

## FEATURE

## SSJ marks 100th birthday with friends and family



PITTSFORD — Klondike gold fever was spreading.

A song called "Stars and Stripes Forever," was sweeping the nation.

And Spanish rule of Cuba was drawing critical attention from the United States.

It was all happening a century ago when Sister Nathalie Brahler, SSJ, entered the world Sept. 11, 1897, as the daughter of Louis and Mary Brahler, members of Holy Trinity Parish, Webster.

Sister Brahler currently lives at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary, 4095 East Ave. She has suffered substantial hearing loss and needs to use a wheelchair to get around, but such challenges don't seem to faze the centenarian who described her life at the infirmary as "good."

Sister Catherine Judge, SSJ, local coordinating superior at the infirmary, said Sister Brahler likes to attend daily Mass, go to programs with the other sisters and visit such friends as her 102-year-old neighbor, Sister Rose Irene Reisdorf, SSJ.

Sister Brahler entered her order as a novice in 1919. Like many women in her order, Sister Brahler spent most of her professional life in the diocese's schools, teaching elementary age children in Rochester, Auburn, Dansville, Elmira, Corning, Canandaigua, Avon and Spencerport.

Her first teaching job was at St. Augustine's in Rochester, where she worked from 1920 to 1924. She last taught from 1963 to 1964 at St. Agnes in Avon.

One of her teaching colleagues, Sister Albertus Schauseil, SSJ, worked with Sister Brahler at St. Patrick's, Dansville, and St. Mary's, Elmira. She reminisced that Sister Brahler liked to play cards and kid around, but was a serious educator.

"The children loved her," Sister Schauseil said.

Sister Brahler's niece, Louise Cleary of Penfield, remembered traveling to Elmira as a child with her family and visiting Sister Brahler in her classroom. She said her aunt loved to show off any work that her students had done in class.

"She loved being a teacher," Cleary



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

(Top left photo) Sister Nathalie Brahler, SSJ, 100, right, enjoys a visit Oct. 3 with Sister Rose Irene Reisdorf, SSJ, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary. The longtime educator also enjoys praying the rosary and attending daily Mass.

said.

Sister Schauseil added that she and Sister Sarah Grundman, SSJ, accompanied Sister Brahler to a birthday party last month. Cleary planned in her aunt's honor. Cleary recalled that her 2-year-old grandson, Jacob Thomas Gauger, helped his aunt blow out the candles on her cake. "She absolutely adores that child," Cleary said.

A local TV news station showed up and taped an interview with her and Sister Brahler at the party, Sister Schauseil said.

"She was as clear as a bell," Sister Schauseil said, delighted that Sister Brahler had uttered "For pity's sake!" at the party.

"That's one of her pet expressions," Sister Schauseil said. "No matter what happened, she said it."

On and off throughout her career, Sister Brahler held non-teaching positions. For example, during the summer of 1937, she was a domestic at St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester. She was also a superi-

or at St. Lucy's Parish in Rochester from 1942 to 1947, and a helper at St. Ann's Home in Rochester in 1963.

After leaving teaching in 1964, Sister Brahler became a seamstress at the motherhouse, a position she held until her retirement in 1990.

— Rob Cullivan

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## God, life after 50 subject of talk at St. Ann's

Dr. Nathan Kollar of St. John Fisher College will speak on "God and Me and Life after 50" at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 14, at St. Ann's Community, 1500

Portland Ave., Rochester.

Retirees are welcome to the program, part of St. Bernard's on the Road series.

## Prayer . . .

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