In Memoriam

On January 21 the Congregation honored past Superior General Sister Kathleen Anne Nelligan, celebrated her release from pain, and gave thanks for the gifts she shared with all who knew her.

“Those who did not know Kathleen well,” said Sister Olivia Marie (Hutcheson) at the wake service, “often underestimated this quiet and unobtrusive person.”

During her administration from 1973-1979, Sister Kathleen Anne guided the development of a spiritual formation center in Israel (established by her predecessor Sister Olivette (Whalen)); the difficult beginning of a central administration for Holy Cross hospitals, the Holy Cross Health System; the renewal of a house of prayer and spiritual development as Mary’s Solitude; and the eventual development of the former Central Administrative Services into Holy Cross Shared Services (now Holy Cross Services Corporation).

Kathleen Anne can be remembered, said Sister Olivia Marie, as a religious whose “vows were the mission from which her ministry flowed. The history of her life lists 15 different ministry assignments that recorded her life as educator and administrator; as one involved as servant to the poor and to the elderly. She was a teacher and a responder to Congregational needs. She is remembered especially as an attentive listener, a weaver of connections and as a punster extraordinary... and always, she cherished and loved her family, her Irish heritage, and her homeland of Utah.”

Her memory can be delineated, she said, by the era in which Sister Kathleen Anne assumed the leadership

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Sister Kathleen Anne waves good-bye to Congregation members at Saint Mary’s as she leaves for home in Utah on the last day of her administration as superior general in 1979. Previous Superior Generals Sister Olivette and Mother Kathryn Marie can be seen in the background.
Voices

In Memoriam, continued from cover

Sister Kathleen Anne Nelligan
(Sister Mary Clara), CSC

of the Congregation. “It was the period of time when Vatican II was being implemented, a time in which horizons were visualized, where many different interpretations of the Council were around. The Congregation was experiencing rapid change, renewal chapters, the departure of many of its sisters, and the conflicting opinions that had to be held in a balanced tension. For some, the community was moving too fast; for others, it was moving too slow; and for many there was a poignant sense of loss. Kathleen Anne was immersed in the Holy Cross tradition and found common ground with the new. She endured ambiguity, and yet brought healing to so many wounded of that time.”

At her funeral, friend and spiritual advisor Father Robert Pelton, CSC, remarked, “Kathleen was diligent in her efforts to grow spiritually and theologically, especially in her later years. After the Bible and the Vatican II Council, the writings of Richard Rohr had a great influence in her life. In a special way Kathleen Anne was a post-Vatican II leader. She built upon its methodology of experiential learning in terms of her talents and her own spiritual life, and in her waning years continued to deepen this reflective model in her own interior growth. She truly longed to be with her loving God.

“Kathleen Anne, you are now at last seeing your Beloved as he is. You are home.”

When we first began to put this issue of Life Signs together, it seemed that the majority of the articles were from or about our older sisters in North America.

Then somewhere on the way to deadline—in fact, the day before this editorial was to be written—we received news that a dear friend had died. Sister Kathleen Anne Nelligan, an Irish-American Catholic girl raised in the Mormon state of Utah, whose feisty spirit and relentless puns were softened and blessed by a compassion and interest in the lives and souls of others, passed from us after many months of languishing, in pain and forbearance, yet to the end sharing her wisdom to all who entered her room, waiting for God to call her at last.

This keen interest of a curious mind and remarkable heart was extended wholeheartedly to two lay women in the Communications office from 1993 to 1995. We continue to honor her in prayer as a valued mentor and teacher, which, truth be told, she was to each of us, and to many others who were fortunate enough to know her in the autumn years of her life.

And so to Sister Kathleen Anne, and to Holy Cross sisters everywhere in the autumn and winter years of their lives, to these sisters who are not so much “retired” as wise enough to know when and how to incorporate the contemplative into their actions . . . we dedicate this first 2004 issue of Life Signs, with love, reverence, and a deep and abiding appreciation for their teaching and example.
Women’s Human Rights: Toward Advocacy and Action

by Mary Turgi, CSC

“...achieving full respect for women and their identity involves more than simply the condemnation of discrimination and injustices.... Such respect must first and foremost be won through an effective and intelligent campaign for the promotion of women, concentrating on all areas of women’s life and beginning with a universal recognition of the dignity of women.”

- John Paul II, Letter to Women

For nearly 20 years, we Sisters of the Holy Cross have been on a journey of deepening conversion to the marginalized, those who are most excluded and oppressed in society. As an integral part of that process, we have become much more aware of the innumerable injustices perpetrated against women in every part of the world and of our own call to stand with other women in solidarity.

- In the 1989 General Chapter, we committed ourselves to seek ministries with “the materially poor and powerless, with a sharpened emphasis on women and on the transformation of social structures.”
- In the Twenty-first General Chapter in 1994, we chose women’s issues as a priority for study, theological reflection and action.
- In 1995, for the first time we sent Congregational representatives to a United Nations conference—the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China.
- In 1998, we overwhelmingly approved a Congregational corporate stand against societal and religious oppression of women.

The documents of our Twenty-second General Chapter remind us that “solidarity is not just a matter of the heart but of action.” To encourage and support activity on behalf of women’s human rights throughout the Congregation, the Congregation Justice Committee (CJC) is undertaking a new project. The Women’s Human Rights Working Group, chaired by Sister Mary Ann Pajakowski, is beginning work on a handbook that will help all of us further women’s advancement in our own locales and ministries.

This handbook, which will be authored by members of the working group, will include expository sections on women’s status globally in four key areas:

- Women and Power/Decision-making
- Women and Education
- Women in the Global Economy
- Violence against Women

But more importantly, the handbook will also include detailed step-by-step suggestions for:

- collecting information about women’s issues in your locale,
- gathering a group to work on the issues,

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Sisters welcomed to Queen of Peace

The sisters at Basil Moreau Convent in South Bend came home to Saint Mary’s on December 9. During a joyous transfer, they sang the Notre Dame fight song as the minibus made its way past the university.

Upon their arrival the sisters were welcomed by Area Coordinator Sister Eileen Flavin, Sister Olivia Marie (Hutcheson) and Kathy Decker-Burrous, HCSC vice president for resident services. All were quickly engaged in a lively sing-along in Augusta Hall North Lounge. Meanwhile, staff packed up the sisters’ belongings at Basil Moreau, loaded them on the truck, then unpacked them in their new rooms in Queen of Peace Convent.

“The Facilities Services staff was just wonderful, cleaning everything days before and efficiently moving all the furniture when we needed them,” said Kathy.

Sister Eugene (Connor) commented that her new room “makes her heart happy.” Sister Margaret Flaherty announced, “The staff has been so helpful.” The sisters were appreciative and also felt that the rooms in Queen of Peace are much homier.

Sister Patricia Gantz, superior, was also pleased with the move. “The sisters have adjusted like good sports. They all have a wonderful, go-with-the-flow attitude.”

The new configuration of the convent that is on the fourth floor of Lourdes Hall includes 10 bedrooms, three baths, a health office, chapel, kitchen, dining room and laundry. Although most of the meals will be brought up from dietary and linens washed by laundry services, continued on page 5

Women’s Human Rights: Toward Advocacy and Action, continued from page 3

• using social analysis and theological reflection to analyze the data and determine your group’s focus, and
• developing concrete strategies to address problems and create positive change—in the lives of individuals and in social systems.

In other words, the handbook will be a “how-to” manual that will help all of us engage in work for women’s human rights wherever we are.

Our goal is to complete the handbook during 2004—the year in which the CJC will focus on women’s human rights. It is our hope that the General Chapter will formally support usage of the manual throughout the Congregation and—whatever our government structure after Chapter—Areas will intentionally implement projects utilizing the manual. This would create a strong Congregational focus on work for women’s rights consistent with our Chapter direction statements and with Catholic social teaching.

This type of project is new for the Congregation Justice Committee and we are excited to be producing a resource designed to move us beyond education/reflection to action! If you have suggestions or resources for the manual or would like to help with its production in some way, please contact Sister Mary Ann Pajakowski at mpajakowski@hcmutah.org.

Sister Mary Turgi is co-chair of the Congregation Justice Committee and a member of the CJC Women’s Human Rights Working Group. She is also director of the Holy Cross International Justice Office.
Branches: Holy Cross Around the World

Sisters welcomed to Queen of Peace, continued from page 4

the convent will continue to run semi-independently, with Queen of Peace staff providing health care, housekeeping, personal laundry and dining room services. The December 9 move of sisters and their belongings from Basil Moreau Convent on Bailey Avenue in South Bend, Indiana, to Queen of Peace Convent at Saint Mary’s began at 8:30 a.m. All 11 sisters were transported and comfortably settled in the North Lounge by 9:30 a.m., thanks to a considerate and hardworking group of movers and haulers from Holy Cross Services Corporation.

TOP LEFT: Sister Brigid (Bromeling)’s personal items are packed and ready for the move to Queen of Peace Convent. Sister commented that she was happy to be moving back home.

CENTER LEFT: Tom Scheibelhut and Ernest Dixon, HCSC Facilities Services, load the truck for the trip to Saint Mary’s.

LOWER LEFT: “Saint Mary’s, here we come!” (L to r:) Sisters Macrina (Wrobel), Brenda Marie (Curran) and Louis Gonzague (Kullmann) enjoy the bus ride.

TOP RIGHT: Sisters Louis Gonzague (Kullmann) and Davida (McKenna) disembark and are welcomed by Sister Eileen Flavin and Kathy Decker-Burrous.

CENTER RIGHT: Vocalist Sheila Varda and accompanist Bobby Charles lead the sisters in a sing-along as Sister Brenda Marie (Curran) and Kathleen Catalino prepare to join in.

LOWER RIGHT: Relaxing comfortably in their new home, Sisters Eugene (Connor) and Davida (McKenna) take part in the songfest, as does Sister Francis Rose (Ruppert) (far right). Sisters Louis Gonzague (Kullmann) and Olivia Marie (Hutcheson), a member of the welcoming party, share a songbook.
Selfless spirits improve lives

by Madeline Therese (Wilhoit), CSC

The sisters in Bangladesh and Uganda have a most generous mission sponsor in Patricia Murphy, who is the mother of Father Frank Murphy, CSC, missioned in Uganda. For several years Patricia has offered to sell the items of Mary’s Craft and Card Shop of Fort Portal, Uganda, which are made by the poor of the area. Last year Patricia also agreed to include the work of the women at the Sewing Room Project in Jalchatra, Bangladesh.

With her helpers, Mary Culkin, Win Culkin, Patricia Wuertz and Doris Newlin, Patricia mounts a display of crafts from both countries at Notre Dame High School, Niles, Illinois, run by the Brothers of Holy Cross, at the school’s annual craft fair. Patricia also holds other smaller shows in her parish or wherever she can find a place to do so. Committed to helping the sisters’ ministries in Uganda and Bangladesh, she thus assures the poor of both countries a means of improving their lives and those of their families.

Beautifully crafted baskets, bags and mats are brought from Uganda to be sold for the benefit of the Ugandan people who have made them. Everything is made by hand and from local products. Some baskets are made with raffia, millet, palm grass or mugogo, a grass from the forest. Some items are made by children as young as 8 years old and by adults in their 60s. Through the sale of their crafts, these people are able to buy medicine and other essential commodities and to help pay school fees.

Many of the women make their baskets, mats, purses, hats, etc., in their own homes and bring them to the store to sell. When they come into town, they meet with other women and learn to make new things. This encounter provides opportunities for social activity. Sister Edward Ann (Wetzel) sends a good number of these articles to the United States to be sold in Patricia’s craft fair.

The elegantly embroidered tablecloths, bags and clothing made in the Sewing Room Project in Jalchatra, Bangladesh, are also sent to Saint Mary’s to be sold by Patricia. Directed by Sister Shopna Cecilia Gomes, the Sewing Room Project is self-sustaining and the women receive a good salary for their work. Those who take part in this project are the very poor of the area, mostly Muslim women. Many have been abandoned by their husbands and rely solely on their own efforts to maintain their children and see that they go to school. At the present time there are about 250 women registered in the project. Hundreds of men and women of Uganda and Bangladesh, both Christian and Muslim, are now able to maintain their families, pay their children’s school fees, and provide necessary medical help for the children. All this has happened because of the dedication of Patricia Murphy and her co-workers, who have so generously responded to the poor with whom our sisters are working.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: (L to r) Sisters Lucy Lalbagzuali and Salome Nanwar admire the elegant embroidery of the tablecloths from Bangladesh with Patricia Murphy and Sisters Linda Veronica Gomes, Anita Teresa Costa and Madeline Therese (Wilhoit) (seated). The sisters had the opportunity to meet Patricia when they came to Saint Mary’s for International Assembly. • Sister Shopna Cecilia Gomes directs the Sewing Room Project in Jalchatra, Bangladesh, which also benefits from the dedication of Patricia Murphy and her co-workers. • Sister Edward Ann (Wetzel) (at right) happily accepts Consolata’s woven baskets to add to the items she will ship to Saint Mary’s for Patricia Murphy’s craft fair.
“The new Christ the King Catholic Church in the hills above Cedar City [Utah] reflects the land and the Catholic people of the area. The crucifix rises dramatically from a frame of red rock, like the mountains and bluffs that surround the city. The church stands out strong, like the faith of its people, with angles and rock accoutrements that say, ‘we are here to stay.’”

- Barbara Stinson Lee

The dedication Mass of the new Christ the King Catholic Church, Cedar City, Utah, was held on Sunday, November 23, the Feast of Christ the King. Most Reverend George H. Niederauer, bishop of Salt Lake City, was the principal celebrant.

The long-awaited church was filled to overflowing. More than 500 people attended the dedication, including six Holy Cross sisters who traveled from Salt Lake City.

Thirteen years ago the parish built a church that soon became too small. For well over six years the parishioners have been raising funds for the new church facility, which includes parish offices and six classrooms. Many of the stained glass windows in the new church came from the old Christ the King Church. They provide a valuable link to the 65-year-presence of Catholicism in Cedar City.

“Your new church stands as a sign of your love of God and your dedication to one another,” said Bishop Niederauer. “This is a joyful moment in the life of this parish.”

The bishop also saluted the present leadership of Christ the King Parish, singling out Reverend Michael J. Winterer, pastor, and Sister Yvonne Hatt. He ended his dedication homily with the words of Mexican martyr Miguel Agustin Pro: “Viva Christo Rey!” — “Long live Christ the King!”

ABOVE: The crucifix of the new Christ the King Catholic Church rises dramatically from a frame of red rock.

LEFT: Sister Yvonne Hatt (center) participates in the dedication Mass for the new church in Cedar City, Utah.
In solidarity with the International Assembly, we sisters at Saint Catherine-by-the-Sea in Ventura, California, prepared our environment to keep the work of the assembly and its delegates in our thoughts. We chose as a theme: “We are many parts, we are all one body.” In the area outside the chapel, we placed the names of all the countries in which we serve. Sister Josephine Marie (Mariano) coordinated this part of the decoration. On the opening and closing mornings of the assembly, members of the convent gathered at the decorated planter to recite the Unity Prayer and, on the final morning, sang “Here I Am, Lord.” Sisters Carmen (Davy) and Mary Christian (Koch) prepared a red ribbon with a Holy Spirit circular for each sister to wear on the opening morning. Many continued to wear it each day of the assembly.

Paul Marquie, head of the dietary department, also got into the spirit by providing international menu items each day of the week. We enjoyed coconut bean soup from Africa and cream of palm heart soup from Brazil. Roast leg of lamb with curry sauce was our menu item from India, and on several days we ate international fruits—guava, papaya and mango. One special menu featured fried beef turnovers from Brazil, which were served with black beans.

Before she left for Saint Mary’s, Area I Coordinator Sister Patrice (McGee) gathered sisters to work on creating an environment in the dining room. The group collected items from each country in which we serve. Some sisters contributed pictures, and there were also two lovely silk saris that we used as focal points in the environment. Maps and printed materials completed the presentation in the dining room.

Everyone at Saint Catherine’s enjoyed the decorations, foods and environment because they helped us to remain in solidarity with those at the International Assembly.
California crafts abound at holiday bazaar

by Josephine Marie (Mariano), CSC

This year the Annual Boutique held on November 23 was a true community event. The handiwork and skill of many sisters at Saint Catherine-by-the-Sea and the talents of many Holy Cross sisters in California and other states were on display. So were the efforts and skills of students and good friends in the Ventura area who sewed, made candy, baked goodies and contributed various crafts. Guests and customers were offered an abundance of choices.

The foyer and seven other rooms held a variety of gifts including jams, baked goods, candy, Christmas decorations and colorful kitchen items. There were classy aprons and afghans in all sizes, as well as quilts, ceramics and numerous beautiful donated articles.

Acting as hostesses, alumnae of the Academy of Saint Catherine’s served homemade cookies and punch to all the guests. The annual raffle was a huge success, and all the winners were delighted with their prizes.

It was a wonderful day, full of seeing old friends and making new acquaintances. The results were gratifying, and customers continued to come by to make Christmas purchases even after the bazaar was over. The sisters at Saint Catherine’s worked hard, and are grateful to the many volunteers who donated their time, efforts and supplies to make this year’s boutique an outstanding community affair.

Sister Ignatius (Schumacher) appears at right with some of her award-winning jams. Sister Mary Agnes Mullen (center) displays one of the many counted cross-stitch pieces she created for the bazaar as Mrs. Patricia Paneccio looks on.

Sisters Mary Margaret Koester (left) and Lorna Mary Swisher admire the variety of talent and skill displayed in the sisters’ crafts.

LEFT: (L to r:) Sisters Carmen (Davy), Vibiana (Weber) and Leo Joseph (Koester) enjoy participating in the bazaar.

RIGHT: Helping display items at the boutique are (L to r): Sisters Estelle Marie (Farrell), Mary Christian (Koch) and Carmelita (Morales).
Saint Mary’s “ghoul”friends enjoy Halloween treat

by Margaret Mary Lavonis, CSC

More than 100 sisters and their friends from the Sister to Friend Organization of Saint Mary’s College gathered in Lillie O’Grady Center and Gathering Space on October 30 for an “awe-inspiring” Halloween party. The requirement for attendance was a costume, and everyone entered into the spirit with amazing creativity. The room was filled with a multitude of remarkable creatures, including witches, a furry ape, and a pair of salt and pepper shakers. There was everything from a shower curtain (unveiled as Sister Kathryn Callahan) to a sleepwalker with curlers in her hair (Sister Ambrose (McCracken)). Even “Lou Holtz” (better known as Sister Louisita (Welsh)) made an appearance! Each one outdid herself and all had a Halloween induced, spine-tingling good time. 

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Sister Marie Vivienne (Dubray) does not work in her bedroom. She sleeps in her workroom.

Comprising her team of helpers at Saint Mary’s—Sisters Dorothy Kebba, Francis Helene (Fox), Marissa (Loringer) and Mary Ann Lamping—are the recruits who can manage a crochet hook or knitting needle. Then there are those who cut the picture frames, and those who can do plastic needlepoint. Sister Marie Vivienne gets boxes and fills them with a double layer of small picture frames and a double layer of booties. She mails the package to Texas.

All this is part of Gifts for the Unborn, Inc., an apostolate founded in 1995 by Dick Jacobs, of Austin, Texas, a friend of Sister Marie Vivienne. The idea behind it is that if a woman can be brought to think of her unborn child as a child rather than an anonymous collection of cells and tissue, she will be far less likely to seek an abortion.

So far, well over 50,000 gift packs have been distributed by the program to more than 400 locations in seven countries. Besides the booties and picture frames, the packs usually contain one other item—powder, baby soap, a soft washcloth, a bib, a cap or maybe a rattle. Dick wrote recently to Sister, “We don’t even need a third item in (your) packs because they are so precious with your booties and frames to match.”

Sister’s room is crammed with materials and boxes on one side, and a sewing machine and correspondence (mostly thank-you notes) on the other. She says she can always use more help in the work of saving lives that would otherwise be cut off before they could really begin. 
Saint Mary’s “ghoul”friends, continued from page 10

Editor’s Note: The Sister to Friend Organization is a popular program sponsored by the Student Organization of Saint Mary’s College. Sister Louisita (Welsh) is the staff advisor for the organization and Sarah Brown, a junior, is the student liaison. Students are paired with sisters on campus. They develop relationships with one another and often become good friends. It is not uncommon to see students dining with the sisters and visiting in sisters’ rooms. This year the interest was so great that some sisters undertook more than one friend and yet, even with the generosity of these sisters, some girls did not get paired with a sister.

Father James Bracke joins Sister Josepha (Cullen) and Erin Fitzpatrick to admire the many fanciful costumes.

Sister Catherine Francis (Ford) and Elizabeth Boss share a moment at the Sister to Friend Organization’s Halloween Party held October 30 in Lillie O’Grady Center and Gathering Space.

During the ceremony, Sister Lilma’s mother (left) helps Lilma don a Peruvian manto (shawl).

Committing myself to God
by Lilma Calsín Collazos, CSC

The commitment of life that is carried out under religious vows is undoubtedly the expression of human maturity that must come to all in constant reflection on the search for the will of God in one’s life. The process takes a lot of dedication and perseverance in integrating body and soul.

On December 28, 2003, I, Sister Lilma Calsín Collazos, proclaimed my desire to perpetually commit myself to God and to the evangelizing mission of the Church, through the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, to live in community and to serve the people of God.

The ceremony was held in the Chapel Santa Rosa, which belongs to the Señor de Esperanza parish located in Huascar, Canto Grande, Lima, Peru. Our president, Sister Aline Marie (Steuer), received my vows and Area VI Coordinator Sister Anne Verónica Horner Hoe, along with a few other people, joined in a very special gesture of placing a Peruvian manto (shawl) on my shoulders as a symbol of being clothed with the gifts of humility, meekness, etc., mentioned in the letter to the Colossians (3: 12-17).

All of the sisters of our núcleo, Peru, had an active role in the Mass. The presence of the members of the communities of Jesus Nazareno and Chimbote, of my family and friends, the wider Holy Cross family, sisters from other congregations, pastoral workers at the Prison of San Juan of Lurigancho, all added a special flavor to the occasion.

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that the place appeared to be in chaos: boxes piled high, papers strewn everywhere, no level or uncluttered place to put anything.

Success is often messy. The sister was looking behind-the-scenes at three simultaneous fund-raising projects: the annual Christmas appeal, the sale of *Hors d’Oeuvres and Even More!* and the preparations for the sisters’ Christmas Bazaar at Saint Mary’s Convent.

By November 1 more than 6,000 letters had been prepared and mailed from the office, while a local mailing house mailed an additional 14,000 letters in bulk for us. The results have been gratifying: 50 to 100 responses arrive each day. Thank-you notes and receipts are mailed back the same day; Christmas Remembrance cards within 24 hours. By Christmas well over $100,000 had been received.

Helping to make that mailing so successful is Sister Josepha (Cullen)’s new cookbook, *Hors d’Oeuvres and Even More!* Orders started coming in September when it was offered in the Development office’s *Tribute* newsletter. After the first books were shipped, the buyers were clearly delighted, as they sent in repeat orders for Christmas presents. Nearly 1,000 copies have been sold, and the results are not yet in from the college and hospital gift shops that are also selling them.

Many of the cookbooks were sold at the Christmas Bazaar, a two-day affair co-chaired by Sisters Thomas Anne (Haugh) and Jeanette Fettig. Donated items appeared daily in the Development office during November and early December. Sisters, employees, college students and friends quickly snatched up the handcrafted Christmas decorations and linens, jewelry, clown figurines and music boxes, candy and confections. Proceeds were split between the Ministry with the Poor and Retirement funds.

From all of us in the Development office—Sister Jeanette, Leslie and LaFon—we wish you a joyous New Year. (We’ll continue to try to make it prosperous, too.)

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**Committing myself to God**, continued from page 11

All these people contributed and will continue contributing to my formation. From all of them I have learned to live in community, to share life in the freedom that each one has. That is the basis for communication and connection with the whole universe, with faith and hope that a better world is possible in pardon, reconciliation and love, to build solidarity and fraternity.

I thank each sister for her spiritual presence with me on that special day, and for all the people who prayed for me. I will continue to walk with my sisters, and feel blessed for their support and that of the sacred Spirit.  

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**Terms of faith and dedication are added to Sister Lilma’s manto as a symbol of being clothed with the gifts of humility, compassion, meekness, etc.**