite teacher, or in honor of a family member. If you would like to do so, please use the following phrase in your will:

I give, devise and bequeath to the Atlantic-Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Inc., for its general purposes all (or state the fraction of the amount) of the rest, residue or remainder of my estate, whether real or personal.

If you would like a free brochure to help you plan your will, please contact Joy Nazzaro, Major Gifts and Grants Manager at 203.762.4113 or at jnazzaro@amssnd.org. Our most recent members of the Blessed Theresa of Jesus Bequest Society who have notified us that they have remembered SSND in their will are...

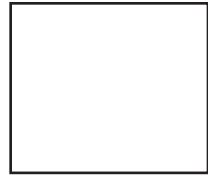
- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Anonymous | Alba Elizabeth Ann Mattingly |
| Noreen Dowling Moini | Sam Moini |
| Mary Patten | Kathy Lydon Sullivan |
| Bernard L. Winker | Mary H. Winker |

Charitable Gifts from IRAs Update

Joy Nazzaro,
Major Gifts and Grants Manager

Since the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA 2006) was signed into law and extended through December 31, 2009, many have taken advantage of this law to give substantial gifts to their favorite charities.

The current IRA Rollover provision exempts from taxable income any funds transferred (“rolled over”) from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a charitable organization. If you are 70 ½ years old or older we ask that you consider making a direct gift from your IRA to the School Sisters of Notre Dame.



Hope

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promises. Three times solemnly we renounce “Satan and all his works,” and profess again our Trinitarian belief Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This profound recommitment brings to a climax the Lenten season. It’s the moment we’ve been anticipating during the whole 40 days we’ve spent with Jesus tempted in the desert, and with the Israelites in Sinai tested for 40 years before entering the Promised Land.

Emily’s bird will “never stop at all.” The Church sings this song of hope every year in the midst of the profound suffering of so many in our world, and of the huge challenges that face us all, personally and communally.

Let us welcome that fragile “thing with feathers,” and make our own its undying, wordless hope.

Matching Gift Companies

A number of alumni and friends of the School Sisters work for companies that match their donations to charities. If you work for a company that matches donations, please ask your company for its matching gift form. You could then fill it out and send it in with your donation. We will complete the form and send it back to the company for the matched gift. There are literally thousands of companies that match gifts; here is a list of just a few from whom we have received gifts:

Aetna	General Electric	Pfizer
Altria	JP Morgan/Chase	Pitney Bowes
Bank of America	Macy’s	Unilever
Exxon/Mobil	Microsoft	Verizon

If your company’s name is not listed above, that does not mean that they do not make matching gifts. Please check with your company for its matching gift form and forward it along with your donations to the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Thank you for taking the time to arrange for these matching gifts. It truly is a great benefit to the School Sisters. Should you have any questions, please call Joy Nazzaro at 203.762.4113.