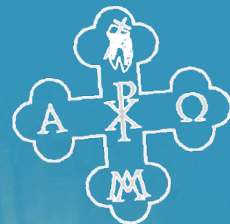


A NEW VISION

Newsletter & Chronicle IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PROVINCE

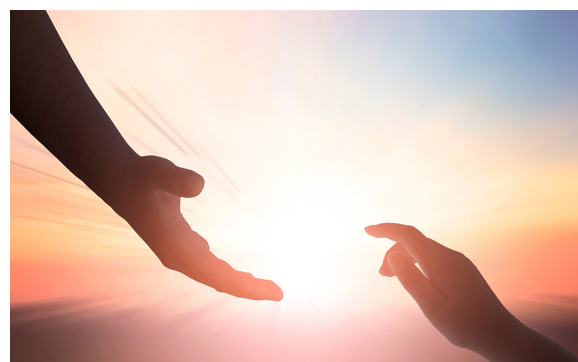


Volume 10

November 13, 2022 to February 17, 2023

Lent and the Longing Heart of God

“What are you giving up for Lent?” That is a question we often hear people ask each other. And so, we think of things to give up and that is good. Alms giving, fasting, and prayer are important ways of uniting with Christ and with the Church in the most powerful mystery, the Paschal Mystery. But, God wants more. God longs for more. He longs for our hearts.



As we read Scripture we can hear the urgency of this longing in the voice of God, *what I want is love not sacrifice*, (Hosea 6:6) and feel the passion of this longing in the heart of Jesus who tells us to call God, “Our Father.”

I think that as we begin Lent, nothing could please God more than for us to plan on setting aside ten minutes daily to ponder what it means for God to “long” for us. If we take time to think about what “longing” really means and what “longing” feels like we will be awe struck to realize that God allows Himself to be so vulnerable and so Fatherly that He longs with a desperate hunger for a loving relationship with each of us.

The dictionary defines “to long for” as to hope for, languish for; pine for; to want something very badly; to yearn for; to have one's heart set on; to ache for. This longing is such a gnawing hunger that God pierced the heavens (split the heavens open) and sent His Son not only to live among us but to even die for us.

Shortly before His passion and death, Matthew quotes Jesus as expressing the same tender longing of His Father: *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.* (Mt. 23:37)

God's longing for us is so great that even when we cruelly and ungratefully crucified His Son, God didn't give up on us. Christ rose and His message was "Peace" and "Do not be afraid." The capstone of Lent and of the Paschal Mystery is God's burning love, a love that nothing can extinguish, *a love that desires mercy, not sacrifice.* (Mt: 9:13)

Saint Augustine pondered and reflected on God's love for him. Augustine was overwhelmed by God's longing and persistent search for him and Augustine responded with a burning hunger for God:

*You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;
you flared, blazed, banished my blindness;
you lavished your fragrance, I gasped; and now I pant for you;
I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst;
you touched me, and I burned for your peace.*

Sister Donna Marie, C.R.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

[The following reflection is from Contact Volume 11 Number 3 1978](#)

The Sisters of the Immaculate Conception Province gathered on Saturday morning, March 4, to honor the memory of Sister Anne Strzelecka, C.R., who founded the province. The Eucharistic Liturgy was celebrated by Father Richard Balas, C.R., pastor of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church here In Chicago.

The introduction to the Liturgy, given by Sister Mary Edward, reminded all of the shining light that Sister Anne was to the community in this country during her lifetime of insightful and foresightful leadership. Sister's balanced perspective on

the importance of our growth in the spiritual life and in our life with each other, along with that of the apostolate, is still instructive for us today. Further, gathering to spend time with each other was seen as a most fitting way to remember one who began the tradition of provincial celebrations at Norwood Park.

In his homily, Father Balas highlighted the Gospel theme by telling a story of a young man walking on the seashore who found a bag of stones. Caught up in his own reverie on his plans and projects, he began to throw the stones out into the sea – one by one. As he held up the last one to throw it, however, he realized that it was a beautiful gem and that the others had also been precious stones. We, also, need to be more aware of the gift of the present moment and the “now” opportunities for extending ourselves to each other, for enjoying each other.

PROVINCE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES' CHRONICLES

November 7th – Sr. Donna Marie was invited to speak with the faculty at Resurrection College Prep High School. She reviewed and discussed the spirituality and charism of the Sisters of the Resurrection. The Christian Brothers, the administration and faculty are committed to continuing the Resurrection Spirit at the school even though it is now a LaSallian School.

November 13th – The Resurrection Local Community celebrated the November Feast Days and Birthdays. This was a special celebration because the Local Superior, had her Feast Day in November. The Sisters prayed Vespers together and had a festive dinner.

November 20th – The entire Province anticipated Thanksgiving with a special Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by Father Paul Sims, C.R. in the Chapel at the Retirement Center. Following the Mass we had a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner in the Terrace Room.



Sr. Barbara & Sr. Maria Marta presenting
Offertory gifts to Fr. Paul Sims, C.R.

November 21st – Sister Virginia Ann, Sister Dominic and Sister Donna Marie joined eleven other residents from Resurrection Village on an outing to Walker Brothers for Breakfast. Afterwards they enjoyed the play, “Wizard of Oz” at the Marriott in Lincolnshire.

November 25th - The Local Community of St. Joseph met to prepare for the Advent Season. Using the book, Sister Maria Marta bought for each of them, “Rejoice! Advent Meditations with Joseph”, they planned an Advent journey for their local community.

December 2nd – The Emeritus Provincials and Sister Donna Marie celebrated Sister Barbara’s Feast Day with lunch in the Archives.

December 3rd – The Province came together for an Advent Morning Reflection. Sister Barbara Mass, SLW gave a reflection on Mary’s Magnificat and then walked us through a process for praying our own personal Magnificat to God, acknowledging all the blessings He bestows upon us. Like Mary our hearts should burst with love and gratitude to God, who is so good to us. Two other Sisters of the Living Word joined us for this morning of prayer and reflection.

December 4th – The Emmaus Local Community had a celebratory evening honoring the Sisters who had Birthdays and Feast Days in November and December. Among the treats were homemade brownies courtesy of Sister Virginia Ann.

December 4th – The Resurrection Local Community celebrated the December Feast Days and Birthdays with recreation and dinner together.

December 7th - Sister Mary Dominic joined some other residents from Resurrection Village for an outing to the Irish American Heritage Center to enjoy Terry Byrne sing and play classic Irish music on his guitar.

December 7th - We anticipated the celebration of our Province Feast Day. the Immaculate Conception with Vespers and the Renewal of Vows. Afterwards we enjoyed dessert and recreation in the Terrace Room. The Sisters from the Saint Joseph Province sent us a large basket of fruit which was also enjoyed at our evening celebration.

December 8th – The Saint Joseph Local Community celebrated Sister Marilyn's feast day. They enjoyed a wonderful recreation and had delicious donuts and hot cocoa. Afterwards they prayed Vespers together.

December 8th – Sister Carolyn, Sister Virginia Ann and Sister Donna Marie attended a special Mass for supporters of Misericordia. After the beautiful Liturgy a festive dinner was served and the residents entertained them with their singing and dancing.

December 10th – Sister Donna Marie participated in a half day retreat on the power of communal prayer sponsored by Solidarity Bridge, a Medical Missionary Organization on whose Board Sister Donna serves.

December 10th – Sister Mary Dominic enjoyed a trip in the Ascension Living Resurrection Village bus to see the holiday lights in Rosemont.

December 14th – Sister Stephanie, Sister Kathryn, Sister Christine Maria and Sister Mary Dominic attended the “Christmas Around the World” event in the Blue Room sponsored by Crystal Home Health Care. Staff and Residents from various cultures (Puerto Rico, Poland, Italy, Iraq, Mexico, and Germany) shared their Christmas traditions followed by refreshments.



December 23rd – We anticipated Christmas with a traditional Wigilia in the Terrace Room. Everything was homemade and followed as closely as possible the traditional menu. Because of COVID each Sister received a “personal paper wish” instead of sharing *oplatek*. We prayed and placed the Infant in the crib. There were gifts for each Sister. We sang Christmas Carols in both English and Polish.

December 25th – The Sisters of the entire Province came together for Mass in the Chapel of Ascension Living Resurrection Village. Starting this special feast together in prayer was very special.

December 25th – On Christmas morning Sister Donna Marie and the Provincial Council enjoyed a Zoom meeting with Sister Dorota and her Council in Rome. Sister Dorota and her Council shared slides taken at their Wigilia Celebration and then Sister Donna Marie shared slides from the Chicago Wigilia.

December 25th – The Saint Joseph Local Community met together in the Resurrection Village dining room for lunch. Sister Rosemary and Sister M. Goretti were invited to join them. Later they met for a Christmas surprise in Sr. M. Marta's apartment. It was a wonderful time to enjoy each other, pray together, and receive gifts.

December 25th – The Sisters in the Resurrection Local Community gathered together for Vespers in their Community Room and had a nice supper together followed by gifts and recreation.

December 25th – The Emmaus Local Community gathered together for Vespers, recreation, gifts and snacks.

December 26th – Sister Donna Marie and the Emeritus Provincials (Sister Barbara and Sister Virginia Ann) celebrated Sister Stephanie's Feast Day by having lunch together in the Archives.

December 27th – Sister Donna Marie hosted a Christmas dinner for the Provincial Council and Superiors in her apartment. Sister Donna thanked them for their ongoing commitment to serve the Sisters in the Province, their witness to our charism, and their support.

December 28th - Sister Donna Marie brought a pizza and pop to the Sisters of the Saint Joseph Local Community to celebrate the Christmas Season. The group had so much fun talking and reminiscing that the party lasted almost two hours.

December 31st – The Resurrection Local Community gathered together for the "Induction Service" for Sister Carolyn as she began her second term as Local Superior. Sister Donna Marie presented Sister Carolyn with two plaques, one a beautiful, framed picture of the Good Shepherd and the other had an inspiring quote regarding leadership. After the induction the Local Community had lunch together.

December 31st - The Sisters gathered in the Ascension Living Resurrection Village Chapel at 7 p.m. for a Holy Hour. There was time for quiet prayer and for common prayers of thanksgiving for the graces of the year 2022 and prayers petitioning God's blessings for 2023. After the Holy Hour the Sisters gathered in the Terrace Room for light snacks and spent time reminiscing.

January 1st – Sister Virginia Ann hosted a dinner for the Sisters of the Emmaus Local Community and invited Sister Donna Marie to join them in welcoming in the New Year.

January 1st – The Sisters of the Resurrection Local Community gathered for Vespers, supper and recreation in their community room.

January 1st – The Sisters of the Saint Joseph Local Community spent **New Year's Day** together by having dinner in the Resurrection Village Dining Room. They had a special guest, Bishop Robert Kurtz, C.R. Sister Rosemary and Sister M. Goretti also joined them for dinner. In the evening they met again as a community for Vespers.



January 6th – The Province came together to celebrate the Anniversary of the beginning of our Resurrection Congregation. We had Vespers together and renewed our Vows. Then we had dessert and games with prizes. Sister Florence had an unusually lucky night and won three prizes in honor of the three Kings.

January 20th – The Saint Joseph Local Community had a Pizza Party to celebrate Sr. M. Marta's birthday. Sister Donna Marie joined them for this little celebration.

January 21st – Sister Donna Marie had a "Thank You" luncheon for the Sisters who serve on various committees such as "Ongoing Formation," "Novena and Triduum Preparation," and "Resurrection Studies." These Sisters volunteer many hours of time which is deeply appreciated.

January 25th – The Emeritus Provincials and Sister Donna Marie celebrated Sister Barbara's Birthday with her by having lunch in the Archives.



January 28th – Sister Donna Marie hosted a surprise party in the Terrace Room for Sister Maria Marta and Sister Goretti in honor of their fifteenth anniversary of coming to the United States. Sister Donna prepared supper for the Province as well as slides of Sister Maria Marta and Sister Goretti which were taken over the past fifteen years.

February 2nd on the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple and the Day of Consecrated Life, the Parish of St. Ladislaus gathered Polish sisters, brothers and religious priests for the Eucharist, reflection, and refreshments.

The theme of the day was, "For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before Him". Ephesians 1:4. Sr. Maria Marta participated in this beautiful ceremony.



(Sr. Maria Marta is on the right second row)

February 5th – The Sisters of the Emmaus Local Community celebrated the February Birthdays and Feast Days with Vespers, Recreation, and Subway sandwiches.

February 16th – The Saint Joseph Local Community met for a day of Retreat in preparation for their spiritual Lenten Journey. The theme for their day of retreat was “What God really wants from us during this Lent.” They prayed the Stations of the Cross together and closed the day with common Vespers. After the retreat they enjoyed Polish Paczki which Sister M. Marta brought from a Polish bakery, because on the Thursday, a week before Ash Wednesday, it is a Polish tradition to eat paczki.

Sister Maria Marta gave each of the Sisters in her Local Community a copy of the book “Lenten Companion – A Personal Encounter with the Power of the Gospel.”



February 14th – The Sisters of the Resurrection Local Community celebrated Valentine’s Day with a salad bar supper in their community room and a special Vesper Service prepared by Sister Carolyn.

February 17th – Sister Dominic joined other residents from Resurrection Village for a tour of “Dank Haus,” a German American Cultural Center located in the Lincoln Square area of Chicago.

BELATED BIRTHDAY WISHES

Sister Maria Marta – celebrated January 20th

Sister Mary Barbara – celebrated January 25th



FEAST DAY WISHES TO

Sister Donna Marie – March 25th

Sister Kathryn – April 29th

Sister Kathleen – April 29th

BIRTHDAY WISHES TO

Sister Virginia Ann – March 10th

Sister Carolyn – March 26th

Sister Donna Marie – April 7th



SAVE the DATE

Easter Monday, April 10th

Mass at 4:30 p.m. in the Resurrection Village Chapel

Father Paul Sims, C.R. will be the Celebrant

Dinner will follow in the Terrace Room