

Congregations honor jubilarians

Sisters celebrate years of service

EDITORS' NOTE: This is the second in a series honoring women religious celebrating their jubilees this year.

Fifty-three Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester are celebrating their jubilees this year. The order honored its jubilarians with a liturgy and reception at the SSJ motherhouse, 4095 East Ave., Rochester, on Sept. 25.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, who celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination last June, was the celebrant.

The following is a list of Sisters of St. Joseph celebrating their 70th and 60th anniversaries. The information and comments were provided by the order's public relations office. Call 716/586-1000, ext. 72, for information.



The Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse is located at 4095 East Ave. in Pittsford. Bishop Joseph L. Hogan was the celebrant for the liturgy and reception honoring this year's jubilarians.

Celebrating 70 years



Sister Coletta Sroczyk was born in Rakoszowa, Poland. She taught elementary students at St. Casimir, Elmira; St. Hyacinth, Auburn; St. Stanislaus, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ambrose, and Immaculate Heart of Mary, all in Rochester; and St. Patrick, Corning.



Sister Immaculata Connelly, is a native of Long Island. She taught elementary students at Holy Apostles and Immaculate Conception in Rochester; St. Peter and Paul, Elmira; St. Francis DeSales, Geneva; St. Patrick, Corning; Holy Trinity, Webster; and St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads.

She also taught English at Nazareth Academy and St. Agnes High School, both in Rochester; and DeSales High School, Geneva.

Sister Connelly earned a master's degree in English from St. Bonaventure University, Olean, N.Y., in 1943, and a master's degree in library science from SUNY Geneseo in 1960.

Celebrating 60 years

Sister Mary Bernadette Anselin, a native of Rochester, taught throughout the diocese. In Rochester, she taught at Immaculate Conception, St. Monica, and St. Anne. She served as principal at Blessed Sacrament, St. Anne's and Holy Rosary in Rochester; and at St. Anthony's, Elmira.

Sister Anselin is now a member of the Spirituality Ministry Team at the motherhouse.

Sister Francis David Backman is a native of Weedsport.

"Selma, Ala., stands out as my most-loved ministry. In Selma we reached out to the poorest, materially, but learned how rich they were spiritually. To do what was needed we had to devise ways and means — we were whites caring for blacks a half century ago. To this day I have strong friends and beautiful memories of my stay in the South."



"I worked in the Fathers' office in Selma, Ala., (the sisters came to Alabama to work with Edmundite Fathers in 1940) and was much impressed with the faith that brought about the growth of the Southern Missions," said Sister Alma Joseph Bauman, a native of Rochester. "In my days there, they took over the hospital for blacks and renamed it Good Samaritan Hospital."

Sister Gemma Maria Cammilleri is a native of Rochester.

"My teaching ministry of nine years at St. Francis Xavier was satisfying. I worked with great nuns and pastors. I was very happy in doing God's work. I taught, did church work, and also distributed surplus food in our school."

"I chose religious life because God called me. I had to come to be happy. God has always been here."



"My ministry has been in education at the elementary level. Being a teacher in a Catholic school gives me the opportunity to create an environment where academic studies are complemented by prayer, liturgical celebrations, and traditional devotions," said Sister Marie Stanislaus Chwalek, a native of Rochester. "It is a rewarding experience to be part of a vibrant faith community."



Sister Teresa Marie Delmonte is a native of Auburn.

"In my career I taught grades from kindergarten to fourth," Sister Delmonte said.

"I taught first grade for 42 years and am still involved at St. Stephen's/St. Francis DeSales School in Geneva by giving break time to the teachers," she added. "I love to see the children grow intellectually and spiritually, and able to read by the end of the year."



"I found both teaching and working with the elderly very satisfying experiences because I felt I was able to be of service to God's people," said Sister Louise Dolan, a native of Auburn.

"Sister Marcella Reagan, principal of Nazareth Academy, made a great impression on me long before I entered. When my father, who had worked in a foundry, became ill, Sister Marcella gave him a job in spite of his poor health. Over the years Sister became a true friend to our family and when I was missioned to the Academy I appreciated more than ever her kindness, integrity, and prayerfulness."



Sister Mary Caroline Donohue is a native of Rochester.

"I spent five years in Canandaigua and moved along with the students in three grades — 6, 7, and 8. They got to know me very well, and I got to know them. One catastrophe was a night at 2 a.m. when the entire ceiling caved in on the second floor of the convent and there were only three of us in the building."

"In the seven years I taught 8th grade in St. Mary's School, Elmira, I chanced to meet an employee of the Mohawk Bakery who asked me about instructions for lay people interested in our faith," said Sister Clarice Fischette, a native of Clyde. "It was the beginning of a close friendship which lasted from 1964 to 1991 — 27 years as a Catholic until her death on Thanksgiving Day of 1991."



Sister Mary Patrick Fleeton is a native of County Antrim, Ireland.

"I was and continue to be enthusiastic about all my ministries. Teaching came naturally to me and I have never ceased instructing others. There are teachable moments in many of our contacts with the sick, the lonely, with children and young adults, with the mature, and with the dying."



"Father John Merklinger, pastor of St. Mary's, Dansville (1958-62), left a very strong impression upon me," said Sister Helen Gray, a native of Ilion, N.Y. "He was ever there as a guiding light and with an inspiring look to the future church. He opened my eyes as to how to be a neighbor to all people."



Sister Rose Ellen Haefele is a native of Rochester.

"I enjoyed teaching both elementary and high school because it was a wonderful challenge to help prepare the Christian leaders of the future."

"Working with the elderly at Mariner House in Rochester and St. John's in Greece was totally different from teaching. To bring the Eucharist to the elderly and to help them in their loneliness and suffering through my parish ministry was very rewarding. I knew, as intermediary for the parish, of the generosity of its people and I could feel the love and gratitude of those I served. It was with great sorrow that I retired from that work."



Sister St. Francis Kane, 94, is a native of Susquehanna, Pa.

She possessed a great talent for writing original plays, according to her fellow sisters, who inspired and encouraged her to produce plays with her school children.

Sister Kane also wrote religious poetry, some of which was published in Catholic magazines. In later years she tended roses and bushes on the motherhouse grounds, giving joy to sisters and visitors alike.



"The happiest and most memorable years were spent at St. Lucy's in Rochester," according to Sister Margaret Louise Konsick, a native

