

Welcome 70, 75, 85 Jubilees - September 23, 2017

We gather for this wonderful feast to celebrate the lives of sisters who have been faithful to the congregation's mission for 70, 75 and yes 85 years. Welcome to our sisters, associates, our celebrant, Fr. O'Hare our concelebrants and the family and friends of our sister jubilarians. Our hearts are filled with gratitude to these sisters who said yes 70, 75 and 85 years ago and have lived that yes with faithfulness, courage and dedication revealing God's unconditional love to thousands of men, women and children in schools, elementary through university, parishes, community service, medical care, outreach and advocacy here and in Puerto Rico. Their influence is immeasurable but for those of us who like concrete facts these sisters, together, have served a total of 1,740 years. Those years saw the poverty of the depression, the violence of wars, the discriminations that birthed movements to foster social justice and peace. But these sisters have what Jeremiah terms "the singleness of heart and action" knowing God has made an everlasting covenant" with them to continue to respond to God's love and call through all of the changes they experienced.

When the 1932 group entered a song by Cole Porter topped the record charts (remember records?). It was called "Night and Day" made popular by Fred Astaire. A lyric from that song says:

Night and day, you are the one
Only you 'neath the moon or under the sun
Whether near to me or far
It's no matter, darling, where you are
I think of you day and night

These sisters knew the one who would inspire them and accompany them to spread God's love no matter what the need.

In 1942 Bing Crosby popularized a song sung to this day: "White Christmas." We could all site the lyrics but "dreaming, listening and hearing" how to spread the joy of being surrounded by love inspired our sisters to face many changes in our world and in religious life. But the 1947 top hit "Peg O My Heart" of Buddy Clark sums it up by asking these sisters to answer God's call:

"Come, be my own, come make your home in my heart."

And that is what they have done their entire lives and we rejoice in all the good they have done.

I'd like to end with a more current song, but it, too, is now old from 1965, Burt Bacharach and it tells all of us what these women have been telling us for that total of 1740 years:

What the world needs now is love, sweet love
It's the only thing that there's just too little of
What the world needs now is love, sweet love,
Not not just for some but for everyone.

Not not just for some but for everyone.

We thank all of you sisters and we celebrate your generous response to god's love. As a sign of our appreciation we together now acknowledge, as you have with your very being:

What the world needs now is love, sweet love,
Not just for some but for everyone.