

I am the Vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.
(John 15:5)

The Vine

Volume 4, Issue 2
Summer 2010

A newsletter of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

According to St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar, devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is the summary of our faith and our norm for the perfect Christian life. The aim of this devotion is to better know and repay the love of the Lord Jesus. The object of its worship is the Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary and later pierced by the lance upon the Cross. This Heart is intimately united with the Divinity of Christ. As the Heart of the God-Man, It belongs to the Divine Person. It is also the fire and emblem of the Divine and human love of the Incarnate Word. This love that He as God shares with the Father and the Spirit is the same love that filled His human Heart, the ineffable love that imbued all His words and deeds.

This Divine Heart, so worthy of love, is the temple of Divinity, the throne of grace, the seat of mercy, the treasury filled with gifts and the source of Divine life upon earth. From this Heart flowed forth all the works of love. From this Heart was born the Holy Catholic Church. From It issued the seven sacraments as seven springs of salvation. Even to this day, all

goodness flows from this Heart since It is Itself peace, reparation, oblation, life and resurrection. For the sake of love, the Incarnate Word emptied Himself and was meek, merciful and ready for all sufferings. The Heart of Jesus - pitying all misery, weeping at the tomb of



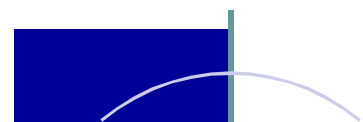
Lazarus and allowing the sinful woman to approach His feet, was filled with this love, of which the greatest signs are the crib, the Cross, the altar and the tabernacle.

Our love, enkindled through meditation on the love of Jesus, protects us from sin,

gains us entrance into the Heart of Jesus, and causes us to imitate His virtues and adopt His desires. Our ardent love stirs up our zeal to spread the Kingdom of the Heart of God upon earth. We then become eager to make various sacrifices for this Heart, to do deeds of reparation for insults and rejection, and to turn to this Heart in all our needs.

To the human heart, love is in the moral order what blood is in the physical. While it depends upon our will, that queen of the spiritual life, to choose the object of our love, yet we often say that it is the heart that loves. The love in our heart gives rise to strong feelings that often entice our will, even when reason opposes. The human heart must love something, and that which it loves it comes to resemble.

CONTINUED on page 6.



To contact us:

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OF THE MOST SACRED
HEART OF JESUS**

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*Letter from Mother Ryszarda Wittbrodt, SSCJ
Provincial Superior*

Dear Friends,

As May is a month dedicated to our Blessed Mother, the month of June we offer to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

For our Congregation, June is a special time when we offer our prayers and celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, anticipating it with a Novena and Triduum. We hold very close to our hearts all the intentions you are sending to us for this Novena.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is always the *source of all consolation, enriching all who invoke Him.* He



Sr. Klaudiana Jozefowicz, SSCJ with her new lawnmower

knows our needs and in His mercy He hears and sustains us. Let us ever have recourse to Him.

In this issue of *The Vine*, we present to you one of our Founder's meditations on the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. We also want to share photos from our first Annual Dinner, a testimonial by one of our friends, as well as our experience in visiting our Sisters in Jamaica ... and much more!

We would also like to acknowledge in a special way all our generous benefactors who responded to our mower appeal. Sr. Klaudiana can now enjoy both a riding and a push mower we were able to purchase through the kind donations received. Thank you for always being there for us in our needs.

Many of us and our families will take various trips during the summer months, so we ask God's blessing and protection in our travels. Several Sisters will participate

in our General Chapter in Krakow, Poland and will take part in many other additional summer activities.



Then, in August we will come together for our annual retreat that will conclude with Sister Francis Clare Flahive's Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession.

We ask for your prayers for many good vocations, especially to our province, so that we can continue our apostolates for the greater glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

United in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Mother Ryszarda Wittbrodt, SSCJ
Provincial Superior

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We gratefully acknowledge all our good friends who made our first Annual Dinner such a success!

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Becoming a Sacred Heart Sister

Once a young woman discerns a call to religious life, she takes the following steps in her religious formation in our Congregation:

Candidacy-After visiting and discerning her call to consecrated life with the help of our formators and superiors, a young woman applies and is accepted for entrance.

Aspirancy- The first 6 months after entrance during which the candidate becomes accustomed to life in the convent while joining in prayer and community life with the Sisters.

Postulancy- after consecration to the Sacred Heart and receiving the postulant garb, the candidate learns about the history and charism of the Congregation, participating in formation classes and shares in the apostolates of the Sisters.



Our Lady of the Angels Postulate Formation house



Novitiate- two years of intense prayer and study in preparation for profession of the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

Juniorate- As a bride of Christ, the Sister renews her vows annually for five years and continues her spiritual and professional formation and undertakes apostolic work.

Final Professed- After five years, the Sister professes perpetual vows and lives her consecration in common prayer and community life while continuing ongoing formation according to the charism of the Congregation in the spirit of Franciscan joy and simplicity.



Fr. Robert Yetsko, TOR with our Sisters and the Prostejovsky "May Queens" Mary Catherine & Anna and family

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We also thank Betty Sloan and all members of the Dinner Committee for their hard work and dedication!

WORKING FOR THE SISTERS

This is nothing new for Betty and me. We lived in Maryland for over thirty-five years before moving back to Cresson. For more than eighteen years we worked for Saint Camillus Parish, in the Archdiocese of Washington.

St. Camillus is a multi-lingual parish with more than five thousand parishioners. Betty was the Parish Secretary and I was the Boiler Engineer and head maintenance person. There is also a school that houses a pre-school, kindergarten through eighth grade. We lived in the parish's back yard. All we did was go out our back door and gate and we were at work. Needless to say it was a very dynamic and lively parish and we were always on the go there. I was Grand Knight for our local Knights of Columbus and Betty and I were involved in a married couple spirituality movement called The Teams of Our Lady (TOOLS). Plus all the other things that go on in a parish...

Back in the spring of 2002 I was diagnosed with melanoma and we moved back to Cresson, right next-door to the Sisters. Betty and I were both extremely tired and burnt out. All she wanted to do was clean house and be a homemaker again. She was not going to get involved in the local parish or anything else.

I found a job at St. Francis Friary in Loretto as a handyman in the Gardens and met Fr. Ronald Bodenschatz, TOR. Before long Betty was doing Father Ronald's Christmas cards and correspondence —so — so much for not getting involved. I went to Mass every weekday at the Sisters' of the Sacred Heart Chapel in Cresson, PA. When the Sisters were building the John Paul II Manor they asked me if I would come to work for them. Now how many times in your life can you get a job where you walk out your back door and are at work? Of course I said yes. I am now the head

(and only) maintenance man for the Sisters. I also take care of the Manor Gardens and the Sisters like lots and lots of flowers. Every window has a beautiful scene outside to feast our eyes. In spring I have no snow to plow, blow and shovel. *Thank you, Jesus!*



“Dedication is their first, middle and last name. God has blessed us all for knowing and caring for these special women.”

Betty fell in love with the Sisters and when Fr. Ronald passed away she was asked to help with the database for a new project the Sisters were starting. The Development Project was taking shape. Now Betty has her own office, which I built out of an existing closet, and she gets to come out of the closet every night.

We were used to working with clergy, and working with religious is not all that different except this time it is women. Now that can be tricky. One has to stay on an even keel and not get ones' own dander up. Try that, five days a week, four weeks a month, and twelve months a year!

We get to see them in times of stress, prayer, and laughter. We see them when they get sad news and good news. We see them in the neighborhoods visiting the sick and being there for the family when someone dies. They are no different than we laypeople except we laity expect the Sisters to be more holy. They are called to a higher spiritual life, and if we are open to the will of God, they take us along with them.

One thing that makes the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred

Heart of Jesus special is that they still wear the habit and in most circumstances receive more respect; at least the language is better and not as loud. The Sisters are a quiet group and it took awhile for them to not be quite so shy.

The Sisters take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They follow the Rule of St. Francis of Assisi. They take on extra prayer every day. The Sisters' apostolates range from teaching our children in school and religious education, lecturing and cantoring, serving as parish secretaries, studying, working in administration, nursing and taking care of our elderly and less fortunate -- helping all of us to follow the way of Jesus — loving God and loving our neighbor. They run a retreat house, missions in Jamaica, help in the poorest neighborhoods of Delaware and Philly. Their courage and strength are an example for all who know and see them.

Any project the Sisters take on they do in an exceptional and fastidious way. They do it to perfection and we benefit from them. Fifty-one years ago the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus came to America from Poland. We were and still are mission territory. They established a convent in Portage and then in Cresson. They went to Swedesburg, Wilmington and Jamaica. Their Sisters took care of John Paul II for over twenty-seven years while he was Pope. Dedication is their first, middle and last name. God has blessed us all for knowing and caring for these special women. Betty and I hope and pray that you will take the time to learn more about these extraordinary and special women through the *Vine*, come to Mass at the “white house” on Cambria Street or the Manor, join in on their special fund-raisers, or say hello to them after they cantor at Mass on weekdays or Sundays.

by Paul and Betty Sloan

Jamaica: Beautiful Land, Beautiful People

By Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ

From March 4-15th, 2010, I accompanied Mother Ryszarda during her visitation of our Sisters in Jamaica.

Holy Spirit Parish, Maggotty, Jamaica is a vibrant, young Catholic community located along a bend of the Black River in the region of St. Elizabeth, a deep, rural district famed



Sisters in Jamaica with Mother Ryszarda

for its sugar cane, rum, citrus, and marked poverty. In January 1999, this parish had its beginnings with the coming of two Polish missionaries who arrived with little more than the blessing of the bishop and their intrepid faith. These pioneer priests, who took up lodging in a goat shed, labored earnestly until December 5, 1999, when a terrible accident near Santa Cruz, Jamaica very nearly cost the life of one of them — Fr. Marek Bzinkowski. The young priest was rushed to Altoona Hospital in Pennsylvania in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown where the local Ordinary, the Most Reverend Joseph Adamec arranged the medical treatment to try to save his life. After many surgeries and prayers, a lengthy recuperation with our Sisters, and some incredible miracles, Father Marek did finally walk again and returned to his post at his beloved mission. Certainly, there are “no accidents with God” since Father Marek’s road to recovery in America became the occasion for our Sisters to later join him on the path in

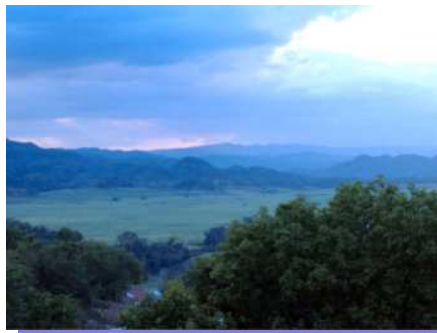
Jamaica, eventually leading to our Congregation opening a convent there on September 7, 2004.

Today, this parish where our Sisters serve now has a church, rectory, convent, clinic, library and homework center, computer lab and classrooms, volunteer dormitories, a farm and yes, a Polish kielbasa factory to “beef” up the local economy and provide a livelihood to many!

Our Sisters make home visits to Maggotty’s bedridden poor and to those in the surrounding villages, but most of their time they devote to working at Holy Spirit Clinic, a new, beautiful and spacious clinic serving the poor.

Excerpts from my email sent from Jamaica:

We just finished a day of working at our clinic. The Sisters and visiting nurses from the US saw 70 patients today...Our Sisters are working so hard here. The people welcomed



us today with singing, welcoming the Holy Spirit to come to us and singing that good things are about to come to them from God. If you could only see the poverty, you would know how touching it was.

Our Sister Clare Marie Carriger registers the patients before they are seen and Sister Superior Emila Malczak and Sister Rita Kurdziel work as nurses. The clinic is visited by a local doctor, and often by volun-

teer medical personnel throughout the year.

The Holy Mass at this parish is very lively with Caribbean music and singing, much clapping of hands, and the church is filled each Sunday with 220 people, mostly children. Father Marek and another driver go to the outlying areas to bring the people to the church. Many are very poor, but always come to church dressed in their “Sunday best”, very clean and neat. There is much hope for the future. Our Sisters teach catechetical classes each Sunday and have organized the recitation of the rosary with the children before the Mass.

...This morning during our meditation at the parish church, there were two yellow finch playing with one another in the sanctuary, landing on the cruets on the altar! The psalm for Morning Prayer was fitting, "Even the swallow finds a nest for her brood...she lays them by your altar with care....On Sunday, the church is filled with smiling, singing, beautiful black faces, and they respond well to Fr. Marek Bzinkowski...

To assist the children of the poor families Holy Spirit Parish has a farm operated by parents to raise money for the children’s tuition, transportation costs, shoes and school supplies.

Without a uniform, shoes, taxi fare,



Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

lunch money and school supplies, children cannot go to school. The Parish of Holy Spirit estimates that it spends about US \$400,000 annually to provide for the education of the children. Every child needs a sponsor, and we hope that we can encourage our friends to consider doing this.

As I must write this on the veranda of the Sisters' convent, the people go to plant pepper plants that Fr. Marek provided. Groups will care for their plot and there will hopefully be a good harvest of plants.

There are different visitors all the time. The parish center which includes dormitories, kitchen, laundry and meeting area is now open to accommodate volunteers. During the time of our Provincial's visitation, Maggotty was visited by a wonderful group of 17 young people from State College, PA. They were a great help — at the clinic, on the farm, working on houses for the poor, and helping prepare food and medicines for distribution. During our stay, the mission was also visited by a medical doctor and his family from Kentucky.

A group is here from our Diocese, from State College, PA. They were preparing rice for Easter gifts for the people. The parish gives rice, powdered milk, flour and oil.



Mother and I accompanied Sr. Superior Emila Malczak and, on another occasion, Sister Rita Kurdziel, in visiting the outlying villages and the outskirts of Maggotty. In each stop, very poor people met us, and our Sisters distributed food and clothing. At times the roads became too bad to drive, and we had to



The new Holy Spirit Clinic in Maggotty, Jamaica

walk to the homes. The living conditions of most of the people are terrible. The Jamaican women still cook over an open fire, wash clothes in the river and the bathroom facilities and showers are nothing more than out-houses with buckets of water.

As to the poverty of this country, I cannot begin to express what I have seen. They still cook over a pot on a open wood fire! Primitive is hardly the word. But they are precious people, so loving and hospitable.

We were very touched to meet a woman named Miss Daphne, 96 years old, who is finally receiving a new home for herself and her blind son. Her present dwelling is treacherous due to rotting floors, and when it rains there is little protection from the elements.

I hope someday to go back to Jamaica, God willing, to see the familiar faces and share in the mission work of our Sisters. Certainly the time spent there was a great lesson for me to appreciate what we

have here, such as the basic necessities of water, food, electricity and medicine.

We pray that this mission will bring glory to God and lead many to know and love Him and we are grateful and appreciative of all volunteers and helpers who are assisting in this effort.

Please see our upcoming issues of the *Vine*, for updates on our Jamaican mission.



Please remember us when making or revising your will.

*Our name is:
Sister Servants of the Most Sacred
Heart of Jesus*

*Our federal ID is:
75-236-912*

MEDITATION *continued from front cover:*

In the Holy Scripture God speaks: *My son, give me your heart* (Prv 23:26). It is at once a request to give our will and our very selves. The Savior assures us: *Where your treasure is, there also is your heart* (Mt 6:21) and again *Out of the heart...come evil designs: murder, adulterous conduct...stealing* (Mt 15:19). Let us form our hearts then solely according to the Heart of God.

SACRED HEART SISTERS' ANNUAL DINNER



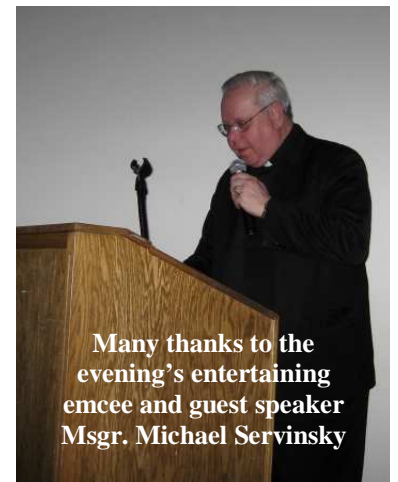
**Mother Amabilis Debicka, SSCJ
with Mr. Larry Servinsky**

Story Telling!

Being a story teller is a very important role in family life. The person destined to tell our family stories is the keeper of our family history. I suppose the person who tells your family stories considers it a special honor to pass on the family history while trying to be faithful to the facts.

For the next annual dinner, the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have chosen to share their community's history. The Sisters have over fifty years of history in America to share.

Our "Second Annual Dinner/Auction", held before St. Valentine's Day, will include sharing with friends, elegant surroundings, fine food, and wonderful items for auction.



Many thanks to the evening's entertaining emcee and guest speaker Msgr. Michael Servinsky

As this issue of the *Vine* was being sent to print...

Our **SISTER JOANNA, SSCJ** died on First Friday, June 4, 2010 at the John Paul II Manor, Cresson, where she served as local superior and nurse.

Born Teresa Kmiecik in Poland on June 17, 1929, Sister Joanna entered the convent Aug. 6, 1947 and observed her golden jubilee of religious profession in the year 2000 with a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee Year. This year marks 60 years of her religious life.



Sister Joanna was known in the community as a dedicated, hardworking and faithful religious Sister who loved her vocation and was always ready to help and serve others. She was recognized by many in the area as the Sister who shopped for groceries and supplies for the Manor, always accompanied by her dog, Alan.

Anyone wishing to make a memorial offering in Sister Joanna's memory may direct this to the John Paul II Manor, 856 Cambria Street, Cresson, PA 16630.

May she rest in peace as her good deeds go with her.

SAVE THIS DATE

**February 12th, 2011 at
The Imperial Room in Ebensburg, PA**

We need your help and support. We are looking for sponsors for this dinner, which will again feature a silent and live auction, and once again will include the Sisters' culinary gifts. We also need different gift baskets (\$25-200 in value), gift certificates, week or weekend vacation opportunities to auction off, Steelers' Pirates or Penguin Tickets, Golf passes or other gifts, monetary or merchandise.

~Betty Sloan (Chairperson) & Dinner Committee

For more information, please contact:

Mrs. Betty Sloan

John Paul II Manor

856 Cambria Street, Cresson, PA 16630

Ph. (814) 886-7961

Email: sscjdevelopment@yahoo.com

Who Cares?

In a society that seems to be focused on, "ME, MYSELF and I", there is little or no room for God and this is at the root of fewer vocations.

As we look at religious life we too often see orders of men or women from a distance. No longer do we have the Catholic school education some of us experienced nor do we see them at hospitals or parishes as we had assumed they would always be.

The first call to vocation must come from home; it always has. The most important and maybe only correct answer when deciding a vocation, vowed

or lay, is to ask: How can I best serve God? In this issue we see the beginning journey of a young person choosing to seek God as a religious in the community of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Order can provide the formation and convent schedule, but we can provide our prayerful support. In choosing any vocation, the "Me, Myself and I", must be less and God must be more.

We also need to support communities of women religious with our personal sacrificial monetary gifts. You can't buy a vocation, but you can't afford not to support them either.

If we care, then we understand this great gift that one person makes in order to serve God by serving others. You cannot separate the spirit of God's grace from the reality of the human being any more than you can understand the Trinity.

We are blessed to have the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus among us and their daily prayers for us and they are blessed because God hears your prayers and receives your sacrificial offering to support their life in their ministry. Thank you!

By Robert J. Allen

To benefit the life and apostolates of the

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