



Salvatorian News

SISTERS OF THE DIVINE SAVIOR SUMMER 2008

Educator Receives Award, Celebrates Silver Jubilee

2008: This has been a year filled with silver linings for Sister Barbara Reynolds, SDS. She will be celebrating her 25th Jubilee of religious profession in June, and she was recently named the 2008 Educator of the Year by students at Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The annual award is given by students to express appreciation for exemplary teaching, commitment to excellence and deep concern for students.

Sister Barbara started her teaching career in 1972, and has been on the faculty at Cardinal Stritch University since 1979. Currently she is Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science. However, she did not always want to be a teacher. "When I was in 8th grade, I knew that I wanted to study math in college. I found the subject exciting and challenging. But I always said, 'Just because I'm a girl who likes math doesn't mean that I have to be a teacher!' As an undergraduate, I got a job at the academic computing center on campus, and I just assumed that I would continue working with computers in one way or another. After college, I went to Ghana, West Africa, as a Peace Corps Volunteer. I was asked to teach mathematics, and discovered that I loved teaching," Sister Barbara said.

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Sister Barbara Reynolds, SDS, center, a Silver Jubilarian, was named 2008 Educator of the Year at Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

focus

Dear Friends,

This is that time of year! Years ago in the summer, we Sisters remember "returning to the Motherhouse" in Milwaukee for an annual time of prayer (retreat) and professional growth (retooling). Now, the tables are turned! In opposite directions, we travel out from Milwaukee during summer months to tell the good news to parishioners across the Midwest about the ministries of our Sisters who serve among the poor in some of the poorest parts of our world. At the invitation of personnel from dioceses committed to supporting missionaries, we relish the privilege of telling our story.

Everywhere we meet people eager to hear and to learn what our native Sisters of the Divine Savior are doing in the foreign missions, places such as Venezuela, Tanzania, India, Pakistan, Congo, Brazil and Mozambique. The list goes on and on. We are proud to serve in 29 countries of our world. Every summer there is a new trip, a new twist, but the core message of what we proclaim is the same. Always we tell the story about the Sisters and how, in their ingenuity and commitment, they continue to love and serve the poor. They go to a new setting, figure out with the people what needs to be done and then, with faith and determination, join with the people to pray and to build a better life.

Won't you please join us in spreading the good news? Our Sisters on five continents depend on us to support them in their caring for the sick, the illiterate, the forgotten and those without hope. Knowing that our concern extends throughout the world with every prayer and every gift, we can do our part to make a difference.

Sister Marion Etzel, SDS

Sister Marion Etzel, SDS
Provincial Leader



“I Believe in the Life”

For thirty-one years, Sister Mary Jo Stoffel, SDS, entered elementary classrooms with great energy and enthusiasm. She remembers the light in the first and second grade students’ eyes when they “got the lesson.”

Their sheer joy of life, great parental cooperation and wonderful colleagues all make for wonderful memories. So much so, that each class list she ever had is on Sister Mary Jo’s nightstand and she remembers the students every night in prayer.

She recalled the split class sessions in Maryland when 55 students would be in the morning group; the teachers would take a 15 minute break and then 53 students would come for an extended afternoon session that concluded at 4:30 p.m.

“We (teachers) were all young and supported one another. We shared ideas and challenges. I loved teaching and really missed it, but wanted to leave while I had the patience necessary to do the job well and still loving the profession. Two of my students still write every Christmas,” she said.

Sister Mary Jo taught at Mother of Good Counsel, Milwaukee; St. Therese in Schofield; St. Pius X, Wauwatosa;

Holy Ghost, Dickeyville, St. Mark’s, Rothschild; and Notre Dame, Chippewa Falls, all in Wisconsin. She also taught at grade schools in Lakeville and Sauk Rapids, both in Minnesota, and Landover Hills, Maryland.

Sister Mary Jo was asked to serve for several months as the secretary to the 1983 General Chapter in Rome, Italy. Later, she ministered in the Salvatorian Sisters’ finance office, the Divine Savior Holy Angels High School finance office, both in Milwaukee; and for the School Sisters of Notre Dame’s Provincial finance office, Elm Grove, Wisconsin. Sister Mary Jo also ministered to her family for a year and one-half. Today, she is a member of the Salvatorian Sisters Provincial Archives Department. At each ministry, she brought competence, a team attitude, and sense of humor.

Her vocation to religious life was fostered by her parents’ strong faith values and the Salvatorian Sisters who taught her in her home parish, St. Paul’s, in Bloomer, Wisconsin. “I wanted to help others and love God in a special way, and the Salvatorians did that with such joy,” she explained. “My Dad wanted me to wait to enter but I did feel called. I remember thinking of being a Sister when I was very young. Our novitiate class was close and we literally grew up together. One of our novitiate teachers encouraged us to remain faithful to prayer throughout our lives.”

Today, Sister Mary Jo also typifies



Sister Mary Jo Stoffel, SDS, is a Golden Jubilarian and serves in the Provincial Archives.

the joy of a happy woman religious and would encourage religious life as a vocational choice. “For fifty years, my vocation has been life-giving for me and life-giving for those I serve. Grounded in prayer and community support, it is a loving and challenging way of life and service to others. I believe in the life and want to do what God asks and make a difference.”

And if there is a day you need prayers, perhaps you will feel those coming from this Jubilarian’s prayer list which encompasses family, friends, students and colleagues.



Sisters Mary Lee Grady, SDS, and Karlyn Cauley, SDS, center, congratulate Award recipient Freesia McKee, far left, and her mother, Pat Walsh, far right.

20th Salvatorian Service Award

This May marks the twentieth year that the Salvatorian Service Award has been given to graduating seniors at Divine Savior Holy Angels High School (DSHA), Milwaukee. The exemplary all girls’ school is sponsored by the Sisters of the Divine Savior. The award recognizes students who have contributed on an extraordinary level to their families, local and global communities. The students are affirmed for consistently sharing their time and talent with the poor and vulnerable in compassionate and caring ways.

SDS Provincial Leader, Sister Marion Etzel, in her remarks to the seniors and their parents, said, “With pride, we Sisters of the Divine Savior, salute and celebrate you, the 20th anniversary Salvatorian Service Award recipients of 2008. You are young women nurtured by the faith life of your parents and supported by those who teach and touch your lives at DSHA. Congratulations! You now move from this school into a world that needs your continuing gift of love and service.”

Healing Ministry Leads to Many Firsts

For nearly forty-five years, Sister Francine Kosednar, SDS, has been part of a healing ministry in Wausau, Wisconsin. Throughout the decades, she had a number of firsts and has been part of profound changes in our health care system.

In 1963, Sister was the first director of the Occupational Therapy (OT) Department at St. Mary's Hospital. Later, St. Mary's and Memorial Hospitals merged in order to meet medical, technical and financial challenges. The system became Wausau Hospital. She remembers being drawn to OT because of the connection of art and this profession. There were times she designed her own hand splints and special devices for patients. She was also instrumental in founding the NeuroDevelopmental Clinic for pediatric patients.

Sister Francine holds wonderful memories of the courage of many of her patients. Some were facing challenges ranging from accidents and workplace injuries to cancer, spinal injuries, arthritis, and disabilities after birth.

"In this ministry, I forged deep ties with the patients. We were part of a team that resolved to improve the person's quality of life. Many were heroes to me because of their courage and determination to return to their families and to work. I was continuously amazed at the persons in oncology and palliative care because they were so



Sister Francine Kosednar, SDS, left, and Kitty Switlick, BSN, strive for patient satisfaction at Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Wausau, Wisconsin.

bright and cheerful. They would express deep gratitude and felt blessed because they had another day," she said.

"After we started a stroke rehabilitation program, we saw firsthand what pool therapy could do for the patients. We saw adults and children able to be weight-bearing in the water. It was fascinating to be part of all these new therapies and we were grateful to be part of these advances," Sister Francine pointed out.

Her enthusiasm continues today as she participates in patient advocacy. She is part of the medical team and staff at

Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Wausau. Sister Francine serves in the Communications and Marketing Department as a customer service analyst.

"I visit the new patients and ask them how they are doing and how we can improve our service to them and their families. They are appreciative that someone asks their opinion. If they have a concern, we follow through before they leave the hospital. In most instances, the patient and family leave with only positive feelings. Then when they return home, we follow up with a telephone survey to be sure we have met their needs and expectations," she explained.

Sister Francine added that she works on a team that includes outstanding and compassionate colleagues. "Our nurses and staff take the concerns seriously and try to respond. Most of the time, the patients tell us they have received excellent care."

Kitty Switlick, BSN, is an Aspirus Patient Advocate and works with Sister Francine. "Sister Francine works with the patients and helps us resolve any issues while the person is still here. She is the smiling, helpful person who visits and listens and then helps our staff provide whatever is needed. At Aspirus, we have placed patient care and satisfaction as a priority and Sister Francine helps us to accomplish this in a personal and professional way."

Educator Receives Award *continued*

When she returned to the United States, she began graduate studies in mathematics at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri. While she was a student there, she met several Salvatorian Sisters, and realized that she felt called to be a Sister of the Divine Savior.

Today she is studying, writing and teaching. "We are always running to keep pace with rapid advances in computer technology. I am particularly known for my work in cooperative learning, and for integrating the use of technology into my courses. Computer

technology makes it possible to visualize abstract mathematical ideas, which makes these concepts easier to understand," she pointed out. Working in groups to do hands-on investigations gives students skills they need for the 21st century. Working together to solve challenging problems, they are developing computer skills as they learn to work effectively as part of a team, all skills essential in today's workplace.

Several of her students spoke about Sister Barbara's teaching skills and her qualities as a teacher: "She is very

prepared, organized and easy to follow. She will stay after class and walk us through the lesson as many times as we need. She is patient and encourages us to think. And it really helps to have the person who wrote the book as your teacher."



For more information on all of the 2008 Jubilarians and their ministries, visit us online at www.sistersofthedivinesavior.org

Service is Key to Every Ministry

“This way of life helps me fulfill my desire to be of service to others. It has given me a freedom to minister in many different places and to meet and work with so many interesting people.”

Golden Jubilarian Sister Deanna Schroeder, SDS, taught for thirty years in the primary grades in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Mississippi and then in social service outreach to the marginalized in McKee, Kentucky. For the last eleven years, she has been the coordinator of the retired Salvatorian Sisters and in a ministry she describes as a “Jill of all trades.”

“Today at the Salvatorian Sisters Residence (SSR) we have a ministry of prayer and service to one another, family and friends. There is a really good spirit here. We are a family. Our Sisters receive prayer requests and every day offer their sufferings for others,” Sister Deanna explained. SSR is located on the St. Anne’s Salvatorian Campus, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is home to twenty-four Salvatorian Sisters. There are also six Sisters living at St. Anne’s. Sister Deanna coordinates activities, medical appointments, and family celebrations for the community. Many of the Sisters are volunteers at the adjacent St. Anne’s Home.

Sister Deanna Schroeder, SDS, right, visits with Sister Segolena Bohner, SDS, the oldest Salvatorian Sister in the world.



One SSR colleague, Jan Garthee, said, “Sister Deanna is a great person to work with. She is kind and gentle to the Sisters and gives so much of herself to so many. She is a very good friend to us.”

Sister Deanna cherishes the moments of Christian love among the many persons who live and work at SSR. Her ministry is based on the fact that the Sisters are family and that accepting, caring and forgiving one another is what family members do for one another. In fact, Sister Deanna is a member of two large families through birth and vows.

The Schroeder Family encompasses twelve siblings, and Sister Deanna is the second oldest. The family grew up in Dickeyville, Wisconsin. Her mother, Pauline, 95, and her sons and daughters all still live in their home state.

“I loved teaching and had wonderful years with students, staff and families in traditional elementary school settings. In 1982, I joined several other Salvatorian Sisters in Clarksdale,

Mississippi. We lived and worked with Sisters from four other communities. I learned how to teach and live with less. After seven years, I moved on to do outreach ministry in McKee, Kentucky. I was inspired to reach out to the less fortunate by the late Father Luke McArthur, the St. Pius X parish pastor during the 70s when I taught at the parish school. His words of advocacy for the poor touched my heart,” Sister Deanna pointed out.

One of the Sisters who lives at SSR said, “I don’t know what we would do without Sister Deanna. She is patient and fair and will do whatever needs to be done. She makes time for each of us,” said Sister Mildred Lotzer, SDS.

Sister Deanna is a member of Mother of Good Counsel Parish, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and loves taking long walks and hiking in the woods, gardening and baking. “I have been so blessed with the gifts necessary to do the ministries to which I have been called,” the Golden Jubilarian said.



Sister Deanna Schroeder, front left and her SSR Team work together in ministry to SDS retired Sisters.

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SAVE THE DATES

June 23rd Together in Mission, 4-7 p.m.
September 18th Woman of Faith, 7 p.m.

Details available at
www.sistersofthedivinesavior.org