Fond Farewell from Sr. Renée – Pt. II – continued from last week

SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION

FICTION
I’m retiring.
I asked for this.
You’ve worked hard for this.
You should have said no.

FACT
Ha! I wish. Old nuns don’t die, they just take on another ministry or two.
I was called by God and by my community to be the assistant provincial for the next six years.
I did not “climb the ladder” nor have my eye on a top position in my community.
You don’t say No to God.

I AM REALLY GRATEFUL FOR…

- Some special gifts over the years – small ones like a Valentine and a $10 gift card from a “starving” student; large ones like my favorite Mary sculpture, tickets to see Jesus Christ Superstar and Lion King, an anonymous Kohl’s gift card, and several vacations near and far.
- Being part of your lives, your homes, your joys, your sorrows.
- Holding so many children – some now of college age – being at the birth of one and the godmother of another.
- Having so many of you drive all the way to Lebanon, OH, to greet me at the church for my youngest brother’s funeral.
- My Halloweens here as Elvis, Martha Washington, Julius Caesar, a wizard, a convict, a witch, a priest, a devil, an angel…
- Being called many names, like everybody’s favorite nun, the most loved woman in the parish, the glue that held the parish together for a period, a spiritual leader of the parish, the mother of the parish, and the ever present Sr. Renee.

I AM REALLY SAD THAT I WON’T…

- get to see your children grow up (unless you keep in touch).
- get to come around on Halloween to surprise you with my new costume (and get some candy or other goodies).
- get to hear Jim Wolfe at Mass or be teased by him at lunch.
- be part of the parish Sunday liturgies at St. Mary’s.
- be part of the ministries that I loved here, especially watching the Holy Spirit work through Christ Renews His Parish.
- be on the women’s C.R.H.P. weekends.
- be a continuing presence of the Sisters of Notre Dame here, who began ministering at St. Mary’s in 1876.

I AM NOT SAD THAT I…CALLED YOU FORTH INTO MINISTRY.

One of the unspoken goals of my life is to keep Vatican II alive and well. Two of my favorite documents from that momentous council are The Laity and The Church in the Modern World. I always want to present God as relevant, as present, as active in our daily lives. I also have been known to call forth hundreds (thousands?) of you to ministry in the parish and beyond. Yes, I have been known to twist a few arms. Just doing my duty – helping you, the laity, to realize that we are all the People of God, that we all have our role, that we are all called to holiness in our everyday lives and in service.

I AM SAD… TO LEAVE ST. MARY’S BUT NOT SAD TO SAY YES TO GOD.

Can you tell that I love you and will miss you? The people of St. Mary’s are family to me. You will remain forever in my thoughts, love, and prayer. I will miss you and would not have wanted to spend the last 21 years of my life anywhere else. At the same time, God has called me to move on. I’m being birthed from the womb of Campbell County all the way over to Kenton County. At first I didn’t want to come to St. Mary’s, and now I don’t want to leave. But in the spirit of Mary with her Yes to God, I respond with my Yes. God is very faithful and prepared me for this new reality. I “knew” in my spirit four months before my work phone was 859-392-8101, and my new email will be rnienaber@sndky.org. I plan to be back for the festival and for the Parish Night Out each year – hopefully more frequently than that. Let us continue, whether in Campbell County or Kenton County or beyond, to do what Fr. Brink used to say often as he pushed away from our lunch table, “Let’s go make the world a better place.”

SO…MY FOND FAREWELL

Our installation as the new provincial council for the Sisters of Notre Dame of the Covington Province will be on July 13, and you will be invited to a reception in the afternoon (via a note in the bulletin). My new address as of early July will be 1601 Dixie Highway, Covington, KY 41011 (across from Covington Catholic). My work phone will be 859-392-8101, and my new email will be rnienaber@sndky.org. I plan to be back for the festival and for the Parish Night Out each year – hopefully more frequently than that. Let us continue, whether in Campbell County or Kenton County or beyond, to do what Fr. Brink used to say often as he pushed away from our lunch table, “Let’s go make the world a better place.”

P.S. I have not been able to write individual thank you notes for ALL of your kind gifts and cards, including donations towards the crucifix that will hang in the school as a testimony to the Sisters of Notre Dame who have served in this parish since 1876. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.