



Joyful Apostolate

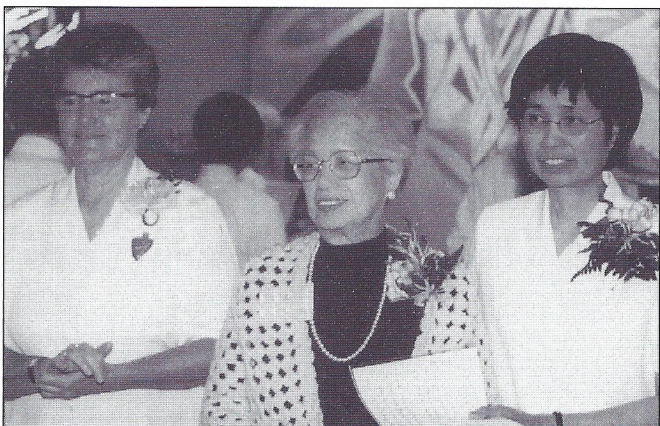
Fall 2007

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF FAITHFUL LOVE

Sisters, family and friends gathered in the Heart of Jesus Retreat Center to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Sister Annette's first religious profession. All witnessed joyfully as she renewed her perpetual vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience during Mass celebrated by Father Ludo DeClippel, C.J., Pastor of Holy Cross Parish in Santa Barbara, CA. where Sister Annette was the Director of Religious Education.



Above: Sister Annette pronounces her vows.



Processing from the chapel for the reception are (l. to r.) Sister Jane, Superior General, Mrs. Chui, mother of Sister Annette, Sister Annette.

"Ask for the grace of never turning off the royal crown."



THE MASTER OF THE HARVEST blessed our community with a new vocation. Laura Bradford began her postulancy in September, first with a three-day retreat and then with a solemn consecration to the Sacred Heart before Mass. Our Sisters joyfully gathered from various convents to pray with her and to welcome her. L. to r: Sister Eileen Sullivan, Director of Formation, Laura Bradford, Sister Andrea Chiang, Assistant Director of Formation.



THE ANNIVERSARY OF SISTER IDA'S BIRTHDAY is prayerfully celebrated every October 7th in the Mother House. It was on her eighteenth birthday that Sister Ida made her first vows, totally dedicating her life to God. Our Sisters in the missions of Taiwan, Hungary and St. Louis participated in the celebration in spirit, as well as with their contribution to the prayer service and spiritual sharing. The picture shows the last part of the prayer service, when all the Sisters gathered in her room to recite the Rosary at Sister Ida's bedside.

val road of the Cross. Walk with Him!"

Sister Ida

THANK YOU, SISTER IDA!

It was only seven years ago that Sister Ida passed into eternal life. Many young people who have been coming to our Sacred Heart Family Retreat Camps year after year have known her in Family Camp, and remember her with love. Here are excerpts of the letter of one of those young family campers:

"On a retreat recently we talked about influential people in our lives... You Sisters have been one of the biggest influences of my spiritual life all growing up... For this I owe you a special thanks who have been there for 18 years of my life.

I owe a special thank you to Sister Ida, because without her dedication and love for people and Our Lord none of that would be possible. I know she is not with us, but I know I love her still. She is truly an amazing role model and will hopefully one day be a saint. Then I can share her story as a saint story in my teachings. ..

I am involved in Catholic Ministry on campus... I just really wanted to say thank you for being such an influential community in my life... Now it is my turn to use my faith and love and knowledge and go out to lead as you do."

Michelle Heffron

LET SISTER IDA INSPIRE YOU!

"YES, LORD!" The joyful response of Sister Ida to the plan of God: the story of her own vocation and how God was leading her to begin the Society Devoted to the Sacred Heart. 68 pages.

"THE SOURCE OF OUR JOY" Thoughts of Sister Ida, a first collection from her talks and letters. Pocket edition.

"THE SOURCE OF OUR STRENGTH" More thoughts of Sister Ida, inspiring with profound simplicity. Pocket size.

"GOD HAS A HEART FOR YOU" C.D. with songs of the Sacred Heart Sisters, joyfully singing of the love of God.

"LOVE DOES SUCH THINGS" Christmas C.D. Every day is Christmas with this CD. Celebrate the coming of Christ every day as you join the Sisters in song.



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“Do your work with God”

FROM THE HEART OF SISTER IDA

“My greatest joy: being in His Presence”

Sometimes we seem to know much better how to serve, to do things, than simply just “to be” in God’s company, enjoying His love and His presence. The joy which comes with contemplation comes from our relationship, our consciousness of God’s love for us, and that we are always present to Him. His love and care never leave us. John 15:4 “Make your home in Me, as I make mine in you.” He means it. So many times, when life was hardest, (e.g. during the Russian occupation), this reality, that He never leaves me, gave me the greatest joy.

Think of contemplation as nothing else but exposing ourselves to God’s presence, to Him who is infinite Love and infinite Joy. Otherwise, prayer looks so “hard.” If you have a very good friend who loves you very much, you are happy to be in each other’s company. It is not a “duty” to be with them.

His love does not depend on my accomplishments. He loved you first. Before you did anything for Him, He loved you. We struggle to acquire virtues; at the same time, His love is freely given; His love is not a reward for our good behavior. No amount of accomplishment could make us worthy to attain God’s love, unless He gives it freely, as He does.

Do I accept that God loves me? He chose me to be His dwelling place. So many times, in the Psalms He says: “I find my delight in the children of men”. Respond to His presence within you, with joy. St. Augustine went all around the civilized world, soaking in philosophies, searching for God. Finally he found Him. He said: “For so long I was looking for You, and you were right here in the depths of my being”.

There are so many “prayer techniques” , yet He is right there, in the depths of your being. The “technique” is not so important as the reality, - that He is choosing us to be His dwelling place, and He is loving us this much. Simple, uncomplicated joy in His presence is a great way to pray.

in your heart; then it will become

LABOR OF LOVE AND HOSPITALITY IN SACRED HEART RETREAT CAMP

This was an unexpected “Work Weekend” in our Sacred Heart Retreat Camp at Big Bear Lake. For Labor Day weekend about 80 volunteers came to work hard, happy to prepare the camp for the winter apostolate. They cleaned, repaired, moved furniture, and clipped the overgrown brush to provide defensible space from fires and from wild animals.

On Saturday lightening struck above the highway near our camp. When the fire jumped the highway, we saw the need to send the volunteers home. It was hard for them to leave with jobs unfinished, but they promised to pray for us. Volunteers had already helped us to prepare dinner. We were ready to freeze and save it. Little did we know that God already had another plan!



Welcoming a group of firefighters

A Battalion Chief of the California Dept. of Forestry called that same evening, and asked if we could accommodate out-of-town firefighters. Of course we said, Yes, left our dinner table, rushed over to Sacred Heart Lodge, transformed it from work weekend disarray to a firefighters' camp, made a welcome sign and collected items they might need.

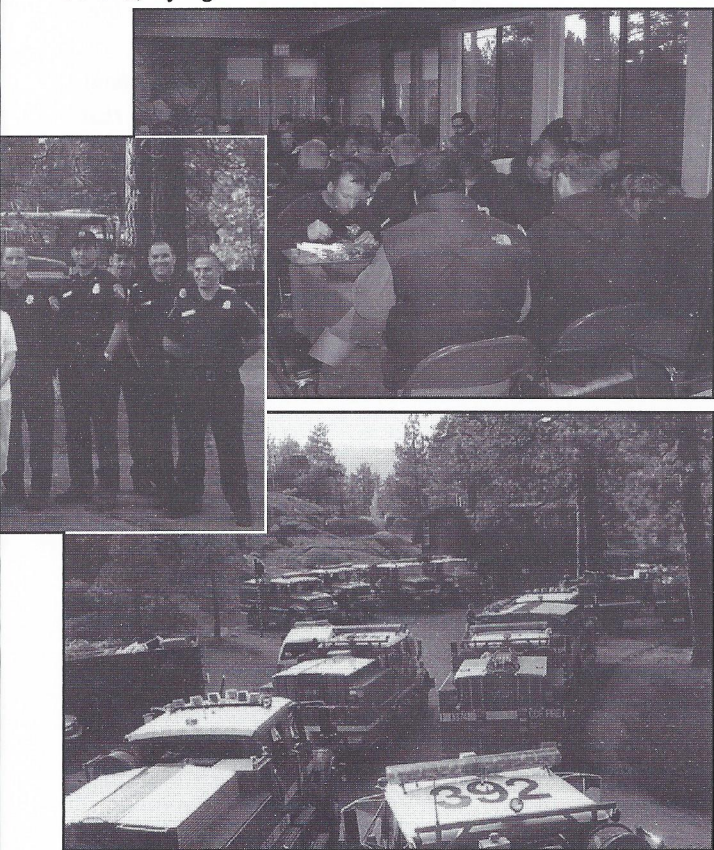
Throughout September we hosted from 21 to 170 firefighters during two consecutive fires. They came from as far as San Diego, Lake Tahoe, Carson City, NV, and Spokane, WA. Before coming to our camp, many slept on the cold parking lot of a nearby ski resort for several days.

Friends and camp staff generously helped us with laundry, and long hours in the kitchen. Customers and clerks in grocery stores helped us to haul cases of chicken, cartons of eggs, dozens of gallons of milk.

prayer, sacrifice and a new habit,

The firefighters would arrive to tables all set. We served them "family style" just like at our Girls' Camps. Each one thanked us: "It's great to eat at a table in a warm place!" "A pillow and a blanket? Luxury!" "Can we help with the dishes?" (And they did!) "Hot shower, home-cooked meals!" One of the Strike-Team leaders left a farewell note: "Never have we been so warmly welcomed and made to feel at home. Your facility is only outdone by your hospitality. Thanks for taking care of us."

Dinner was waiting for the firefighters when they returned in the evening. We cooked and served breakfast at 6:00 a.m.; it meant cracking 600 eggs the night before, frying 800 slices of bacon, etc.



One day about 45 firetrucks were parked on the driveway for the night, all facing out, so they could quickly pull out at 6:30 a.m. sharp!

We prayed for them during the day! From day to day, we never knew who and how many firefighters were going to come back. One of them said, "One day we just won't come home," meaning to our Sacred Heart Camp.

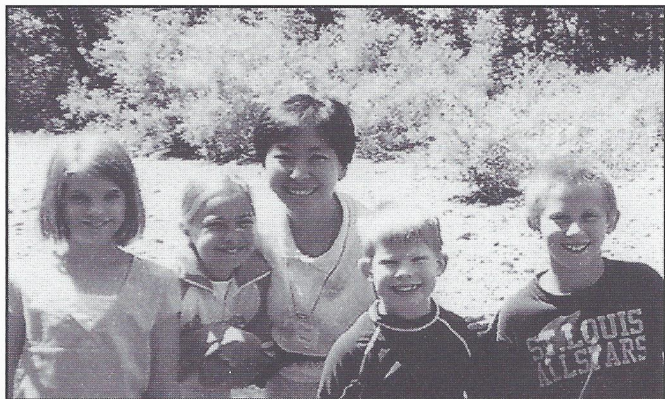
all in one."

Sister Ida

SPECIAL MISSION IN TAIWAN

Here in Taiwan we have been entrusted with a special mission of proclaiming Jesus and His love to many who have never heard His Name. Recently, a patient in Cardinal Tien Hospital, a non-Christian lady, approached us, asking if she could buy a crucifix like the one hanging on the wall across from her bed.

We brought one for her as a gift. As soon as the lady received the crucifix, she hugged it, and held it close to her heart. Two days later she died. We believe that at the moment of her death her gesture was reciprocated, and she was drawn into the living embrace of Our Lord! Sister Ida often said: "God has a Heart for you!"



IN ST. LOUIS

At Sacred Heart Family Retreat Camp: Sister Teresa with some of the happy campers. The shirt on the right describes all the families: St. Louis All Stars – and bright stars in the Church!

TEAMWORK IN HUNGARY

An important characteristic of our apostolate is teamwork. A recent example was delightful. Try to picture two of our Sisters driving 150 miles north-east of Budapest, through beautiful countryside. The destination was the city of Nyíregyháza, where 50 priests gathered for our Catechumenate and Catechist Formation. Will both of our Sisters present the workshop? No, because only one of them speaks Hungarian. Sister Yolanda who is assigned to be in Hungary for this year simply offered to do the driving, to offer support and companionship.

People notice our teamwork. After Sacred Heart Children's Camp this summer our volunteer camp doctor said: "The unity and harmony among you, Sisters, gave the children and all of us such a happy spirit!"