

Veritas



Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia Congregation Newsletter

Winter 2010

Thanks-giving begins at Home

At St. Cecilia, **Home** is much on our minds these days, as the time nears for the celebration of our 150th Jubilee.

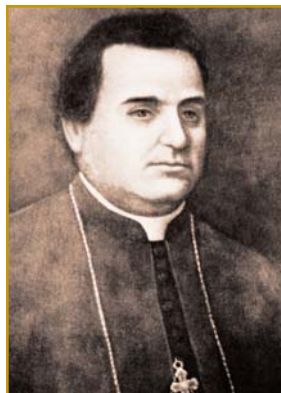


The Most Reverend
Richard Pius Miles, O.P.
Nashville's Founding
Bishop

Home, after all, is where life is given and nurtured and first steps are taken; it is where identity is shaped, and faith is fostered. **Home** is where one first *receives* and then learns to *give* love. It is “where the **heart** is.” For all these reasons, Thanks-giving begins at **Home**.

If this experience is true for us as human persons, it is also uniquely the case in the life of a religious community. For the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, **Home** – for 150 years – has been the Diocese of Nashville. In what was surely a deliberate touch of Divine Providence, Nashville’s second bishop, James A. Whelan (himself a Dominican) was God’s instrument in calling four Dominican sisters from Somerset, Ohio to Nashville, Tennessee in 1860. They were to establish an academy for the education of young women. The beginnings of the community were not without labor pains: civil war and its aftermath; bankruptcy and debt; poverty and disease... all of these were sufferings the sisters shared with the small Southern diocese and its people. Through it all, however, Something Else was at work. As they struggled and carried the Cross together, the sisters, their Bishops and the people of Nashville came to be more and more deeply united in the heart of Christ, likely in ways they did not realize at the time. It was, in fact, Nashville's third bishop, Patrick A. Feehan, and prominent laymen of those early days who made it possible for St. Cecilia's to remain in existence when this seemed humanly impossible.

Nashville’s founding bishop in 1837, Richard Pius Miles, like Bishop Whelan, had also been a Dominican.



The Most Reverend
James A. Whelan, O.P.
Nashville's Second
Bishop

Dominican missionary friars had played an active and tireless role in the early history of the diocese itself. No doubt, that Dominican influence in the Diocese’ early history played a large part in making the sisters feel so at home as their own history in Nashville began. Beneath the

“Dominican connection,” however, was the deeper influence of the Holy Spirit, shaping both diocese and community within the heart of the Church. As the community experienced God’s Providence at work through Nashville’s successive Bishops and through the goodness of its people, the identity of St. Cecilia as a religious congregation within the Church was nurtured, strengthened and broadened beyond the diocese where it began.

Our Thanksgiving for 150 years of life and growth truly begins “at Home” in the Diocese of Nashville, where God continues his shepherding presence to St. Cecilia Congregation through Bishop David Choby, Nashville’s 11th Bishop. Born, baptized, raised and educated in Nashville, Bishop Choby has the singular blessing of having been ordained both priest and bishop in and for his home diocese. The Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia have long found in him a faithful friend and guide ~ a support in our service of the Church in and beyond the Diocese we call **Home**.

Jubilees provide occasion for giving thanks. For the Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Cecilia of Nashville, Tennessee, its birth and “growing up” at **Home** in the Diocese of Nashville is cause for Thanksgiving indeed.



The Most Reverend David Choby, Bishop of Nashville, is greeted by Sister Mary Charles, O.P. at the Motherhouse.

From the Desk of Mother Ann Marie Karlovic, O.P., Prioress General

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the individual persons and events covered within the pages of this issue of *Veritas*, there somehow comes to my mind a familiar figure in Sacred Scripture. Abraham, who lived thousands of years before us, continues to be remembered best as a man of faith and a friend of God. It seems that the Lord entered personally into Abraham's life on a regular basis, calling him, directing him, challenging him. Abraham's characteristic response to God at these times was simple and direct: "Here I am!" or, in another delightful translation: "Ready!" (cf. Genesis 22). During these early days of our 150th anniversary observance at St. Cecilia, it strikes me that our history is filled with personalities much like Abraham. There are bishops and priests, sisters and laity, students, parents, friends and benefactors – all of whom, in their individual ways, were men and women of faith and "friends of God." Because they were "Ready" to go where He directed and to give of themselves however and wherever He asked, the Lord could use them to form and fashion the St. Cecilia community for the sake of his Kingdom. We are mindful of the fact that He continues to do so today, as the articles in this issue of *Veritas* will attest.

There was a time, in the post-Civil War era, when it seemed St. Cecilia would no longer exist. Debt, sickness and increasing daily hardships all seemed to point the way to extinction. It was the prayers, the kindness and the active support of Nashville's early bishops, clergy and many prominent laymen that enabled the Academy to remain open when bankruptcy had threatened closure. They were Friends of God all, Friends whom God chose to share with the Dominican Sisters in the St. Cecilia community. Their response was one of *readiness* to allow the Lord to use them for the good of the Church in Nashville. The witness and support of such persons throughout the ensuing years, even to the present, has been a stable presence in our history.

Of course, there is the unforgettable example of the strong women who have gone before us in the community,

sisters whose faith and fidelity built up strength within the very being of the congregation. Such remains the reason we remember our beloved deceased in prayer. It is also the reason we celebrate Golden and Silver Jubilees of profession each year. Such, too, remains the example we seek to offer one another in community, and the witness we are called to offer in our teaching apostolate.

Then there is the undeserved blessing of new life through which God gives growth to St. Cecilia. As He calls young women today to enter, to receive the Dominican habit, and to give themselves in religious profession, we experience yet again that Abraham-like response, "Ready!" "Here I am." The example of these young sisters calls all of us to renew our own self-giving. The blessing of new vocations also allows the community itself to discern God's call in accepting invitations to expand its teaching apostolate to additional schools.

As we continue our Jubilee Celebration, which we formally opened on Christmas Eve, 2009, we are increasingly conscious of the fact that this is above all a celebration of Thanksgiving. In particular we thank you, our families, friends and benefactors, who are a valued witness to us of faith and fidelity. Thank you above all for the example of your ready response to the Lord, and allowing Him to use your gifts for the sake of his Kingdom.

God bless you,

Mother Ann Marie, O.P.



(left) St. Joseph Pastor, Msgr. James Callahan, The Most Reverend Robert Hermann, Auxillary Bishop of St. Louis, St. Joseph School Principal, Sister Maria Christi, O.P. and Mother Ann Marie, O.P. at the blessing of the school's new renovations and additions. See page 7 for more information.

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Archbishop Raymond L. Burke to celebrate 150th Jubilee Mass



The Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke, Prefect of the Vatican's Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, will be the principal celebrant of the Mass marking the 150th Anniversary of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. Archbishop Burke, who was serving as Archbishop of St.

Louis, Missouri at the time of his appointment to the Vatican position in June of 2008, has been a wonderful friend to the Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation for several years. Prior to his appointment to the Vatican Office in 2008, the Archbishop often visited the Motherhouse to celebrate with the community the Masses of First or Final Profession. He is a faithful supporter of religious life. It is an honor for the community to be able to welcome him once again for its Jubilee celebration.

Archbishop Burke, originally a priest of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin, completed his studies in preparation for the priesthood at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome (1971-1975) and was ordained to the priesthood on June 29, 1975 by Pope Paul VI at St. Peter's Basilica. After serving in priestly assignments within the Diocese of La Crosse for five years, he returned to Rome from 1980 – 1984 to complete studies in Canon Law at the Gregorian University. On returning to La Crosse, he was appointed Vice Chancellor of the Diocese.

In 1994 Pope John Paul II appointed him Bishop of La Crosse. Bishop Burke shepherded the Diocese of La Crosse for eight years, until his appointment as Archbishop of St. Louis, Missouri in 2003. It was while he was in St. Louis that Archbishop Burke invited the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia to serve at St. Joseph School in Cottleville, Missouri, where the community presently has four sisters. Throughout his priestly and episcopal ministry, Archbishop Burke has provided those entrusted to his care leadership that is humble and sensitive, yet firm and steadfast, watchful for the truths of the faith and the good of souls.

It was in June of 2008 that Archbishop Burke was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI to become Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura. In this position, he heads the highest Vatican tribunal, which ensures that Church law is justly administered. Shortly before he left the United States to assume his new responsibilities, Archbishop Burke visited St.

Cecilia for the 2008 final profession Mass. Nashville Bishop David Choby, for many years a personal friend of Archbishop Burke, invited the Archbishop to be the principal celebrant for the profession Mass that year. The sisters were privileged to have both Archbishop Burke and Bishop Choby join the community for lunch afterwards in the motherhouse refectory. It was at this time that the Archbishop indicated his willingness to return to Nashville, if possible, for the community's 150th anniversary celebration.

News came late this past October that Archbishop Burke has recently been asked to undertake an additional role of service for the Church. He has been appointed a member of the Vatican Congregation for Bishops. The cardinals and bishops in this congregation make recommendations to the Holy Father for appointment of future bishops all over the world.



Archbishop Raymond L. Burke (top, left) with Nashville Bishop David Choby (top, right) Mother Ann Marie (fifth row, center) and Sister Mary Angela, Novice Mistress (fourth row, left) with the Dominican Sisters making their perpetual profession of vows during the summer of 2008.

"My greatest joy," Archbishop Burke has said, "is to teach the faith and celebrate the Sacraments for the flock which God has entrusted to my pastoral care. Having been called by Christ to the priesthood, I am ever more humbled by the reality of the priestly life and ministry. At the same time I am filled with confidence, because the ministry belongs to Christ Whom I, through no merit of mine, have the privilege to serve."

In his active witness of love for the Church and for his priesthood, Archbishop Raymond Burke offers a strong and beautiful gift to God's people all over the world. It is with great joy that the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia anticipate his presence at our Jubilee celebration this coming June.

New mission: Diocese of Joliet, Illinois ~ St. Jude School



(seated, center) Sister Mary Elizabeth, Principal, (back row, l. to r.) Sister Maria Clemens, Father Michael Lane, St. Jude's Pastor; Sister Mary Clare

This past August, Bishop Peter Sartain's homily at the motherhouse for the Feast of Saint Dominic drew on a familiar image from the Gospel: that of the sower. Reflecting on Christ's image of the "good seed" which dies and bears much fruit, Bishop Sartain urged the sisters to consider how Dominic's priestly imitation of Christ's self-sacrifice inspires and sustains their own consecration. For sisters about to begin new assignments, return to schools, welcome twenty-three postulants, and open a new mission, these were truly fruitful reflections. The vocation to religious life is a gift, as is "the grace of preaching." In embracing their assignments,

the sisters learn afresh that this grace is not given for themselves alone. It is given so that "much fruit" may yet be borne to the Father.

It is in this spirit that the sisters can give thanks to God for the opportunity to serve in a new mission: St. Jude's School in Joliet, Illinois. The community had been invited two years ago to serve in the Diocese of Joliet by the very Bishop Sartain who preached the St. Dominic's day homily. Indeed, the communi-

ty has long held ties to Bishop Sartain and to his diocese. The Bishop received both his elementary and high school education from the sisters, at Saint Paul's School and Bishop Byrne High School in Memphis, Tennessee. As for the "Joliet connection," five of our sisters are graduates of Providence Catholic High School in the Diocese of Joliet. One of these five, Sister Mary Elizabeth, now serves at St. Jude's as principal. With Sister Mary Elizabeth are Sister Mary Clare and Sister Maria Clemens. All have enjoyed a kind and enthusiastic welcome from pastor Father Michael Lane, and the students and families at St. Jude's Parish.



(seated, center) Sister Mary Elizabeth, Principal, reads with St. Jude students

150th Jubilee Mass

Principal celebrant:

The Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke

Prefect of the Vatican's Supreme Tribunal
of the Apostolic Signatura

Friday, June 25, 2010, 3:00PM

St. Cecilia Motherhouse grounds

Reception immediately following

No cost to attend

150th Jubilee Dinner

Keynote Speaker:

The Most Reverend Anthony Fisher, O.P.

Auxiliary Bishop of Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia

Friday, June 25, 2010

Reception 6:30PM ~ Dinner 8:00PM

Sheraton Music City *

Cost to attend: \$115 per person; \$200 per couple;
\$1,000 table of 10

* Limited seating; invitations mailed spring 2010;
reservations may be made beginning March 1, 2010



Save
the
Date!

Family Day

(for Dominican Sisters' family members)

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Saturday, June 26, 2010, 10:00AM

St. Cecilia Motherhouse grounds

Picnic immediately following Mass

Saturday, June 26, 2010, 12:00PM

St. Cecilia Motherhouse grounds and

The Dominican Campus

Nashville Symphony

Saturday, June 26, 2010, 7:00PM

St. Cecilia Motherhouse grounds

Accommodations: for information on area hotels' special rates for these events, please visit our website: http://nashvilledominican.org/News/Latest_News
Reservations for the Jubilee dinner and **RSVPs** for other events will be taken beginning March 1, 2010.



(Seated) Gayle and Tom Benson visit with the sisters at the Motherhouse to discuss the Retreat House progress.



Dominican Sisters' Retreat House architectural rendering

(above) An architectural rendering of the retreat house being built on the Congregation's property in Dickson, TN. Tom and Gayle Benson are the benefactors for the retreat house. The first phase is under construction and is scheduled for completion by spring of 2011.



Friends around the country



(1) New Haven, CT: Supreme Knight Carl A. and Dorian Anderson, Sr. Henry Suso, Sr. Catherine Marie (2) New Canaan, CT: Kate, Rachel and Tom Ray (3) Bronxville, NY: Sr. Henry Suso and Rev. Msgr. Guy Vinci (4) King of Prussia, PA: Catherine and Jacob Ferry with Anna and Nathaniel (5) Whitestone, NY: Martin, Mai, Mary, Patrick, and Hai Le (6) Glen Mills, PA: Friends at the Maris Grove Retirement Community (7) Oakland Gardens, NY: (front, center) Laura Nunez, (back, l. to r.) Patrick, Mary, Kevin, Joey held by Marie, and Theresa Flaherty (8) Phoenixville, PA: Kim and David Savage with Gregory, Connor, and Johnny (9) Glen Mills, PA: Joe and Evelyn Costa (10) New York, NY: Sister Henry Suso and David Budinger (11) Franklin, TN: Tim Downey and Mother Ann Marie (12) Thompsons Station, TN: Sally and Fred Martin (seated) and Denise Downey (13) Wethersfield, CT: Tony Santoro and Sr. Henry Suso (14) King of Prussia, PA: Nancy and Dominic Toscani

Eucharistic Congress

“Sacrifice of Enduring Love”



“Down in adoration falling, / Lo! The sacred Host we hail” – the familiar words of Saint Thomas Aquinas’s Eucharistic hymn rang throughout the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. the weekend of September 11-12. United there in adoration knelt priests, religious and laity. A host of faithful, three thousand strong, had gathered for the solemn Benediction which closed the two-day Eucharistic Congress entitled “Sacrifice of Enduring Love,” sponsored by the CMSWR (Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious). The Congress presented priests, religious and lay faithful with a privileged opportunity to reflect on the Love which is at the heart of each vocation. Those assembled were nourished by times of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, by beautiful celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy, and addresses given by Marc Cardinal Oullet, Sean Cardinal O’Malley, and Archbishop Edwin O’Brien, among others. Each of the major addresses focused on a particular vocation as understood in light of the Eucharist. In her address on religious life, Mother Ann Marie, O.P., noted how beautifully each vocation supports the others. “We all experi-

ence, with gratitude,” she said, “the support we receive through those who live with fidelity the vocation to which they are called... We go to the Father together with Christ: *with* Him and *because of* Him. Each vocation, each person, is important to the life of the Church.” In celebrating the Eucharist as the very

source of the life of the Church, each vocation finds its joy and its strength. This shared joy and strength became freshly tangible for the sisters who visited with young people, families, priests and other religious, and with them praised the Eucharistic Lord. “Down in adoration falling, / Lo! The sacred Host we hail!”



(above) Sister Rosemary, O.P., conducts the choir for the Eucharistic Congress. The Choir was composed of sisters from various CMSWR communities.

(left) The Eucharist was exposed for adoration in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel of the National Shrine throughout the Eucharistic Congress. The Knights of Columbus kept an Honor Guard during Exposition.

*Photos by:
Robert Mullen and
Douglas Turecek Photography*

Sister Mary David Harlow, O.P., 1918-2009

One of the themes in Dominican Spirituality is the complement of words and silence. When a young woman enters St. Cecilia Congregation, she directly encounters words and silence, as she navigates places of silence and embraces the discipline of times of silence. Gradually the young sister discovers that silence is not the absence of words but the presence of the Word, and that the rhythmic chanting of the psalms is an echo of the Word, while the pauses allow the words to permeate one's soul.

Sister Mary David Harlow, O.P., who died on September 15, 2009, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, had a deep reverence for words and silence. She understood the presence of the Word in both. Sister Mary David's own religious name was truly a prophetic one for this young woman who came from Chattanooga to Nashville in 1937: Mary, whom she knew as her spiritual mother, and David, whom tradition associates with the psalms.

Sister Mary David's love of words and silence was expressed in her love of literature and the dramatic arts. In her later years of teaching at St. Cecilia Academy, Sister Mary David taught Freshman Composition, a class in which she instilled an understanding of grammar. She instructed the girls how to recite poetry and to delight in the spoken word, especially in passages from Robert Browning. She taught them how to read literature (whether an Edgar Allan Poe short story, Dickens' *Great Expectation* or Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*). Lastly, she guided them as they mastered the skill of writing the five paragraph essay, the culminating feat of the freshman year. Though she was a demanding teacher, Sister Mary David spent uncountable hours after school assisting and encouraging students. She, a master teacher, knew the importance of looking into a student's eyes and listening to her words, because Sister Mary David understood the presence of the Word within each student.

Her students knew and appreciated her devotion and love. The St. Cecilia Class of 1988 dedicated their yearbook to Sister Mary David. One of the photographs features Sister Mary David walking through the St. Cecilia Courtyard on their graduation day, with the wind gently blowing her white habit, black mantle and academic regalia, with the caption "I am a part of all that I have met" from Tennyson's "Ulysses," one of her favorite poems.



While Sister Mary David's special teaching gifts remain in the minds and hearts of each student she taught, one of her great legacies is the Christmas Pageant which she wrote for St. Gertrude's School, Madeira, Ohio. As Father John Rock noted in his homily at Sister Mary David's funeral, "Her sense of the dramatic was infused with the understanding that life is dramatic because salvation history is dramatic." As St. Cecilia Congregation approaches its 150th Jubilee celebration, another of Sister Mary David's projects is remembered, namely *They Shall Shine as Stars*, the pageant she wrote for the Congregation's 100th anniversary.

Sister Mary David is remembered for her gracious words, her love of silence and her gentle manner. May we now sing with her these words from Psalm 45, "My heart is stirred by a noble theme, as I sing my ode to the king. My tongue is the pen of a nimble scribe. You are the most handsome of men; fair speech has graced your lips, for God has blessed you forever."

May she rest in peace.

St. Joseph School's newly renovated building blessed

On October 28, St. Joseph School in the Archdiocese of St. Louis celebrated the blessing of a newly renovated building with Bishop Robert Hermann, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese. Mother Ann Marie and Sr. Mary Louis attended the Mass and blessing, which included the dedication and opening of St. Joseph Chapel. The chapel will be a place of Eucharistic Adoration for the students of St. Joseph School. It will provide them with an opportunity to pray the rosary daily before the Blessed Sacrament and be a place for individual and communal prayer. The renovation also included a new school library, art room, music room and new faculty room. The school is grateful for the support of the parish and a number of benefactors who made the renovation possible.



(above) Students from St. Joseph School enter the school's new St. Joseph chapel for Eucharistic Adoration. The school is located in St. Charles, MO. The sisters have served as administrators and teachers at the school since 2006.



2009 Postulant Class

First Vows



(above) Sister Mary Margaret professes her vows.



(left) The newly professed sisters prepare to present the offertory gifts to Bishop Choby.



2009 Novice Class



Final Vows

(above) As a sign of their total offering, the sisters make the prostration during the Litany of the Saints.

(right) Prior to the Mass of Perpetual Profession, the sisters gather with Bishop Choby and Mother Ann Marie, O.P.





Silver Jubilee

(above) Sister Mary Jude was joined by former students who traveled to celebrate her 25 years of Fidelity to Religious Life this past summer.

Golden Jubilees



(left) Sister Clare Therese, Sister Regina, Mother Ann Marie, Sister Mary Louis and Nashville Bishop David Choby. The three sisters celebrated their Golden Jubilees.

(bottom left) Father John Rock, Motherhouse Chaplain, Mother Ann Marie, Sister Regina, Sister Terese and Sister Mary Evelyn (standing)

(bottom right) Sister Mary Louis with her mother Margaret Colley Baltz



“Show me your ways O Lord, teach me your paths”



Sister Scholastica

“Lord, show me your will.” This had been my prayer, off and on, for over a year. What had once been a quiet but persistent inclination toward the Nashville Dominicans, had in the last year grown into a strong conviction, and one that I knew I had better act on, post haste. Yet there seemed to be so many obstacles keeping me from pursuing a vocation; nothing unusu-

al, but the standard worries about job, family, and finances weighed heavily. These concerns prevented me from seeing the path God set out for me. At adoration one day my prayer changed from “Lord, show me your will” (which, in truth, I already knew) to “Lord, show me how to get to Nashville.” Immediate results followed.

One by one, as those difficulties were quickly resolved, I began to see the events of my life, even the seemingly inconsequential ones, as part of God’s providential care for me. I thought back to my earliest days in school and saw His designs there. I was taught by the Nashville Dominicans in grade school and the formation I received from them left a deep impression on me. In addition to the wonderful education I received, I learned from the Sisters about the joy and peace that comes from a life consecrated to God. Their witness of eternal realities, their love for God that permeated each action, and their profound and abiding care for their students, had stayed with me long after my schooling had ended. I thought also of my family and the experiences of my childhood as the youngest of eight

children, a loving environment which had left me open to the possibility of a vocation.

Later, I attended the University of Dallas where I majored in Theology and I felt truly blessed to receive such a solid foundation in the faith. Though I rarely thought of a vocation, even there I could see God’s providence at work. One of my favorite courses was Christian Marriage taught by Dr. Mark Lowery, in which we studied the beauty and sanctity of this sacrament. The professor wisely pointed out the ways in which earthly marriage foreshadows the union with God to which each of us is called. Furthermore, God calls some to live this heavenly reality here on earth. This is the vocation to Religious Life. We were assigned to read Father Thomas Dubay’s book *And You are Christ’s*, a work which struck me deeply. I read and re-read that book several times.

After college I started teaching Religion at Knoxville Catholic High School. It was during this time that I began attending daily Mass more frequently and kept an hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. These two things, more than anything else, really helped me to discern God’s will. Still, I needed Him to show me how to **do** His will, not just know it. Once again, God patiently directed my steps. Near the end of my first year teaching, the principal announced that two religious Sisters would be coming to teach at our school. They were, of course, two Nashville Dominicans. I hadn’t been able to find my way to Nashville, so the Lord brought Nashville to me. I spent the next couple of years working with the sisters, finding out more about their life and continuing to discern God’s will. Then one day at adoration my prayer changed and the path suddenly became clear. The obstacles that had seemed insurmountable were taken care of and I had only one task that I had to complete, one thing that no one else could do for me. I had to choose to make a free, total, loving response to God’s invitation. And I did just that!



St. Cecilia Motherhouse

For single Catholic women ages 17-30

VOCATIONS RETREAT

(by individual reservation only)

May 19-23, 2010

Discernment and the Consecration
to the Dominican Life

JESU CARITAS RETREAT

March 12-14, 2010

New Evangelization and the
Renewal of Catholic Culture ~ Father Kevin Augustyn

For more information:

If you are interested in attending a retreat at St. Cecilia Motherhouse, please call Sister Mary Emily at (615) 256-0147 or e-mail us at vocation@op-tn.org.



Photos on pages 12 & 13 are from the annual Appreciation Mass and Brunch held on August 30, 2009. 1) Dr. Bill Godfrey reading at the Mass 2) Mother Ann Marie, Judy and Ted Lyon, Gallatin, TN and Gayle and Tom Benson, New Orleans, LA 3) Julie and George Stadler, Nashville, TN 4) Recessional of the Mass 5) Michael Sheridan, Nashville, TN, Mary Brewer, Nashville, TN and Sister Mariana 6) Fred and Lyn James, Nashville, TN and Father John Rock, Motherhouse Chaplain 7) (front, l. to r.) Kate Martinez, Sister Mary, Sister Michaela, Sister Olivia (back, l. to r.) Sister Jessica, Dr. Waldo and Victoria Martinez, Lubbock, TX 8) Carrying the gifts during the Mass are Therese and Joseph Fakult, Willowick, OH 9) James and Marsha Sabella, Jackson, TN, Sister Mary Evelyn, Beth and Dr. Harry Baddour, Jackson, TN 10) (foreground) Linda and Kean Spellman, Arrington, TN, greeted by Sister Mary Catherine (background) Mr. Henry J. Nekvapil, Arrington, TN



1) Sister Elizabeth Anne, Maggie and Barry Kulback, Clarksville, TN and Sister Jean Marie 2) Ted Lyon, a member of the Planned Giving Advisory Committee, served as emcee for the Appreciation Brunch program 3) Father Lukas Misko, O.P., Dominican Province, Poland, and Ania, Adam and Dr. Jacek Hawiger, Nashville, TN 4) The Dominican Sisters' Schola provided beautiful music for the Mass



Third annual Appreciation Mass and Brunch held

The third annual Mass and Appreciation Brunch was held at the Motherhouse on Sunday, August 30, 2009. On this occasion, members of the St. Catherine of Siena, St. Cecilia, St. Dominic, Marian and Veritas Societies and the Donum Ecclesiae Guild were honored. The societies recognize donors who have made an annual gift of \$2,500 or more to the Congregation, and the guild honors individuals who have made a planned gift.

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated by Father John Rock, S.J., chaplain for the Dominican Sisters and concelebrated by Father Lukas Misko, O.P., Dominican Province, Poland.

The Motherhouse Recreation Hall was the setting for the Appreciation Brunch, where guests were treated to a meal served by the sisters. The program, emceed by Ted Lyon of Gallatin, TN, included a key note address by Mother Ann Marie and a condensed version of the documentary "Beloved". Sisters from the novitiate provided musical entertainment.

Mother Ann Marie also recognized new members of the Donum Ecclesiae Guild including two anonymous members, Ms. Peggy Grannan, Mr. & Mrs. Barry L. Kulback, Mr. & Mrs. Timothy R. Martin and Mr. & Mrs. S. Paul Passafiume. The Guild, established in 2007, honors those who have included the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in their estate planning or who have made another type of planned gift.



(1) Mother Ann Marie with new inducted Donum Ecclesiae Guild members (l. to r.) Jim Brower, Nashville, TN, Peggy Grannan, Lawrenceville, GA, and Maggie and Barry Kulback, Clarksville, TN.

(2) Mother Ann Marie thanks Jim Brower for becoming a member of the Donum Ecclesiae Guild as Ted Lyon looks on, during the annual Mass and Appreciation Brunch hosted at the Motherhouse.

Beyond the founding years...

Second in a Series



“If, as the saints assure us, God marks all the works He designs with the Cross, then may this Community rest assured that its origin is legitimate.” ~ Mother Frances Walsh in A Short Sketch of the Foundation and Growth of Saint Cecilia Congregation, 73.

The founding of St. Cecilia Congregation and St. Cecilia Academy in 1860 had required hard work and dedication on

the part of the sisters; yet it was nothing compared to the trials that the Community faced in the years immediately following its founding. In the succeeding years, the sisters found themselves facing the same problems that beset every citizen of that era in the South. Civil War and its aftermath, outbreaks of cholera and yellow fever and, above all, serious financial problems: all these found the sisters one in suffering with the Southern people they had come to love, and much involved in the lives of those most in need.

While the War Between the States divided the country and wrought havoc among her people, it was the aftermath of the War that impacted St. Cecilia the most. When the Union Fleet traveled up the Cumberland River in February of 1862, a mile away from St. Cecilia and in plain view of the sisters and the students of St. Cecilia Academy, no one could have imagined the devastation that would befall Nashville and her citizens, not to mention the rest of the country. Not only did the beautiful landscape disappear and become bald earth, but the Southern people said goodbye to a way of life that had long supported them economically, socially, and even spiritually. The sisters, though from various parts of the country, suffered along with their students and neighbors. They tried to prepare the young women in their care for the sorrows brought about by the War and the crosses that they were sure to face in the future.

In 1866 when Mother Ann Hanlon was appointed superior of St. Cecilia, she inherited a debt of close to \$60,000 which the Academy owed to numerous creditors. The amount included the original purchase price of the property, buildings, furnishings, and the construction of the 1862 Academy wing. With many of their benefactors bankrupt and families unable to finance their daughters' education, the sisters found it impossible to pay off their debts. Eventually, creditors sued the community, and the Academy and grounds were auctioned on the Nashville Courthouse

steps on July 27, 1867. The Rt. Rev. Bishop James Feehan and some generous benefactors in Nashville bought the property in the sisters' behalf. Only weeks later, on September 2, 1867 (the very day scheduled for the opening of the school term) another creditor sued the sisters, and by order of chancery court the sale of all personal property owned by the Academy was auctioned. Again, the good Bishop interceded and purchased everything for the sisters. While the crisis appeared temporarily over, the sisters now assumed the responsibility to repay the Bishop and their benefactors, at a time when enrollment was down and there were few opportunities to raise the needed money. Despite these incredible circumstances, St. Cecilia Academy continued to operate, with the sisters making material sacrifices so that the young women in their care would not suffer privations.



The financial situation at St. Cecilia continued to be desperate during these post-War years. The sisters, particularly Mother Ann, were under intense pressure to satisfy the demands of their creditors. With little hope of paying off such an enormous debt, it looked as if Bishop Feehan would have to close St. Cecilia Academy, allowing the sisters to leave their debts to be paid by others over time. This was a grand blow to the Sisters. After so many years of struggle and sacrifice, to be asked to withdraw, leaving their debts unpaid and their work undone was, as Mother Frances later expressed it, “humiliating in the extreme.” When the summer of 1868 brought the request of Reverend John A. Bokel, O.P., pastor of St. Dominic's in Washington, D.C., for sisters to staff his school, five sisters from St. Cecilia volunteered, seeing this as God's will.

With their departure, Mother Ann Hanlon, Sister Frances Walsh, and two novices were the only sisters left to close St. Cecilia. It would have been easy for the small community to disband, especially since the Bishop had relieved them of their financial obligations. But, as community historian Sister Rose Marie Masserano, O.P. observes in The Nashville Dominicans: A History of the Congregation of St. Cecilia: “At this time perhaps the most important event after the foundation itself occurred. Mother Ann and Sister Frances, ‘almost dazed by the departure of the sisters and the thought of dissolving the community,’ chose to remain” (11). Mother Frances recalls this historic event in her own early history of the Congregation:

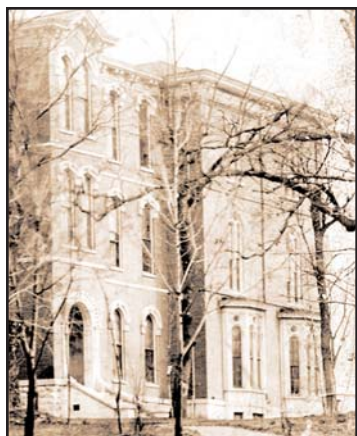


In preparation for and celebration of the Dominican Sisters' of St. Cecilia 150th Anniversary Jubilee, a series of articles highlighting eras of their history is being included in this *Veritas* and issues throughout 2010.

Celebrating 150 Years, continued...

“Mother Ann and her little band shrunk from the thought of dissolving the Community. The foundation had been made by the Provincial of the Order according to its rules and constitutions. The idea of a Community of Dominicans breaking up and leaving their debts to be paid by other people was humiliating to the last degree. Even at the last moment the good God was humbly entreated to avert such misfortunes. If there was a safety plank left for the Saint Cecilia convent it was in prayer. In this alone the remnant of the community placed its hope (74).” The Sisters who had remained “appealed in prayer to St. Catherine and St. Dominic for the ‘preservation’ of St. Cecilia. In the end, they remained—conducting the school, liquidating the debt, preserving the community” (Masserano 11).

The Sisters had remained faithful, and their example of fidelity would be modeled for years to come. The little Community had stood the test. United and brave of heart, they had passed through the vicissitudes and sufferings which often fall to those who give themselves to God’s service. “Their Calvary lasted long but they repined not, for they were thus more closely united to their Crucified Redeemer” (Mother Frances Walsh 122).



In subsequent years, the community began to experience a springtime, as more students entered St. Cecilia Academy and a Novitiate was established with new members answering God’s call to religious life. With the increased numbers, the Sisters of St. Cecilia were able to send members to other schools in East Nashville and Chattanooga, and to undertake full responsibility for St. Mary’s Orphanage. Ever ready to serve the needs of those who were suffering, the Sisters ministered to the sick and dying in Nashville who were stricken with cholera during the epidemic of 1873. They also assisted in nursing the Yellow Fever victims in Memphis later that same year, with Sister Mary Joseph McKernan among the victims.

Having weathered the storms of War, financial ruin, and disease, the Sisters held tightly to the Cross of Christ, faithful to prayer and to the living of their religious life. Their witness helped prepare their students to view the struggles of life with faith, courage and hearts filled with hope. Certainly other crosses would come to the Sisters and to their beloved students; but, history had shown that God was guiding them with His providential love.

150th Jubilee Calendar of Events

2010

- December* 2009
- 6 Nashville Youth String Orchestra Concert
- January*
- 31 St. Cecilia Academy Choir and Blair Children’s Choir
- February*
- 12 Historical Lecture: “Nashville in the 19th Century” by Dr. Carol S. Bucy
- March*
- 27 Symphonic Band Performance by St. Joseph School (from St. Charles, Missouri)
- April*
- 25 Franklin High School Wind Ensemble
- June*
- 11-17 150 Hours Adoration
 - 18 Metro Center Business Reception
 - 25 Jubilee Mass and Reception
Jubilee Dinner
 - 26 Family Mass & Picnic
Nashville Symphony (evening performance)
- July* Historical Lecture
- October*
- 10 Sacred Music Organ Recital
 - 11 Sacred Music Lecture
- November* Historical Lecture
- December*
- 7 Music City Community Chorus Concert
 - 23 Closing of Jubilee Year

Please note, some events and dates may be subject to change.



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St. Cecilia Novitiate

2009-2010



It is the duty of the consecrated life to show that the Incarnate Son of God is the eschatological goal towards which all things tend, the splendour before which every other light pales, and the infinite beauty which alone can fully satisfy the human heart.

~Vita Consecrata #16