

The Way of the Cross



The Newsletter of *The Servants of the Sacred Cross*
Anglican ■ Roman Catholic ■ Orthodox

Volume 2, Issue 1

"The Cross is my Anchor"

Lent 2006

Mother's message!

Dear friends in Christ,

It is mid-Lent. We journey to the Cross, reflecting on the Death and Passion of Our Lord and Saviour. We make little sacrifices, we fast, we pray. The soul is in darkness, we gaze at the suffering Christ, the Sorrowful Mother at His feet. We long for the light and glory of the resurrection that is surely to come on Easter Day.

It has been a busy few months since our last newsletter. I attended the Annual Forward in Faith National Assembly in Pittsburgh. We have received two Associates and inquiries pour in from around the world, mostly via our web site.

In this issue we begin a series of articles about the Sisters. I have asked each one to write a short piece about their vocational call, their life and work in their own parishes and communities and will include them all in future newsletters.

May you all have a holy Lent and a joyous and blessed Easter.

In the Cross of Christ,

Mother Wendy, Superior

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Forward in Faith 2005 National Assembly

The Servants of the Sacred Cross (SSC) is officially affiliated with Forward in Faith, North America (FiFNA). This organization compliments and supports our traditional ethos and mandate. We are richly blessed by this association with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ. We hold dear the FiFNA motto: *"Upholding the Faith and Order of the undivided Church"*. The 2005 FiFNA Assembly, *At the Name of Jesus*, was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the Westin Convention Centre from November 13-15. The Community elected Mother Wendy and Sister Joan as delegates to the Annual Assembly. Unfortunately, Sister Joan was unable to attend.

This particular Assembly was especially important, coming at a time when the Anglican Communion is in chaos and is poised for a possible split following the consecration of a practicing homosexual as a Bishop in the Diocese of New Hampshire in the USA and the blessing of same-sex couples in the Diocese of New Westminster in Canada. SSC honours the traditional Biblical and Catholic teaching on human sexuality, marriage and the family. We pray that the Anglican Communion will firmly uphold the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution that declared *"homosexual practice as incompatible with the Scripture"*.

Bishop Donald Harvey, SSC's Episcopal Visitor, was the Chaplain for the three day event and preacher at the main Mass. He also gave a most interesting presentation on the Anglican Church of Canada, from his perspective as the Moderator of the Anglican Communion Network in Canada. He spoke about the denial of the crisis among Anglicans in Canada and said that repentance by the Church, for its departure from the teaching of Holy Scripture, must be forthcoming and be "real".

The FiFNA Assembly followed on the heels of another gathering, in the same venue, of over two thousand orthodox Anglicans from around the world, including a number of Primates, Bishops, clergy and laity. *The Hope and A Future Conference* was sponsored by the Anglican Communion Network. It was a great blessing that several of those attendees stayed on for the FiFNA conference. One key speaker at both conferences was Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini, Primate of the Province of the Episcopal Church of Rwanda.



Mother Wendy with Julia Smead, of the FiFNA National Office, during one of the workshops at the Assembly.



(L-R) Bishop Keith Ackerman, President of FiFNA, Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini, Primate of Rwanda, and SSC's Visitor, Bishop Donald Harvey, Chaplain of the 2005 Assembly.

The Archbishop spoke of the terrible suffering from genocide in Rwanda, leaving the Church and the country in chaos. There are one million Anglicans in the tiny country of Rwanda. His Grace spoke at length about the current Anglican Communion crisis, telling listeners that *"Jesus will win!"*. All Bishops and clergy who spoke at the Assembly were most inspiring in their encouragement to stand firm in the Faith and proclaim the Gospel of Christ, no matter what the cost.

New Associates for SSC

The Community has been blessed in this holy Lenten season by God's call to two new Associates who have recently been received. On March 5, 2006, The First Sunday in Lent, Phyllis Kroeger was admitted during a Mass at St. Aidan's Anglican Catholic Church of Canada parish in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Phyllis and her family have been parishioners of St. Aidan's since last fall and live in the Halifax area. St. Aidan's is also Mother Wendy's home parish and Mother is deeply thankful to have this gift of fellowship with an SSC Associate so near to her. The Rector, Father Craig Botterill, received



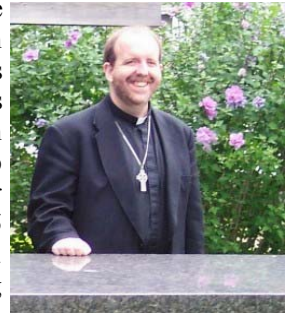
Fr. Botterill, Mother and Phyllis

Phyllis' promise to live in obedience to the Rule of an SSC Associate.

At Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Marlborough, Massachusetts, Bishop Harvey received Father Michael McKinnon as an Associate on March 19th. Father is Rector of Holy Trinity which is a parish of the Anglican Communion Network. Bishop Harvey

serves as Episcopal Visitor to the parish and spent a full week with Father McKinnon and parishioners as part of his regular visitation. As Diocesan Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, Bishop Harvey had ordained Father McKinnon to the diaconate in 1995 and then to the priesthood in 1996. Father is married with two young daughters. He is currently starting a new Chapter of Forward in Faith North America to serve the New England area and has been appointed Chaplain of the New England Chaplaincy of the Forward in Faith Convocation of the Anglican Communion Network

We are deeply thankful that Phyllis and Fr. Michael have answered God's call in this way. As Associates they live a simple Rule of Life that mirrors that of the Sisters. Inquiries are welcome from men and women who feel called to support the work and prayer life of SSC in its particular ethos and spirituality. This affiliation creates a strong bond that becomes an important means to upholding the spiritual lives of all of us.



Fr. Michael McKinnon

Celebrations of thanksgiving in Australia!



Sr. Teresa, Archbishop Hickey, Sr. Vedette and Fr. Vinh

Roman Catholic SSC Novices, Sister Vedette Lendich and Sister Teresa Inni, in Perth, Australia were blessed to have the Archbishop of Perth, The Most Rev. Barry James Hickey, celebrate a Mass of thanksgiving for their vocations. The Mass took place after their return from the Community's Chapter week in Canada last fall, during which time they were Clothed as Novices.

The Mass took place at Good Shepherd Parish in Lockridge, Western Australia. Parish Priest is Father Van Vinh Doug. A reception followed the Mass.

The Community is very grateful for Archbishop Hickey's encouragement and support. He had personally admitted Sister Vedette and Sister Teresa as Postulants, on behalf of SSC, a year earlier. In writing to Mother Wendy, His Grace described the SSC vocation as a "joyful and prayerful" one and indicated his hope for more SSC Sisters in Australia.

The Sisters have been warmly received in their parishes and communities. As married women they are blessed by families who fully support their vocations.

SSC outreach via the World Wide Web

Around the time that The Servants of the Sacred Cross was founded, in the year 2000, an interesting article entitled, *Religious Orders Increasing Presence on World Wide Web* was published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. It indicated that an increasing number of Religious Orders use the Web as a tool in a variety of aspects of their Communities. "Vocation recruitment, ministry information and historical background top the purposes for developing the Web sites" the article states. The statistics presented in the article were compiled from a survey of Catholic Institutes of Consecrated Life. The statistics were impressive and convinced Mother Wendy that potential aspirants to SSC could be reached via a Web site of our own.

Mother designed the first basic Web site and it was hosted free of charge by a traditional Anglican organization which supported the Community's goals. Nevertheless, that Web site was, by the Grace of God, the vehicle that led some of the Community's present Sisters to make the first inquiries after the establishment of SSC. It thus appeared from the beginning that this would be an important vehicle for making the Community known, reaching a large number of people around the world at very little cost.

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Web... *(Continued from page 2)*

In fact, the Web site proved to be so important in the growth and evolution of the Community that a more professional design with new domain name and hosting was felt to be an excellent investment.

Thus, a year ago, on Ash Wednesday 2005, the Community launched the “new and improved” Web site. Mother worked with Scott Hupman, owner of the digital design and multimedia firm, SAHDigital, in Nova Scotia. See: <http://www.sahdigital.com/>.

Taking the basic text information from the original site, Scott designed the impressive graphics and header. He was outstanding in his attention to detail, choosing the colours, photos and effects that would best represent the spirit of SSC. His expertise resulted in a truly beautiful Web site, more user friendly and professional. Scott’s reliability, patience, ongoing interest and dedication to keeping the site up-dated and improved have been truly appreciated.

In the past year the SSC Web site has been visited over 7000 times!! This figure represents about 180,000 hits. At every hour of the day someone, somewhere in the world, is visiting the Community’s Web pages. Each month the average number of daily visits has increased. Visitors have reached us from Canada, the USA, Australia, Sweden, Germany, Greece, Finland, the UK, France, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Ireland, Italy, Slovak Republic, Japan, India, Seychelles, Norway, Russia, Netherlands, Indonesia, Mexico, Spain, Singapore, Israel, Peru, Brazil, Belgium, Argentina, Ghana, Guatemala, Malta, Portugal and others. It is obvious that we are already tapping in to a huge resource that would not have been available to Religious Orders in an earlier era.

The survey mentioned in the article cites “outreach” as being one of the most important uses for a Community’s Web site. The same holds true for SSC’s Web pages. Mother Wendy receives a regular flow of inquiries from those interested in learning more about becoming a Sister or Associate. She finds that her correspondence, sometimes lengthy and in-depth, becomes a ministry of outreach, touching her own life, and that of others, in remarkable and unexpected ways.

We hope to keep improving our Web site, perhaps making it a little more sophisticated as we go along and using it to its full potential in ways that we may not have yet discovered. We see this instrument as one means of fulfilling our mandate to serve God and His people as we spread the Gospel. May we glorify God in all ways in which we serve Him.

Visit us on the Web: www.TheSacredCross.org



Meet Sister Lea Davis

God’s Surprises *By Sister Lea Davis, SSC*

My call to SSC is an example of how God’s plans for each of us can be a wonderful surprise and open doors we never imagined existed. From my parents’ example I learned a very casual, vague style of Christian life and belief: my mother’s church group met in community halls and was non-liturgical and charismatic in a restrained way, and my father had some bad childhood experiences which inclined him to avoid churches, so I thought like many people that it was OK to be a Christian without attending church. In time, God led me to marry my husband, Norman, and our marriage was happy. But eventually we decided together that our lives were lacking a spiritual dimension; so we started attending his old Anglican church and had our marriage blessed at our 10th anniversary.

I was completely unfamiliar with liturgical, sacramental church life, but I was attracted by the majestic organ music and the poetry of the Book of Common Prayer, and I was intrigued because I could sense there was an ancient depth of meaning behind the ceremonial. So I went to confirmation classes out of curiosity; I also attended a Bible study and was inspired to read the whole Bible again. Through all this I finally came to understand the true meaning of Jesus’ loving sacrifice of Himself for us, and I wanted to offer my love to Him in return.

When I was baptized and confirmed, I had a very moving spiritual experience, and was inspired to start learning everything I could about Christianity, starting with the history of the Church. I also had a strong desire to offer myself to God and my skills to God’s service in some special way, and I started searching to find the role in the Church that I was sure He had prepared for me. Over the following years I got involved in various study groups and ministries in our church, and learned a lot from them, but none of them seemed to give me a true sense of fulfillment. One day my attention was drawn to a little ad for SSC in a traditional Anglican magazine that we read, and I noted that married women were allowed to join, so out of curiosity I sent an e-mail to ask for more information.

I didn’t know much about the “religious life” at the time, having never paid attention to the concept because it didn’t seem very relevant to me as a married woman. But most of the things I started to learn about SSC satisfied a sense of rightness within me,

(Continued on back page)



Sister Lea prepares the sanctuary before Mass in her parish of Christ the King in Calgary, Alberta.

Are you called to be a Sister or Associate??

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Can you help us???

The Sisters need financial support in order to carry out the work to which they are called, in a life of prayer and service. Please help us if you can! All donations are received with prayerful gratitude.

***SSC is a Registered Charity in Canada
and an Incorporated Non-Profit Society***

Most importantly, we ask for your prayers.

Words for Lent from some of the great Carmelite Saints

Saint John of the Cross

"When something distasteful or unpleasant comes your way, remember Christ crucified and be silent." **The Letters**

"It is fitting that the soul be in this sepulcher of dark death in order that it attain the spiritual resurrection for which it hopes."

Dark Night of the Soul

Saint Teresa of Avila

"Do you know what it means to be truly spiritual? It means becoming the slaves of God. Marked with His brand, which is that of the Cross,"

Interior Castle

"Fix your eyes on the Crucified and everything will become small for you."

Interior Castle

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus

"Yes, Jesus is there with His Cross! Privileged one of His love, He wills to make you like Him! Why be frightened at not being able to carry this cross without weakening?"

General Correspondence

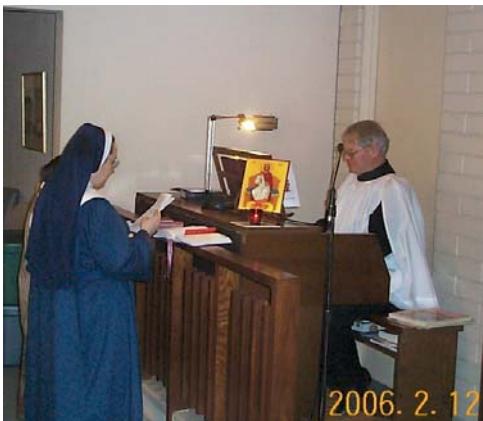
Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

"The Saviour hangs before you with a pierced heart. He has spilled His heart's blood to win your heart....The arms of the Crucified are spread out to draw you to His heart. He wants your life in order to give you His."

Last Retreat

Sister Lea ...*(Continued from page 3)*

and I sensed a kindred spirit in my correspondence with Mother Wendy, so I seriously considered and prayed for several months to discover whether it was God's plan for me, despite the fact that a few of the requirements made me feel uncomfortable initially. For example, the requirement to wear the habit seemed to conflict with my shyness, until I realized that it was a way of witnessing my faith to others without having to raise the topic myself! I was about 80% sure that God was calling me to SSC when I sent in my application and arranged to travel to the next Chapter meeting. Some of my uncertainty went away when a friend donated money to pay for the trip, and the rest of it vanished when I actually met everyone in person and discovered that what seemed too good to be true, was actually true. Since then I've never had any serious doubt as to my calling. It has been challenging learning to live by the Rule while working at a full time job, but very much worthwhile, as I discovered that the structure imposed on my life by the Rule provided a balance that enriched me and provided a sure foundation for spiritual and personal growth. Being part of the SSC Community has added a new dimension to my life as well, knowing that I am a member of a special spiritual family whose members support each other with love and prayer. Earlier in the same year that I took my first vows, Norman and I went through a period of discernment together and recognized that God was calling us to leave the Anglican Church of Canada and join the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada (Traditional Anglican Communion) instead. It was difficult to say good-bye to our friends at our old parish, but the rightness of our choice was confirmed by new joys and new doors that opened to us. Norman is now studying for the priesthood, and I have already found a few areas of service through which I can offer the talents God gave me to help support my new parish and the national church as well. I look back at my life now with the realization that only a few years ago, I never would have believed it if I had been told where I would end up, and how rewarding it would be. I now look forward to the next wonderful surprise that God has in store for us!



Sister Lea, a member of her church choir, practices a hymn with the organist.

Sister Lea lives, with her husband, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. She entered the Postulancy of The Servants of the Sacred Cross in September 2001, was Clothed as a Novice the following year and Professed First Vows in September of 2004.