



THE PANGS OF LETTING GO



Yes, it is sadly that the Sisters Holy Cross are saying goodbye and thank you for the many years of love, joy, and challenges. On July 31, 2017, we left Infant Jesus Parish in Nashua, New Hampshire where we served for 107 years (1910–2017).

The history of our stay is extraordinary! As we reminisce, we recall stepping into the 1910 building to greet 235 students. Two sisters of Holy Cross resided at the convent at St. Louis-de-Gonzague and walked back and forth to Holy Infant Jesus for four years. On occasion (most likely in the winter) they traveled by horse and buggy.

In 1914 a convent wing was added to the chapel only to be destroyed by the 1930 fire that took 125 homes and buildings, among them the church and school. A woman generously offered her home to the five sisters and chose to move in with her sister. During these trying times the sisters continued their mission on scattered sites until the new convent was built in 1931. Again in 1955, another fire destroyed the convent. Four years later the present brick building was build and even provided an entrance directly into the school. Providently, the trials and blessings at Infant Jesus Parish brought the community together in prayer, friendship, and strength.

Though we mourn our departure from this strong and noble parish, we know that the parishioners understand our own aging and losses of personnel. We pray that Infant Jesus Parish (now known as Blessed John XXIII Parish) will be blessed and remain strong as it was in years past! The Sisters of Holy Cross will be ever grateful for your support, care and love. You remain in our hearts and prayers!

God bless you one and all!

Pauline Morneau, CSC

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THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

A viewing of the Solar Eclipse on August 21st which occurred, uniquely, from coast to coast in the United States, was celebrated in the U.S. Sector / North American Region by a gathering of anyone who wished to attend. Sister Sally Stearns was inspired to plan this gathering with members of the Justice and Environment Commission.

At least sixty sisters in the Sector gathered in the dining room at St. George Manor to celebrate this rare cosmic event of the partial eclipse as it was seen in New Hampshire. Partial or total, it was an event to behold.

In the context of prayer, the group was reminded that "there is Holy Mystery behind all that moves and has its being in this great cosmos". And from the Book of Genesis we heard what is so familiar to us:

Then God said:
"Let there be light," and there was light.
God saw how good the light was.
Genesis: 1 : 1-4

As time neared for the appearance of the partial eclipse, the sisters shared the special glasses for viewing and the "OHs! and AHs!" could be heard as soon as the eclipse came into view. Many returned several times to follow its progression. The heavens spoke to us that day as the moon cast its shadow over the sun – our sun – in the middle of the day.

To conclude this event, an ice cream social followed as the reactions around the spectacular event continued to be the focus of conversation. We all hope to be around for the next total eclipse that will be visible in our part of the country in 2024.

Diane Y. Dupere, CSC

Below : Three Members of the J & E Mission Group
Sally Stearns, Diane Dupere, Rachel Labonville



The Gathering

The Gathering



Staff scooping ice cream for the ice cream social

The Creation Story retold and illustrated



In a moment of fun, Sisters Sally and Diane re-enacting the partial eclipse

and near-total eclipse

WE, SISTERS OF HOLY CROSS, PRAY OUR GOODBYES



Two years after celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the purchase of the Pittsfield, New Hampshire, property, the sisters in the U.S. Sector gathered Saturday, August 26th – five days after gathering for the solar eclipse. At the invitation of Berakah Staff, a group of approximately sixty sisters and associates enjoyed one last cookout in Pittsfield followed by a time of prayer in the form of a PowerPoint presentation whose theme focused on: “We Remember You, We Honor You, We Thank You” as we “prayed our goodbyes.”



As we, ourselves, stood on holy ground that day, we remembered the hundreds of individuals who, since 1965, who lived and gathered here:

- Provincial / Local leadership and local community
- Retreatants
- Participants of the Second Novitiate
- Month of Renewal for English-speaking sisters in the Congregation
- RCIA Instruction Sessions
- Confirmation Groups
- PRH Sessions
- AA Retreats
- Monthly meetings of diocesan clergy support groups



Your spirit remains and
We Remember You
We Honor You
We Thank You



Within the context of making the facility available to these groups, the sisters welcomed parishioners for daily mass during the winter months, hosted a wedding at the Shrine, provided a refuge for an entire family that needed to be relocated due to the loss of their home due to a fire, and provided shelter for a



foster child.

In 1993, the sabbatical program at "Berakah: A Place of Blessing" was launched. Women religious from around the world brought about a sense of universality to this small town. They came from North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

For a dedicated staff that joined us over the years...

**We Remember You
We Honor You
We Thank You**



When the sabbatical program came to a close, summer retreats continued and weekend and one-day presentations were offered to the community at large. Then two month-long programs were made available: *Mystical Perspectives and Cosmic Consciousness*, and *Retirement for Mission: Journey into Deeper Love*. Both new programs were very well attended and received rave reviews. Many other groups received warm hospitality during the final days of transition.



On this day,

**We Remember You
We Honor You
We Thank You**



The prayer culminated in a virtual walk-through of the house and a stroll of the grounds. Later, the sisters were invited to walk through the house and to reminisce. Those who were able to do so were most appreciative of that opportunity. Following the prayer, the group was invited to share thoughts and feelings and we listened to their witnessing and all that Pittsfield and "Berakah: A Place of Blessing" meant to them. It's obvious from the witness of those who spoke that the memories will never be eradicated.



**We Remember You
We Honor You
We Thank You**



One group shared about the event in the car on their way home. In their words: "We did not feel sad. We felt gifted. We have been given memories that will evoke 'picnic joy', sung prayers, and loving companions, who shared talents and gifts to be remembered with gratitude and affection. You gave us Berakah to carry with us that will always live in us. That's the blessing and Mystery of this day – of all Berakah's yesterdays. Thank you all."

Diane Y. Dupere, CSC

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