



The Call

“To Jesus Through Mary”

Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church

June Edition 2007

Mother Mary Luke’s Journey Home

To the friends of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church and of Mother Mary Luke.

This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to Mother Mary Luke, who passed away on May 5, 2007. She was our Vocation directress and it was she who initiated The Call and was its publisher and editor. Please pray for her. May she rest in peace!

With the Feast of the Ascension, our hearts and minds naturally are raised to heaven and we remember Our Lord’s promise to us: **“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, ...that where I am, there you may be also.”** John 14:3. By meditating on our heavenly home we renew our hope.

Thinking of heaven helps as we remember our Mother Mary Luke’s journey home, when she was taken from us suddenly. Mother Mary Luke spoke about her life on earth only as a pilgrimage and she stated her true home was heaven. **“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”** Philippians 1:21. Mother said she never wanted to be without the cross, because she always wanted our Lord near. She had heard the call to take up her cross and follow Christ.

I had the privilege of traveling with Mother Mary Luke during the latter part of April as we had been invited to participate in a Vocation Fair at the great Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. We felt so welcome by the college’s community spirit.

At the beginning of the Vocation Fair, Mother suddenly became ill with distressing pain. So we left everything and made our way to the emergency room at the hospital there. Soon we learned that Mother needed to be transported by ambulance to Heartland Hospital in St. Joseph’s, Missouri, because she needed special care. Although far from home, we were touched by the Christ-like kindness from the Monks, Religious, Professors, and Students at Benedictine College and all the Hospital Staff who helped us in our time of need. **“God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”** Philippians 4:19. Mother received the Sacrament of the Sick from a Benedictine Father. She spent the day in Heartland until she was stable enough to return to Connecticut where she could be near her fellow Sisters and family and friends. After arriving at our Holy Family Motherhouse in

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Mother Mary Luke and Sister Jacinta

Baltic, CT, Mother was taken to the Backus hospital in Norwich. As a true faithful daughter of the Church, Mother had served her Lord ministering to others, sharing her faith, teaching, counseling with unselfish love. Now during her illness and surgery in the Critical Care Unit at Backus, there was an outpouring of love for her in return.

However, Mother’s condition deteriorated unexpectedly. Although many doctors were working together to save her health, our Lord came and brought her to her true home where the Bride meets the Bridegroom, the Wedding Feast she had been waiting for. Death is a mystery, yet our faith gives us hope, for we know God understands and we trust in Him. **“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”** Philippians 4:7.

Mother Mary Luke died on First Saturday, May 5th, 2007 surrounded by her Religious Sisters as well as her family and friends who gathered around her in prayer. Her funeral was May 9th with the Mass celebrated by our Bishop, Rev. Michael Cote, and concelebrated by Monsignors and Priests of our diocese. Our chapel was filled with those whom she had served and loved. Mother Mary Luke was a true witness of Christ in living her Religious Life as a Sister of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. Mother was totally dedicated to the service of the Church. Although we all miss her, we know she will continue to intercede for each of us. Sister Mary Jacinta, SCMC

The Great Miracle at Saint Agnes School: “PRAY, HOPE AND DON’T WORRY!”

A great miracle has occurred at the Saint Agnes School a K-12 school located in the inner city of St. Paul, Minnesota.

On April 20, Father John Ubel, the Pastor and Superintendent of Saint Agnes School, announced that given the financial circumstances and decreased enrollment, the High School would most likely need to be closed at the end of the school year.

A surge of sorrow hit the parish/school community. We refused to give up. The students, families, faculty and staff, alumni and parish united in fervent prayer. 11,000 letters were sent to alumni, with parents and students working together to send these out in two days. Time was of essence. Father Ubel was able to get a one-week extension in our efforts to receive our much needed miracle. The deadline was March 8th. Mr. Fred Blonigan, our High School religion teacher, and Sister Maria, the local Superior of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church, held a prayer service in the Sisters Chapel on April 25th. The inspired new motto of Father Ubel: “Pray, Hope and Don’t Worry,” the message he had received in prayer from St. Padre Pio, was on everyone’s lips and hearts as we endeavored through prayer and efforts, both individually and collectively to save our beloved school.

In efforts to save our school, Our High School put on a benefit performance of *The Beauty and the Beast*, di-

rected by Mr. David Johnson in early May. This huge Broadway-style production of a cast of over 250 students (K-12) netted around \$100,000 in one

night! The renowned performance ran for two weeks and all of its proceeds were donated back to the High School. The School raised in 19 days a total of \$750,000. Excited as we were, we needed to continue to pray for some significant donations.

Finally May 8th arrived. No one but the pastor and his financial advisors knew what the outcome would be. Father Udell invited everyone to an assembly. Bishop Richard Pates attended along with parents, faculty, students, alumni and those who were concerned about our schools. Father announced that the Saint Agnes Schools received two significant donations from an anonymous couple (1 million dollars) and another individual donor (1.56 million dollars): totaling 3.25 million dollars with promises to assist us in future years! The applause and standing ovation rang throughout the building! Father Ubel announced that about 62 new students were registered for our schools next year. Finally, Father concluded in his talk: “This cannot be the end. It must be the beginning.”

Padre’s Pio’s advise to Father rang through everyone’s heart that day and every day as we strive to make the Saint Agnes Schools give great glory to God: “Pray, Hope and Don’t worry! Long live Saint Agnes Schools.

Prayer: Pathway to Holiness

During April 13-15, 2007, the weekend after the Solemnity of Easter, a few Sisters of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church drove to Mundelein Illinois for the annual meeting of the Institute on Religious Life. In responding to our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI’s message for the 2006 World Day of Prayer for Vocation’s, the primary duty of each religious and consecrated person is a life of deep union with God. The theme of this year is “Prayer: Pathway to Holiness.”

Religious and consecrated persons and many youth from around the country gathered at the beautiful campus of the University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois for the three day weekend, where spiritual masters such as **Most Rev. Robert Baker, Most Rev. Peter Sartain, Rev. James Kubicki, S.J., Rev. Thomas Dubay, S.M., Msgr. Charles M. Mangan** and many more, whose topics, on the different aspects of Christ, His Church, and Prayer were truly food for the soul. One of the highlights of the weekend was to be able to hear Father Dubay’s talk on Deep Conversion, Deep Prayer sincerely urging each religious to be a true witness of Christ’s love. Father received the Pro Fidelitate et Virtute Award for faithfully living out his call as a consecrated person.

The national meeting of the Institute on Religious Life is also an opportunity for the Sisters to meet many wonderful young people, who come to Mundelein searching for Christ and His Will. This year, the IRL had been working together with EWTN to create a series of thirteen videos based on the personal stories of thirteen Religious. Sr. M. Catarina, SCMC had been asked to be a part of this program to share her calling, a testimony of God’s love when He said, “Come and follow me.”

Mother Anthony, Mother Marie Julie, Mother Mary Luke, Sister M. Kathleen, and Sister M. Catarina came this year. This was Mother Mary Luke’s last trip. Mother Mary Luke had been our Vocation Directress for the last seven years, every year, Mother had been faithful in coming to Mundelein just as she had been a true witness all her life as a Spouse of Christ. Mother Mary Luke came back from the trip and two weeks later, went to her Lord on May 5, 2007.

For us who had been with Mother during that weekend, we never would have known that it was Mother’s last mission that she would fulfill but that was also Mother’s way of life. For each mission that was assigned, it was for her the first, the last, and the only one that Christ asked of her.

Mother Mary Luke, may you rest in peace!



The Sisters at Mundelein