

“Be still and know
that I am God!”

Psalms 46:10

The View From The Bluff

September 2020

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF OUR LADY OF MERCY

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT

Sister

M. Philomena Dempsey

Hanna Dempsey was born in Prescott, C.W., Ontario, Canada, in 1846. The records do not provide any information about her family or her life prior to her entrance into the Community on March 10, 1869 at age 23. Hanna (Johanna) became Sister M. Philomena when she was received into the Community on November 21, 1869. She was professed two years later on November 21, 1871. On the occasion of her Golden Jubilee in 1919 the newspaper stated: “For a quarter of a century she devoted her energy and talent to the progress and upbuilding of Saint Joseph’s Academy, Sumter.” Sr. M. de Lourdes Boyle in her thesis “A Retrospect of the First Educational System in Sumter, SC” wrote, “Sister M. Loretto Quinlan was assisted in the great work of building St. Joseph’s Chapel by Sister M. Euphemia and Sister M. Philomena, who were untiring in their efforts to obtain the necessary funds for the erection and completion of the edifice. The Chapel became a hallowed spot for the Sumter Catholics.” She also noted that Sr. M. Philomena Dempsey succeeded Sister M. Loretto as Directress (1900-1903) and did excellent work in removing prejudice from the minds of many non-Catholics.” Following her election as Mother Assistant of the OLM Community in 1903 Sr. M. Philomena returned to Charleston. In 1911 she was again elected Mother Assistant for the next three years. Simultaneously, she served as the Sister in Charge of the City Orphan Asylum on Queen Street. When relieved of that responsibility, in 1915 or 1916, Sister Philomena remained at the orphanage until

1922. Apparently, she spent the rest of her life at the Motherhouse, 68 Legare Street, until her death on September 1, 1936 at age 90. Sister Philomena is buried in St. Lawrence Cemetery.

St. Joseph's Academy, Sumter



St. Joseph's Chapel



Sister De Chantal Clary

Sarah Daly, the future Sr. De Chantal, was born in Troy, NY, on August 7, 1832 and baptized the same day according to the records of St. Peter's Church in Troy. There is no information in our records about her life prior to her entrance into the Community on May 20, 1856. At the time she was 24 years old and a widow. The Marriage Register of St. Mary's Church, Charleston, records the marriage of Sarah Daly and William Cleary on September 8, 1850. However, we do not know when or how her husband died. On November 21, 1856, Sarah received the name Sr. De Chantal perhaps because Saint Jane Frances De Chantal was also a widow. Two years later, November 29, 1858, Sr. DE Chantal was profess as a Sister of Our Lady of Mercy.

During the Civil War Sr. De Chantal served on the nursing staff of the Confederate Military Hospital in Montgomery White Sulphur Springs, Virginia. In 1869 during the first election of OLM Community Officers held after the war, Sister De Chantal was elected Procuratrix whose responsibility was to provide for the daily wants of the Community. In 1875 a newly elected OLM Council appointed her to take charge of the Boys' Orphanage which Bishop Patrick Lynch had established in 1867. She served in that position until elected OLM General Treasurer in 1878. Four years later, in October 1882, the Community established St. Francis Xavier Hospital in Charleston and appointed Sr. De Chantal its Superintendent. During the nineteen years of her administration the hospital grew in size and services. New buildings were added in 1896 and 1900. In 1896 St. Francis was designated a United States Marine Hospital. The Spanish American War brought many casualties to Charleston and these soldiers and marines were treated in St. Francis Xavier Hospital in a section of the 1896 Annex which became known as "the Marine Ward." Sister De Chantal was also involved in the establishment of St. Francis Xavier School of Nursing which opened in October 1900. She was then almost seventy years old and in failing health. She resigned as Superintendent in June 1901. Three months later, on September 19, 1901, she died at the OLM Motherhouse on Meeting Street (now known as the Russell House). She is buried in Saint Lawrence Cemetery.

Miss Mary McKenna, Superintendent of the SFX School on Nursing in 1901, described Sr. De Chantal as “a magnificent woman, dignified and capable, and thoroughly in sympathy with all things which meant progress for her Community.” The obituary notice in the Charleston News and Courier on September 20, 1901 stated: “During the war, she formed one of the band of Sisters of Mercy who nursed the sick and wounded soldiers of the Lost Cause in the hospital’s of Virginia during the entire war. It was said of her that her touch was a balm, and her smile carried hope to many a weary and suffering soldier.” Sadly, we do not have a photo of Sister De Chantal.



Following is a letter from Sister Margaret Mary Cammann to Rev. Mother Mary Charles Gibson relating a remembrance from Sister Philomena Dempsey about Sister de Chantal.

J.M.J.

Nov. 8, 1966

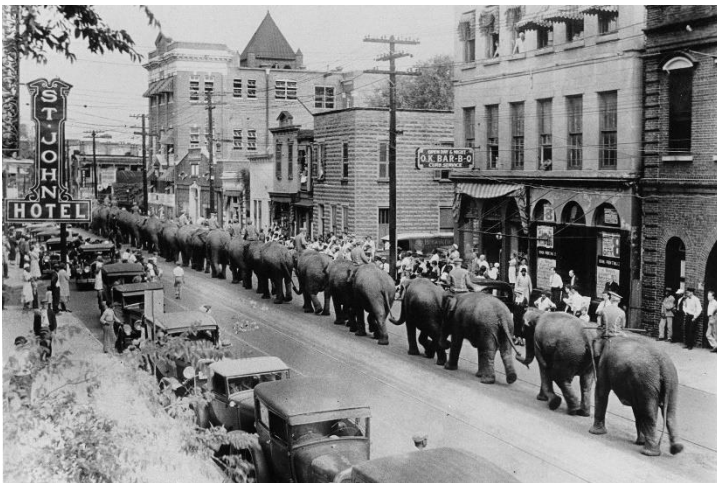
Dear Rev. Mother,
He who had the privilege
of living with Sr. M. Philomena
Dempsey enjoyed her company as
she reminisced. One story she
enjoyed telling was one about
our hospital.

In the early days of the
hospital our ambulance was
a horse drawn covered wagon.
It required two horses. The
horses owned by the Sisters were
growing very old and one
day when a circus had
come to town the proprietor
of the circus contacted Sr.
de Chantal and asked her
if she could use two
horses that were now too

old for dancing but were in good working condition. Sr. de Chantal knew this was an answer to prayer for they really needed the horses. The next day as the newly acquired horses were pulling the ambulance with a patient on Calhoun St. across King the Circus was coming down King and the band was playing. The horses began to dance and the poor driver didn't know what was happening but he conquered and the patient came through safely. Some day I will try to remember some others- God bless you!
 Sr. Margaret Mary.



Pictures of dancing circus horses and a two horse covered wagon ambulance.



Circus comes to town!

A Monument to be proud of and the story of how the OLMs became part of it

Sr. Carol Wentworth



Religious Orders pictured on the Nuns of the Battlefield Memorial in Washington, DC, left to right Sisters of St. Joseph, Sisters of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Sisters of St. Dominic, Sisters of St. Ursula, Sisters of the Holy Cross, Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Sisters of Charity Emmitsburg, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Sisters of Divine Providence.

On Saturday, September 20, 1924 the Nuns of the Battlefield Memorial in Washington, D.C was dedicated. The day was also called "Sisters Day in DC". For the first time ever vowed Catholic Sisters were honored. The United States Congress authorized the monument in 1918 and the Hibernians raised the necessary funds.

The back story..... The idea for a national monument started with a Rhode Islander with the wonderful name of Dr. Ellen Ryan Jolly who was, at the turn of the 20th century, president of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, (From 1912-1916) a new but large (56,000 members on its inception) and politically powerful organization at the time. July 1914, the National Convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Ladies' Auxiliary convened. During the fourth session of the Auxiliary meeting the recommendation of Ellen Ryan Jolly to erect a monument in Washington, DC to the memory and in honor of the Sister Nurses of the Civil War was passed by unanimous vote. She went to Washington and presented the petition for the monument to the officials of the War Department. It was made very clear to her that *"absolute proofs of the services rendered by the Sisters during the Civil War must be submitted to the War Department before it could conscientiously approve the granting of a site and the permission to erect the Nuns' Memorial on government property"*. This was the law and Ellen accepted the ruling and for one year, Dr. Jolly researched the roles of Nuns in the American civil war and compiled enough evidence to bring her case before congress to ask that a monument be built in their honor. Her campaign was championed by her Congressman, an Irishman named Ambrose Kennedy. The Congress, aware of the growing political clout of the Irish-American and Catholic communities, agreed and the monument was commissioned. Her labor of love would soon reveal to the world the nearly forgotten heroism of the brave and saintly women, the Nuns of the Battlefield who served the soldiers of the two armies during the Civil War. The "Nuns Monument Resolution, No. 154" was buried in committee for nearly two years. The Resolution was finally presented to the Congress, debated and passed on March 18, 1918, the legislative feast of St. Patrick.

The following letter was received by Mother Stanislaus from Mrs. Jolly in May of 1919.

Pawtucket, R. I.

May 13, 1919

My dear Rev. Mother:-

By the morning's mail, I had the honor to receive from Quartermaster Gen. Wood of the War Department, at Washington, D. C. a long delayed and long expected quantity of application blanks, which I am hastening to forward to you. Will you kindly fill out the blanks of the Civil War Nurses, as far as possible, in accordance with printed instructions.

I would also request you to make a separate list of Sisters of your Order who did Service in the Civil War, but who are interred in other sections of the Country, so that the Markers may be sent to these different localities, to be taken care of in each locality by the present local Superior.

There is still another list which I further request of you. The names of the deceased War-Nurses if there were any, who served in the Spanish-American War and who are buried in your vicinity; also, those who are interred elsewhere.

This will make four (4) distinct lists but I know how hastily you will accede to these requests and thereby, hasten the day which to us both is so much our hearts' dearest desire.

The National Chairman of Nuns' Monument Committee must ask you dear Rev. Mother to rush this matter, as our National Hibernian Convention will open within a few weeks and I wish to make a favorable report on Markers for Sisters' graves.

With the most sincere love to your own dear self, and to all the dear Sisters of your Community,

I am, dear Rev. Mother,

Fondly and gratefully yours,

Ellen Ryan Kelly

National Chairman Nuns' Monument Committee.

Mother Stanislaus sent Mrs. Jolly the following information noted in Council minutes of December 3, 1861.

Tuesday, December 3, 1861.

The Bishop held a meeting of the Council this evening, at which he presided, the object, viz--That he had received an application from Virginia for a few of the Sisters to attend a Hospital in the western part of that state, where there were hundreds of sick and wounded requiring attention and care, and that Bishop McGill had written to him on the Subject.

The Bishop said that all travelling expenses would be defrayed by the Government and that he, the Bishop, would give a hundred dollars to the Sisters to purchase articles suitable to the climate, it being intensely cold at White Sulphur Springs, where the Hospital was located. He also said that he wished Mother Teresa to accompany the Sisters and remain with them for some weeks and then return. The following are the Sisters who were sent;

Mother Mary Teresa Barry
Sister Mary Ignatius Clark
Sister Mary Bernard Frank
Sister Mary Helena Marlowe
Sister Mary Stanislaus Coventry.

P. M. Lynch,
Bishop of Charleston.

A meeting was held Sept. 26, 1862. The Bishop announced that the Sisters in Virginia had written for a reinforcement and it was resolved to send:

Sister Mary Alphonsus Moore
Sister Mary Agatha McNamara
and
Sister Mary Francis Kyte.

Data sent to Mrs Jolly

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR NURSES.

The following Sisters nursed in our own hospital, soldiers who were brought in from Chickamauga stricken with typhoid fever, and soldiers returning from Cuba suffering from pneumonia.

FAMILY NAME	NAME IN RELIGION	NATIVE PLACE	BORN	DIED
Sara Daly Clary	Sister Mary de Chantal	Troy, N. Y.	1836	1901
Matilda Zingales Gonzalez	Sister Mary Rose	New York, N.Y.	1845	1914
Rosa Early	Sister Mary Laurentia	Charleston, S.C.	1846	1902
Delia O'Day	Sister Mary Veronica	Ireland	1864	1918
Julia O'Neill	Sister Mary Margaret	Brooklyn, N.Y.	1860	1917

Sisters still living who nursed our soldier boys during the Spanish-American War.

Sister Mary Euphemia	Charleston, S.C.
Sister Mary Bernadine	Donegal, Ireland.
Sister Mary Aloysius	Philadelphia, Pa.
Sister Mary Michael	Boston, Mass.
Sister Mary Magdalen	Charleston, S.C.

Charleston, S. C.
Oct. 23, 1919.

My dear Mrs. Jolly:

I am sending names of our Civil War Nurses. I beg of you please to have us enrolled as Bishop England's Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy founded in Charleston, 1829.

I could not see from the Honorable Mr. Kennedy's report that our services on the Virginia Battlefields are recognized; but I beg of you who are so interested in the Nuns of the Battlefield please, in your love of justice and recognition, see that the enclosed names are inscribed on the Honor Roll of the Country, for indeed they deserve it.

Unfortunately, our records, owing to the exigencies of the times, are meager. I find in looking over the Council Books that we had no meetings from '63 to '66. The last Council Meeting of '63 was held Tuesday, April 7, here the record ceases and is resumed Tuesday, August 7, '66.

The Sisters were out on the highways and byways during these troubled times, on the Virginia Battlefields, in Wilmington, North Carolina nursing an epidemic of yellow fever as the enclosed extract will show, and in the hospital wards of Charleston. We have letters from Federal prisoners and officers testifying appreciation and gratitude for care received during the Civil War from Bishop England's Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, and these same letters aided us in securing an appropriation of \$20,000 from the United States Government to repair our shell wrecked Convent and Orphan Asylum.

The Sisters of our academy, The Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, and all of the boarders refugeed in 1863 to Sumter, S.C., away from the shot and shell that bombarded Charleston, and thus began venerable St. Joseph's Academy which celebrated its Golden Jubilee in June 1913.

- 2 -

Please, dear Mrs. Jolly, see that we are given our legitimate place on the National War Monument. Bishop Russel one day last May after returning from Washington, asked me if our services during the Civil War had been recognized in this movement to erect a monument. I replied, "Yes," but on reading the article in the Catholic News of New York, July 19, 1919, I failed to see where we are known and simply beg that in the inscription we are given legitimate place. Please give us part in the inscription for future generations to read.

God bless your every effort and prosper your every endeavor is the earnest prayer of

Very gratefully yours in Christ,

Mother M. Stanislaus

NUNS OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

National Memorial at Washington to Perpetuate their Memory.

The site for the memorial to the Nuns of the Battlefield, to be erected in Washington by the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Ancient Order of Hibernians, having been designated and the design approved by the Fine Arts Commission, the National Capital will have the distinction of possessing the first national memorial that the Catholic Church or the Irish race has erected in America, and the first memorial in the world to perpetuate the memory of the war's first nurses, the Sisterhoods.

Jerome Connor, the sculptor, who was born in County Kerry, Ireland, and who designed the statues of John Carroll at Georgetown University, Tom Moore in the Corcoran Art Gallery, and Robert Emmet in the National Museum, was designated by the auxiliary to prepare a design for the Sisters' Memorial, and he has devoted more than a year to the work, with the result that his model has been accepted by the Fine Arts Commission on behalf of the United States Government.

The sculptor's plan is that the memorial shall rise from a marble plaza in the triangle at the intersection of Rhode Island avenue and M street. This will place it directly in front of St. Matthew's Church and within a short distance of the home of Chief Justice White of the Supreme Court of the United States.

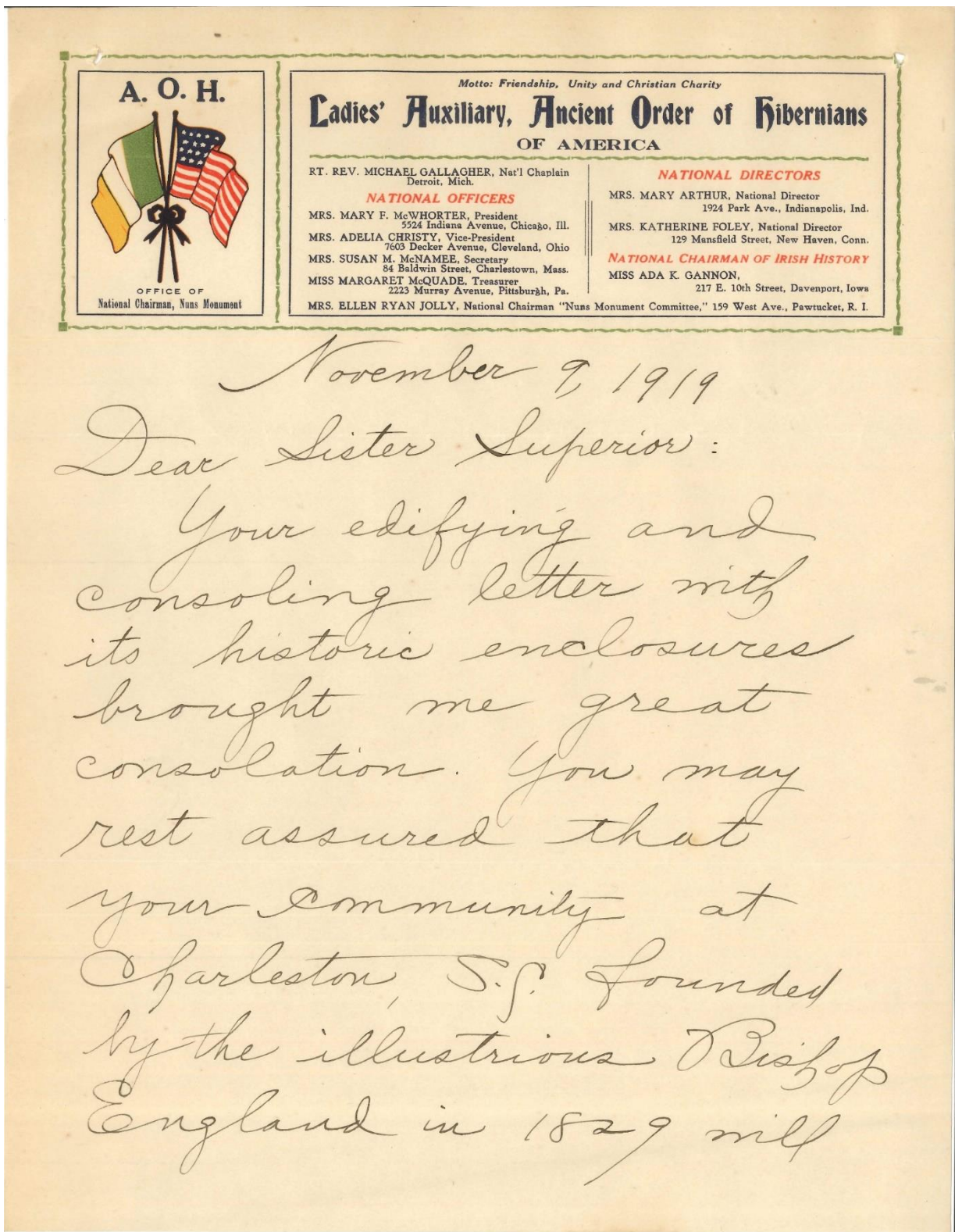
On one side of the large block of white marble, which will be six feet in height, will be carved the figures of the Nuns of the Battlefield, whose tender care in camps, on the field of battle, in hospitals and on floating hospitals is gratefully remembered by the veterans of the wars in which the United States has been engaged. Each figure is in distinctive habit, and each carries a separate charm. Those represented are the Sisters of Mercy; Sisters of the Holy Cross; Sisters of St. Joseph; Sisters of Charity of Namere; Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul; Sisters of the Mother Seton Order of Charity; the Ursuline Nuns, the Dominican Sisters, Sisters of Mt. Carmel and Sisters of Providence of St. Mary's.

The erection of this memorial was inaugurated by Mrs. Ellen Ryan Jolly of Pawtucket, R. I., who at the national convention of the order in 1914, in Norfolk, appealed to the organization to do honor to the saintly women who served their country well, by erecting a memorial worthy of them and the order they represented.

This newspaper article appeared in the Catholic Union and Times, Buffalo, NY in July 1919. Perhaps this is the news Sister Stanislaus read initiating the above letter to Mrs. Jolly asking her to be sure to include the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on the Monument! As you can see we were not included in the plans of 1919! Yet, she persisted!



The following letter from Mrs. Jolly gave directions for receiving military markers for OLMs. You can see these grave stones in St. Lawrence Cemetery.





Motto: Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity

Ladies' Auxiliary, Ancient Order of Hibernians OF AMERICA

RT. REV. MICHAEL GALLAGHER, Nat'l Chaplain
Detroit, Mich.

NATIONAL OFFICERS

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5524 Indiana Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

MRS. ADELIA CHRISTY, Vice-President
7603 Decker Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

MRS. SUSAN M. McNAMEE, Secretary
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MISS MARGARET McQUADE, Treasurer
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MRS. KATHERINE FOLEY, National Director
129 Mansfield Street, New Haven, Conn.

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF IRISH HISTORY

MISS ADA K. GANNON,
217 E. 10th Street, Davenport, Iowa

receive its full quota of recognition. The government markers will be shipped to you from the office of the Quartermaster General at Washington, D.C. as soon as the enclosed application blanks are on file in his office. Will you therefore kindly transfer your data with reference to the deceased army sisters of both Civil & Spanish American Wars to the enclosed application blanks. They are very particular



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in the war department to have everything done according to their prescribed formulae.

I have just returned from Notre Dame University, Indiana, where I have been conferring about the erection of fifty-three markers which have already been shipped. The nuns are delighted with these markers which they are to use as foot stones already having a community cross as a headstone.

Be as prompt as possible in filling out the application blanks. The sooner you send

A. O. H.

OFFICE OF
National Chairman, Nuns Monument

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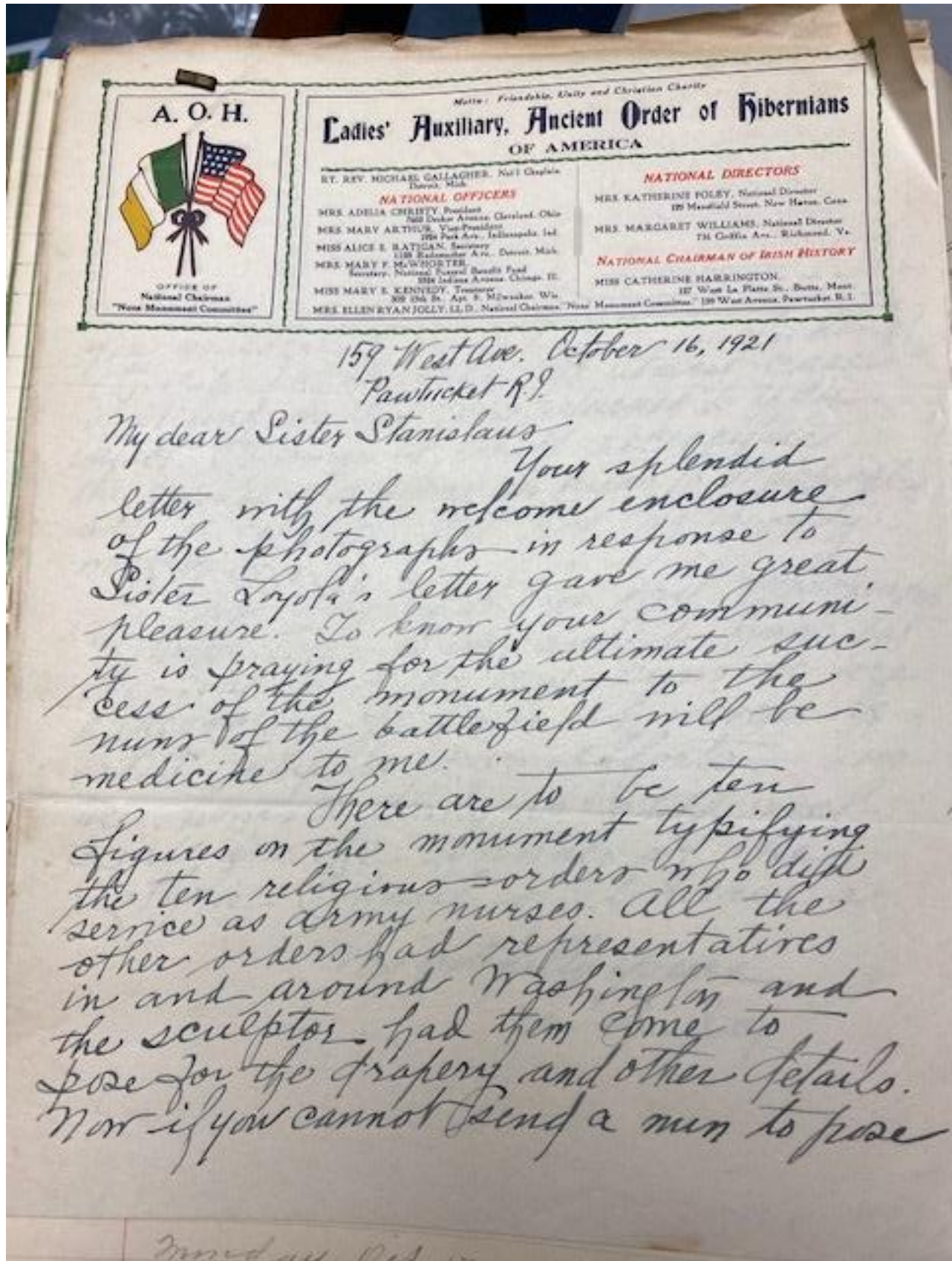
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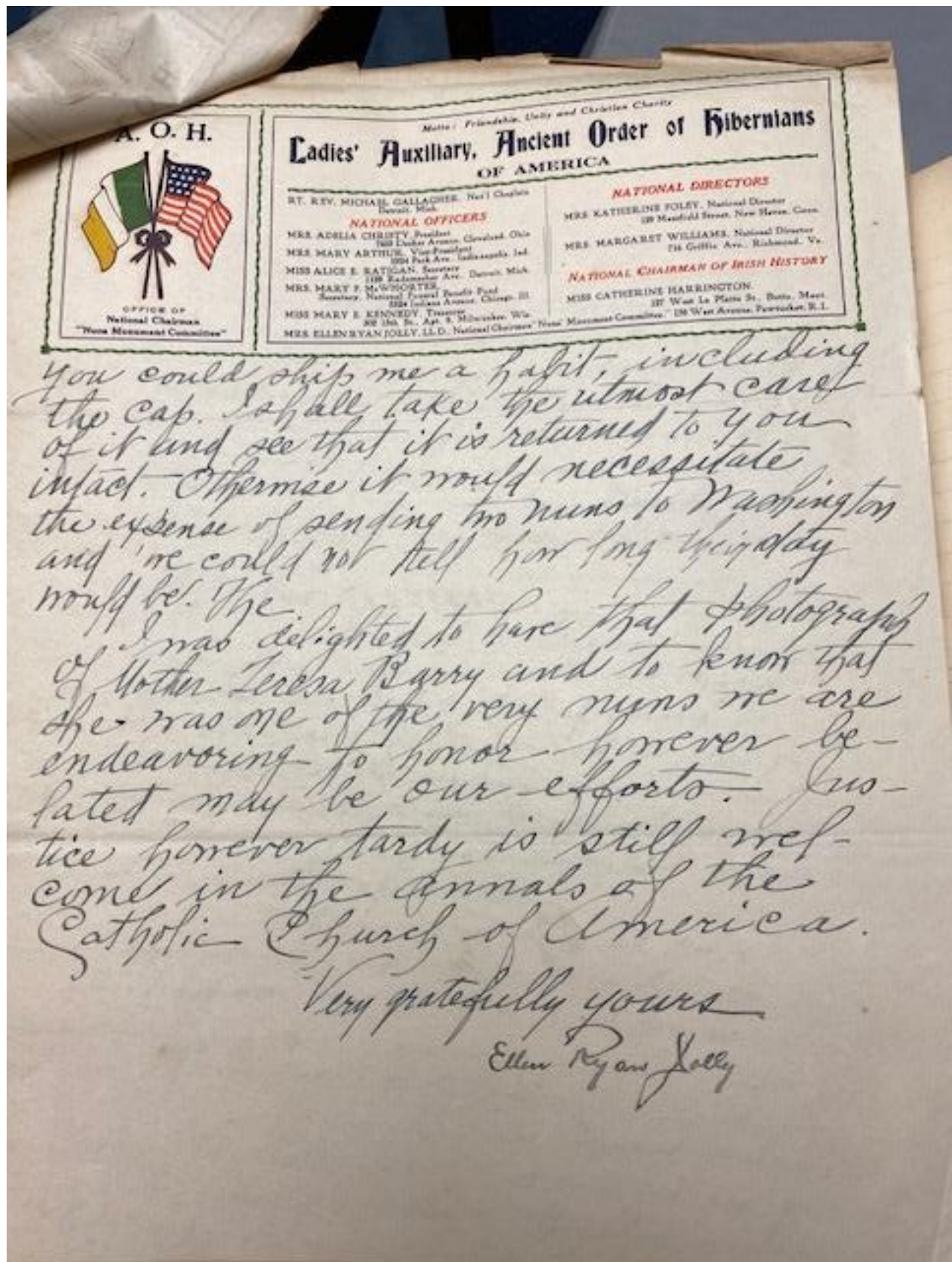
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me the blanks the quicker you
will receive your marble markers.
The Sisters at Notre Dame are
delighted with the markers. Some
of the old nuns, surviving members
of the war nurses, are worried lest
they will not have one of the
markers placed over their
graves when they die.

Very sincerely and gratefully yours
Ellen Ryan Jolly A.D.

Sr. Stanislaus continued to correspond with Mrs. Jolly with the goal of getting the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on the monument. In this letter Mrs. Jolly requests a habit be sent so a model for the sculptor could wear it. She also included a picture of Sister Teresa Barry which may be the image the sculptor used for our image on the monument.





The following is a transcription found in Mother Stanislaus's scrapbook of the letter she sent back to Mrs. Jolly. There would be OLMs in Washington attending college....they would model our habit!!

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Wednesday, Oct. 19, 1931

Morning prayers, meditation, Holy Mass according to Rule. The letter posted on the opposite page speaks for itself. Had a nice letter from the Sisters in mine Creek, encouraging and hopeful.

The letter below was sent in response to the one received from Mrs. Jolly.

My dear Mrs. Jolly:

Your very welcome letter received. To pass for the sculptor would be an easy solution for us as two of our Sisters are at present in residence at the Catholic Sisters' College, and within easy reach of the sculptor. They will remain in Washington until next June, so have unlimited time in which to perform this extremely historic duty towards the Community.

If you would kindly send a letter of introduction and authorization, and the address of the sculptor to me to forward to them. I would write at once and commission them to execute this request and for your endeavors in this important ^{matters} ~~the~~ Community will be everlastingly grateful.

Hoping that you have entirely recovered from your recent sickness, and able again to pursue your wonderful activities.

I am,

Very sincerely in Christ,

Mother M. Stanislaus.



The Monument was unveiled in 1924, before a crowd of 5,000. Cardinal William O'Connell presided. That's Mrs. Jolly standing behind him. The monument shows twelve nuns, representing the different orders who nursed the wounded of both North and South. There are twelve nuns depicted on the relief and then two bronze statues of women (one representing Peace and the other Patriotism) on each side of the granite slab that encompasses the relief. It says above the relief, "They Comforted The Dying, Nursed The Wounded, Carried Hope To The Imprisoned, Gave In His Name A Drink Of Water To The Thirsty." At the statue's base are the words, "To The Memory And In Honor Of The Various Orders of Sisters Who Gave Their Services As Nurses On Battlefields And In Hospitals During The Civil War." Unsurprisingly, this is on the National Register of Historic Places. The monument was intended to be placed in Arlington Cemetery but the war department objected (too religious) and the piece was plopped down in front of Saint Mathew's cathedral, to the objections of its sculptor Jerome Connor.



Jubilarians

Join us in Celebrating our 2020 Jubilarians



Sister Mary Joseph Ritter

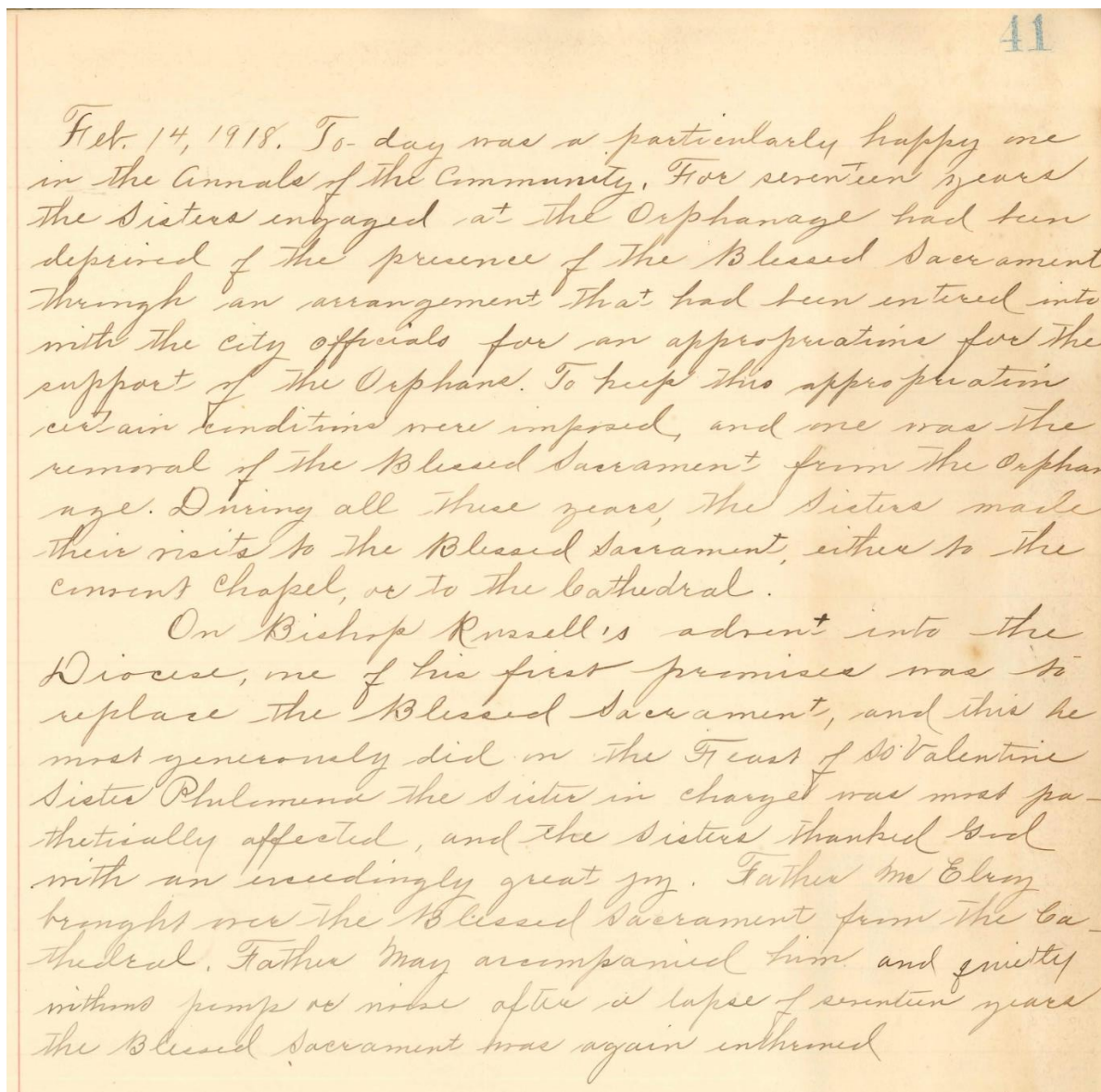
Happy 60th Jubilee!

Sister Anne Francis Campbell

Happy 60th Jubilee!



Did You Know?



Feb. 14, 1918. Today was a particularly happy one in the Annals of the Community. For seventeen years the Sisters engaged at the Orphanage had been deprived of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament through an arrangement that had been entered into with the city officials for an appropriation for the support of the orphans. To keep this appropriation certain conditions were imposed and one was the removal of the Blessed Sacrament from the orphanage. During all these years

the Sisters made their visits to the Blessed Sacrament either to the convent chapel or to the Cathedral.

On Bishop Russell's advent into the Diocese, one of his first promises was to replace the Blessed Sacrament, and this he most generously did on the Feast of St. Valentine. Sister Philomena, the Sister in charge, was most pathetically affected, and the Sisters thanked God with an exceedingly great joy. Father McElroy brought over the Blessed Sacrament from the Cathedral. Father May accompanied him and quietly without pomp or noise after a lapse of seventeen years the Blessed Sacrament was again enthroned.

(Taken from journal of Sister Stanislaus Hanley)



Pope Francis has designated September 1 as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Join Pope Francis and Christians around the globe in praying for and taking action for our common home on September 1 and the Season of Creation, September 1-October 4 by visiting www.SeasonofCreation.org. The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through repenting, repairing, and rejoicing together. During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.

This year, amid crises that have shaken our world, we're awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and each other. During the season this year, we enter a time of restoration and hope, a jubilee for our Earth, that requires radically new ways of living with creation.

The Season of Creation unites the world's 2.2 billion Christians around one shared purpose. With so much injustice all around us, now is the time for Christians everywhere to come together and show the world how to love each other and creation.



Season of Creation

2020 Prayer

Creator of Life,

At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit. The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas and forests sustained life.

The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing. And throughout time the Earth has sustained life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time.

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given; a time to liberate ourselves from vicious consumption; a time to allow the land and all creatures to rest from the burden of production.

But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demands for growth, and our never-ending cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world.

The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. We have not allowed the land to observe her Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to be renewed.

During this Season of Creation, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we proclaim a Jubilee for the Earth, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of creation.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ.

Amen.



**SEASON OF
CREATION**