



The Widows' Mite

Widows of Prayer

Issue No. 32

Spring/Summer 2022

From Our General Servant Leader



"Follow the saints because those who follow them will become saints." Pope Saint Clement I

Learning about the lives of the saints is motivating, thought provoking, inspiring, empowering and a host of many other adjectives.

Having a fascination to read and hear more about the saints can bring us to the conclusion that "They are like me. They experienced some of the same things as I have had." or, we may say, "I never did those things...I wasn't that bad."

Saints as we all know, can be quite the variety from prayerful and never leaving the cloistered walls to those who are pushers and movers in founding religious orders, schools, etc. Some lives are short, maybe 12 to 20 years while others lived into their 70's and 80's.

By all these differences, what can we derive from their lives? Obviously, the common thread is love of God and love of fellowman. They are willing to sacrifice their own life for the kingdom of God.

I viewed some of the saints who are currently on the 2022 Church calendar for March and April.

The feast of the Annunciation again is noteworthy to show, because Our Holy Mother was sinless, Mary's "yes" is genuine and comes from a present which wasn't challenged by "but or if". She perfectly filled the role of motherhood throughout her perfectly modeled life.

We have Saint Joseph whose life exemplified the virtues and fruits of the Holy Spirit to the utmost. In his deep love for God, he accepted the roll of physical spouse of the Blessed Mother and unconditionally followed in God's path in the role as the foster father of Jesus. The virtues of being the protector, just, obedient, faithful and so on give us all an example to imitate.

Some other saints were noted in giving away their possessions while working with the poor. We find that St. Frances of Rome, used all her means and sold her possessions to give to the poor; St. John Baptist de La Salle left his position as a canon and gave away his wealth to become poor. Saint Katharine Drexel as an heiress used her

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An Interview With God

(author unknown)

I dreamed I had an interview with God.

"So you would like to interview me?" God asked.

"If you have the time," I said.

God smiled, "My time is eternity! What questions do you have in mind for me?"

"What surprises you most about humankind?"

God answered:

"That they get bored with childhood, they rush to grow up, and then long to be children again.

That they lose their health to make money, and then lose their money to restore their health.

That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live in neither the present nor the future.

That they live as if they will never die, and die as though they had never lived."

God's hand took mine and we were silent for a while.

Then I asked,

"As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

"To learn they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is let themselves be loved.

To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others.

To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness.

To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they love, and it can take many years to heal them.

To learn that a rich person is not one who has the most, but is one who needs the least.

To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.

To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently.

To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another, but they must also forgive themselves."

"Thank you for your time," I said humbly. "Is there anything else you would like your children to know?"

God smiled and said, "Just know that I am here... always!"

Community News

Fort Wayne, IN: Mary Lou Sohn, Servant Leader

The Ft. Wayne and Huntington Widows of Prayer got together in November for our annual Christmas party. Due to our cold and snowy winter weather, we didn't meet for a couple weeks in January or February.

Our Spiritual Director, Father Wimal, left on Sunday, February 27th, to go back home to Sri Lanka to have his visa re-issued. He will not be back until April. On March 15th the Ft. Wayne Community will travel to Huntington and meet with the Widows of Prayer there and afterwards go out to eat.

Hibbing, MN: Mary Wanhala, Servant Leader

We continue to meet weekly in Hibbing except when I am out of town. I recently retired from my position at the church and am spending quite a bit of time out of town visiting relatives and friends.



On February 24th, I gave a presentation about the Widows of Prayer to the ladies of Queen of Peace Parish in Cloquet, MN at their Widows Winter Tea. Fr. Nick Nelson, pastor of Queen of Peace, invited me to his parish to speak (photo on right).

I am looking forward to giving another talk on May 3rd in Brainerd, MN. It is a great privilege to share the Widows of Prayer Apostolate with neighboring parishes who may not yet be aware that such an organization exists.



Molalla, OR: Suzanne McKenzie, Servant Leader in Formation

We sadly lost a dear lady this last November, Rosemarie Santagrossi. She was discerning her call to join the Widows and faithfully attended our Mass and rosary each month. She had a beautiful Latin Requiem Mass with many of the Mt. Angel Abbey monks present, including Abbot Jeremy.

Two ladies in the Portland area continue their formation year. A time for their first Promises is yet to be determined.

We had our first breakfast together after our Mass and rosary. We will be meeting again this month to see how that works out. Several recent widows have made inquiry and we pray with them in their discernment.

Community News

Huntington, IN: Catherine Fitzgerald, Servant Leader

The Huntington community is a scattered group and also a shut-in group. I have been keeping in touch with our members who live a further distance away by phone, email and Messenger.

This month our local Community has begun to meet again every two weeks. Mae Leedy, Ginny Salge and me, meet at Mae's home since she is in hospice and not easily able to leave her home. Each of our community members keeps an Hour of Eucharistic adoration on her own personal schedule.

Once a month the Huntington community and the Fort Wayne community come together for a Eucharistic Holy Hour and afterwards socialize with a meal. Every three or four months we have a Day of Recollection. We come to St Felix Catholic Center (the former home of Blessed Father Solanus Casey) for Adoration, Mass and socializing. We choose to come on the third Saturday of the month, because the Mass is for Healing and at our age many of us are in need of this precious gift. There is also a personal blessing with a First Class relic of Blessed Father Solanus.

Our Lady, Queen of Widows, Pray for us

Franklin/Milwaukee: Bernadine Ziemba, Servant Leader

The Widows of Prayer from Franklin/Milwaukee continue to meet and pray via phone three Wednesdays a month. Once a month we meet with our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Patrick Magnor at his St. Alphonsus Parish in Greendale, for prayer, Mass, and a teaching.

We are planning to attend the Widows of Prayer annual retreat Tuesday evening through Thursday afternoon September 13-15 in Waukesha. Those days include the Triumph of the Cross and the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. We continue to pray for our deceased husbands and community members, and for the health of our present members.

Madison/Verona: Suzanne Dahms, Servant Leader

During these past cold months, I have not been able to get out and about. As the weather gets warmer, I am hoping to get back to daily Mass. We appreciate the constant presence of the faithful women who still come and pray every Thursday morning after 8:30 am Mass at St. Christopher's Parish, even when I am not there.

I am able to attend Sunday Mass if someone gives me a ride, and am so thankful to the parish representative who brings me Communion every Friday.

Continued prayers are requested for Mary Wanless (who will be 102 in May). She fell in January and is recovering at home under the expert care of her daughter, Sr. Patricia Mary. Catherine Duerst-Schroeder continues to do well at Willow Pointe Assisted Living.

It is with deepest sympathy that we say goodbye to our sisters who have moved on to their final resting place with God. May they rest in peace.

***Gail Welter, 12/1/2021 – Appleton Remote
Mary Troutner, 3/17/22 – Ft. Wayne, IN***

Community News

Appleton: Kathy Feistel, Servant Leader

The Appleton Community continues to gather on Thursdays at 4:00 pm for Adoration, Evening Prayer and Mass. On the second Saturday of the month we gather for morning mass and then breakfast.



In November we witnessed the Final Promise and Consecration of Nancy Mary Siebers at her home parish of St. Bernard's in Green Bay. Pictured with Nancy Mary is Alice Peeters, and Fr. Mark VanderSteege, Pastor.

Several of our group joined together in a zoom weekly meeting to renew our Marian Consecration with the *33 Days to Morning Glory* study. We then met at St Pius on December 8 for Mass and to make our renewal. It was a good experience to study and pray together. We hope to use it more.

We gathered for a Christmas/New Years celebration in early January at Alice's Peeters' home. January also saw us at the funeral for one of our members, Gail Welter, may she rest in peace. In February we hosted the coffee and donuts after 8:00 and 10:30 Mass at St Pius X in Appleton. It was great to meet so many people we had not seen during Covid.

On March 16th we witnessed the First Promise of Mary Rose Verdegan in St. Joseph Parish, Sturgeon Bay. Pictured are Rev. Robert Stegman, Mary Rose and Alice Peeters.



The Appleton Community will host a day at the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help at Champion on Monday, May 16th. Father Tom Farrell, our Spiritual Director, will be our celebrant and speaker. The event will be open to all widows. We will begin with Mass at 11:00, lunch, Father's talk, Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 3; Father's blessing and dismissal after. Final details will be posted.



Welcome to our two newest Widows of Prayer who made their First Promises the end of March: Carla Banks-Williams with Alice Peeters and Fr. Thomas Kessler at St. Catharine's Parish in Columbus, OH.

Denise Brennan with Alice Peeters and Fr. David Fernandes at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Bensalem, PA (photo on right).



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.

Spotlight on Widows of Prayer

The Widows of Prayer are scattered throughout our country. In an attempt for us to know each other better, we are highlighting 1 or 2 members in each newsletter.

Catherine Fitzgerald – Huntington, Indiana

Catherine joined the Widows of Prayer in 2002. She had met Fr. John Guimond when he arrived in Huntington



and Catherine asked him to be the spiritual advisor for their local Franciscan fraternity. Eventually Fr. Guimond asked her what she thought of the Widows of Prayer. Catherine had never heard of that group but months later drove to Monte Alverno in Appleton for a Widows of Prayer

Retreat. That's when she met and visited with Mary Reardon. When Catherine asked Mary how many women were in the group, Mary replied that if she joined, she would become the 12th member. She made her first promise in May 2002.

Catherine is now the Servant Leader of the Huntington, Indiana, community. They meet weekly for prayer, scripture study and faith sharing. Once a month they meet with the Fort Wayne Community for a holy hour and then go out to share a meal. The Huntington Widows of Prayer also lead the rosary for deceased parishioners. Seven years ago they had 15 funerals in 6 weeks! Catherine comments that this is her most precious devotion after Eucharistic Adoration.

Catherine has 5 children, 16 grandchildren and 24 great grandchildren. At least twice a month she has 3 to 7 children spending most of the weekend with her and her daughter Ann (including a sleepover). She says her hobbies "are my great grandchildren". But when they are not around, Catherine knits, crochets, enjoys reading mysteries, and makes & repairs rosaries and chaplets (both cord & chain). She also serves as a lector and Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist.

For more information about the ***Widows of Prayer:***

website: www.widowsofprayer.org

Facebook – "Widows of Prayer Facebook Home"

or e-mail: widowsofprayer@gmail.com

Appleton, WI area – 920-284-9476

Franklin/Milwaukee WI area – 414-427-0020

Verona/Madison, WI area – 608-845-9386

Huntington, IN area – 260-356-8021

Fort Wayne, IN area – 260-484-6300

Hibbing, MN area – 218-966-9074

Mololla, OR area – 503-949-3142

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inheritance to begin schools and missions. St. Agnes of Bohemia built a hospital, a residence for the friars, and a monastery for the Poor Clares.

Saints that were martyrs include Saints Perpetua and Felicity, St. Mark and St. Oscar Romero. We have saints who were seemingly failures such as Saint Louise de Marillac who began her life in an unstable and dysfunctional family until St. Vincent de Paul found her gift of being able to work with the affluent in receiving donations as well as working with the poor people.

We can pray to these saints and ask them to intercede to Christ on our behalf. They are ever so close in assisting us. May the holy saints help you on your journey to heaven.

Alice Peeters WP
General Servant Leader

Widows of Prayer Retreat

September 13, 14, and 15, 2022

International Shoenstatt Center

W284 N698 Cherry Ln., Waukesha, WI 53188

Arrival: 4:00 pm on Tuesday, September 13, and depart after the noon lunch on September 15.

Cost: \$163 which includes 2 nights lodging including meals. (Cost is subject to change as we get closer to September.) A semi-private room (2 occupants) would be a little cheaper. If interested in this option, please let us know.

Your deposit of \$50 to secure your room will be due at a later date, and at that time if you have any special dietary needs, please indicate them. The balance of the room/board rate will be due upon arrival at the Schoenstatt Retreat Center.

Book Reviews

To submit a review of a book, or a website, that you have found inspiring, and would like to share in a future Widows' Mite, please send information to widowsofprayer@gmail.com

My Other Self – by Clarence Enzler

A reprinted classic by Ave Maria Press helps one encounter Jesus in a very personal way. What drew me to the book was my experience praying with Enzler's **Every-one's Way of the Cross**. Traditional Stations always invoked a response to my savior. Praying with Enzler, my stations were very personal. This was not history, but my every day as a new widow. I better understood what it means to pick up my cross. In the 14th station, Jesus states. "But now another life begins for Mary....and you."

Having had a personal invitation to grow, I opened the book, *My Other Self*. Written in the style of *The Imitation of Christ*, the book through intimate conversations with the Master offers a way to transform daily life and routine into an intimate and prayer experience. I need not be sitting in a church; I may be focused completely on the task at hand, but because I am where He wants me, I can find the joy and be united with Jesus. I first read it with excitement and then went back and prayed the book, working it and looking for how to use the experiences. As a result, my prayer life has changed. Intimate conversations with Jesus are often. It has opened my eyes and I hope I now see where I can be Christ to others. It is not intimidating. I would recommend it for the beginner as well as one truly committed.

Kathy Feistel, WP

Do not look forward to what might happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father, who cares for you today, will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either he will shield you from suffering, or he will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

-St. Francis de Sales

Will You Help the Widows of Prayer?

The Widows of Prayer are growing in number with satellite communities in neighboring states and dioceses. 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. 414 Frances Way, Menasha WI 54952-1350

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.

www.widowsofprayer.org