



Joyful Apostolate

Spring 2008

HERE I AM, LORD, I COME TO DO YOUR WILL

St. John Eudes church in Chatsworth, California was filled with joyful excitement as families and friends joined us on March 29th for the Profession of Vows of six of our Sisters. Cardinal Roger Mahony was the main celebrant of the Profession Mass, and eleven priest friends of our community concelebrated. In his homily, the Cardinal said, "Today we not only celebrate this great Community of women religious, and these six Sisters in particular, but we also celebrate what we need to live out in our own way... Choosing a lifelong path and be committed to it is just something that is not in our culture... we need these wonderful and strong witnesses!"



Next to Cardinal Mahony and Sister Jane, our Superior General: Sister Jennifer, (l) and Sister Rachael (rt) final professions. First professed (second row, clockwise) Sister Gabrielle, Sister Ines, Sister Veronica and Sister Rose (front rt). Sister Laura (top rt) begins novitiate.



Cardinal Mahony and Sister Jane listen as the Sisters dedicate a song to him during the reception after the Profession Mass. He graciously stayed, and warmly visited with the Sisters' families to rejoice with us.

A GLIMPSE INTO OUR HEART OF JESUS RETREAT CENTER

About 15,000 children came to be with Jesus on their days of retreats last year. We would like to share some of their comments.

From a teacher:

"I wanted to thank you for a wonderful day at the Retreat Center last Wednesday. My second grade class is very well prepared for their First Communion next month because of your wonderful presentation. We all had a very enjoyable time, and renewed our spirits. Thank you for your kindness, humor and dedication."

Patricia Blain, 2nd Grade Teacher

From the children:

"Thanks for all you have taught us at the retreat. It was such a great treat! I will pray for all of you. I hope to see you at the Advent retreat!"

"I liked the lunch, snack, prayer service and the other things. Thanks for letting the third grade come to the retreat. Thanks for teaching more about Jesus."

"I loved when the Eucharist was put in the Monstrance. I love going to the Retreat Center."

"I was glad to see the Sisters again. You made the retreat a wonderful time with me and my friends."

"I can't wait to come next year!"

"Awesome day. I'll pray more and reflect on Jesus."

"I loved learning about Jesus being our light! Your chapel is beautiful!"

"You make learning fun. You taught me so much about faith, friends and life. As I become an adult, I hope I can have as much faith as you!"

And finally:

After hearing the story of Sister Ida, and understanding that she entered eternal life, a kindergardener sighed: "I miss her." Sister said: "We miss her, too." In the evening, the phone rang, and one of our Sisters answered: "Sacred Heart Convent." A little voice on the other end said, "Hi, Sister Ida!"

"REVOLUTION IN MY TEACHING"

In the St. Louis Archdiocesan Paul VI Catechetical Institute, Maggie is one of our students, a catechist and a home school mother. After a few weeks into the class, learning our "Five-Step Illustrated Method" she observed a joyful transformation in her teaching. "It's like a delightful revolution in my teaching. Now I don't have to read verbatim from a text book about faith. Now I speak with confidence to my students about what we believe. Your Method truly helps me to keep their attention! As soon as I start to draw the illustrations, they are focused and quiet. This even extends to my home. At night, when I tuck my daughter in bed, I have started to tell her the stories about Jesus and the saints in my own words."

A SECOND GRADER TOUCHED BY ST. TARSICIUS

We give catechetical retreats through Paul VI. from kindergarten age to teachers, this year to over 3,500. On a First Communion retreat in the spring, Tony, a second grader listened attentively to the story of St. Tarsicius, the patron Saint of first communicants. In our lesson he heard that St. Tarsicius was only 12 years old, when he had the courage of a soldier to defend Our Lord Jesus, and gave his life to protect the Blessed Sacrament. Tony sat up straight, still looking at the story board and said thoughtfully, "Now I see why he was a soldier for Christ." His heart was moved to share the young martyr's heroic love and faith in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

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 edition.

"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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*"While you lead a busy life and your mind
be sure to*

FROM THE HEART OF SISTER IDA

When we light a candle in the twilight, we can see much more of the candle than in daylight. Its light penetrates the darkness, and makes it disappear. Once we have light around us, we can see.

There is darkness in the center of a candle light. If we wanted to remove that little dark spot, we would have to extinguish the candle! We would have to kill the flame! The dark gas feeds the flame!

It teaches us something about ourselves and our relationship with God. When we discover God in our life, when we love God, our life is bright and happy. But in the "inner space" of our hearts there will always remain a dark "vacancy."

We can be in the midst of a large crowd of people, and still feel empty, lonely and wishing for more. We do not feel full; we are not fulfilled, Is that bad that we still feel that something is lacking? What does this show?

It shows that in the "inner space" in our hearts there is a spot reserved for God Himself! He made sure that we would have a space for Him that nothing else would fill.

When we enter that space, we find Him there. It is true! God loved us first!

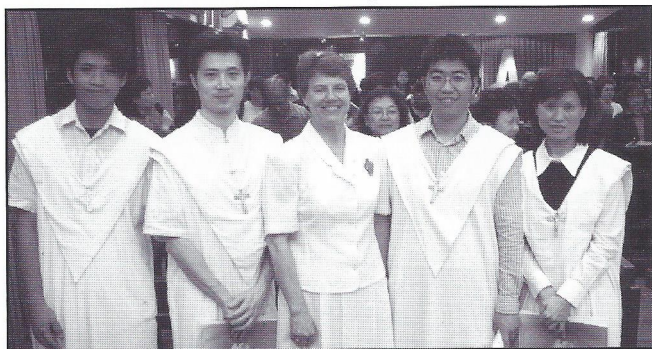
We can hear His words in Psalm 139: "I know you, I created your innermost self. I put you together in your mother's womb. I loved you. I have called you by name, I formed you, you are mine. Do not be afraid; I am your Savior."

*and is active,
to be immersed in God with faith,*

TEACHING ALL NATIONS

"In keeping with the Heart's desire of Our Lord to expand His kingdom over the hearts of His people," as Sister Ida wrote into our Constitutions, we are enthusiastically immersed in evangelization in the United States, in Europe and in Asia.

In Taiwan, Joseph Lu reflected on his Baptism: "I have been coming to church for a few years, feeling as a guest. I began attending the Sisters' RCIA program. Now I am no longer a "guest," but a member of the household; I belong to God's Family!"



Sister Mary Beth with newly baptized students in Taipei.

Sister Mary Ann (rt) and Sister Arlene (lt) with three staff members of Cardinal Tien Hospital who were baptized this Easter; fruits of the work of Sister Mary Ann and Sister Grace, initiated through the Pastoral Care Department, and carried out by a catechist who was trained by Sister Grace.



with trust, with your love and v



Sister Shannon (center) with new members of the Church in Hungary.

In Hungary this Easter, our Sisters saw the miracle of God's grace in the lives of all the young people and adults whom they prepared for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist in our RCIA program. The action of the Holy Spirit was clearly visible!

God draws people into His family in amazing, yet very simple ways. One of the young men had asked his Catholic friend what happens to someone after death. Instead of giving him a quick answer, the friend took the young man to Sister Shannon's RCIA program. In the end, he was the proud sponsor/godparent of this new member of the Church.

Another story of God's grace is that of a brother and sister who found their way to the RCIA classes. They had a sister in Japan who was introduced to the Catholic faith by her fiancé, and was baptized prior to their marriage. Full of enthusiasm, she called her siblings and encouraged them to join an RCIA group. And so they did. Now, beside the family bond, the Spirit of God's life and love binds them together stronger than ever before.

with all your soul." *Sister Ida*

In Southern California, scores of children, youth and adults were baptized on Holy Saturday, and many were received into full communion with the Church in our RCIA parish programs. Every time our Sisters gathered for a community meeting, there were enthusiastic exchanges about the candidates from Mission Santa Ines in Solvang to Our Lady of the Pillar parish in Santa Ana! And on Easter Sunday we gave special thanks to Our Risen Lord's merciful love for them. This entire Joyful Apostolate could be filled with their stories and pictures!



Sister Sharon with young people who were recently baptized in Our Lady of Lourdes parish.



Above: in St. Brigid Chinese Catholic parish in Los Angeles, Father John Lam and Sister Grace join the happy celebration of newly baptized Catholics, cutting the cake!

Right: Sister Grace shares the solemn and gracefilled moment of one of the Baptisms.

