

The Widow's Mite

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Fall/Winter 2011

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Making Promises

During the Saturday mass while on retreat three Widows of Prayer made promises – Judy Keefe of Chicago made second promises; Bev Poquette of Menominee, Michigan made final promises and Gina Vincent of Menominee, Michigan repeated promises.



Left to right: Mary Reardon wp, General Servant Leader, Bev Poquette wp, Gina Vincent wp, Servant Leader for Menominee, MI, Fr. Keith Clark OFM Cap., Judy Keefe wp, and Cecilia Viloria Skrzypek wp, Servant Leader from Lindenhurst, IL/Chicago area.



Loretta Johannes wp made second promises at the 5:30 p.m. mass at St. Pius X Church on October 6th.

Left to right: Mary Reardon wp, General Servant Leader; Loretta Johannes wp; Fr. Tom Farrell, General Spiritual Advisor of the Widows of Prayer.



On October 26 Joan Lee made second promises during a mass at Clare Meadows Chapel in Franklin, WI. Left to right: Mary Ellen Morrow wp, Servant Leader of the Wind Lake Community of Widows of Prayer; Fr. Mark Brandl, Spiritual Advisor of the Franklin/Milwaukee and Wind Lake Communities, and Joan Lee wp of the Wind Lake Community.



Marjorie Meyer wp made final promises following mass at Heritage of Huntington, where she lives. The above picture was taken on May 26th. Fr. Ron Rieder OFM Cap., was the celebrant of the mass.

Back row left to right – Vera Johnson wp, Sharon Solloway, Catherine Fitzgerald wp, Cecelia Baker wp, Jean Ann Buzzard, Virginia Salge, Middle row – Fr. Ron Rieder OFM Cap. – Addie Ness wp. Front row – Mae Leedy wp, Marjorie Mayer wp and Bertha Rosen wp.

St. Anne's Prayer Group Huntington, IN

Since I am not able to be at the retreat in Appleton, I would like to give just a short resume about our Widows of Prayer Group at St. Anne's. We are in retirement living for seniors but are completely on our own as far as taking care of ourselves.

We now have eight members in our Widows of Prayer Group of which seven have received their insignia as of October 1, 2011.

We meet each morning after 8:30 mass to say morning prayer and Wednesday and Saturday at 2 p.m. for evening prayer.

On Thursday – the third week of the month, our Spiritual Advisor, Sr. Loretta, SND, gives us a "pep" talk.

On the 4th Thursday of the month, Fr. Overmyer offers Holy Mass for our deceased husbands and gives a talk afterwards. Once yearly we have been having a day long retreat at which we invite the Fort Wayne and Huntington groups to join us.

Our oldest member will be 104 in October when she will also receive her insignia. She is very faithful and sharp. All do what they can.

Thank you,
Mary Voors wp

Religious Quotes to Remember

Suffering is a kiss from Christ on the Cross.

The only time you fail in prayer is when you don't show up.

"I used to tell God about my problems. Now I tell my problems about God."

— St. Teresa

The measure of love is love without measure.

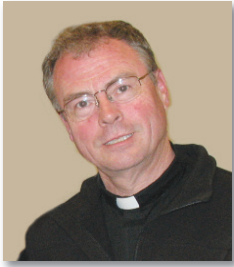
— St. Francis de Sales

Our Mission

To serve Christ through His Church by praying for priests and others in Church leadership, to be devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and to promote Adoration of Christ in the Eucharist.



A memorial service at Monte Alverno was held in the chapel at the closing of the annual Chapter Meeting remembering the 23 deceased Widows of Prayer, each with a blue tipped carnation.



The "Sign of the Cross" is itself "a prayer"

To have the word "Prayer" incorporated into the title of one's association is truly an honor. The Widows of Prayer make it a life commitment to pray for priests along with Church leaders, their families, and the concerns of the world. As we look at the power of prayer it is important to note that **every prayer begins with the Sign of the Cross.**

Over the past few months Catholics throughout our country are learning how to implement the new translation of the mass. In studying Edward Sri's book: "A Biblical Walk through the Mass," I came across his reflection on the "Sign of the Cross". He emphasized the **Sign of the Cross** as **not simply a way to begin prayer but as a powerful prayer in itself** – meant to pour out tremendous blessings in our lives. He states: **"In making the Sign of the Cross, we invoke God's presence and invite Him to Bless us and guard us from all harm."**

St. John Chrysostom urged God's people to turn constantly to the power of Christ found in the Sign of the Cross as he stressed **"Never leave your house without making the sign of the cross! It will be your staff – your weapon – an impregnable fortress. Neither man nor demon will dare attack you seeing you covered with such powerful armor."**

He continues: Let **"The Sign"** teach you that you are a soldier,

ready to combat against the demons and ready to fight for the crown of justice.

He then poses as well as answers the question: Are you ignorant of what the cross has done?

*It has vanquished death
It has destroyed sin
It has emptied hell
It has dethroned satan
It has restored the universe*

He mentioned that while we often perform the sign of the cross merely out of routine and sometimes even

take it for granted – the early Christians did it eagerly, especially during those crucial times in their lives. **It is critical for everyone to know the power of the Sign of the Cross and for this reason it is important that everyone makes this Sign with great love, and devotion and intent.**

As "Widows of Prayer" **let everyone see you deliberately and reverently sign yourselves** as you call one another to prayer. This visible prayer is the prelude to all prayer. It strongly emphasizes the importance of an upcoming prayer on behalf of those for whom you promised to pray making a powerful statement on the seriousness of how you not only address their needs but also on how you seriously take your ministry.

Mr. Sri emphasizes two principle aspects of the sign of the Cross, *the actual signing* and *the spoken words*. The actual Signing or marking the forehead is seen as: Divine protection from evil. He compared it to the saints in heaven having a seal upon their foreheads as stated in the book of Revelation, and he compared it to the blood on the door posts that protected the Israelites from death as conveyed in the book of Exodus: **"In signing ourselves with the cross – we are conveying the desire to set ourselves apart from corrupt ways of living while invoking the protection of God in our lives."**

The spoken words of the trinity are seen as a calling forth of God's name as it denotes Worship. The spoken words are associated with prayer and sacrifice. In Genesis, Abraham calls upon God's name when he is erecting altars and consecrating land promised. In Kings, Elijah called upon God's name to reveal Him to the people of Israel.

Sri tells us that calling upon one's name is done not merely to identify a person, but to come to know the person more fully. To call upon God by name is not only to identify God, but to know God and invoke his presence and Power. The Israelites called upon the name of the Lord not only to petition Him but to thank Him and praise Him. Know that

when you make the Sign of the cross you are not only remembering your baptism when you become a member of the Christian community, but you are also asking for assistance to remain faithful to Him "in whose name" you were baptized.

The sign of the cross is an invitation to *join our blessed mother & the beloved disciple John – at the foot of the cross*. The cross depicts suffering. The Widows of Prayer like Mary and John are called to embrace the cross, and to stand in the shadow of its pain and suffering. How often have you stood at the foot of the cross and called upon God's mercy during those times of sorrow and – how many times have you fled from it because of its weight and expectations.

Oftentimes it is out of fear that people run from that which will be the very means by which they will achieve greatness.

*Don't run from the cross
Understand its greatness
Know its power*

Always remember that every time you bless yourself with this great Symbol of Faith you are witnessing to everyone around you, a belief in an all powerful and loving and merciful God. For this reason **Bless yourself with "The Sign of the Cross"** with the same love and devotion Jesus had shown you on the day he found himself nailed to it.

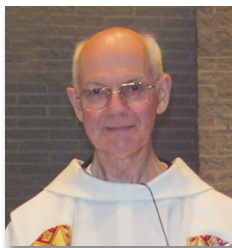
The Sign of the Cross not only introduces Prayer to the world,

The Sign of the Cross introduces Christ to the world.

Let the Sign of the Cross also introduce "You" to the world.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Fr. Tom Farrell
General Spiritual Advisor,
Widows of Prayer*



Talents

All of us are given talents by God. Some have spectacular talents but most of us have talents we can't make a living from and, like the third servant of Matthew 25:14-30, we may feel it's not worth doing anything with them. So we forget about finding a use for them.

Whatever talents the Lord has given you, find a way to use them. God will expect something from the talents He has given you. Don't bury your talents but make use of them in some way. You may be surprised to find how much you can do with the talents the Lord has given you. For one thing, look back into your life to some of the dreams

you had concerning your future. All of us could have lived several lives if we had had enough time or energy to do so. If you have the time now, try to put some of your talents to work for you. Some people have a baking ministry. They choose a special recipe and bake something for someone who is having a hard time or old or too busy at some time in their life. You would be surprised at how much cheer you could give them by bringing them a home baked treat. Some can knit. Everyone can use some knit item. I can draw a bit so I make my own Christmas cards. I work on that during the year and, by Christmas, I have a couple hundred cards ready. Guaranteed, you won't get a duplicate of the card I send you!

Now, we come to something a bit different. When you were young, did

you sometimes dream of becoming a religious? Well, if you're a widow, you can still do that with the Widows of Prayer. Imagine, the welcome you will get from God if you have the courage to embrace a vocation in your older years!

There are ministries available for people of every age. Activate your dreams. Give something to God in return for what He has given you. What a welcome you will get if Heaven if you do!

Beware of the sorry twins, Coulda and Shoulda. Don't leave your talents buried and unused. If you are still capable of doing so, by all means get there and live! That's the least you can do for our generous God.

Fr. John Guimond, OFM Cap.

Spiritual Advisor

Widows of Prayer, Washington, MI

Creation of the Widows of Prayer *By: Carlotta Stricker, WP*

Before there was the vocation, Widows of Prayer, Mary Reardon coordinated the Chalice of Strength Prayer Group that would meet each Thursday afternoon in the Monte Alverno chapel for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Mass for priests and for an increase in religious vocations. When Jack died suddenly from a heart attack, it became clear to Mary that she should dedicate the remainder of her life to this cause. For 17 years this has become Mary's passion and life.

Mary Reardon's inspiration for Widows of Prayer was based on the Order of Widows that originated in early Christianity during the time of Jesus. It continued for just a few hundred years after his death. The Order disappeared and it's unclear as to what happened. Our Blessed Mother was one of the first Widows of Prayer. Other widows would follow including St. Monica.

Mary Reardon's vision to recreate this Order came at a time when vocations to the priesthood were on a continual decline. It became clear to Mary that without our priests there would no longer be a Catholic Church. Without priests there cannot be the transformation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. We would be deprived of the sacraments.

Mary, along with Fr. John Guimond OFM Cap., the first Spiritual Advisor of the Widows of Prayer, began the work and

investigation. Statutes needed to be created. On October 9, 1998, the Most Reverend Robert J. Banks, reviewed the initial Statutes of the Widows of Prayer and recognized the widows as a private association of Christ's faithful in the Church. These Statutes were revised because of the growth of the association and were reviewed by Bishop Zubik, who reaffirmed the status of the Widows of Prayer as a recognized private association in August of 2006. Once again, because of continued growth, the statutes are being reviewed by Fr. John Doerfler, Vicar General/Chancellor of the Diocese and Bishop David Ricken.

The Widow's Mite, a newsletter, is published twice a year. Formation materials such as CD's, brochures, formation materials, a monthly mass for deceased husbands, and weekly Adoration and prayer were put into place. A quarterly meeting with the Corporate Board is held.

St. Pius X Catholic Church is the primary location for the Appleton area Widows of Prayer, with Fr. Tom Farrell as our Spiritual Advisor. Appleton will remain the birthplace of the Widows of Prayer due to its Foundress, Mary Reardon. Currently there are 62 insignia wearing widows who have made one, two or final promises. They promise to dedicate their lives to God, to never remarry and to lead a celibate and chaste life and to

pray for the Church, it's priests and other Church leaders. There are 24 candidates at this time. Twenty-three Widows of Prayer have passed on to their heavenly reward. There are Widows of Prayer in four states: Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.

The Bishops in the areas where there are Widows of Prayer have stated there is an increase in religious vocations.

What makes a widow choose to become a Widow of Prayer? It's a calling from God and a desire to turn over one's life entirely to Him! The graces we receive are AMAZING! So, for those who say that they would not know how to do something or take on any responsibilities, just turn your life over to God. You will be astonished to see what the Holy Spirit can achieve in you.

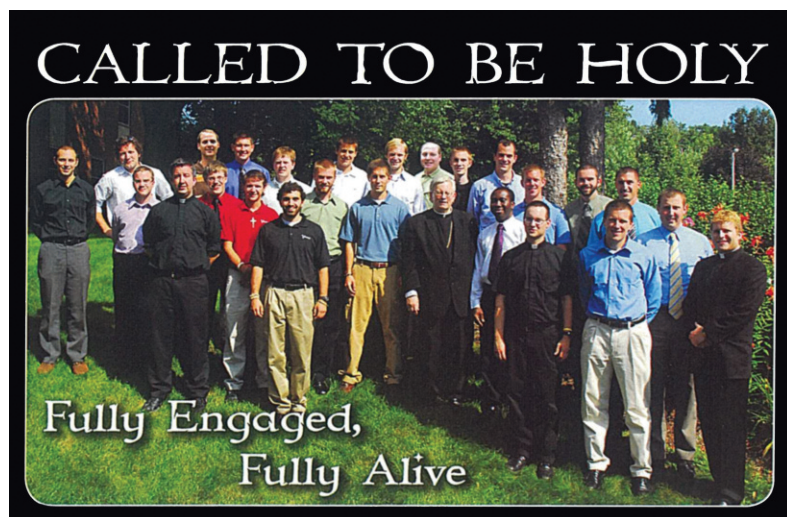


Carlotta Stricker wp made second year promises during the 8 a.m. mass on November 12th at St. Pius X Church in Appleton.

Pray for Your Priest . . . All Priests!

2011-2012 Diocese of Green Bay Seminarians

Please pray for our seminarians



Dcn. Ryan Krueger
Dcn. William VanDyhnoven
Alvan Amadi
Brandon Barlow
Adam Bradley
Bryce Evans
Jason Hawman
Thomas Holschuh
Kurt Krauss
Edward Looney
Timothy Martens
Mark Mleziva
Andrew Natali
Gregory Parent

Matthew Rapp
Jacob Rudd
Connor Schlaack
Ryan Starks
Michael Thiel
Jon Thorsen
Scott Valentyn
Michael Warden
Zachary Weber
Brian Wideman





~ In Memory ~

Helen Reynolds wp – May 31, 2011
Mildred Schneider wp – June 16, 2011

Widows of Prayer, Inc. Board of Directors

Mary Reardon wp, President
Natalie Raaths, Vice President
Connie Hannemann, Secretary
Peter Bekkers, Treasurer
Rev. Thomas Farrell
Vernon Sumnicht
Ned Woytych
Germaine Doerfler wp
Carlotta Stricker wp
Catherine Fitzgerald wp

To learn more about the Widows of Prayer, call:

Appleton, WI area
920-733-2652

Franklin & Milwaukee, WI area
414-858-9811

Lake Villa/Chicago, IL area
847-265-0411

Huntington, IN area
260-356-0919

Fort Wayne, IN area
260-749-2726

Menominee, MI area
906-864-1972

Wind Lake, WI area
262-895-3482

Washington, MI area

Fr. John Guimond OFM. Cap. – 248-651-4826
or Kathleen Hurley – 586-949-1995



Will You Help the Widows of Prayer?

The Widows of Prayer are growing in number with satellite communities in neighboring states and diocese. Our financial needs are growing as well.

Are you willing to support a new movement in the Church with your financial help? The Widows of Prayer is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Tax Deductible Charity. Cut off the bottom of this sheet, fill out and send along with your check to: Widows of Prayer, Inc., 1021 W. Windtree Dr., Appleton, WI 54914

Widows of Prayer Donation

Name: _____ Address: _____

I am willing to give: \$100 - \$75 - \$50 - \$25 - \$20 - \$10 - Other \$ _____

Any amount given will be greatly appreciated. Remember the Widows of Prayer in your will.