

St. Andrew To Fete Nun

Sister Therese Richardson, RSM, principal of St. Andrew's School, will be feted by the parish at a reception following the 10:30 a.m. Mass, Sunday, June 13. Sister Therese has been stationed at St. Andrew's for the past nine years as both a teacher and administrator.

In addition, the Elmira native was stationed at the school in the late 40s and for about a decade in the 50s and 60s. In all, she has served the parish for about 21 years.

She pronounced her final vows as a Sister of Mercy August 22, 1949.

The reception is being sponsored by St. Andrew's Education Committee.

Blue Army

Fathers Philip Lavin, CSSR, John Poluikis, CSB, John Steger, Robert Doell, Bruce Ammering, Robert Meng, Charles Adams and Robert Ritz, CSB, will all preside at an all-night vigil starting at 9 p.m., June 18, at Holy Rosary Church. The event, sponsored by the local chapter of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, commemorates both the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



New Council

A diocese native is a member of the provincial legislative council, the "Province Definitory," of the Conventual Franciscan Friars of the St. Anthony of Padua Province. The council was recently elected. Standing (left to right) are: Father Leon Krop, Father Robert Gryzbowski, Father Edmund Szymkiewicz, a native of Bradford, and former Minister Provincial; Brother Brian Newbigging. Seated are Father Joachim Giermek, Father Daniel Pietrzak, newly elected Minister Provincial, and Father Alexander Cymerman, Vicar Provincial.

Major Gift

Elmira — A major gift of \$100,000 was presented to Quest 82, the expansion and renovation program of St. Joseph's Hospital here, by Robert E. Agan, executive vice president of Hardinge Brothers. The paid-in-full pledge will be earmarked for the new intensive care/

coronary care unit in the program.

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Sister Ruth Agnes Kesselring, SSJ

Viewpoint: Sisters Reflect

A Very Real 'Heart Journey'

In life's journey there is often a certain scripture passage that moves from the level of thought into the heart where it can be felt with every heartbeat. "He did not cling to His equality with God but emptied Himself..." Philippians 2:6 is for me the one that seems to have permeated my whole life. That text has brought me to some small realization of what the Incarnation really means: that Jesus was willing (more than that: he chose) to become one of us; that he did not cling to being God; that he was satisfied with the state that was ours.

That realization has made me examine my attitude about my own finiteness. Am I satisfied with the kind of humanity that is mine? Do I choose to have the gifts, the personality, the weaknesses that God gave me? I feel a strong call to that kind of poverty that Jesus chose in becoming one of us.

As the years go on, every new phase of life, every new demand, every new ministry seems to bring me to either a deeper or a different aspect of this same truth. Often I do not realize immediately that this new circumstance is another variation of this invitation — to accept my humanity anew.

In September 1980, a serious heart attack provided me a challenging opportunity to affirm a humanity very different from that which had been mine. Limitations were imposed foreign to my nature. The physical limitations, the lack of energy, the inability to do many of the things I had taken for granted, presented a brand new kind of acceptance of my humanity. The call I heard was to accept BEING rather than DOING.

At this time, the word from Ezekiel, "I shall give you a new heart..." assumed a deeper meaning. It was a changed heart, scarred and weaker, that gave me a different humanity to accept during

the succeeding fifteen months.

At Christmastime a change in symptoms prompted having an angiogram which verified the need for open heart surgery. Should I have it? Who will do it? Where? When? Each of these decisions brought another opportunity to accept the poverty of my finiteness.

The two-month wait sounded like an eternity but in reality it was well timed to prepare for the surgery. I found myself praying and thinking through the five stages of death/dying/healing: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. It was a time of growth in faith and trust. It gave me a deeper realization and appreciation of the support of community, family and friends. It gave me time to prepare for the next phase of humanity (or possibly, eternity) that would be mine.

The anointing of the sick during a special liturgy with my local community and a para-liturgical anointing with a group of friends had given me great support and true inner healing. By the first week of Lent, the time for surgery, I experienced great peace. The flood of prayers offered for me from all sides made me confident in expecting a miracle. That, I received — and even more!

Lent was a good time for the healing that had to take place. The return to strength inched along as that "new heart" was pumping an increased supply of life-giving blood through my body. Joyfully, I began to sense a return to health, the possession of re-created life. When Easter arrived I felt that I, too, had risen with the Lord!

Now there is another phase of acceptance: of listening to my body as it insists on exercise or rest, of being willing to BE rather than DO. Again, I hear the call to accept this healing humanity and at the same time to rejoice with the risen Christ with my new life, my new heart. As Christ allowed me to be emptied, so he now fills me! I cry out with gratitude for all that has been mine in this journey of the heart.

Guild Officers

The St. Joseph's Villa Guild recently elected the following officers: Maryanne Abasciano, president; Marion Spezio, first vice president; Lucille Zicari, second vice president; Bertha Barrese, recording secretary; Florence Dandrea, corresponding secretary; and Grace Abasciano, treasurer. They will be installed at a luncheon at the Colonial Restaurant June 15.

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Jessica thanks you. Jeremy thanks you.
Jerry thanks you. MaryAnn thanks you.
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