



Heritage Happenings

Archives Office
October 2019

Lest We Forget...



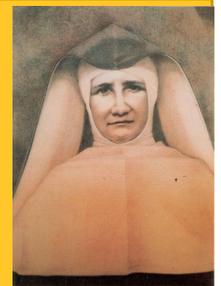
Preparations for Reception are down to just a month with their Retreat starting in less than a month. What do you remember about the weeks before you entered the convent? Did you have a list telling you what to bring along? Can you imagine what would these four women be doing?



SEWING: Habits are progressing. The pattern was fairly simple but had to be hand sewn during the daytime when there was light or in the evening by kerosene lamp. Patterns probably came from Mother Caroline with instructions on how to wear them.



In 1869 the traditional habit for a religious included: coif, wimple (a white cloth folded in a specific manner tied around the neck and head, so as to hide the hair; the guimpe covered the lower part of the neck, shoulders, and could extend over the chest—collar); black veil; habit/tunic: resembled a loose cloak or garment with pleats from the upper– mid chest down to the ground. Serge fabric was used to make this tunic. Such material was woven at the mills in St. Nazianz. A scapular hung down the front and back as a sign of being yoked to Christ. A rosary made of wooden beads hung off the cord or belt. Looking at Sister Seraphica, notice her collar. This had to be our earliest habit.



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Rosary and Cord: Both of these were essential to the habit. *The photo on the right shows a foot-treadled cord maker.* An electric machine in 1964 was designed to run with wool fiber, not cotton. The wool is filled with natural lanolin, which acted as a lubricant and allowed the shuttle to move around easily. Cotton cords were more difficult for the machine but cotton was much easier to care for...and could be bleached! Ten strings are pulled down through the center. Strands from 31 spools of cotton feed upwards and across, like spokes of a wheel, to meet it. Then, voila! A shuttle picks up the outer string and binds it around the “filler” to create a cord – kind of like hair being braided.



Jamison out of Chicago provided cords for hundreds of communities. Did you know: blue cords for the Marist Missionary Sisters, black cords for the Holy Cross Order, brown cords for other groups, and red cords for the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, the Hartwell Sisters. Our cords were wool originally and then we switched to cotton. We still have samples of both. This image shows cord making at a heritage museum which is probably more like how cords were made in St. Nazianz before machines took over. Putting the knots in the cord just right is still a challenge but you can learn to do it by watching YouTube. (Article:

“Confessions of a Cord-Maker” by Br. Mark Liggett July 15, 2019 Friar Voices)

Did the Sisters make their own rosaries? Possibly, especially if made from wooden beads, of which we have 1-2 in archives. We also have Mother Perpetua’s rosary and Mother Generose’s but neither are wooden beads. Both are seven decade rosaries but crucifix differs on both. Several of our Sisters continue to make rosaries and fix those in need of repair.

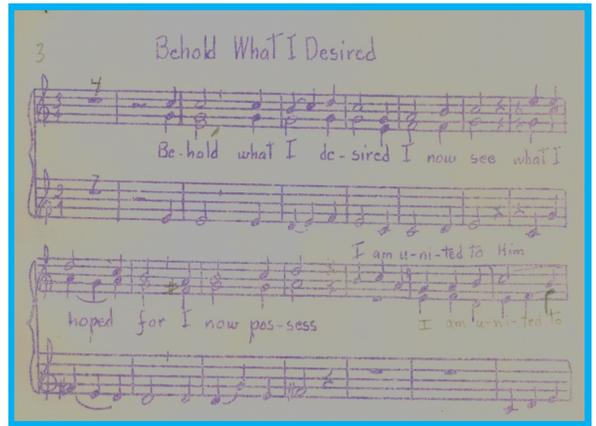




“Behold What I Desired I Now See”

Music written by Singenberger way back in 1906 still has relevance today. Near the end of August Sr. Natalie received a call from the Monastery of the Holy Cross Discalced Carmelite Nuns in

Iron Mountain. Their community was in the process of putting together a “homemade” hymnal to be used for Mass and Benediction. They thought this song was written by one of our Sisters and were seeking permission to use it. In 1906 John Singenberger was teaching music here and he wrote our Profession songs. This one was used for Perpetual Vows. A copy of the music was sent to them including the organ music.



Meet Sister Francis Helen Bonde!



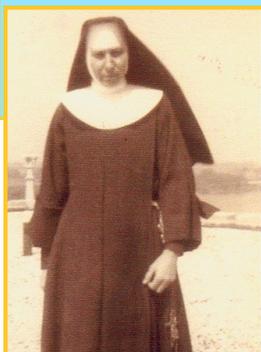
It's always nice to receive a photo of an “unknown Sister” and here she is. Ellen, who greets us in the morning cafeteria line, asked about Sister Francis Helen (Annie Bonde) Ellen's great Aunt. Lucille Strauss, niece of Sister Francis Helen, brought the following: “I went to St. Joseph's school. I graduated from 8th grade in 1946. I remember the convent having a farm and barn with milking cows. They had a hired hand to take care of it. Sister Francis Helen ran the dairy... I visited her a lot of times during my lunch hour. I always clued her in on what was going on in our family. She got one week vacation every five years and would come to stay with my Mother on our farm that week. Us kids were on our best behavior when she was there. To us it was an honor to have her at our home. They also had a huge garden and grew their own vegetables. Whatever Nuns knew gardening, they took care of it. Those were the good old days when everyone was assigned a job.” (Photo of Sister Francis Helen as a Candidate)



More information was available in her folder as written by a Sister who knew her before she died. She writes: *Sister Francis Helen spent much (if to all) of her 25 years of religious profession right at the Motherhouse. At first she was an apprentice to Sister Christina Lemberger, helping with the milking, doing the separating of cream from the milk, making the butter, etc. This was when the milk cellar was in the basement of the original building across from the “folding table” at the north end. (Folding table—in Laundry? Now the Bakery) The north end of old Bonaventure's/old clinic was the milk area. We don't have exact dates for dairy improvements, but time came when the Sisters were relieved of the milking but they carried on with the other jobs. In time (1925) the dairy was moved out of the main building to the basement of the ice-house area (St. Joseph's building). Sister Francis Helen once needed someone to milk a cow. When she met Sister Leufrieda who could milk, the job was hers...just this once.*



Sr. Frances Helen also had charge of the rabbit pen. When rats molested the rabbits, Sister would call upon Teddy, the infirmary dog, to come down “to take care of” the rat. NOTE: Teddy was a stray dog that had found his way to the second floor infirmary porch. There he found hearts and hands that gave him a pen and meals. The photo on right shows Sister Christina Lemberger with “Teddy”.



Sister Francis Helen was born August 24, 1890, the seventh child of a family of eight children. She entered the convent in 1919 and celebrated her 25th anniversary of her religious profession. She died at the Motherhouse August 30, 1947, age 57, professed 26 years.

