



from the Northside

Window of Vision

by S. Karen Mohan

A very special gift arrived in time to conclude our 20th anniversary year and initiate the Visitation Order's 400th birthday. The stained glass window that was recently installed in the Girard house dining room came with a special name. This "Window of Vision" now inspires the Sisters and friends to cultivate hope and gratitude as we honor our past and step into our future during this special year. The genesis of this work of love is the story I now share.

John and Mary Scanlon had wondered when the time would be right for John to design and craft a stained glass window to be placed above the built in buffet in our Girard House dining room.

While visiting their usual stained glass window store, this creative, Irish couple discovered a piece of light purple glass that had an unusual image fired into its solid color. As they gazed at the image, they were excited by what they saw and brought it over to show us, hoping that we would see it too. Indeed we did! Amazingly, the image resembled the Visitation! Mary and Elizabeth seemed to be embracing in this piece! Encouraged by our recognition of the image, John was ready to use his "hobby" skills to begin his gift.

When the Scanlons returned the piece of glass to the store to be cut according to John's specifications, the workers there were somewhat leery of cutting it, knowing that it could easily shatter, and there could be no replacing of this unique image. Fortunately, the professionals at the shop were successful, and this "visitation" became the centerpiece for the window.

Window of Vision

Continued on page 2



Dear Sisters,

We name this gift, "WINDOW OF VISION." These are some of our thoughts on your window. We hope it will inspire your imagination.

1. The four corners of the window represent north, south, east and west, and reflect back to come together around the Celtic cross.
2. Red is the spirit travelling all around the world giving off energy to all within.
3. Blue: Mary comforts and protects all her family with her mantle of blue.
4. Green represents new life, peace and healing for the world.
5. The four burgundy corners are a sign of Elizabeth's son, John the Baptist, who came to prepare for Jesus.
6. Salmon in the Irish culture was a sign of wisdom and connection with the spirit world.
7. Yellow signifies joy and surprise at the invitation to motherhood. It also signifies the roses that Mary sent as a sign at Guadalupe.
8. Purple reminds us of compassion and royalty.
9. Pink on both sides of the cross are the Resurrection and Ascension.
10. The Celtic cross is special to all the Irish. The circle around the cross is the circle of friendship uniting all the peoples of the world.

The window was started the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, and finished on Friday, December 11, the birth of our grand-daughter, Enya Lynn Scanlon. It was installed Monday, December 14, 2009. It was a pleasure to do this for you.

Peace, John and Mary Scanlon



News from the Northside is published three times a year by Visitation Monastery of Minneapolis, 1527 Fremont Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55411 612-521-6113

We are an urban monastic community. Please contact us for more information about our way of life.

Join us on Facebook: Visitation Monastery North Minneapolis

You can read the newsletter online at our website. If you prefer this format, please contact S. Joanna at Vmonastery@aol.com.

Vocation Partners: Looking for Seven (more) Visionary Women and Beyond

by S. Joanna O'Meara

In February 2008, we began the journey of what it would look like (even before we were gifted with the stunning window of vision) to engage new faces and voices in seeking to attract new members to our North Minneapolis Monastery. Accomplished and experienced long-time dreamers, energizers, problem-solvers and creative thinkers appeared in the gifted persons of Bob Gilsdorf, Annette Scotti, Sue Schwalbach, Melissa Borgmann-Kiemde, Beth Eilers Sullivan, two seasoned veterans on the Visitation vocation team—Srs. Katherine & Karen with one long-distance across the pond contact, Sr. Joanna.



Srs. Joanna and Katherine, Cyndy Hanson, and Bob Gilsdorf are part of a spirited team!

Meeting monthly, we learned in fresh ways what it means to commit to a vowed life in a new way. Exploring what our life means and how it engages Salesian Spirituality, how it might attract a new generation of women considering a call to religious life to give us a try. How living an Urban Monastic lifestyle in the “midst” calls for a listening ear to the front and

Window of Vision

Continued from page 1

When John and Mary installed the finished piece of stained glass they blessed it with a special name and their own reflection on the window. Their words offer us inspiration and hope for our 400th anniversary year—and beyond. And their faith and wisdom will accompany us as we strive to make our motto, “Live Jesus” come alive this new year.

To see the magnificent window in color, check our **newly redesigned website**:

www.visitationmonasteryminneapolis.org

To find the window on our website, click on the Our Ministry heading, and scroll down to Ministry of Presence and Prayer. And while you're at our new website, take a tour!

Vocation Partners, *Continued from page 2*

back door and also to the center of our beings as living “out” of the box here stretches and holds, questions and calls, celebrates with simple yet profound joy the rhythm of our days, which gathers people who see with us the vision of life together.

Traveling through our lived history we have gathered a new energy, a refreshing and engaging beloved group of friends who are seeing with us imaginative ways to meet our new members who are on the journey. We have cajoled, conjectured, deliberated, created and now we rejoice as we launch our new DVD about our life to be used as a vocational tool, and a new website lead us all together to “listen” with those who may begin to discover us. (You can watch our new video on our website!) Fast forward three years from now: Fremont & Girard houses bulging to capacity with new members, the chapel overflowing with more tuneful voices than you can imagine, an ever-expanding dining room table. Now that looks like a vision we would all enjoy, after all, this



A neighborhood drum and dance corps led a procession to receptions at each of our houses to celebrate 20 years here!

“Rear View Vision”: Community Update

by S. Mary Frances Reis

Since our last newsletter we have enjoyed reflecting on the unfolding of the Vision of the last 20 years here in Minneapolis and planning for the next 20! Some highlights of the past several months:

- Our Foundation anniversary was celebrated at Ascension Church on October 2nd with a Mass with Father Michael O’Connell and about 200 guests; teen drummers and dancers (photo above right) led us in a procession to receptions at each of our 3 houses where refreshments and archival displays completed the day. You were all with us in spirit!
- As we mark this anniversary year, we cannot forget that for 15 of those years a Cursillo men’s group has joined us faithfully for prayer, fellowship and partnering in ministry once a month; our presence here is enhanced greatly by this relationship!
- We continue to welcome former “windsock kids” and other teens for programs that help them plan for their future. Some of the young people we knew as children return with their families now so THEIR children can “know the Sisters”!
- Our monthly Salesian evenings are a perfect venue to share our spirituality with neighbors and friends. A Pot luck meal, input by Sisters and friends alike, and communal prayer all contribute to penetrating this neighborhood with the gentle spirit of our founders, Saints Jane and Francis.
- MANY groups partner with us in reaching out to vulnerable persons and families, but among them, Visitation students in Mendota have had a lasting impact on many through the sharing of gifts especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas. This BRIDGE OF CARE has brought hope and happiness to countless persons over the past 20 years. The Sisters in Minneapolis and the Mendota Visitation received a significant recognition from the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center for the work that we do together for the community.
- In future issues we hope to give you an update of the wonderful impact the St.Jane House is having on the community. This spirituality center, which opened in the past few years under our sponsorship, is growing gradually into a center where people have the opportunity to reflect and pray ‘in the midst’ and to be a haven for peace.
- As we move forward we want to continue to LISTEN to the expressed needs of this community. To that end, Dave Nimmer facilitated a listening session based on our vision. Among other insights, we heard neighbors and friends say that they would like to see us focus on FAMILIES and the Hispanic community. We heard and we have already begun to implement this request.
- We extend sympathy and prayer to all of those who grieve the loss of loved ones. Specifically we want to share that during the week before Christmas three deaths touched our community deeply: John Baker, our neighbor, whose family is very close to us, died of cancer; Chris Juarez, husband of our beloved Grandma Aurora, went home to God; Mac Walton, community organizer, friend and mentor to the community died peacefully after a courageous 5 year battle with cancer. May they and all our beloved dead know PEACE in the Kingdom.
- We cannot close this update without thanking the Friends of Fremont and many, many other generous donors for literally making our presence here possible. We promise to be good stewards of your gifts!



—Wendy Wright, *Bond of Perfection*

"The bond of love grows in time and takes on
new power by enduring;"

Address services requested

Visitation Monastery of Minneapolis
1527 Fremont Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-3232
www.visitationmonasteryminneapolis.org

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Mpls., MN
Permit No. 4690

Catholic Youth Camp (CYC)



**"Thank you for a great week at
CYC! I hope I can go again."**

—A camper

Please consider sponsoring a camper for \$325.
Call S. Mary Frances at 612-529-8215 or send
your tax-deductible donation to Visitation
Monastery of Minneapolis.

Thank you for sharing the gift of camp!