

FEATURE

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But she continued to support Holy Angels and the Rochester Carmelite Sisters — and in 1958, Father Brown — through soliciting money.

She also began to collect fruit and vegetables from the farms around her family farm in Penfield, to bring them to Holy Angels Home and St. Joseph's House of Hospitality.

But her current focus is her bottle and can collecting.

That effort began in 1989.

"I was walking with a friend," Miller recalled. "She picked up a dirty can. I said 'That's dirty,' and she said 'It's a nickel.'"

Miller explained that she drank only milk, and was not familiar with the returnable bottle and can deposit law in the state. But after her friend explained the law to her, she was suddenly inspired and began her collecting efforts.

Meanwhile, she had learned about the Franciscan missions years before, because one of the sisters stationed at Holy Angels had two cousins who were Capuchin Franciscans in Pittsburgh. So she contacted the Franciscan mission office there, and has been sending the money to them since.

The amount of the money she raises is part of the reason for the newsletter, Miller said.

"If you do anything of this magnitude per month, then you should have it documented," she said. "It's not peanuts."

Each newsletter includes a photocopy of the latest check sent to the Franciscans, and lists donations from numerous people (by first name) and businesses.

Distributing the newsletter has also helped to spread the word of her efforts.

"If I didn't, I don't think I'd have the following," she speculated.

The Franciscans themselves are fans of her newsletters, according to Theresa Bauer, office manager of the Capuchin



Matthew Scott/Staff photographer
Dorothy Miller leaves the House of Guitars after collecting its cans and bottles. She collects from many local businesses.

Franciscan mission office in Pittsburgh.

"We look forward to the newsletters," Bauer acknowledged in a telephone conversation with the *Catholic Courier*. "We enjoy reading all the details, the things people say."

Bauer said the money Miller sends has been used for a broad range of Franciscan mission efforts around the world — from financially supporting the missionaries themselves, to supplying food and medical

Seniors

MONTHLY FEATURE



aid in African nations, to rebuilding the church in Russia. She noted that the missions office regularly cites Miller as an example of generous and consistent support.

"She's truly a gift from God," Bauer remarked. "She helps so many people."

Miller credits growing up — and working — on a farm for her stamina in pursuing her charitable efforts. This past February, though, she fell and hurt her back, slowing her down. The pain is not completely gone, and she wonders if age is finally catching up with her.

"I'll be tapering down" in the near future, she said. "It's getting to be too much."

But she nevertheless intends to persevere as long as she can.

"I've got it built up now," she says matter-of-factly. "I hate to throw it all away."

She acknowledges that "it's dirty work. It's messy work." But she keeps it up because "I love people anyway."

Besides, she added, "I know what the end result is. Actually what you are doing is saving lives, and more than saving lives, you're motivating people to be charitable."

One nickel at a time.

Day to target aging, dignity

Nazareth College, in conjunction with Rochester Friendly Senior Services, is cosponsoring the third annual Growing Older with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity conference Wednesday, May 21, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the Nazareth College Arts Center, 4245 East Ave., Rochester.

The keynote speaker will be Sister Carol Taylor, CSFN, assistant professor at Holy Family College, Philadelphia. A nurse ethicist, she will talk about dignity and aging, emphasizing ways in which older adults can work with health-care professionals to ensure quality care.

Syracuse community activists Richard and Lisa Mundy will present "A Couple's Pilgrimage: Finding Meaning Leads to Enhanced Freedom."

The day will also include a panel discussion of "Perspectives on Growing Older." The scheduled panelists are community volunteers Betty and Ted Altier, retired nursing director Georgia Burnelle, and Mary Bush, chairperson of Nazareth College's history/political science department.

The emcee for the day will be Don Alhart, news anchor at WOKR-TV Channel 13.

The conference is free. Advance registration is required by May 14. To register, call Nazareth College's nursing department at 716/389-2709.

For information, call Denise Hubler, 716/385-0239, or Charla Kucko, 716/389-2456.

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