

Volume 15, Issue 2  
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A newsletter of the Sister  
Servants of the Most  
Sacred Heart of Jesus

# The Vine

*I am the Vine, you are the  
branches. Whoever remains  
in Me and I in him will bear  
much fruit, because without Me  
you can do nothing. Jn 15:5*

*Glory be to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus*



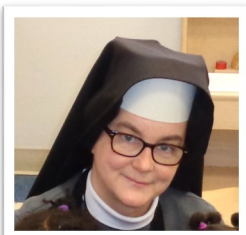
*Holy Mother of  
Czestochowa,  
Thou art full of grace,  
goodness and mercy.  
I consecrate to Thee  
all my thoughts,  
words and actions,  
my soul and body.  
I beseech Thy blessings,  
and especially prayers  
for my salvation. Amen.  
„Maryjo, Królowo Polski,  
jestem przy Tobie,  
pamiętam, czuwam!”  
Mary, Queen of Poland,  
I am near you,  
I remember you,  
I watch!*

# 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*



Vacation. Time for rest, travel, and change. Time to read a favorite book, see a good movie, enjoy a long walk. Time to meet friends. I wonder, how many reunions happen during summer? How many family

members have an opportunity to share their stories, recall the events from their childhood and laugh at the youthful pranks?

This year, the Jubilee Year of our Congregation, brought us a chance for a special reunion: 13 Sisters from our American Province, all who wanted and could go, went to Poland, to participate in the 125th Anniversary of the founding of our Religious Family, and also celebrating the 60th Anniversary of our presence in American soil.

There were the blessed days. We met Sacred Heart Sisters from Poland, Ukraine, Italy, France, Bolivia and Argentina. Here in the United States, we are only a tiny particle of a big family of consecrated women, who, with joy and love bring the message of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to a hungry world. We saw young and old Sisters, Sisters starting their religious life, Sisters maturing in it by prayer, work and suffering, and those at the end of their earthly journey. We visited convents in different parts of Poland, everywhere finding beautiful hospitality, warmth and love.

And we ourselves learn to be part of our Family.

*Sr. Klara Slonina, SSCJ*

Sister Klara Slonina, SSCJ

## From the Meditations of Bl. Klara Szczesna (1863-1916)

The Heavenly Master commanded the Apostles to love one another as he loves them, and his Heart greatly desires this fraternal love.

I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was sick and you cared for me; I was in prison and you came to visit me. Such are the glories of love for neighbor. Jesus is within our neighbor. Whatever you do to the least of my brothers you do unto me. At the moment of judgment you will not judge your neighbor but yourself. When you sadden and offend someone, you sadden and offend



Jesus. In persecuting Christians, St. Paul persecuted Jesus. In covering a naked man, St. Martin covered Jesus. How dare you refuse a moment of patience, a word of consolation, a service or a piece of bread to him who did not refuse you one drop of His blood?

In giving us his commandment of fraternal love, the Lord Jesus desires that our love take the form and likeness of his own, that is, that it be supernatural – a love for God and in God that does not arise from nature and the senses. Adore within the soul of your neighbor the image of God and the great ransom of God's Blood. Love your neighbor, and if, for the good of his soul you must make some unpleasant reproof, do not hesitate to do so. Even should your neighbor forget his salvation, you must love it. Our love should be universal since Jesus died for all. Even the Lord's worst enemies had a share in his charity. He prayed for his persecutors

If we love God in our neighbors, we recognize that there is no one so miserable that he cannot have access to our love.



# Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



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

**CHRISTIAN PERFECTION:**

**LIFE WITH AND IN CHRIST**

## **Part I**

1. Before attempting to plumb the depths of Christian Perfection, kneel before Our Lady, the “Morning Star” and with heartfelt fervor ask for her aid, and through her intercession also the help of the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Spirit as your Teacher and the Mother of God as your guide, you will quickly understand the Way of Perfection and with great ease start on your journey.

2. Man, by his nature, joins in himself two worlds. He is a member of the immense human family sharing its privileges and obligations, blessings and deficiencies. Above all, however, he is a creature of God from whom he has received the gift of life and to Whom he should reach out as his ultimate goal.

3. To serve God: This is aim of life, the most important goal, before which everything else appears as dross. Every action which does not reflect man’s ultimate destiny only saps his energy and leaves him unhappy. Mere knowledge without Faith does not answer the fundamental question of Life, and inflates pride. Instead of enlightening, it engulfs man in darker doubts. Every act of love that does not come from and incline to God will fail to satiate the infinite craving for the divine that God placed in the immortal soul.

4. If we could experience all worldly pleasures, pile up all earthly treasures, if we could own all the medals of all the heroes, enjoy the wisdom of all the intellectual giants, if we could boast of enjoying the contentment of a happy family, even of society, and do not serve God, with Jesus Christ, who is our way, truth and life, we have accomplished nothing, and we are not living Christian lives. Life without God is merely an illusion, a dream which turns into a nightmare.

5. The Christian Life is a reflection of Divine Life, because it has as its source Jesus Christ, its inspiration, teacher, and model; the Holy Spirit as its developer and director; and the Catholic

Church as its unerring guide—all this for one purpose: union with God, that is, life through God, with God, and in God.

6. Whoever wishes to live a supernatural life here on earth and achieve eternal salvation in heaven must make use of the redeeming graces of the Passion of Jesus Christ. Not only must he accept the truths of Faith, the promises of Hope, but also the necessity of being united to God by Charity. In this way divine love takes root in the heart and God condescends to abide there.

7. The Christian, elevated to the supernatural state, aided by the Holy Spirit, together with human effort, must shape and develop the interior and exterior life in accordance with the will of God, as revealed by Christ and proposed by the Catholic Church. Thus, the soul resembles Christ in thought, word, deed, sentiment, and even in suffering. This is the foundation of the Christian life.

8. The essence of the Christian life is love. It unites the soul to God who is “Perfect Love”. The more intense the love, the more developed is the Christian life.

9. The interior life, the Christian life, is developed day after day; it is the growth of the life of Jesus in the soul and the growth of the soul in Jesus. This requires a life of recollection, prayer, self-denial and mortification. In short, it means a life of sacrifice and total dedication to God. This produces a way of life on the supernatural level, whereby, through the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus freely acts in the soul. And so the soul is ever on the alert to avoid sin, follow graces, reject evil inclinations, control self indulgence and bear cheerfully one’s daily cross; in short, gradually to die to one’s self, ever mindful of Jesus Christ.

## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

On Jubilee Pilgrimage to Poland—Walking in the Footsteps of our Saintly Founders: St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna



**The Epic Journey begins!**



Communities of Sacred Heart Sisters, from all over the world, gathered to share the family celebration of 125 Years of Glory to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.



United in prayer, our Sisters remembered you and your intentions.



(Above) In Gdansk, where the Solidarity Movement was born.

Remembering Bl. Jerzy Popieluszko and the fallen shipyard workers.

(Left) Sisters of the American Province made a musical presentation before the Sisters and guests during Jubilee celebrations at the Franciscan Monastery in Krakow.



## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



**By Sr. Angela Marie Igou**

It is difficult to pick out a favourite place or experience in Poland. This was my very first trip abroad so everything was exciting. I enjoyed the ornate beauty of the churches coupled with the simple, unassuming faith of the people. This humble faith was demonstrated in the tiny simple chapel-like churches. The beauty of the churches spoke of the majesty and glory of God, which could draw you into adoration quite powerfully; yet it was the small, humble village church of Lubowidz that touched me most deeply and awakened a deeper love and devotion to our Blessed Mother Klara. It struck me that the almighty and omnipotent God is aware or rather has provided for all the little details of each of our souls. He had placed Bl Mother Klara in this tiny village in whose church she was baptized and the first seeds of grace grew. This perhaps smallest of places that we visited had the greatest impact on me throughout the pilgrimage. Lubowidz was like a mustard seed in my pilgrimage experience.



**By Sr. Mary Barbara Hoyt**

During our pilgrimage through Poland this year, to renew our spirit, many spectacular places, events and people captured our attention.

One special moment for me was to venerate the 1<sup>st</sup> class relic – a hair – of one of our Patrons, St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, and to ask for his prayers at the starvation bunker at Auschwitz, Poland, where he died, taking the place of a fellow prisoner, on August 14, 1941.

Many thanks to all of you, who made this pilgrimage possible for us.

**By Sr. Mary Joseph Calore**

Returning to Poland after some years, and this time as a pilgrim, I was so grateful to God to allow me to participate in the celebrations of our Congregation and to be present with our Sisters. It was truly edifying to walk in the footsteps of the saints so beloved to us: Our Father Founder and Co-Foundress, St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna, as well as other patrons, St. John Paul II and St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe. Many years ago, I was confirmed on the canonization day of St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe. As I visited the starvation bunker where he died in Auschwitz, I knelt in that place, made holy by his heroic love. I pray that my love may resemble that of these great saints!



**By Sr. Augustine Marie Molnar**

While our entire pilgrimage was amazing, I feel particularly blessed to have met and spent time with so many of our Sisters, who gave us such a warm welcome at each convent we visited. It was beautiful experiencing the same family atmosphere throughout Poland that attracted me to our Sisters here, and I am truly grateful to have had this opportunity!



## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



Walking on Pilgrimage in the footsteps of our beloved Founders and Polish patron saints, eleven Sisters of the American Province joined Sacred Heart Sisters from all over the world in celebrating the Jubilee of 125 years since the founding of our Congregation by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna.

The American Sisters were able to see beloved fellow Sisters in Poland and to share with them what the Lord is doing in our midst in the United States.

To the left, Sr. Mary Daniel Jackson enjoys the beauty of God's creation in the Tatra Mountains of Poland.

To the right, Sisters gathered in the episcopal seat of Przemyśl, formerly held by our Father Founder, Bishop and Saint Joseph Sebastian Pelczar.



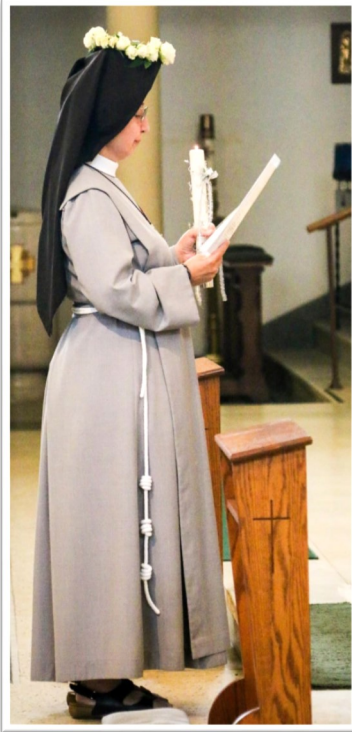
Where it all began...our Sisters journeyed to the birthplaces of our Founders, St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna. On the left, our Sisters gather in the church of baptism of Blessed Klara in Lubowidz. The parish boasts four Blessed among its children.

(Below) Visiting the Wieliczka Salt Mines.



The Polish hills were alive with the sound of music and laughter as our Sisters enjoyed the wondrous beauty of the Tatra Mountains during our recent pilgrimage to Poland.

## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



(Above) In June, Sr. Gabriela Strachowska observed her 25th Jubilee of Profession in Poland and on August 17, 2019 at Sacred Heart Parish, Grand Rapids, Michigan where she renewed her vows before the provincial Superior, Mother Klara Slonina and the pastor celebrant, Fr. Robert Sirico.



(Above) Sacred Heart Parish in Grand Rapids, received a relic of St. John Paul II, a piece of the bloodied shirt worn by the pontiff on the day of his assassination attempt. The pastor, Fr. Robert Sirico, was delighted at this relic obtained through the intervention of our Sisters and Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz.



(Right) Our Sisters observed our annual retreat in Munster Township, Pennsylvania under the expert direction of retreatmaster, Fr. Thomas Acklin, OSB of St. Vincent Archabbey and Seminary, Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

# 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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The SisServants 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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