

The Vine

Glory be to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

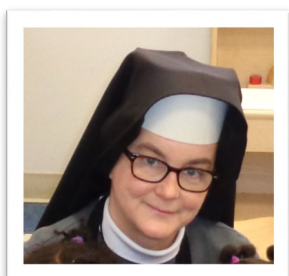


Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



Letter from Mother Klara, SSCJ Provincial Superior

Glory be to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



Dear Friends,

Fr. Jan Twardowski, a Polish priest and poet, wrote: *Let us hurry to love people, they depart so quickly.* While working on this issue of *The Vine* and checking the

photographs of our Sisters, these words from a beautiful poem stayed in my mind. How many Sisters and lay friends departed from my life... How many of them will leave me this year... Did I really love them? ... Did I show my love?...

Another sentence accompanied me during my preparation of *The Vine's* cover page: *Alive or dead, we belong to the Lord* (Romans 14:8). Our life is like a jigsaw puzzle, in our youth, maturity, and old age, we belong to God. In our work, prayer, and rest, we belong to God. In our health and sickness, we belong to God. In our life and in our death, we belong to God. To God, Whose Heart is merciful, loving, and tender. To God, Whose Heart was pierced with a lance for us. To God, Who conquered the Evil one. We belong to God by baptism and religious vows, and by our daily offering to Him.

Sr. Klara Slonina, SSCJ

Sr. Klara Slonina, SSCJ

In life and in death, we belong to the Lord.



Memories of Bl. Klara Szczesna (1863—1916)

By Her Spiritual Daughters

Mother Klara's spiritual life demonstrated perfect harmony. Everything was simple, consistent, and in agreement with the theological definition of the purpose and spirituality of the Congregation, as defined in the Constitutions. Mother Klara's secret to greatness lies in that combination of simplicity and harmony. Furthermore, her personal spirituality became the basis for the Congregation's spirituality. Thus, the Sacred Heart Sister's spirit has always been measured according to the standard of Mother Klara.

Her motto was, "All for the Heart of Jesus." Every day, she gave all that she was, all that she possessed, and all that she accomplished to the Sacred Heart. This was evident throughout the memoirs of the Sisters who witnessed her life. Mother Klara constantly remained in God's presence because of her own steadfast faith and undivided love. This constancy of presence was nurtured by her complete obedience to God's will, by her total dependence on God's Providence, by her concern to spread His honor, and by gratitude for her religious vocation.

Mother Klara made reparation to the Most Sacred Heart through prayer and penance. She also accepted humiliations, spiritual sufferings, and chronic illness without complaint. She was motivated by the Sacred Heart to love her neighbor and always maintained an attitude of generous service to the needy.



Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



**From the Writings of our Founder
ST. JOSEPH SEBASTIAN PELCZAR
(1842-1924)**

**THE HOMILY DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF
THE FOUNDING OF THE CONGREGATION AND THE
DEDICATION OF THE CHAPEL**

APRIL 15, 1894

When the Lord Jesus entered the home of Zacchaeus, he pronounced these words: "Today, salvation has come to this house" (Lk 19:9). In similar fashion, I consecrated this simple chapel in the name of His Eminence, the Archbishop, and I say with joy: "Today, salvation has come to this house" since to it has come our Divine Savior with all his power and all his love. Although hidden beneath the appearance of the Sacrament, he has come not only as a Priest in order to offer himself on this altar, but also as the Heavenly Guest to remain in this Sacramental dwelling day and night. Oh, how great and how ineffable a grace!

How right it is to give thanks for it from the depths of our hearts and to cry out with the prophet: "Acclaim the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endures forever" (Ps 117:1). How right it is - as much as our spirit allows us - to humble ourselves at the sight of this immeasurable graciousness of our Lord, and, running ahead toward him in the spirit of the centurion in the Gospel, to strike our contrite heart, saying, "Lord, we are not worthy to receive you under our roof." Finally, it is truly right for us like Zacchaeus to welcome the Lord with longing, while climbing the tree of prayer and virtue.

And why did the Lord come here? He has come in order to show his unending love, and to bring his blessing, and at the same time, his salvation to this house. He has come as a generous king to his subjects, as a tender father to his children, as a good lord to his household this household gathered here for the first time in his name. Thus, he will be faithful to the promise he has given, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matthew 18:20). This household wants to dedicate itself to his Heart; therefore he opens his Heart to it, so as to pour out the effusions of his grace. (...)

Servants of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, your particular assignment must be to spread the devotion to the Divine Heart. More than two hundred years ago the

Lord Jesus revealed the mystery of this Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary and, through her, to the world. Today this devotion has been spread widely throughout the world, however it is not so ardent and universal as the Savior himself desires, nor as the Church, his Spouse, is working toward. Therefore, let it be your concern, Servants of the Heart of Jesus, to return limitless love for his immeasurable love; to make expiation to the Lord for the insults he receives from so many of the blind and ungrateful; moreover, spread so far as you are able, the honor and love of the Heart of Jesu

Behold, in the Heart of Jesus, for It is the school of virtues, the seat of graces, the source of consolations, and the furnace of spiritual light and fire. "If only I could proclaim to the whole world," says Blessed Margaret Mary, "what a treasure of graces the Lord Jesus included in his Heart in order to give them to the souls who nourish honor and devotion to this Heart. I do not know if there is any devotional practice that would be able in such a short time to raise the soul to the heights of perfection." For religious this help is the most effective to sanctification, and to those who fulfill the apostolate of souls, it is the best means to bring them to contrition of heart and to gain them for God. Quickly therefore, let us go to the Heart of Jesus.

To you, devoted souls, who in any way contributed to the foundation of this new work of God, may thanks be given from the Congregation and blessing from the Heart of Jesus. You have given your offering to this Heart; may this Heart reward you - and certainly he will - because the Lord promised through the intercession of his faithful servant, Blessed Margaret Mary, "Those who will work for the propagation of the honor and love of the Heart of Jesus will find in this Heart plentiful help and graces for their state of life." Please continue to support the Congregation of the Servants of the Heart of Jesus in its devoted works and do as much good as is in your ability.

Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

On Saturday, November 30, 2019, Sisters from all the convents of the American Province of the Congregation of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, gathered in Cresson, PA to celebrate the triple Jubilee:

- * 125th anniversary of the founding of their Congregation,
- * 60th anniversary of their presence on the American soil,
- * and the 50th anniversary of Sr. Klaudiana Józefowicz's arrival to the United States.

Blessed Klara Szczęсна, co-Foundress of the Congregation, learning of the spiritual and material poverty of Polish emigrants to America, wanted to send the Sacred Heart Sisters there. However, the Founder, St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar, had reservations. "The bird is too young," he said, "and its wings are too weak to cross the ocean."



Forty-three years after the death of Bl. Klara, on January 18, 1959, the first Sacred Heart Sisters arrived in the United States, from Paris to New York. They

were: Sr. Jolanta Chorzępa, Sr. Deodata Majta and Sr. Eliana Buchl. Shortly afterwards, on February 1, 1959, the first American convent was officially opened, in Erie, Pennsylvania. In 1961, two more Sisters, this time from Poland, joined the small community: Sr. Amabilis Dębicka and Sr. Maksencja Szczepanek.



Invited by Fr. Bronislaus Worsa, our Sisters came to the diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and thus our second convent was created: in Portage, PA, on August 12, 1962 (later this house served as a novitiate house).



The Sisters worked in the hospital as nurses, served as sacristans, taught the religious education, ran a kindergarten and a Marian Sodality, at the same time that they were learning the English language.



In 1969, the Sisters faced an important problem: they had been in America for 10 years, but had no American candidates. They decided to offer a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, asking Him to



reveal His will, i.e. whether they should return to Poland or stay in the United States. During the novena, the first girls came asking for the admission to the Congregation. For the Sisters, it was a very clear answer to their prayers: Jesus

wanted them to stay in America, and He wanted them to serve Him and proclaim the glory of His Heart here, in the United States.



Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



So they stayed, and gradually the number of Sisters and convents increased. With time, they expanded not only beyond the borders of the diocese of Erie and

Altoona - Johnstown, but also beyond the borders of



Pennsylvania, to Michigan, West Virginia, New Jersey and Delaware.



With the arrival of American candidates, the apostolate could be enriched, so the Sisters began to work in schools as teachers and headmasters, in parishes as secretaries and organizers, in Manors as nurses and administrators, and actively participate in the work of evangelization.



Over the years, the Sisters served as Directors of religious education and catechists, commuting to many parishes every week; they conducted summer camps for children and youth, and organized retreats



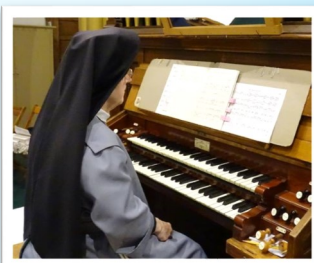
for various groups. In addition

to working in other places, served in Altoona, Bellwood,



Cresson, Davidsville, Ebensburg, Gallitzin, Johnstown, Lilly, Patton,

Portage, Footdale, Everson, Metuchen, Scranton, Media, Philipsburg, Swedesburg, and Wilmington.



Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

In 1971, our first estate was purchased - in Cresson, PA, and shortly thereafter in Munster, PA.



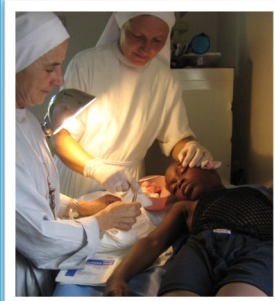
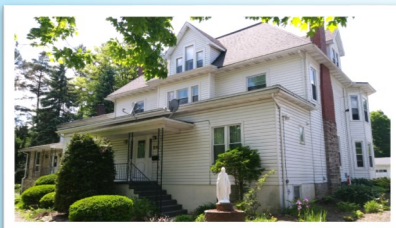
On November 27, 1986, Thanksgiving Day, the American Province was erected under the patronage of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The first headquarters of the province was at Munster, PA, later the provincial administration was transferred to Cresson, Pennsylvania.

Currently, 24 sisters belong to the American province, comprising 6 religious communities:

* St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe convent, our Provincial House, Cresson, PA

* John Paul II Manor, Cresson, PA

* St. Joseph Convent, Munster, PA



* St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar convent, Maggotty, Jamaica



* Bl. Klara Szczesna convent, Middletown, PA



* St. Margaret Mary Alacoque convent, Grand Rapids, MI.



The province's jubilee celebrations took place in St. Francis Xavier parish church in Cresson, PA. At 11:00 the solemn Mass began, celebrated by Rev. Leo Arnone, the pastor. Priest-friends of the Sisters, and a large group of benefactors and parishioners were present.



Rev. Leo Arnone was the Mass homilist, and the Sisters served as the readers, cantors, organists and violinists. The offertory gifts were brought by Sr. Klaudiana (our special Jubilarian) and Sr. Margaret Mary (one of the first American Sisters).

The Province of the Sacred Heart of Jesus has experienced both beautiful and difficult moments. Our history has been marked by the fervent prayer and hard work of the Sisters, tears of longing for Poland, pain related to learning not only a foreign language but also a foreign culture. There were years of enthusiasm, when new candidates joined our ranks, and years of grief, when Sisters, for various reasons, began to leave the sisterhood. Today, as we bow our heads with thanksgiving for the past, we raise our eyes to the Savior's Heart and ask, "What is next? What are your plans for us? Will you send us girls and young women who will happily raise your banner to spread the Kingdom of Your Love? "



We entrust the past and our future, through the hands of the Immaculate Mary, into the hands of Jesus.

Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Our Dear Friends and Benefactors



Let us join in
praising Jesus for His
selflessness
and deep love
for humanity.
May the beauty
of Easter
warm your heart
and bring peace
and joy
to your family.

With grateful prayers,
Sacred Heart Sisters

The Lord's Resurrection, strengthens our love for God and neighbor. The fire of love burning within the Heart of the Lord Jesus emanated from His opened side, and, coming forth with Him from the tomb, has shone throughout all the earth and through all ages, enkindling millions upon millions of human hearts. Inflamed with this fire of love, the Apostles are crying out through the lips of St. Paul: For to me "to live" means Christ (Phil 1:21), and they go out to all parts of the world proclaiming Christ the Lord, going forth to suffer and die for Him...The martyrs run with joy to the sword, the scaffold and the pyre. Priests, hermits and religious offer the Lord their suffering and mortification. The family is renewed by the power of Christ's teaching, for its bond has become a pure, sacrificial and unending love. Society is also renewed by it, for the Church brings fraternity and equality, and pours out upon the whole world the mercy of God.

St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar

THANK YOU!!

We are very grateful to **Assistant Coach Josh Hutchison**, who, under the direction of **Head Coach, Chris Villarrial**, brought six **Members of the St. Francis University Football Team** for their recent community service, so generously rendered towards our Sisters in attic and basement clean-up efforts.

Your hard work and spirit of sacrifice were truly inspiring and praiseworthy!

Our gratitude also goes to **Mr. Ken "Tiger" Trimbath**, for organizing this!

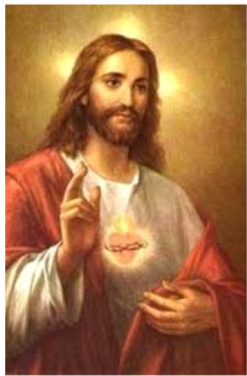


Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

*"The world needs God's madmen
who will go through the earth,
like Christ or Maximilian Kolbe,
who will have the courage to love
and will not turn back from any sacrifice."*

Bl. Klara Szczesna

Is God calling you?



Do you want to leave everything behind, and offer yourself totally to Him? Are you brave enough to love and suffer, to fall and get up, to smile and cry, and pray? Do you want to join us, the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and proclaim the Kingdom of Jesus' Love everywhere? If your answer is yes! come visit us, experience the spirit of silence, prayer and sisterly life in community.

Our Congregation is:

- Pontifical
- Franciscan
- Contemplative-Active
- Devoted to the Sacred Heart
- Founded by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Bl. Klara Szczesna in 1894 in Krakow, Poland



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Our Federal ID Number is: 20-812762

The Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded in Krakow, Poland in 1894 by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna are devoted to extending the Kingdom of Love of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus by prayer, community life and apostolic work in the areas of

teaching * catechesis * nursing * personal care
parish music ministry * retreats * youth ministry
and missionary work

Internationally, the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus serve in the following countries

- ♦ Poland
- ♦ Ukraine
- ♦ Italy
- ♦ France
- ♦ Bolivia
- ♦ Argentina
- ♦ Jamaica
- ♦ United States.

The United States Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is represented in the Dioceses of:

Altoona-Johnstown, Harrisburg, and Grand Rapids
and in Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies.

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