

Clelian Heights Newsletter

A Family Affair



Shavings

Christmas 2002

“For of such is the Kingdom of heaven.”

(The 40th Anniversary Heart to Heart Banquet message from Sr. Clare Millea, ASCJ, Provincial Superior)

It is a great joy for me to be with all of you this evening. We were doing a bit of math today and realized that the sisters present this evening have served as staff members of Clelian Heights a total of 258 years. If we would add to this total the time spent by Sr. Celine, founding director, Sr. Geraldine, Sr. Athanasius, Sr. Angelica, Sr. Virginia, Sr. Lucian, Sr. Mary Louise, Sr. Lisa Marie, Sr. Beatriz and the others, how high that number would be.

I celebrated my 21st birthday at Clelian Heights. Preparing my remarks for this evening gave me the opportunity to reminisce about fifteen years of wonderful experiences among the students, families, staff, volunteers and benefactors who are the Clelian Heights family.

I'm sure we've all noticed the quotation at the bottom of Clelian Heights' stationery. It's also right on the cover of tonight's program booklet: "For of such is the Kingdom of heaven." That line forms part of the discourse Jesus spoke to a large crowd of simple people who gathered around him on a Palestinian hillside 2000 years ago. I think Jesus could speak those same words on a certain hillside in Greensburg and he would add: if my teachings seem hard to understand and, even more, to put into practice, look at my special friends at Clelian Heights and learn from them.

Let's try:

How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Pope John Paul II proclaims a "civilization of love" to a world filled with conflicts, injustice, violence and greed. Persons with disabilities, on the other hand, are persons of the heart.

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They place affection, faithful friendship and understanding above all else and have a mysterious way of breaking down barriers around peoples' hearts. People like Shirley, who spend each day carrying out simple housekeeping tasks, are giants of generosity and compassion. I remember the day Bishop Connare came to celebrate a farewell Mass for our elderly chaplain, Fr. Bernard, who was retiring. Shirley came into the dining room after Mass and, hands on hips, announced: "I have a bone to pick with you, Bishop." Somewhat taken aback, he asked her what might be the problem. Shirley stated: "You said that Fr. Bernard is going to leave us to go back to Rome because the Holy Father needs him. But he's old and sick, he can't work, he needs to rest!" Thank you Shirley, for the many times you teach us how to build a civilization of love, one act of compassion after another.

Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage.

I remember the day Arthur kept coming near me in the classroom with his shy smile and a gentle pat on the hand. Getting frazzled by all the children's demands for attention, I responded to his umpteenth expression of affection with "Arthur, stop it!" End of story, so I thought, and the morning proceeded just fine. At lunch, however, I found Arthur waiting for me outside our dining room, his big innocent eyes welling with tears as he said: "But Dare, I love you." A big hug and a couple of my own tears mended the relationship. Thank you, Arthur, for teaching me not to be so busy that I forget to be gentle like you.

Happy those who mourn: they shall be comforted.

A dad once told me: "I used to weep gazing at my newborn Down syndrome son sleeping in his bassinet. I was mourning the child I had dreamed about and who would never be. Then one day, after his baptism, I was flooded with the realization that this tiny baby was a temple of God and a great gift of God to us. From that day, his presence in our family has been a source of joy and many blessings." Thank you for teaching all our families to be more caring and sensitive.

Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied.

What is right, where do we channel our energies? Sharon was one of our best actresses, gifted with a fine voice and an amazing ability to memorize and deliver her lines on stage. One day her Dad asked her: "How can you possibly learn all your parts on stage and never remember to take the clothes out of the dryer?" Sharon explained: "Daddy, other people worry about lots of things and get all flustered. I just pick what's important to me and give it my all." Thank you, Sharon, for teaching us to follow our hearts and do with love all that we do.

Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them.

A lovely young college student who came to do an internship at Clelian Heights had a severe physical disability which made her walk with a very unsteady gait, her arms swaying erratically. Little Danny met her at the classroom door and with his usual candor asked: "Why do you walk that way?" Sarah replied: "Because this is how God made me." "OK", said Danny, "come on in." We may be able to walk and talk and learn, but so many of us have trouble accepting ourselves as we are. Thank you, Danny, for showing how to accept ourselves and others.

Happy the pure in heart: they shall see God.

Gerald was a part of our Clelian Heights family for nearly 30 years, renowned as an expert pot washer. But he had his moments too. How many times, after Gerald had received some minor correction we'd come upon him in chapel, pouring out his heart to God with a tearful: "I'm sorry, God, I'll never do it again." Sr. Eleanor remembers the time he and the other young men at Chip's House were watching a football game. At a certain point, Sister saw that Gerald had stopped watching. He seemed mesmerized as he stared out the window. After quite a while, she asked him if he were ok. Gerald answered: "God's saying hello to me." She asked him to explain. "See those trees blowing out there. That's God saying 'Hello, Gerald, hello, Gerald.'" Gerald went home to

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God a couple of months ago. What a warm hello he must have received. Thank you, Gerald, for teaching us to see God in our everyday life and pray to him with simplicity and trust.

Happy the peacemakers: they shall be called sons of God.

Those who knew and loved Patrick, a young resident whose playful antics were often great table talk, will certainly remember the time Sr. Clelia was leaning over to rinse the tub after bathing one of the little boys. She heard Patrick say, behind her: "Ready or not, here I come!" and – no sooner said than done – into the tub she went! Patrick was not just a mischief maker. In his own little way he was a peacemaker. Thank you, Patrick, for teaching us to seize and enjoy the present moment – and not take ourselves too seriously.

Happy those who are persecuted in the cause of right: theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

I was privileged to be present in Rome throughout the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, during which countless persons experienced the grace of love and reconciliation by taking part in pilgrimages and other religious events in the Eternal City. During the International Eucharistic Congress held in Rome in June of that year, I heard Jean Vanier, the founder of the l'Arche communities, tell this story. The previous weekend, some of the residents in his community had received the sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time. Matthew, aged 11, had prepared with great joy and devotion for the day he was to receive the Body of Christ for the first time. His mom looked on so proudly and Matthew radiated with love for Jesus. At the reception following Mass, one of his relatives remarked on the beautiful ceremony, adding: "Too bad it was all wasted on a child who doesn't even understand." Matthew looked over at his mom, whose eyes were filling up with tears and whispered to her: "Don't worry, Mother, Jesus loves me just as I am." Thank you, Matthew, for teaching us to see God's love even when we are hurt.

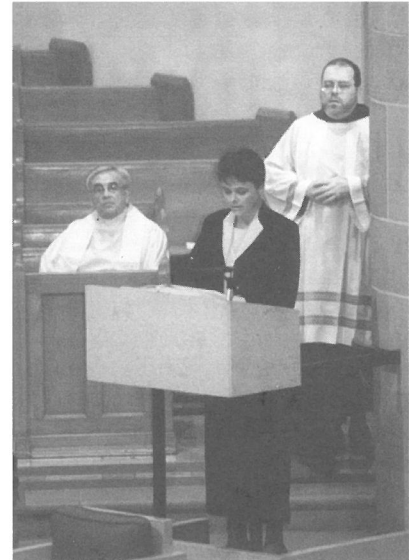
Yes, the kingdom of heaven truly belongs to these special persons. We're not here tonight just to celebrate an anniversary for Clelian Heights. All of us, families, staff, volunteers, benefactors and friends want to thank you, the past and present children and adults who have been a part of our Clelian Heights family these forty years. Our lives have been touched by the gift of your presence among us. When we reach heaven we hope to tell Jesus that we have learned to live – at least a little bit – as he asked us to on that grassy hillside 2000 years ago because you have been our teachers and our shining examples. The Kingdom of Heaven is yours. Thank you.



Recipients of the first Heart to Heart Award given at the 40th Anniversary Banquet: Shirley Bernacchi, Sr. Maria Battaglia, J. Murray Egan for the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, Margaret Krystyniak for the Krystyniak family, and John Nagy.

WE CELEBRATE

The Mass celebrating the conclusion of the 40th anniversary of Clelian Heights School was held on Sept. 8th at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Greensburg. The Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were honored for their 100 years of service to the church in the United States.



*"Trust in the Sacred Heart
and you will see miracles."*

Mother Clelia Merloni



A Letter from Sr. Adrienne

Dear Friends of Clelian Heights,

I have served as the Executive Director of Clelian Heights for the past seven years, and during this time I have formed beautiful relationships with many of you. I thank God for these opportunities. I have always been touched by your generosity to our spoken and unspoken needs. You have given in response to our annual drives, through memorial donations, by your attendance at our many functions, and many have officially chosen to remember Clelian in your wills or trusts. Your faithful generosity is deeply appreciated because it is through this same generosity that many of our dreams are realized. I personally want to take this opportunity to thank you for your help and your friendship. I realize that you have made many sacrifices so that Clelian Heights could grow and flourish.

I have been experiencing some health problems during the last few years, and it has become increasingly more difficult to take care of Clelian Heights and my own health. I have recently been relieved of my position as Executive Director of Clelian Heights due to this medical condition. Sr. Rosemary Zaffuto has been appointed as the new Executive Director. Sr. Rosemary served in this position for six years from 1989-1995. She also brings many years of experience in the field of education having served as Principal and Superintendent of Schools in Sacramento, CA. She served in a major leadership position in our congregation in the years prior to her return to Clelian in 2001. I feel that Clelian Heights is in competent hands with Sr. Rosemary as Director, Sr. Linda as Principal and with the support of a very dedicated staff. I will continue to be a visible presence at Clelian helping in the programs where I am needed.

As we move toward our celebration of Christmas with our hearts focused on the Lord, I pray that you will experience the abundant blessings of our Newborn Savior. You have helped make our dreams real through your belief in our mission. This belief has been evident in your friendship and your monetary support. With a heart of gratitude I beseech God to fill your heart with peace and the assurance that He walks beside you in good times and He carries you through the difficult times.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Gratefully,

Sister M. Adrienne DiLonardo, ASCJ

Sr. Adrienne DiLonardo, ASCJ



A Message from Sr. Rosemary

May I begin by saying that I am happy to be back at Clelian Heights and I look forward to working with you for the continued success and improvements here at Clelian Heights. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in all our endeavors. Since having been here before, I know that we can count on your support and encouragement.

Those of you who have recently visited Clelian Heights are aware of the growth that has taken place over the years. From the humble beginnings forty years ago we have grown, not only in buildings, but also in enrollment and staffing. Every employee at Clelian Heights is committed to the special belief that each child and young adult is a beloved child of God who deserves our dignity and respect. The cooperation that we receive from parents, friends and benefactors reflects the commitment we all have to make Clelian Heights a home away from home. Anyone visiting Clelian Heights is impressed with the smiles and friendliness of the staff, the children and the young adults.

You are aware that all organizations need long and short-term goals. We have accomplished many of the goals that were set up some years ago. As some goals are achieved others take their place. Some of our present short-term goals are immediate and demand attention. Since the main building was built thirty-five years ago, there are some major repairs that need to be done. A new roof is needed over the section that houses the classrooms and dorms. Some major exterior masonry work and spot pointing is necessary to prevent further damage to the building. After thirty-five years, the carpeting in the classrooms and hallways, as well as the carpeting in Chip's House, needs to be replaced. The personnel in the Development Office have been busy preparing requests to major Foundations for grants to cover the costs for the above mentioned repairs.

The enclosed envelope is for our Annual Christmas Appeal that goes to our Endowment Fund to which we pledge our continued support. We are most grateful for all your generous gifts throughout the years in support of our special mission here at Clelian Heights. As we approach the holidays, we extend best wishes for a very Merry Christmas filled with love and choicest blessings of the Christ Child. Be assured of our prayers for good health, happiness and prosperity in the New Year.

Development Office News

Wholey Barbecue

On Sunday, September 20th, we held our 5th annual barbecue and it was again a great success thanks to the generosity of so many giving individuals. We would like to give special recognition to Sam Wholey and his family who provided 600 pieces of chicken and the potatoes for the occasion.

Sam and his helpers arrived early on Sunday to begin the grilling and between Sam's group, Dewey Harter, Pat and Steve Nelson, the chicken was prepared in record time. Guest were heard saying that the chicken was the best ever. Thanks to all who volunteered at the grill - you did a superb job!

Sunday was a beautiful day and the crowd started arriving early. In addition to our great dinner, there were many unique baskets and a lottery tree for our raffle as well as silent auction items that were in great demand. Thanks to the families, staff and friends of Clelian Heights who donated all the gifts to make this possible. A special thanks to The Redfern Company for sponsoring the cash raffle tickets again this year. Our cash raffle winners were:

∨ Justin McFall - 1st place	\$500
∨ Daniel Kelly - 2nd place	\$250
∨ Frank Bono - 3rd place	\$150
∨ A. Baric - 4th place	\$100

This barbecue wouldn't have been possible without all the people who volunteered to help serve, bus tables, sell tickets and clean up. We appreciate all the time and hard work of all our volunteers

The barbecue and the appeal that accompanied its announcement raised over \$30,000.00 for Clelian Heights! Without the continued support of the Wholey family, this great event wouldn't be possible.

Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credits

In 2001, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania created a unique opportunity in the form of the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) for businesses that pay state taxes. Business owners that make contributions (donations of cash, personal property or services) to scholarship organizations or educational improvement organizations will receive tax credits. The **Scholarship Partners Foundation** was created by the Diocese of Greensburg to promote the EITC as well as ensure that tuition is provided to eligible students of need.

An eligible business must submit an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development making a commitment to contribute money to the **Scholarship Partners Foundation**. This contribution can be designated to go to Clelian Heights. Our school will be awarded these funds and our students with special needs will directly benefit in the form of financial assistance.

A business will be approved for a tax credit equal to 75% of its contribution to this foundation, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per taxable year. The tax credit may be increased to 90% of the contribution made if the business agrees to provide the same amount of contribution for two consecutive years.

Tax applications are processed on a first-come-first serve basis by the day of submission. Applications will be processed until the amount of available tax credits is exhausted. Two businesses have already taken advantage of this unique opportunity to help Clelian Heights with their tax credits. If your business is eligible, please consider EITC and Clelian Heights. For eligibility requirements or more information, visit this web site: www.inventpa.com or call the Clelian Heights Development Office at 724-837-8120.

This year is almost over and as you do your end of the year tax planning, please consider the income tax charitable deduction. This deduction can reduce your income tax and also provide support for Clelian Heights. Charitable gifts can be given in the form of cash, stock, real estate or life income gifts. If you need additional information on making a gift, please contact the Development Office at 724-837-8120 or consult your tax advisor. Thank you for your continued support of Clelian Heights.

WORLD YOUTH DAY Toronto, Canada

“You are the salt of the earth...
You are the light of the world.” Matt. 5:13-14

“I invite you to come to [Toronto] for the seventeenth celebration of World Youth Day (WYD). ...It will be another chance to meet Christ, to bear witness to his presence in today's society, and to become builders of the “civilization of love and truth.” Pope John Paul II

Upon hearing these words, Sr Linda along with Shirley Bernacchi, Greg Boyle, Angela Dipolitto, Michael Policastro, Jessica Robb, Randy Rose, Clifford Trice and David Twigger, accepted the challenge and went on a pilgrimage. The Clelian “Pilgrims”, accompanied by Michele Buraczewski and Irene Ridilla, joined the youth from the Diocese of Greensburg and traveled to Toronto to see Pope John Paul II.

The six hour bus trip was nothing compared to the five mile walk on Saturday from the hotel to Downsview Park, the gathering point for over a half a million youth from 170 different nations. They walked in 80° - 90° heat carrying backpacks, sleeping bags, food and water, meeting other groups along the way. The strong arms and the steady support of other Greensburg companions made the trip less burdensome for the Clelian pilgrims. Fr. Jonathan Wisneski and Terri Telepek, the group leaders, made sure everyone stopped frequently and drank plenty of water.

Upon arriving at “the park”, a former air force landing strip, the Clelian group was fortunate to be in a special section. Everyone settled down on the tarmac to eat the WYD dinner of stew and biscuits while awaiting the arrival of the Holy Father who was coming for an evening prayer vigil. The Clelian pilgrims soon realized that the Pope mobile would pass within a few feet of them! The excitement mounted as his helicopter circled above and landed. The Holy Father looked directly at the travelers from Clelian and he waved and smiled as he passed in his Pope mobile.



The exuberance of the group was beyond telling. The next day this scene was played out again as the Pope arrived for 10:00 a.m. mass. The rain held up long enough for our pilgrims to again “meet” the Pope as he drove past them. Despite fatigue, dampness and heat the Clelian Pilgrims were “troopers” all the way. The five mile bus ride back to the comfort of the hotel was a most welcome trip.

Pope John Paul II truly is the “Light of the world and the salt of the earth” who enlightens and inspires others to be the same. In Toronto he had this effect not only upon a small group from Clelian Heights but upon 800,000 youth from around the world who spent time together in prayer, peace and unity.



Captain and Sandy Dog Biscuits

These nutritious biscuits are now for sale at Clelian Heights and select stores throughout the Greensburg area. To place your order for this all natural, delicious snack for your favorite canine friend just phone the school 724/837-8120 or EMAIL: clelian@aol.com

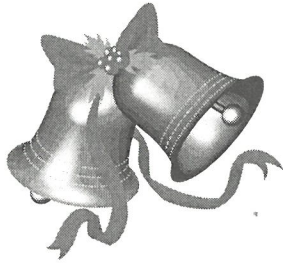
These biscuits are made in our vocational training program.

Made with extraordinary heart

♥ by exceptional people. ♥

Wish List

Light Commercial Treadmill
8 1/2 x 11 white copy paper
iMac Computers
Computer software
DVD players for residential areas
Visit our School Wish List Registry at:
target.com



You are invited to join the sisters at Clelian Heights for mass on Christmas Eve. Mass begins at 10:00 p.m. in the chapel and will be followed by a reception.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS * JOYEUX NOEL * MERRY CHRISTMAS * JOYEUX NOEL*

Please Mark Your Calendar Today

Night at the Races

Feb. 15, 2003

Longaberger Basket Bash

Apr. 6, 2003

JPK Golf Classic

June 9, 2003

VISA AND MASTERCARD MAY NOW BE USED
WHEN MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO CLELIAN HEIGHTS.

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