



CLOISTER Echoes

*Autumn ~ 2011
Issue 122*

*A Newsletter for all our Friends
400 Pratt Street Watertown, New York 13601*

The Grace of Diminishment



Autumn is a wonderful season in which to muse about diminishment. Year after year, we've seen the breath-taking foliage fade away to usher in the cold blast of another winter. Nothing stays the same. The changes all around us remind us that our own, personal days on this earth are dwindling...and that means....well, it means many different things, depending upon one's perspective.

The number of women entering religious communities these days is comparatively small. We might be tempted to think it is time for all of us to fold our tents and go quietly into that proverbial night. One look over our shoulder is enough to evoke a gasp: "Who is there to follow us?" Sort of reminds one of John's query to Jesus in the Gospel: "What about him, Lord?" The apostles, too, wondered how and if their little band would make it.

But are we missing the precious gift God is offering us today....right here....right now, in 2011? It isn't size that matters. It is commitment....even of the few. It is faith in the face of insecurity. Is what we call "death", in reality, new life struggling to break through? Could it be that what we see as failure—on a human scale—is actually grace, begging us to glory in our weakness? "We do not have a high Priest Who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but One Who in every respect has been tempted as we are...." Jesus saved us, not in the performance of one of His miracles, but at that moment in His Life when He felt most alone, abandoned and close to despair.

If, in fact, all living things must fade and die before returning to a newer, more glorious form, how is that we miss the purpose of what God might be doing in His Church today? There is a reason for diminishment. It demands that we rid ourselves of the false security we knew when monasteries were brimming with new vocations. Diminishment insists that we re-visit our beginnings as a community to rediscover what made our Foundresses such intrepid women of faith. After all, there were only four of them! They found ways to do so much with so little. More importantly, their love for the Church had no limit. Like Jesus, they gave themselves totally and left to God the care of the future.

The world has changed at a dizzying pace. Government agencies have taken up many of the charitable works once initiated by Religious whose labors bore astounding results. These religious paved the way for others to see and respond to needs not previously recognized by society. Today our Sisters in the active apostolate continue to call the world's attention to current day causes, such as human trafficking and injustice toward the poor. Our apostolate of prayer does not change. Nor does it go out of style. The vision of our Foundress is as clear today as it was in 1861. Our Institute was founded at a time when rampant heresy and scandal afflicted the church. To counteract it, Mother Catherine Aurelia urged us to "pour the balm of prayer into the wounds of the Church..." How relevant a work it is! Numbers are not nearly as important as the firm faith of the few.



July Raffle Sponsored by Precious Blood Auxiliary



*Auxiliary President Myrajean Koster
And Sister Martha drawing names*

Winners drawn in September, 2011

Sue Moseley, Watertown, NY: \$50.

Mrs. Mary Martin, Watertown, NY: \$100.

Roberta White, Gig Harbor, WA: \$150.

Mary Dermady, Watertown, NY : \$250.

Eileen Giltz, Alexandria Bay, NY: Rosary

Nancy Moloney, Garden City, NY: \$500.

We are so happy for each of you!

Our new sit-down lawnmower
has been christened:

“Walter”

His arrival has made
a fantastic difference for
our maintenance helpers.

Walter Zapf, of happy
memory, used to faithfully
manicure our lawn each year.
An employee of the Ives Hill
Country Club, Walter would
drive through the gate
separating our property from
the golf course. He
always greeted us with
a smile and a “Glad to do it”!
His wife, Jan, and her family
with the aid of our
Precious Blood Auxiliary,
provided the new equipment
in Walt’s memory.

Dan LaFave and Charles
look happy with their new
toy, don’t they?



Mollie's Corner



Me and Joe
the day he came back



Look who came to see me! My buddy, Joe Sabel, used to work for the sisters. We had so much fun together. I think I was the best part of his work day because we used to go galloping all over the yard and down into the woods. (That's something not too many of the sisters do.)

But then, one day, Joe didn't come. I thought he was gone forever. I should have known better. Who ever forgets a best friend?

You should have been here to see the welcome I gave him! He looks so handsome in his navy uniform. Now I know where he is and I'm sure he'll be back to see me. He is stationed at Guantanamo Bay. "Gitmo" to those of us in the know.

So, friends, there you have it....my latest news. See you again when the snow flies!

Love, Mollie



P.S. Did you notice the golf balls up on the counter? They don't let me near them. It's not like I'd be dumb enough to swallow them. I just want to chew them, that's all. No justice here on earth!

November ~ the month of the Faithful Departed

Once again, it is time to remember in a special way, our loved Ones who have already reached the end of their earthly pilgrimage. Even though we feel quite sure that they are already rejoicing in the light of God's Love, it is always a consolation to pray for them and to remember them in our Masses and novena.

Our public novena begins the 23rd of November and ends on the 30th. *Each day, our community Mass is offered for the happy repose of all whose names have been requested to be included in this novena.*

An Evening Prayer

Let us pray: Let me go into this night willing to die to all that I have clung to through this day,
All that I have placed my hope in, everything in which I have sought life,
through which I have hoped to find new life.
I can let go. I can surrender.
I can die to this day
Because I expect the resurrection of a new day,
Of a new life tomorrow.



A People of Patience and Goodwill

Is there anything on earth that we dread more than change? Just when we had settled back in our pews and memorized every prayer of the Mass, confident we didn't need a mis-salette ~ it happened! So much is brand new again....almost as though some sinister plot had been devised to frustrate us.

On the first Sunday of Advent, the entire Catholic world will usher in the "new" liturgy. Much will depend on our willingness to make the effort to familiarize ourselves with phrases which have been changed. Understanding the rationale behind the changes helps. Some years ago, an attempt at a "dynamic translation" of the parts of the Mass resulted in the loss of some of the literal (formal) translation from the Latin. This latter holds so much meaning and beauty. A painstaking effort has been made on the part of many liturgists to restore now the original awe-inspiring words which, at one time, had grown so familiar in Latin. The "new parts" hold a greater challenge for our priests than for the laity. So many of the texts said by the priest have been changed.

Advent will present us all with a good opportunity to put on our best smile and open our stash of patience. At least that is what our chaplain, Monsignor Whitmore, says! Oh, and by the way, we'll all be invited to sing a little more.



The Perfect Christmas Gift

Give a loved One the gift of
A Lifetime:

Remembrance in the Prayers and Masses
Here at our Monastery

The **5 x 7** card may be used for any occasion.
The offering for the enrollment is **\$3.00**
Place your order to have the card inscribed
In calligraphy:

Name of person to be enrolled

Name of donor giving the card