



Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary
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Winter, 2018

Christmas Greetings!

It's hard to believe that yet another year has sped by since you received our last Christmas newsletter! There has been a flurry of activity since last fall and it seems as though we are always striving to keep up with responding to the needs of the communities in which we serve.

As an example, I'd like to share Sister Linda Hatton's new ministry with you. Sister Linda, as you may remember, served as our Province Leader from 2007 to 2017. After a well-deserved sabbatical, she is enthusiastically pursuing a new ministry path. Sister Linda is offering her experience, prayer and presence to both the clergy and the rural parishes in Ford and Iroquois counties in Illinois. She hopes to serve as a beacon of light to small faith communities and their spiritual needs, thereby fulfilling our newly formed Rural Ministry Initiative.

We have always supported rural ministry in this diocese as we've served in Beaverville, Momence, Manteno, Hopkins Park and Irwin going as far back as 1895 when our predecessors first established Holy Family Academy in Beaverville. By the following year, 1896, our Novitiate had been established in the same small community. We have a strong and long-standing presence in this locale which makes the use of Sister Linda's gifts so valuable.

St. Mary's Church in Beaverville, Illinois has graciously offered Sister Linda rent-free housing in their rectory. Since she receives no stipend whatsoever, the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary are the sole support of her ministry. She plans to apply for various grants to help offset her expenses but we have a saying... "where one is, we all are" and she knows that we will provide whatever is needed.

Even though all of the rural parishes in which she is present have at least one weekend Mass, their priests are serving two to four parishes each week! With Sister Linda's involvement, she is able to offer more to the parishioners by visiting all of the churches, introducing herself, meeting with the women involved in CCW (Catholic Council of Women), offering education for the lay leaders of parishes, while lifting their enthusiasm and extending spiritual support where needed.

Sister has a wealth of knowledge and experience, having served in parishes both urban and rural. She is no stranger to rural ministry. She has trained Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, those who minister to the sick and shut-ins and those preparing for marriage and baptism. Due to lack

of availability and travel constraints, Sister Linda has been able to offer “time” to these parishes that their priests just do not have. Time to educate, companion, share and create new ways to renew their passion for prayer life.

In years past, along with Sister Myra Lambert, she ministered in three rural downstate parishes that did not even *have* resident pastors. She has taught in elementary schools in Chicago, served as a Pastoral Minister, Director of Liturgy and our own Directress of Formation, to name just a few. Every person of faith needs, wants and deserves spiritual enrichment and Sister Linda is certainly qualified! It is not always financial needs that others lack, but often *spiritual* needs, as well. This is why it is a perfect ministry for her. Her outreach is vast and the reward is, too. I can only imagine how comforting it is in the little town of Beaverville when one gazes up and sees the light burning on the second floor of the rectory, reaffirming her presence among them.

So during this holy and giving time of the year, we invite you to partner with us to help provide the means by which Sister Linda may continue forward, offering her time and talent to the small communities in east central Illinois and elsewhere. And let us not forget our other many ministries that would benefit from your help.

All of our sisters wish God’s blessings on you and your families and we offer our love and prayers, too. Please keep us in your prayers as well.

Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year! Enjoy this glorious season!

In Mary’s Heart,

Sister Carol, SSCM

Sr. Carol Karnitsky, sscm
Province Leader

PS: We have another new and exciting project in the works! More to follow in our next letter.