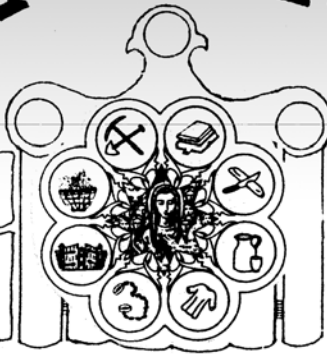


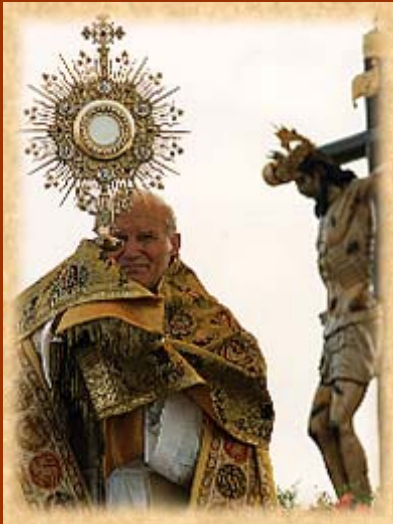
TO JESUS



THROUGH MARY

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

World Youth Day 2005



"From Toronto to Cologne"

"We have come to worship him" (Mt.2.2): this is the theme of the 20th World Youth Day which will take place from August 16-21, 2005 in Cologne, Germany. Pope John Paul II states that this is a theme that enables young people from every continent to follow in spirit the path taken by the Magi whose relics, according to a pious tradition, are venerated in this very city, and to meet as they did, the Messiah of all nations.

Like the Magi who undertook a difficult journey to follow the star, so youth today are preparing themselves for a journey, but they must also prepare themselves spiritually "in an atmosphere of faith and listening to the Word of God."

By pursuing the path of our Redeemer, from the poverty of His crib to his abandonment on the cross, we can better understand the mystery of His love, which redeems humanity. The same Redeemer is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Pope John Paul invites them "Listen to Him, prepare yourselves properly and draw close to the sacrament of the Altar, particularly in this year of the Eucharist (October 2004 –2005) which I have proclaimed for the whole Church."

Pope John Paul says "Listening to Christ and worshipping Him leads us to make *courageous choices*, to take, what are sometimes called, heroic decisions."

The Holy Father went on to say, "Jesus is demanding because He wishes our genuine happiness. He calls some to follow Him in the priestly or consecrated life. Those who hear Him must not be afraid to say "yes" and to generously set about following Him as His disciples. Besides special forms of consecration there is that specific vocation of all baptized Christians--the call to holiness."



The Official Logo
Of
World Youth
Day 2005

With its dynamic conception and its clear elements, this Logo symbolizes the essence and the characteristics of the 2005 World Youth Day in Cologne. This is a brief overview of the explanation of the logo.

The most important moment in the celebration of World Youth Day is the encounter with Christ, represented by the cross that dominates the Logo at its very center. It is Christ's presence that characterizes this event. The color red symbolizes the love, the passion and the pain of Jesus' death on the Cross, and reminds us of the pain present in our lives and the lives of all of God's children throughout the world. The Cross is the main symbol of Christian hope and of redemption in Jesus Christ, which is greater than any pain.

The star symbolizes divine guidance and it provides a sense of direction. It shines as the divine indication of the place in which Jesus was born. According to the Bible, it showed the wise men from the East--the three Magi--the road they should follow to reach Jesus.

The comet's tail represents the star's route: it comes from above, from God. The Cologne Cathedral represents the place in which the World Youth Day will be held. For centuries, the relics of the Three Magi have been venerated in this cathedral. The Cathedral's red coloring unites the Church with the Cross: Christ and the Church are inseparable.

A Tribute to Our Foundress

Each Congregation has a great love for its Founder/ Foundress. Their holiness, steadfastness in times of adversity and their faithfulness to the Lord and to His Church have set them apart as true followers of Jesus Christ. We often hear the senior Sisters and the "not so senior Sisters" relate stories about our Foundress, Mother Marie Alma, and her love for the Congregation. We often speak about her and the treasury of spiritual points she has left to us as reminders of what it means to be a true Bride of Christ.

On Saturday, June 4, 2005, we, as a Community, would like to honor, in a special way, the Foundress of our Congregation, Mother Marie Alma. Our Sisters, are in the process of planning each portion of the program for the day.

Many Sisters, individually or in groups are preparing:

- special prayer vigils,
- video and power point presentations,
- written accounts of Mother's life,
- memories of Mother Marie Alma,
- songs,
- collages,
- book of sayings,
- and many other unique projects.

Our hope is to capture the spirit of Mother Marie Alma with these presentations-- a spirit which includes a joy-filled dedication to the Congregation and to the Church she loved so much and a spirit we hope to pass on for generations to come.



Mother Marie Alma
Foundress

Meet Our Chaplain, Father Chris



Since September, 2004, we have been blessed to have Father Christian Wojciechowski, OFM Conv. (Order of Franciscans Minor Conventual) as our chaplain at our Motherhouse and the Academy of the Holy Family.

Father Chris, originally born and raised in Trenton, New Jersey, was ordained to the priesthood in 1954 saying his first Mass at St. Stanislaus Church in Trenton.

Father Chris has served the Church and his Franciscan Congregation faithfully for many years. During this time, Father has ministered to God's people in various apostolates such as the following:

- the ordinary confessor at St. Peters in the Vatican
- a student in Paris, and in Warsaw
- the principal of Cardinal O'Hare High School in Tonowanda, New York
- the pastor of the parish where he first received the sacraments

Having participated in so many different experiences, Father Chris brings to us a wealth of invaluable information which is evident in the homilies he gives to the Sisters at Mass each morning and also to the Academy girls as they attend Mass on the first Friday of each month. Father Chris is also called on occasion to conduct missions or to assist in other local parish functions.

Reasons for Celebrating

On Sunday, February 27th, following our eight-day annual retreat, Sister Anna Joseph, a second year novice, pronounced her vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience for the first time as a Sister of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church. Sister Anna Joseph came to us from Beloit, Wisconsin. Sister is presently a C.N.A. at St. Elizabeth Home for the aged in Janesville, Wisconsin. Prior to her assignment at St. Elizabeth, Sister cared for the needs of our Senior Sisters here at the Motherhouse.

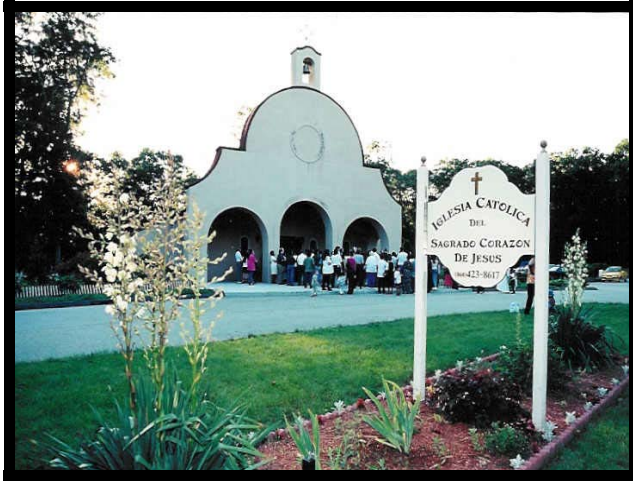
On the Feast of St. Joseph, Saturday, March 19th, Sister Mary Jane and Sister Francesco, who are presently junior professed Sisters, will renew their vows for one year, and Sister Joan Clare, who is presently a canonical novice, will become a second year novice. We congratulate them and ask God's blessings on each "yes" made on their journey that leads them to becoming a Bride of Christ.



Sister Anna Joseph

Plans, Plans and More Plans

Believe it or not, it's time to start planning for our summer camp program! The families from the Concord, New Hampshire area, who originally initiated last year's program, are coming to discuss what will be on the agenda for this year. Usually a theme for the camp is chosen and many activities evolve around that particular theme. Our first experience with camp was very enjoyable, and we hope to improve with new ideas and projects for the future. More information will be available in April.



The Hispanic Presence: Blessing and Challenge

The following is among the series of accounts describing the establishment of our apostolates in America since 1874

It has been said, and said correctly, that the growing proportion of Hispanics in the United States constitutes one of the most dramatic demographic shifts in American History, comparable to the last century's Irish immigration. Students of American History and anyone acquainted with the so-called "Know-Nothings" or the Nativist movement know that when the Irish came to the United States they were not universally thought of as a blessing or a resource. Today, however, Irish Americans are the country's elite. As a group, they have the second highest level of education and the second highest per capita income--second only to Jewish Americans with their enviable drive to educate their children.

The situation isn't that much different today. Although our world and our society are more complicated than in years past, the task of ministry to Spanish-speaking people--the new immigrants to our country--is the same which the Church undertook with previous ethnic and national groups. That is, to preserve and deepen their Catholic faith; to aid them in their struggles to better themselves; and to confront prejudice and replace it with understanding. This mission involves valuing the great richness of a peoples' culture, speaking their language as they gradually learn to speak English, helping a people to recognize that we are all equal and worthy. Even if the customs

Do we want to reclaim something which is our heritage and our Glory as Catholics, something which sounds very much like the Gospel?

of one are different from those of others, even if one never had educational advantages, even if one does not have the right papers to live in this country, or even if one lives in public housing rather than in a private home, they must still be recognized and valued as God's children.

Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese of Norwich is carried on principally in 5 parishes and 2 prisons. The parishes are: St. Mary, Star of the Seas in New London; St. Francis, in Middletown; St. Mary in Norwich; St. Mary of the Visitation in Clinton; and Sagrado Corazon in Windham. In the parishes of New London, Middletown, Norwich and Clinton, the Hispanic community forms an integral part of the parish, under the leadership of the pastor, aided by a bi-lingual staff. The parish of Sagrado Corazon in Windham, formed fourteen years ago, is a "national parish", that is, a parish formed by and for the Hispanic people of the Windham-

Willimantic area, under the leadership of Rev. Robert Washabaugh and Sister Mary Jude, in ministry with that community at the time. The purpose of the Hispanic Ministry in our diocese is to preserve and enrich the faith of a people, by preserving and valuing the people themselves and their way of being. A lot has



Sister Mary Jude
Diocesan Director of
Hispanic Ministry

changed since the time of the Irish, Italian or Polish immigration: technology has changed the nature of work, communications and travel. However, dire poverty and even desperation continue to drive growing numbers of Hispanic people to cross into this country, many without papers or permission, and therefore, have no safe future here or any legal protection. The place of the Catholic Church in society has changed as well. Catholic parishes which were once the home of the poor are now middle class or upper middle class places. That is why I propose that Hispanic Ministry really serves a double purpose in our day: it is ministry in Spanish with our great cultural sensitivity to Catholics who are Hispanic, to be sure. But it is also ministry to our Catholic middle class brothers and sisters. The middle class, non-Hispanic Catholic has a huge role to play. He or she, each one of us, makes a decision and each one of us is a part of a communal decision, whether or not to let Hispanic Catholics in, and whether or not to let them be who and what they are. The presence of Hispanic Ministry in our Church challenges the non-Hispanic middle class to reaffirm our heritage and our identity as Catholics, by posing to us the following questions: do we want to be a Church which is entirely middle class and suburban, or do we want to reclaim something which is our heritage and our glory as Catholics, something which really sounds very much like the Gospel? Do we want to continue to be a Church of the poor and the lowly, of the less than glamorous and less than influential? Do we want to claim our immigrant heritage and thereby give this generation of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Guatemalans, Dominicans, and Central Americans a place which they can call home in our Catholic parish?

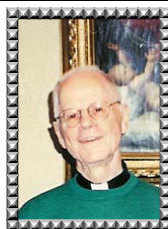
Like the first generation of Irish one hundred years ago, our Hispanic brothers and sisters are not often thought of as a blessing. What happens to them now in our society and how our Church welcomes them will be a crucial

factor. This factor will decide if, indeed, this rapidly increasing population will become, like the Irish, the blessing for our Church and for our society that they have the potential to be, or will they, in large part, be lost to our Church.

Sister Mary Jude states that “By the grace of God, it has been her privilege to serve in this ministry for almost twenty years, a ministry that has indeed been a source of abundant blessing to her personally. She gives thanks to Almighty God for the presence of our Hispanic brothers and sisters in our diocese and for having called her to walk with them, as together they journey home to the Father.



A Week to be Remembered



Annually, in February, the Sisters make an eight-day retreat. This February we were again fortunate to have Father Thomas Dubay as our retreat master. Father Dubay is well known throughout the United States and beyond for his conferences, books and spiritual direction.

Father's retreat conferences addressed the importance of prayer in our lives and reminded everyone that, no matter who you are, you are called to deep communion with God in prayer. Father stressed that no accomplishments and/or pursuits in life will ever satisfy the human heart until it finds rest in the Lord.

Billboards for PRO-LIFE



During the 2002-2003 school year at AHF, a few freshmen in the Honors World History Class began an interest in social justice activities, based on their current events studies. The group quickly focused on the primary pro-life aim of protecting the lives of unborn children. They decided to put up a billboard in our town of Baltic, CT. One of the many people who have assisted the club is Joe Collision, the diocesan pro-life expert. He told them that billboards are the most cost-effective way to spend money for the pro-life cause. One of the mothers on the faculty permitted them to use the ultrasound of her newborn. The title of the Club has gone through changes. In the spring, the whole freshmen class named the club **TEENS of PRO LIFE ...the "TOP-Life "Club** and began recruiting members.

Billboards are expensive, so donations were solicited from alumnae, friends, parishes, other pro-life organizations, and other students. One parishioner sponsored an entire month, as did the Southeast Connecticut Birthright director. God has provided generously through many people. Word is spreading!

Since the first local billboard, the students discovered that other pro-life groups provide ready-made billboards. From one billboard, they have been able to sponsor a second design. This second design has been displayed several times in the location across the street from the Crystal Mall in Waterford, CT. The girls worked on their third and fourth courageous (original) billboard designs to be posted simultaneously on Route 85 in January of 2005. The second billboard will show compassion

for women who have had the traumatic experience of abortion.

At the annual convention of the Connecticut Right to Life Corporation (CRLC), October 30, 2004, in Cromwell, two students of the Academy of the Holy Family, received, on behalf of the T.O.P. Life Club, the CRLC's Agnes Giannini Youth Award presented to young persons who have shown deep commitment to the sacredness of human life.

The Heart of Our Home

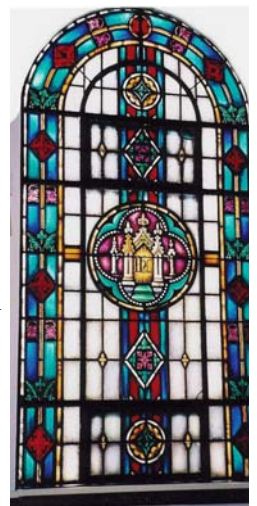
Our chapel, the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus built in 1942, is in dire need of repairs. Thus, a fundraiser has begun to cover the cost of the following items:

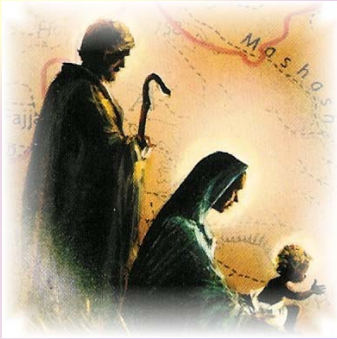
- redoing our stained glass windows
- providing for far better lighting
- replacing a well-worn rug
- replastering portions of the water-logged walls

After acquiring estimates for the work to be done, our goal is to raise approximately \$200,000 to cover the cost of this entire project. We know this will be a challenge, and we ask for your support--especially, your prayers and sacrifices in helping us to obtain this goal.

The stained glass windows depict the invocations of Our Lady, in the Litany of Loreto. Five of the ten stained glass windows can be seen on our website: www.sistersofcharity.com The title of each window can be seen by placing the cursor over each window design.

It will be through acts of kindness and the charity of friends that the beauty of our chapel will be restored.





*From the Crib, to the Cross;
From the Cross to the Crown*

*If There is No Cross,
There Will Be No Crown.*

*Our pilgrimage during this Sacred Lenten
Season brings us to a new springtime if we
have taken to heart the message above.*



Gem Journal



Depression of the heart has no better remedy than prayer. It's like asking God for a match. He will light your way.



It's smart to pick your friends, but not to pieces! Love them for who they are, be kind, not jealous.



If you want to pray better, you must pray more. If you believe, you will receive what you pray for.



"Fear not," Jesus said. Yet we worry so much. There is no softer pillow than a clear conscience.