

For All, We Praise & Thank & Love

At 5:30 a.m. on August 18, a large group of Sisters gathered around the three vehicles parked behind Sacred Heart Convent. In the darkness of early morning, luggage was quickly packed into the vehicles, then the group assembled in chapel to receive Holy Communion and ask the Lord's protection on the journey. Good-byes were exchanged between the travelers and some of the Sisters at Sacred Heart Convent, and then the eighteen Sisters began the long drive to Mendham, NJ.



Sr. Caroline Schafer and Sr. Mary Clement Eiden catch a glimpse of the sun during a rest break on the journey to Mendham.

She encouraged as many Sisters as possible to take advantage of the opportunity to meet old friends and to become better acquainted with our Eastern Province. Twenty-three Sisters accepted this invitation.

A Long Drive & A Warm Welcome

The Western Province had received an invitation from our Sisters in the Eastern Province to celebrate the 160th anniversary of our Congregation with them in Mendham, NJ, from August 18-22. In her Christmas letter of 2008, Sr. Janice Boyer, Provincial, had extended this invitation to all the Sisters of the Western Province.



Sr. Rosemary Schwer waits as Sr. Anastasia Sanford and Sr. Joan Clare Cooney assist Sr. Margaritis Kullowitch in stepping down from the van during a rest stop.

Eighteen Sisters from the Western Province arrived in Mendham just before midnight (another five had arrived by plane earlier in the day), wrote Sr. Mary Dominic. Luminaries dotted the driveway and all the lights on every floor of the front of the Motherhouse were burning, brightening the dark night and extending a warm welcome. After a flurry of greetings and hugs, all gathered in the chapel to sing "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" in the three languages of the Congregation. The weary travelers, as well as the hosts, soon retired.

Busy Days

The next few days were filled with a variety of activities planned by different groups of Sisters. On August 19 an outdoor prayer service, "Journey of Light" was the day's first activity. At 1:00 the Sisters gathered in the Motherhouse chapel for Mass. After dinner there were games and tours of the Motherhouse and Villa Pauline. After Evening Prayer was



The front of the Motherhouse in Mendham, NJ, is aglow as the Sisters await the arrival of the caravan from Wilmette.

*Text by Sr. Alice Mary Ortmann, SCC & Sr. Mary Dominic Kopitar, SCC
Photographs Courtesy of the SCCs of the Eastern & Western Provinces*

celebrated in chapel, a cheerful sing-a-long was enjoyed in the community room.

On August 20 the Sisters from the Western Province were invited to several local convents for lunch. In the afternoon the group gathered once again in chapel to begin a theological reflection on reconfiguration of the community before dividing up into smaller groups for deeper sharing in various rooms throughout the house. In the evening the Sisters were again in chapel to witness a beautiful Rite of Initiation for two postulants. As happens every year, the silence was such that one could hear a pin drop as the Sisters waited to hear the new Novices' religious names.



A joyful "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" was sung in the three languages of the Congregation after the Sisters' safe arrival at the motherhouse in Mendham just before midnight.

A Day of Celebration

A warm day dawned brightly for the commemoration of the 160th anniversary of the Congregation on August 21, and the celebration of the jubilarians of 2009 from both provinces. At the beginning of the 11:00 a.m. Liturgy, all were treated to a most impressive and stirring sight: A procession of flags from all of the countries where our Sisters minister. In his opening remarks, Bishop Arthur Serratelli of the Paterson Diocese, surprised everyone by speaking in German. In his homily, the bishop spoke glowingly of Mother Pauline's lavish love for God and her dedication to God's will. The jubilarians then renewed their vows. A soaring rendition of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" was a most fitting recessional to the awe-inspiring Liturgy.

After Mass a dinner in St. Joseph Hall took place. Following the meal, Sr. Adalberta Mette, Superior General, shared a PowerPoint reflection on the experience of hope throughout the 160 years of SCC history. The novices and newly-professed Sisters put on an inspirational play about Mother Pauline and the foundation of the North and South American Provinces. Between the scenes, one of the new novices performed an interpretive dance. At the play's conclusion barely a dry eye could be found.



Portraying the first 4 SCCs are Sr. Marie José de la Rosa as Mother Pauline; Sr. Maria Erin Saldivia (from Chile) as Sr. Elizabeth; Sr. Maria Angelina as the dancer; Sr. Maria Clare Nagle as Sr. Maria Mother Gonzaga; Sr. Karen Marie Benfer as Mother Mathilde.

Waving Good-Bye

Soon it was time to gather in the 2nd floor corridor to process into chapel for the commissioning Service. The Sisters soon dispersed. Many of the Western Province SCCs were among the Sisters gathered at the back door waving good-bye to those Sisters leaving for their convent homes and the beginning of a new apostolic year.

Early Saturday morning, August 22, the Sisters of the motherhouse gathered to say "good-bye" to the travelers. By 6:00 a.m. the day's journey had begun. The caravan arrived at Holy Family Convent in Danville, PA, at 8:30 a.m. in time to attend Mass with the Sisters there. Breakfast and a quick tour of the convent followed. Again the travelers said their "good-byes" and thanked the Sisters for their hospitality. The journey resumed; all vehicles arrived safely in Wilmette around 10:00 p.m.

In her letter, Sr. Mary Dominic summed up the feelings of each SCC who attended this celebration. *These were unforgettable, momentous days during which the power of love was very visible in each Sister and felt strongly in every event. "For all, we praise and thank and love!"*✠



Sr. Janice Boyer, Provincial - Western Province, Sr. Adalberta Mette, Superior General, and Sr. Joan Daniel Healy, Provincial - Eastern Province.



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"Journey of Light" was the first activity of August 19. During the outdoor prayer service, the Sisters shared moments of their faith life with each other along the walk from one prayer site to the next. Sr. Mary Ann Warwick and Sr. Mary Veronica Kulsar led the procession at one point.



Extending an invitation to share conversation and refreshments: Sr. Mary Anne Feerick, Sr. Marie Colette Martelli, Sr. Joanne Korn, Sr. Maria Goretti Nguyen, Sr. Mary Joseph Schultz, Sr. Martha Kavanagh.



Sr. Annellyth Pandi and Sr. Maria Martin Nguyen found a quiet corner in which to converse and play a game of "Go Fish."

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Sharing laughter and (more) refreshments: Sr. Janice Boyer, Sr. Mary Joseph Spring, Sr. Adalberto Mette and Sr. DeSales Tonerio.



Sr. Joan Clare Cooney is all smiles as she leaves the chapel with an old friend, Sr. Helen James Peck.



A friendly afternoon game of Bingo finds Sr. Carol Bredenkamp, Sr. Elizabeth Kovacs, Sr. Marie Pauline Demek and Sr. Monica Cormier concentrating on finding the right numbers.



Sr. M. Joanne Ladwig, Sr. Mary Lawrence Cassidy and Sr. Pauline Schafer finish their refreshments following the sing-a-long.



Sr. Mary Ann Eultgen and Sr. Marcella Rigglin wear matching smiles and name tags.



The jubilarians of 2009: Seated: Sr. Genevieve McGuire, Sr. Mary Anne Feerick, Sr. Mary Schmidt, Sr. Anna Marie Ziegler, Sr. M. Mercedes Johnson, Sr. Marianne Schwer. Row 2: Sr. Pietra Cash, Sr. Catherine Labouré Hutt, Sr. Mary Mark Smith, Sr. Mary Damien Buskirk, Sr. Pauline Schafer, Sr. Mary Stanislaus Surgoff, Sr. Helen Joseph Waldman, Sr. Adalberta Mette, Sr. Joan Daniel Healy. Row 3: Sr. Mary Edward Spohrer, Sr. Maryilyn McCusker, Sr. Rosemary Schwer, Sr. Alice Mary Ortmann, Sr. Francetta Scherer. Sr. Mary Ann Eultgen, Sr. Susanne Kullowitch, Sr. Susan Keatley, Sr. Janice Boyer.