



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



S. Rose Marie

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings to each of you in this Season of Lent. We have been blessed in this part of Michigan with a mild winter. On behalf of the membership, we hold in thought and prayer, all those living in areas of the country, affected by tornados and other unusual weather conditions.

From an archival perspective, it reminds us of the importance of having a disaster plan in place in case of unforeseen circumstances.

Due to the unusual circumstances which surrounded this year's search for an ACWR Vice-President/President Elect, S. Louise Grundish, SC, has been nominated and elected by the ACWR Board to serve as ACWR Vice-President/President Elect for a three-year term.

We are grateful that S. Louise is willing to serve again as an ACWR officer. We also appreciate all those who considered nomination but had to decline for various reasons.

Kathy Hertel-Baker will continue her service as Secretary.

The board continues to work on plans for our Triennial Conference. We will meet here in Grand Rapids on April 12-14 to continue the work on the details.

Hope to see you at our Triennial Conference "Meeting the Challenges of the Present:

Shaping our Future Now," September 6-9, 2012, in New Orleans, Louisiana at the DoubleTree Hotel on Canal Street.

Happy Easter Season!

Sincerely,
Rose Marie Martin, OP, rmmartin@grdominicans.org

WOMEN & SPIRIT: CATHOLIC SISTERS IN AMERICA

What was *Women & Spirit*? How was it received? Why does it matter?

Women & Spirit is an exhibit whose purpose is to demonstrate how Catholic sisters helped to shape the history and culture of the United States. Conceived by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in 2004, it opened at Cincinnati Museum Center



Cutting the ribbon at the Cincinnati Museum Center on opening night of *Women & Spirit* in Cincinnati, Ohio

in 2009, traveled to the Smithsonian, Ellis Island and seven other venues. It will close after its showing at the California Museum in Sacramento in June, 2012.

Made possible through the collaboration of devoted archivists, talented designers,

generous donors and an indomitable committee, the exhibit tells remarkable stories and shows unique artifacts collected for the first time from sister communities across the country. Desiring to share such excellence with a wider audience, LCWR has produced a documentary DVD. Narrated by noted author and National Public Radio senior news analyst Cokie Roberts, it features interviews with historians, journalists and sisters. This documentary brings to life the inspiring stories of women, both personal and communal, who have greatly helped to create the American landscape.



Those attending the exhibit could also view short videos further explaining the artifacts on display at the exhibit .

Given this range of talent and this level of research, how was the exhibit actually received? Providentially, the tour of the exhibit coincided with the Vatican's evaluation of women religious in the United States. Many commentators suggested that the exhibit was an unplanned primary response the Vatican's initiative. Although there has not been any professional evaluation of the exhibit, the over one million persons who viewed the exhibit testify to its excellence and timeliness.

Here a few of the thousands of responses.

"I brought many co-workers (who are not Catholic) and women friends to the exhibit and they were powerfully moved, along with me, to tears."

"Sister, as someone whose life has been profoundly touched by a number of Catholic

Sisters, this exhibit was powerful and deeply meaningful to me."

"One of the displays, which lists all the congregations which have been in the USA, was particularly moving to me. I touched each of the congregations which have been a part of my life and prayed in gratitude for them."

Through the commitment of local committees, each venue brought its own culture and texture to the event. In the museums where a local story complimented the national exhibit, a new and vital dimension evolved. In each place, the exhibit was a new thing because of the creativity and diversity of local committees. Cincinnati was the first, and its excitement was the excitement of an original. Dallas united the leadership of all women with the leadership of Catholic sisters at the Women's Museum. Cleveland demonstrated the power of collaboration between the Jewish Maltz Museum personnel and the local Catholic Committee. Ellis Island brought the tears of the immigrant sisters in concert with the tears of all struggling immigrants. Dubuque featured the power and challenge of the Mississippi and the frontier. Los Angeles brought all the resources of a Catholic women's college to bear in creating a truly Catholic event. South Bend emphasized the intellectual leadership of Catholic scholar, Kathleen Cummings, who featured the exhibit in her classes. Sacramento with its powerful local story brings a fresh Hispanic color to the last moments of the exhibit. The Smithsonian; well, the Smithsonian is the Smithsonian.

In the midst of these glorious events, there were, of course, disappointments. The fact that we were not able to present the exhibit in Chicago, a prominent Catholic city, despite valiant attempts, was a deep disappointment. The reality that many valuable artifacts could not be included saddened many communities and archivists. The committee's responded: "The exhibit is illustrative, not exhaustive." Finally, the realization that, after nine venues, the exhibit will close causes an occasional

tear.

With the occasional tear, there is the realization that **Women & Spirit** does matter. In January, 2011 the American Catholic Historical Association honored the exhibit with its **Service to Catholic Studies Award**, acknowledging its scholarly and artistic excellence. That scholarly and artistic excellence would not have been possible without the archivists of the congregations of women religious. Thank you, archivists. You matter. You matter decisively.

Helen Maher Garvey, BVM, Director: "Women & Spirit" Exhibit

ADVENTURE IN MICROFILM

Although I had hoped to put our paper collection in order before handling anything else, the paper itself came to present an issue. One of my biggest concerns was about the record books that began in 1869, the year our community came to Western PA. These books contain detailed handwritten records that record finances, receptions and professions, and lists of students. Even though they had held up well, the ink was beginning to fade or bleed through the pages, and I had a sense of panic when temperature and humidity control were not stable.

Then in April 2011, I had the good fortune to attend a two-day workshop in our area presented by Archivists from the Pennsylvania State Archives. In the discussion on digital archives, the presenters noted that the more sophisticated a technology is, the harder it is to preserve. They said, however, that microfilm is a format that can last for several hundred years. Microfilm is human readable, and thus does not absolutely require equipment that can become obsolete. A light table and an eye loop or magnifying glass will enhance microfilm reading, but in an

emergency, one might even use a window on a sunny day.

After that, I found a company in Pittsburgh that produces microfilm. I chose eighteen books that I considered most critical, and we devised a plan where I could take the books to the company offices and work with the staff in making images of the pages. Each day I carried the books with me, and they were never away from our archives overnight. The staff developed the microfilm and then made DVDs from it. Since the light used in taking microfilm images is not as intense as that used for DVDs, we spared our originals some wear in the project.

Now the original books will not have to be opened, and this should increase their



Srs. Kathleen Garde (left) and Sally Witt discussing their documents on microfilm, DVD, and paper copy.

longevity. We have two sets of microfilm (positive and negative), which are also free from constant use. Yet the information is much more available than it ever was. Already some of us have

examined copies of pages made from the DVD. It is amazing to be able to finger these pages and expose them to light without concern, knowing that the originals and the microfilm copies are stored safely. Seeing the handwriting of our early sisters puts us in touch with them in a unique way. Hopefully, the whole project will bring us closer to our past, even while we have increased the conditions of preservation.

Sally Witt, CSJ. archives@stjoseph-baden.org

BURIED TREASURES IN OUR YARD

MR. BOB KRESS AND A METAL DETECTOR ...Yes, we found *buried treasures* in our yard! A nearby parishioner named Bob Kress requested permission to explore our property with his metal detector. After retiring from the business world, Bob had the opportunity to pursue a long-awaited hobby and became a member of Northern Kentucky Treasure Hunters Club (NKTHC) www.NKTHC.com. Recently, he won the monthly award for an artifact that he discovered in our yard. Silver wings. [More details below.]

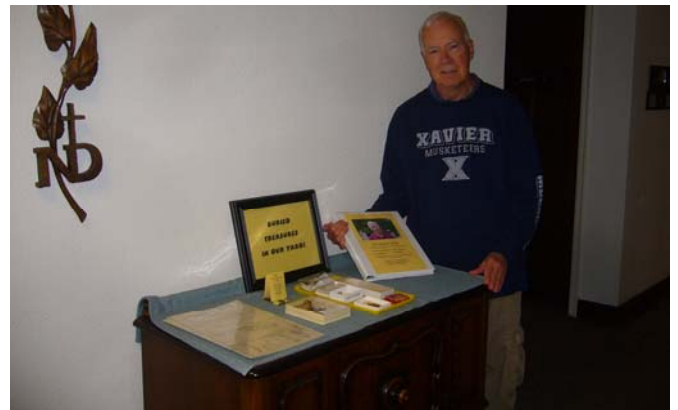
DEEDS TO PROVE OUR PURCHASES ...

We were happy to welcome Bob to our yard. There was a slim chance that he might uncover a very special item, a medal of St. Joseph that was buried on our current property in the early part of the twentieth century. Since 1876, the Kentucky *hub* of the Sisters of Notre Dame (of Coesfeld) was the convent and academy on Fifth Street in downtown Covington. The religious leaders had the vision to search for property in the rural area as the administrative center and a renewal facility for body and spirit. In our convent archives, we have the three original deeds that exhibit the progression of that goal. The first deed is dated July 1907 and confirms that we bought 6 acres on Lexington Pike (currently, Dixie Highway). The Old Fedders Farm became a small renewal center for the sisters and also provided two classrooms for elementary students. The farm had been divided into three properties. Since we purchased the front section, we agreed to let the other two owners use our 16-foot gate to access their homes beyond our land. The second deed is dated September 1907 and proves that we purchased 33.75 acres and 20 poles of the former farm belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Berry. This land was adjacent to the previously purchased property. Then the sisters were hoping that Theodore Heck whose farm was next to the Berry's farm, would be interested in selling his property.

That would provide sufficient space to build a *new hub* in an ideal setting. However, Mr. Heck was not yet ready to sell his farm. So, some of the sisters buried a medal of St. Joseph on the Heck farm and prayed. They promised that if they obtained the farm, the site would be called "St. Joseph Heights." Eventually, Mr. Heck sold his farm to the sisters and to this day the SND center is known as St. Joseph Heights. A large outdoor statue of St. Joseph greets visitors near the entrance to the building. The deed was dated October 1912 and confirms that the transaction involved 14 acres, increasing the total acreage to 53.75 and 20 poles! In November 1927 the new provincial house on Lexington Pike was dedicated and many people attended the Open House. The St. Joseph Heights Association provided strong financial support for this project and pledged to remain with the sisters until the debt was paid. Through the years, the association kept their promise! The current provincial house at 1601 Dixie Highway (formerly, Lexington Pike) includes the original building plus two additions in 1958 and 1980.

STORIES TO ACCOMPANY THE ARTIFACTS ...

While searching for a medal of St. Joseph, Bob Kress has found a variety of interesting items in our yard. In February 2012 the monthly archival display in the first floor hall of the provincial house showcased some of the "treasures buried in our yard" and a notebook to describe the associated stories.



Bob Kress standing by display of interesting items found in the yard of the Sisters of Notre Dame of the Covington, KY Province.

Bob received the monthly award from NKTHC for his discovery of the silver wings. This insignia was worn by members of the Army Air Corps during World War II. It was probably lost by one of the serviceman who attended our annual July 4th festival. During the war years, we offered free dinners to those who were serving their country. Another interesting item was a small thimble with the quotation, "Spence for Congress." Brent Spence was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and maintained that position from March 4, 1931 until January 3, 1963. He grew up in Newport, a city in Northern Kentucky, and one of the bridges that currently unites Kentucky and Ohio bears his name. Most likely, these thimbles were distributed at one of the July festivals. One of the artifacts was not a surprise. It was a medal lost from the large rosary worn at the right side of our original habit. The rosary removed from the dress via two large hooks sewn to the waistband. One side displayed a picture of Jesus *Salvator Mundi* (Savior of the World); the reverse side, a picture of Mary and the words *Mater Divinae Gratiae* (Mother of Divine Grace). One other example was a one-cent *genuine* copper (with green edges confirming its authenticity) 1904 U.S. coin that displayed a Native American wearing a headdress. This penny could have been lost by Theodore Heck before we purchased his farm or by any sister, student, parent, or lay collaborator.



CONCLUSION... I wish that I could conclude this story with a successful ending to the research project, but the medal of St. Joseph has not yet been found. However, it has been a pleasant *walk down Memory Lane*. We continue to hope against hope. If the medal is found, you will hear a shout of joy from Northern Kentucky and I will relay the announcement to a forthcoming issue of this newsletter!

Joan Terese Niklas, SND, smjoanterese@sndky.org

FOUNDERS' DAY ARCHIVAL DISPLAYS AT THE IHM CENTER

In observance of the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Monroe Michigan in 1845, several treasured artifacts shown in the photo below were exhibited at the IHM



Center in Scranton, PA. in November 2011. Included in one of the displays was a gold relic of St. Alphonsus Liguori, one of the Congregation's patrons, and a medal of St. Alphonsus presented to the Congregation by Marywood University in 2008. Pictures of Mother Theresa Maxis, the co-founder of the Congregation, her personal prayer book *L'Imitation of Jesus-Christ*, written in French, and recently translated into English were also included in the exhibit. Mother Theresa's needlework which was completed when she lived with the Grey nuns in Ottawa, and relics of her habit and veil were also displayed. A compilation of Mother Theresa's letters together with images of her sculpture were also shown. The Journeys of Mother Theresa were outlined in a map, and the program remembrance marking the Pennsylvania Historical Marker Dedication in Susquehanna, PA were also exhibited. Truly, she was a "*Woman Ahead of her Time.*"

The display also focused on Father Louis Florent Gillet, co-founder of the Congregation and included images, his personal rosary, selected quotations and his book *Faithful Witness*. A photograph of Father Gillet as a Cistercian at the Royal Abbey of Hautecombe-Savoy was also shown, along with significant quotations of Father Gillet. Photographs of the

burial sites of Mother Theresa in Immaculata, PA and Father Gillet in Monroe Michigan were also presented.

Another display presented "Then and Now," the history of Catholic Sisters in America which is illustrated in the *WOMEN & SPIRIT* traveling exhibit. Sponsored by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), it Included pictures of sisters advocating for



education, justice, and peace. The display revealed the mystery behind a small group of innovative American women who helped social, cultural and educational landscape. These were women who corresponded with President Thomas Jefferson, talked down bandits and roughnecks, lugged pianos into the wilderness, and provided the nation's first health insurance to Midwestern loggers. The Catholic Sisters in America represented courage during the Civil War, the Gold Rush, the San Francisco Earthquake, the Influenza Epidemic, the Civil Rights Movement, and Hurricane Katrina.

Anitra Nemetko, IHM, nemetkoa@sistersofihm.org

INTRODUCTORY ARCHIVE WORKSHOP FOR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

The Catholic Library Association is pleased to announce the fifth Introductory Archive Workshop for Religious Communities to be held at the Oblate Renewal Center, San Antonio, TX from June 24-29, 2012. The 5-day intensive program is directed toward individuals who are interested in learning about archival theory and practice or who wish to update their archival training.

Unlike other archival workshops, the sessions will focus on the unique types of records found in the archives of men's and women's

religious communities. These records document not only the communities themselves, but also the evolution of Catholicism in the United States, and its impact on educational, social and charitable institutions that shaped the nation's history.

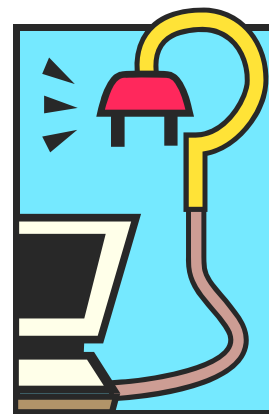
The program, directed by professional religious archivists, will include lectures, tours, and opportunities for sharing experiences.

Complete program and registration information and a registration form are posted on the Catholic Library Association website at www.cathla.org/preservation.php, or contact the CLA at cla2@cathla.org or phone 312-739-1776 or toll free 855-739-1776.

Submitted by Malachy McCarthy, Archivist for the Claretian Missionaries Archives

ACWR MEMBER SEEKS YOUR INPUT

I wonder how many of you have a computerized index or cataloging system for your archives? I think it would be interesting to know this, the name of the archive and archivist, the name of the company (if purchased from one) and your opinion of it.



I know that the ACWR Board plans to have some talks and demonstrations along this line at the New Orleans meeting, but I just thought that in the meantime, it would be nice to know where our religious archives are at present in this digital age.

If you can email me your information I would be most grateful.

Thank you.

S. Louise Smith, SSMN, smitlou@hotmail.com

SISTERS WHO ENTERED FROM ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA?

Our parish, St. Anthony of Padua in St. Louis, MO, is preparing to celebrate 150 years later this year. We are trying to find the names and locations of **any sisters** in your congregation who may have entered from St. Anthony of Padua Parish, St. Louis, MO. If in your records you have any member, **presently living**, who entered from St. Anthony's, would you please let me know the name(s)?

Thank you for any help you may be able to give us.

Charline Sullivan, CSJ, charlinesullivan@csj.org

COMING SOON... 2012 CONFERENCE

7th ACWR Triennial Conference
*"Meeting the Challenges of the Present:
Shaping Our Future Now"*
September 6-9, 2012
Doubletree Hotel, New Orleans, LA

The ACWR Board is happy to know that many of you are planning to attend our Conference and hope that when our registration forms are sent to you in May we have a very good response from members.

This wonderful gathering of archivists gives everyone the chance to meet and share interests, ideas and wisdom with colleagues. Of course we will also have the opportunity to gather for Liturgy, to share meals together and to greet old friends and make some new ones. There will be the chance to participate in one of the tour options that will be available in the exciting city of New Orleans.

The Board is grateful for all those who signed up to be a committee member. Plans are being finalized to make this a Conference you don't want to miss.

To celebrate this Seventh Triennial Conference of ACWR, the Board offered five (5) \$500 scholarships to deserving members of ACWR to help defray the cost of attending the Conference.



St. Louis Cathedral,
New Orleans, LA

We had a good response to this offering. Five deserving individuals have been selected by the Scholarship Committee.

Congratulations to:

Anitra Nemetko, IHM, Ph.D.
Congregation Archivist at the IHM Center
Scranton, PA

Paula Diann Marlin, RSM
Archivist, Sisters of Mercy, South Central
Community, Belmont, NC

Sally Witt, CSJ
Archivist, Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden, PA

Sarah L. Patterson
Ursuline Sisters Archivist, Mount Saint Joseph
Archives, Maple Mount, KY

Joanne Gardner, HM
Director of Communications & Archives
Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Villa Maria, PA

More details regarding the program will be coming with your registration form in May.

Hope to see you at the ACWR 2012 Conference

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members of the ACWR,

Thank you so much for the many articles you have submitted for the Spring and Fall Newsletters. It is helpful to the members to read about new projects and methods adopted with success by other member of the organization. Your help is greatly appreciated by the editor.

On another subject, the current members of the Board of ACWR are concerned about the reluctance of members to allow their names to stand for office or to nominate another archivist to fill one of the national offices. This raises serious concern and the members of the Board will discuss this matter with the members during the Triennial Conference Business Meeting. Please come prepared to offer your wisdom and suggestions.

The ACWR is a wonderful organization and serving as an officer has many rewards. It provides an opportunity to meet other archivists who share similar concerns, passions, and reverence for the community records. It also provides a way to make new friends and gather new ideas. In addition, the service given to the organization helps to maintain its growth and vitality.

The program for the upcoming Triennial Conference looks interesting and exciting. I hope to have the opportunity to meet many of you in New Orleans. In the meantime, keep thinking of material for an article you would like to submit for our Fall Newsletter. It will soon be time to send out a request for articles.

Thank you for your support. Please keep writing.

Blessings for this beautiful Easter Season.

Sister Louise Grundish, SC Editor, lgrundish@scsh.org

ACWR MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

ACWR welcomes one new member since our Fall 2011 Newsletter publication. Her address, phone number, email address, etc. can be found for her, and all ACWR members, in our membership directory on our website: www.archivistsacwr.org. Our new member is:

- Anthony Clare Reiman, OSF, Allegany, NY

Our current membership in ACWR is 254.

ACWR NEWSLETTER

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DEADLINE FOR FALL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 15, 2012

Send articles and pictures to
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