



SEVEN SISTERS APOSTOLATE COMMUNIQUE

APRIL 2025

A Seven Sister: One holy hour/one priest/each week/one heart of prayer

SEVEN SISTERS – in and out and about:

Heartfelt welcome: NEW groups that registered in MARCH to cover more priests in daily prayer: Additional groups in Cameroon (Kumba), Peru, Spain (Sevilla), Portugal, and Washington, DC and these USA states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. **Let no shepherd be left behind!**

HOLY WEEK: Our priests/bishops will appreciate extra graces this Holy Week. Plan now as to how/where you will offer “the Hour” d/t limited Chapel access. An **Hour** from home is acceptable.

Visit the Apostolate website today...
www.sevensistersapostolate.org

Please like our Facebook page!
www.facebook.com/sevensistersapostolate

Spanish page: www.facebook.com/Apostolado-Siete-Hermanas-112921710620881/

ANCHORESES:

Please pass this **Communiqué** on to group members.



Illustrator: A. Wahl

Greetings to dearest Sisters in Christ as we continue our Lenten journey, having freshly experienced two oasis days in

March on the Solemnities of St Joseph (19th) and the Annunciation (25th). As Seven Sisters we had good cause to also take joyful pause on **Inspiration Day** (14 years on the 24th!) and on the Feast of our patron, **St Margaret Clitherow** (26th). Parting the curtains to April, we now gain sight of Holy Week, Easter Sunday (20th), and Easter Octave with its culmination in Divine Mercy Sunday (27th). Oh, do recall with great delight that this is also the Jubilee Year! *Go forth in peace, for you have followed the good road* (St Clare of Assisi).

Our Lenten liturgies put us face-to-face with much: miseries, temptations, sinfulness, fasting, generosity, humility, repentance, forgiveness, conversion. All along, step by step, our priests nudge us onward. Their homilies aspire to fortify with new insight, remind of the ever-abundance of graces, and ultimately invite us to a courage to delve more deeply into our Faith's greatest treasury: **the Paschal Mystery**. The passion, death and resurrection of Christ is inexhaustible as the supreme sign of God's inexhaustible merciful love. **All this is affixed in the hearts of our priests, for they are ambassadors of merciful love.** Priests respond daily in walking intimately in this Mystery alongside Christ, who is Merciful Love. *“We are far less lonely than anyone else, for we can count on the constant company of the Lord, with whom we should be conversing without interruption. We are in love with Love, with the Author of Love!”* (St. Josemaria Escriva)

It has been said that priests are anointed *for the sake of the sacraments*. During the annual Holy Thursday's Chrism Mass, where oils for sacramental use are newly blessed, priests fittingly renew their promises offered on the day of their Ordination. During the **Chrism Mass in the Year of Mercy** (24 March 2016 – and also our

Apostolate's 5th anniversary of Inspiration Day), **Pope Francis** focused his remarks on the topic of mercy. He beautifully reminded priests that one of their principal responsibilities is to **make mercy visible in the same way as Jesus**, who always conferred it in excess. *"As priests, we are witnesses to and ministers of the ever-increasing abundance of the Father's mercy; we have the rewarding and consoling task of incarnating mercy, as Jesus did."*

What a privilege of prayer we accept as Seven Sisters.

Our priests are given the heavenly commission of *incarnating mercy*. There is much to uphold in prayer in support of the life of a priest/bishop who as St Ambrose echoes, *"God made them, the vicars of His love."* Lent and Eastertide are perfect seasons to examine and fortify our sacrifices of prayers, for these seasons emphasize the sacraments of Reconciliation, Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders, which emphasize merciful love. Priests avail themselves to a super abundance of Confessional times during this season. **Let us pray that they not grow weary but instead be enlivened and grow in a love for this sacrament – as both Confessor and penitent.** Let us seek the intercession of their patron, St John Vianney, a stellar model of merciful love and endurance as Confessor. Recently a retired Bishop shared how he meets monthly with a priest to celebrate Mass together. After the Mass the priest retrieves a confessional stole and gives it to the bishop, who hears the priest's confession. The bishop returns the favor and gives the stole to the priest to hear his. Breakfast follows for the priestly brothers. In discipline and fellowship, they live what Our Lord disclosed to St Faustina, *"There (in the confessional) the greatest miracles take place and are constantly repeated. ... The miracle of Divine Mercy restores that soul in full"* (Diary, 1448). How often the priestly hearts must be graced in the work of their own interior conversion, precisely by their active listening role as Confessor. What solace to that heart of a priest as he accepts the confessions of children and the return of "big fish" (as St John Vianney called those long away from the sacrament). Yes, that our priests love Confession more and more!

As we pray for those that God chooses to be His conduits of love in this world, let us take the opportunity to **ourselves be renewed in the experience of God's merciful love.** May we too sense through frequent and good Confessions, as did convert-to-the-Faith, St Elizabeth Ann Seton, *"I felt as if my chains fell, as those of St Peter at the touch of the Divine messenger. My God, what new scenes for my soul!"* Prayerfully consider preparing to offer a **General Confession**, a reviewing of one's whole life (or extended period). Earnestly reflecting on one's history can be an effective way to notice repeating patterns, and also to come to a realization of God's deep and abiding merciful love despite our lack of faithfulness at times.

At the Chrism Mass of 2016, the Holy Father also emphasized that priests carry a special role in **enculturating mercy**, *"so that each person can embrace it and experience it personally. Mercy restores everything; it restores dignity to each person."* We often witness this deep love and work in our priests/bishops through ourselves or others. Let us pray the influence of these ambassadors of merciful love becomes increasingly effectual in the culture. Regarding our hoped Apostolate prayer reach, we tout, **"Let no shepherd be left behind"**. Let us fervently pray toward a vibrant witness from the hearts and lives of our merciful shepherds: **"Let no sheep be left behind"**!

United in prayer, fasting and mission...*that our prayers may find the heart of every bishop and priest.* Eternal gratitude continues as **you each offer a daily wee Hail Mary for me.** **"One Ave Maria makes hell tremble"** (St John Vianney). Pray that I will not *'spoil the beautiful work that God has entrusted...'* (St Teresa of Calcutta). Your emails, notes and calls always arrive to my heart door at the just the right moment! Financial sacrifices are for 100% furtherance of the Apostolate. Your **letters of testimony** are beautiful and edifying! What glory is given to God through them! **Be assured** of my continued **daily prayers** for you at the altar.

- Janette (Howe) +**JMJ**+ 651-283-0929;
43 Nord Circle Rd, St Paul, MN 55127
sevensistersapostolate@gmail.com



*Madonna of the Grapes,
pray for us!*

*St John Vianney,
pray for us!*

*St Margaret Clitherow,
pray for us!*

...in quietness and trust is your strength. - Isaiah 30:15

Anchoresses: Please inform of all **NEW groups** and **Anchoress/ priest/ other changes (including updates in your contact info) thru Web site.** Know of my **special and steadfast prayers** for Anchoresses who serve such an indispensable and exemplary role in the Apostolate!

SEVEN SISTERS GUIDELINE BOOKLETS:

Available as **free** download from Web site. Hard copies passed on for printing cost of \$2 each + P/H. **Order thru Web email** with amount desired and address.

SEVEN SISTERS Tri-fold BROCHURE:

Effectively used in parish pamphlet stands (ask pastor's approval prior), Adoration Chapels, Retreat Centers, Bags/Packets for Women's Conferences/Retreats, Women's clubs, Serra clubs – or simply handing out! Available on Web as **free** download. Recommend **80# silk** for best printing results. May also **order through Web site**. Indicate address/quantity. 25 for \$10 + P/H. Available in ENGLISH and SPANISH.

SEVEN SISTERS Tri-fold LITANY for PRIESTS:

Now available for purchase. Printed on **100# silk** (a bit thicker than brochures). Original artwork (inspired by the Diary of St Faustina) by Seven Sister in Minnesota, Litany by Richard Cardinal Cushing. 25 for \$10 + P/H.

APPRECIATED and LOVED quilt project: A double cloaking for RETIRED PRIESTS:

Seven Sisters prayer and a quilt! To learn more, contact QuiltsBySevenSisters@gmail.com

ELIJAH's HELPERS: Intercessors in this group are dedicated to offering Holy Hours for priests in various forms of crisis (no names known). These are special Hours for special circumstances and carry special supportive graces. **It is growing!** Please consider this vital, hope-filled offering for our priests! **All inquiries to Nancy** at ElijahsHelpers@gmail.com or cell: 612-756-1107. She will help!

LAMP-BEARERS: Lamp-Bearers, so-named for their action of continually '*filling of their lamps with the oil of prayer*', pray for the **Apostolate at large**. Each intercessor **offers prayers of her choice every day**, and prays for two unique countries to increase prayer efforts for priests. Intentions are gleaned from topics and calendar points in the Communique and sent to members on the second or third Sunday of the month. **Additional intercessors ever-welcomed.** Inquire through Website.

REMEMBRANCE of those SEVEN SISTERS who have PASSED:

We want to remember those Seven Sisters in name and in prayer, who have gone before us to their eternal rest. Visit the Web site. Click on ABOUT folder and scroll to bottom, choose: IN REMEMBRANCE. Follow prompts ... OR you may submit info via the Website email. **Please check site monthly for additions!**

PRIEST who has PASSED to ETERNAL REST:

If the priest for whom you pray has entered eternal life, the group may be led to continue to pray for a length of time for the soul of that priest. Perhaps a novena of Holy Hours or the offering of holy Mass(es) for the priest. You will know. Some groups have/are offering Holy Hours for an entire year for their beloved deceased priest. Groups may be started following the death of a priest that did not have a group prior. This is commendable and welcomed. Please register these special groups through the Web site.

PRO PACE (Latin, for peace): In Nov 2024 an opportunity opened to pray for the **souls of priests in Purgatory**. Groups of seven are to band together. The commitment for each intercessor will be to attend holy Mass on one's unique day every week and offer one's personal Mass intention and personal Communion for the **souls of priests in Purgatory**. **Anchoress:** registration forms on the Website.

FASTING BROTHERS is growing: Groups of men offering various forms of fasting to augment the prayer efforts of a Seven Sisters group. Each man prayerfully discerns the type of fasting he will offer and commits to fast a designated day of the week (excepting Sunday/Solemnities). **Our Chaplain, strongly urges formation of these groups.** **Form on the Website for FB leader** to register.

SPANISH translation of Communique:

Posted (and archived) on the Website. If it is easier to receive through an email account, please let me know. Allow a few days for translation.

MATTERS of the HEART:

- “Knowing that a member of Seven Sisters is personally praying a Holy Hour for me each day is a source of comfort in times of difficulty, a source of strength in times of temptation, and a source of peace in times of turmoil. Your witness to prayer is a daily reminder of God’s love for me and those whom I shepherd. Please know that your prayers make a difference in my personal and priestly life.” (Fr JD Betzen, *Kansas*)
- “A friend from high school, who I had not seen or visited with in quite some time, was in from Florida for a funeral and attended Mass at my parish. While praying she sensed a calling to begin a Seven Sisters group for the pastor. She wondered how, since she lives in Florida! I then came into her mind and she turned around and saw me. She spoke with the priest after Mass, then tracked me down through a mutual friend and sent info. We now have Seven Sisters committed to prayer for our pastor.” (Alyce, *Louisiana*)
- “I am proud and, at the same time, humbled that you should remember me in such a magnificent and sacerdotal way before our Eucharistic Lord! My mission here is to assist anyone in spiritual need, but especially priests. Therefore, “holy women of Jerusalem,” thank you for permitting me to lend a hand to those in need. You are a constant reminder to me that I, too, stand in much need of spiritual support in this work. God reward you for the sacrifices you make for priests.” (Fr C Murr, *Sevilla, Spain*)
- “While on a retreat, I learned about this beautiful ministry and felt immediately drawn. I mentioned it to our pastor. He shared he had recently spoken with his mother about how he felt a lack of intentional prayer for him. At his previous parish, the Seven Sisters was active, and he had experienced firsthand the strength and grace that came from being regularly lifted up in prayer. Priests face spiritual battles, heavy responsibilities, and often loneliness. Through the Apostolate, we can ensure that our priest is supported, encouraged, and strengthened in his mission.” (Kym, *Wisconsin*)

RECENT...and AHEAD on the calendar:

- **Gratitude** to Divine Mercy for America for invitation to Janette for interview and to join the Zoom Holy Hour on 6 March. Archived: <https://divinemeracyforamerica.org/first-of-month-novenas/>
- **Gratitude** to Wichita (KS) Diocesan Co- Coordinators, **Carmen & Amy**, for organizing/hosting a Day of Reflection (SLC in Wichita) 15 March. *Getting to know our Patrons*. Over 100 in attendance!
- **Sat, 26 April (DM weekend).** *Day of Reflection*. St Anthony Abbott. Cumberland, WI (Superior Diocese) Mass, lunch, fellowship. Janette will offer reflection: *Praying for priests: ambassadors of Divine Mercy*. Seven Sisters and guests welcome.
Contact Liz: sevensisterssuperiorwi@gmail.com
- **Sat, 17 May.** *Reflection and Renewal*. Seven Sisters and Guests. *Hope in the Hidden*. Holy Spirit Church (St Cloud, MN). Incl Holy Mass, Rosary, talks (Fr Jeremy Ploof/Sr Amelia Hueller, O.P.), luncheon, Recommitment prayer. Fee: \$20 if by 04/15, \$25 after. Inquiries to Carrie: 320.253.1692
- **Sat, 31 May.** *4th annual Seattle Retreat*. Archbp Brunett Retreat Center (Federal Way, WA) Begins w/9 am Mass. Incl Talks, fellowship, confessions, adoration, lunch. Ends 3 pm.
Contact: Holly: sevensistersseattle@gmail.com
Friday eve option: vespers, social hour, Sat breakfast if overnight.
- **Sat, 7 June.** *Morning of Reflection* w/Rosary, Mass, talks, fellowship, relics for veneration, lunch. St Aloysius. Olivia, MN (New Ulm Diocese) 9-12. Wear blue & bring flowers to Mary if you so choose, on this First Saturday. Janette will offer Reflection. Contact Jen: sevensistersnewulm@gmail.com
- **Wed, 11 June.** *Commitment Day retreat* with Most Rev Brendan Cahill, St Mary’s (Victoria, TX) Begins 11 am. Adoration, Talks, Holy Mass, Potluck.
Ask Conchita: sevensistersvictoria@gmail.com
- **Sat, 14 June.** Save the date. Birmingham, AL. Contact: sevensistersbirminghamal@gmail.com
- **Sat, 21 June.** Galv-Houston 2025 Recommitment Retreat. Cathedral of Our Lady of Walsingham. Incl Mass, brkst, Adoration, Confession, lunch, fellowship. Janette to offer reflection: *The Privilege of Praying for Priests*. \$33.
Contact: galvezhoustonsevensisters@gmail.com Sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050844AEA723ABF A7-55577591-2025>