

Stella Maris

“ You cannot visit the Child without visiting the Mother for these holy heads are too near together for the halos not to mingle and cross.”

- G. K. Chesterton



Dear Family, Friends, and Benefactors,

This past fall God called into eternity the mother of Sr. Marie Agnes, Helen Ahern, of Colorado Springs, CO. Helen was a devoted wife, beloved mother, compassionate friend, talented artist and designer, and a loyal Catholic. It was through her cherished devotion to Our Lady, the Mother of God, that Helen was able to keep the Faith, promote Catholic education, and support priests who offered the Tridentine Mass. In your charity, please pray for the repose of her soul.

During the month of December, the Sisters have been busy with program practice, Christmas caroling, baking and decorating. We sang for the First Solemn High Mass of the three new priests ordained on December 12.

Our new puppy Angelo is growing fast and learning many things. Our cows are expecting calves in January and February.

On February 16, Sr. Maria Gabriella (Ohio) and Sr. Mary Clare (Minnesota) will be renewing their vows for three years. We will also have the ceremony for the reception of new novices. Please keep our Sisters in your prayers.

With our prayers,

The Sisters of the Congregation of the Mother of God



“A star appeared in the heavens which eclipsed all the other stars; its light was indescribable, and its novelty caused astonishment.”

- St. Ignatius of Antioch



Helen A. Ahern
August 10, 1930
October 27, 2019



Immaculate Conception Church - St. Cloud, Minnesota



Mother Cabrini Academy - Denver, Colorado



Our Mother of Perpetual Help, 25th Anniversary, Sulphur Springs, Ohio

Choir for Fr. Michael Sellner's First Solemn High Mass



Our Lady of the Sun Academy - El Mirage, Arizona



Immaculate Heart of Mary Academy, Colorado Springs

Our Lady of the Sun Academy



Mary Immaculate Academy - Seneca, Wisconsin



Omaha, Nebraska

Seneca, Wisconsin



Sacred Heart Academy - Burlington, Colorado



Angelo

Mater Dei Convent - Persia, Iowa



Vocations

by Fr. William Doyle, S.J.



(...continued)

II. Objections

3. **"I would break my parent's heart."** - When the devil sees in anyone a religious vocation, he does everything possible to prevent him from following that attraction. But of all the means he makes use of, the love of one's parents is the most powerful and dangerous. He shows it to be so just and reasonable, he makes use of such specious sophisms, that the poor soul does not know to which voice to listen - that which calls him or that which bids him go back.

St. Alphonsus Liguori declared that the hardest trial of all his life was when he made known to his father his determination of quitting the world. "Dear father, I see that you suffer for my sake. However, I must declare that I no longer belong to this world: God has called me, and I am determined to follow His voice." For three hours the father clasped him in his arms weeping and repeating, "My son, do not leave me! Oh, my son, my son! I do not deserve this treatment." If he had listened to this pathetic appeal the Church would have lost one of her grandest saints; fortunately he remembered the words of Him Who could call Himself "the kindest and gentlest of men": "Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace but the sword. For I came to separate the son from the father, and the daughter from the mother; ...he that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."

A terrible responsibility rests on the conscience of some parents, who, through selfishness or misguided love, succeed in preventing their children from following the call of God, and unscrupulously withhold from Him those He is drawing to Himself.

They may have the satisfaction of keeping a little longer with them those to whom they have given birth, but they must answer one day to their Judge for the immense good they have hindered, and the souls of those lost through their fault.

Though it meant a big sacrifice,

even a serious loss, no right-minded father would dream for a moment of forbidding a marriage which would bring to his child joy and good fortune; why then interfere with that holy alliance, made in heaven, which means far greater happiness?

St. Ambrose asks if it is just that a young girl should have less liberty in choosing God for her Spouse than she has in selecting an earthly one.

To the mother of a family who opposes the religious vocation of her daughter one might say: "You married, and you did well. Had you been forced to enter a convent, would you have done it?"

4. **"I could do more good in the world."** - In a very exceptional case, and under circumstances not likely to be realised, this might be true, but such a statement generally shows a want of realization of the immense advantages of religious life, and the merit which comes from living the vows.

Would St. Francis, St. Dominic, or St. Ignatius have done more for God's glory had they led the life of pious laymen, and would not the world have been poorer and heaven emptier if Nano Nagle, Catherine Macaule or Mary Aikenhead had refused the grace offered them?

5. **"Good people are wanted in the world."** - But does God want ME there? If so, why did He give me a call to leave it? Surely I must take it for granted that He knows what is best for me and for His glory, and blindly follow His voice.

Pere Olivaint, one of the Jesuit Martyrs of the Commune, answers the objection of a young man who wished to remain in the world as follows: "My parents have plans for my future. ...But what does God want? In that position which is offered to me men will hold me in great esteem. ...But God? My natural taste moves me in that direction. ...But God? I shall certainly be able to save my soul in the world. ...True, but does God wish that you should save it there?"

Granting that I have a clear vocation to the religious life, where I shall be far

better able and more fitted to work for the welfare of my neighbor, I cannot persuade myself that I could do more good by going against the Will of God.

6. **"I may be unhappy in the convent."** - Is the world, then, such an earthly paradise, so full of love, peace and happiness that no sorrow is to be found there? Religious may have much to suffer, days of trial and desolation to be endured, the grinding monotony of a never changing round of duties to be bravely faced, day by day, yet with St. Paul they can exclaim: "I super-abound with joy in the midst of my tribulation."

"Father," said an old Trappist monk, "I have so much consolation here amid all our austerities I fear I shall have none in the next world."

"One evening in winter," writes the Little Flower, "I was about my lowly occupation; it was cold and dark. Suddenly I heard the harmony of several musical instruments outside the convent, and pictured to myself a richly furnished, brilliantly-lit drawing-room, resplendent with gilding and decorations; young ladies, tastefully dressed were sitting there and paying each other many a vain compliment. Then I looked on the poor invalid I was tending. For the music, I had her complaints; for the gilded drawing-room, the brick walls of an austere convent, lighted only by a feeble glimmer. The contrast was exceedingly sweet. The dim light of earthly joys was denied me, but the light of God shone all around. No, I would not have bartered those ten minutes taken by my deed of charity for ten thousand years of worldly diversions.

"Here in Carmel," she adds, "a prey to bodily and spiritual anguish, I am happier than I was in the world; yes, happier even than in my home, and by my beloved father's side."

(to be continued...)

Mater Dei Convent
3715 286th St.
Persia, IA 51563
materdei431@aof.com