

Wichita ASC Associates

Spiritual Journey

Winter 2012

BRINGING NEW LIFE

I have been reflecting on how to give more meaning and energy to our Associate meetings at the Wichita Center. We are called the Questers, so I decided to go on a quest. I felt that we needed a jump start of some kind. We are an intergenerational group that represents many diverse ministries. Although other groups in the area are connected by being members of the same parish, we come from many parishes and areas of Wichita. Here is our mission:

Rooted in the ASC charism, we, the Questers, are called as lay faithful to embrace the cross and Paschal Mystery in our daily living; support the Sisters in their vision and ministry; and share with others our faith, prayers and compassion.

Motivated by a radical contemplative vision that exemplifies unconditional redeeming love, we commit ourselves to be a life-changing movement in the Church. We are not only a faithful, adoring, redeeming community dedicated to social justice, but also a multicultural and intergenerational group who walk in solidarity with Maria De Mattias and the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

The more I reflected on this mission, the more I zeroed in on the aspect of social justice as having life-changing significance. I mentioned my thoughts to our Sister Mentor, and she suggested that we do a survey of the members to see how they were feeling. There appeared to be a need for a new paradigm. When we presented this need at the next meeting, one of the Associates, Maxine Coppel, mentioned that a film series focusing on social justice might be something that could spur us to action. The Associates were very pleased with this suggestion. Our Area Coordinators (Rosemary Niedens and myself), our Local Leader (Nancy Diepenbrock), and our Sister Mentor (Angie Houska), met to discuss how to implement this idea of the film series. As a result, our first gathering is scheduled for Friday, February 10, in the Alumni Lounge at Newman University. The Associates are encouraged to come to the 5:00 p.m. Mass beforehand, then go to the Lounge for a meal that will be provided and which will be followed by the showing of the film, *Facing the Giants*. The other films that are being explored for use in the series are *The Mission*, *The Visitor*, *Pay It Forward*, and *I Am*. Someone will facilitate questions and discussion after the film in order to encourage reflection and action. I really think this is a good beginning that will forge a new path for us.



Lori Bengel,
Area Coordinator

BUILDING THE KINGDOM WITHIN PRISON WALLS

My name is Christy Hopkins, and I am currently incarcerated at the Mt. View Unit in Gatesville, Texas. I am also an Associate of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ. My sponsor, Sister Sophia Kammer, asked me to write an article about what I am doing for others and the Kingdom of God here in prison.

I remember when I started correspondence with Sister Sophia and began to read how St. Gaspar and St. Maria worked with the outcasts and -- those who were on the margins and fringes of society, giving them hope and leading them to Christ.

I knew I could do the same because what better place is there to do this kind of ministry than in a prison? Being in a maximum security prison is really hard. I see a lot of things that sadden me. But then I remember how hard it was for Jesus; yet, He endured it for our sake.

What I do foremost here is love others unconditionally. I try not to be judgmental, knowing that the blood of Jesus covers not only my sins but those of others, too. I see my sisters through the eyes of Christ, allowing me to relate to them as a child of God, rather than as an offender. By being kind and courteous and obeying authority and the rules, I am a light in the darkness. By helping others see that their lives are more than this prison and the things they have settled for, I bring encouragement. I tell them that God has a plan and a purpose for us and that it is not about us; it's all about God. Having an attitude of gratitude has helped me stay thankful and humble.

I pray to the Holy Spirit to move in a mighty way over this unit, pleading for the Blood of Christ to flow over us daily. I also pray that I continue to grow in goodness and grace and not be conformed to this place but be daily renewed in heart and mind. As an Associate I truly want to help build God's Kingdom inside these walls.

Please pray for all of us here as I do for you.

Christy Hopkins
ASC Associate



ST. MARIA'S SERVANTS OF GOD

We are the Associates who gather in St. Andrew's parish in Moore, Oklahoma. Calling ourselves St. Maria's Servants of God, we have continued living St. Maria's spirit since 1985, even when we have not had any Sisters to guide us. Therefore, we are confident that we will continue in the future. We are very dedicated to the Associate program. I am the leader of this group, which meets in my home and has a large enough space for all of us to gather. Many of us are seniors now, and due to health concerns, are having to say goodbye to some of our past ministries. Here are some of the ministries in which we have been involved:

helping with St. Vincent de Paul activities, working at St. Andrew's food pantry, bringing Eucharist to senior citizens' homes, participating in Birthchoice and pro-life activities, serving as spiritual directors, assisting in Kairos Outside prison ministry, participating in weekly prayer group, serving as Eucharistic ministers, being Knights of Columbus, feeding street people, participating in Pac-a-Sack for the poor, serving as sacristan, participating in adoration, attending daily Mass, leading PTSD meetings at Veteran's Hospital, undertaking child care, taking persons to doctor appointments, providing funeral dinners, undertaking prison ministry, and being prayer warriors.

Our ministries have the Precious Blood spirituality as their focus. Even though there are no Sisters in our community, the spirit of St. Maria is alive and well. We ask you to keep us in your prayers.

Jan Mollman
ASC Associate

ASC 2011 ASSEMBLIES

CHOOSE LIFE, THEN!

General Assembly

For the first time in the history of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, the General Assembly was not held in Rome. The meeting took place in Mysore, India, July 7-31, 2011, with the theme of the *Choose Life, Then!* (Deut. 30: 19-20). This place change, in itself, moved the delegates to cross the threshold to new life with Christ. At the end of the Assembly, a document was written called *The Chapter Acts*. This document contained different calls which the Sisters are to live for the next six years.

The calls center around the following concepts: to broaden the *Sacred Circles of Communion*, to reaffirm Jesus *Radiant Center*, to build up God's Reign as *Citizens of the World in the Church*, to explore processes toward *New Models of ASC Consecrated Life*. You can access the document on the Adorers web site.

The Sisters will be discussing this document and sharing ways in which to implement these calls in their lives and witness to them as a Congregation. You are invited to follow the Adorers on the web site as they journey more and more into the depths of these calls.

Sister Angie Houska
Sister Mentor

Regional Assembly 2011

I was privileged to attend the 2011 Regional Assembly October 21 - 23 in St. Louis. What an amazing experience! While I had attended portions of prior Assemblies at the Wichita Center, this was my first experience at an actual site. I did not know what to expect and was somewhat apprehensive that I would feel I did not fit in. Nothing could have been further from the reality!

The first thing I noticed even before the formal meetings started was that the atmosphere was that of a (very) large family reunion. In fact, the event could be re-titled *Regional Reunion*. Everyone was so happy to see their other Sisters and their friends. And I was thrilled to see them and to feel so welcomed!

As the actual sessions began, a reverent spirituality was evident throughout. The proceedings, which included reporting, discernment and directions for the future, were all undertaken with the clear intention of humbly seeking divine guidance.

All present were eager and excited to hear from the delegates that had attended the XX General Assembly in Mysore, India, in July. It was both inspirational and exciting to hear of the actions of the Sisters in attendance. The *General Assembly Acts* were also distributed and discussed.

One highpoint of the weekend was the liturgy led by Fr. Joe Nassal. I highly recommend that you read his homily that is available on the Associates section of the Adorers webpage (www.Adorers.org and click on the Associates section). He motivated our hearts to compassionate commitment and action.

In solidarity with each other, the entire assembled group (including those present by ITV) created a statement that supported the directions outlined from the General Assembly. The assembled group stated a specific intention that included all professed Adorers, Associates and Sojourners, calling for us all to act with compassion throughout every aspect of our lives:

"Out of an awareness of our own brokenness and the wounds of the world, we Adorers choose life for ourselves and others by being a compassionate presence wherever need touches our hearts."

As you can see from this short overview, this was a wonderful experience for the Associates in attendance at our "family reunion". I am very glad and feel privileged that I was able to share this time with those present. I am a better Associate because of it!

Rosemary Niedens
Area Coordinator



FATHER JOE NASSAL'S REFLECTION DAY



Thank you so much for the invitation to attend Fr. Joe's reflection day. I enjoyed it very much. Fr. Nassal spoke about things we all (especially myself), need to be reminded of from time to time. He talked about spiritual practices that would help us keep living the Sabbath and deepen our relationship with God. Being aware of God's presence in our lives all day on the Sabbath is one practice to help us deepen our spiritual lives. We need to rest in body, mind and soul. The Sabbath is the time to embrace our true selves as being united with God. Therefore, it is a time to let go of all the false notions that

obstruct our relationship with God.

Fr. Joe's insights were refreshing, and the handouts were a very good source for further reflection. I left the day feeling uplifted and energized. I am thankful we could come together with Associates and Sisters for sharing and learning more about our faith and the need to keep the Sabbath so we can share it with others.

Cheryl Shuler
ASC Associate

NEW ASSOCIATE JOINS GROUP

Jerry Johnston made his commitment as an Associate on August 7, 2011. Rosemary Niedens and Lori Bengel, the Area Coordinators, received his commitment during the Sunday Mass at the Wichita Canter. Robert Diepenbrock was his sponsor.

Jerry lives in Wichita, where he formerly operated the Johnston's Clothiers. His desire is to worship with the congregation on Sunday: *"to be part of the peace and joy that I have when I worship with the assembly: sisters, associates, and friends."*

Let us welcome him and support him in his journey as an ASC Associate.

Sister Sophia Kammer



IN MEMORY OF ASSOCIATE CHARLES BEARDSLEY



Charles made his commitment as an Associate Adorer of the Blood of Christ on April 10, 1998, at St. Andrew's Church in Moore, Oklahoma. He joined the Merchant Marines in 1944 and met his wife, Maria, in

Hong Kong, and married on October 14, 1950. They were happily married 61 years and blessed with seven children. Charles frequently helped Sister Paulette and Sister Ursula in Moore and spent several vacation days with them at Lake Tacoma, Oklahoma.

We will miss his gentle spirit.

Sister Ursula Schones



The Wichita Associate Office would like to thank all the associates that responded to our request to update your personal information. If you have not returned your form, it is never too late. Please notify us of any changes immediately by calling S. Sophia at 316-942-2201 ext 4208 or by email kammers@adorers.org.