

FROM THE ARCHBISHOP

# Living his love

Everyone at the convent knew that Sister de Chantal loved baseball. She lived through plenty of baseball seasons.

I had the pleasure of sitting with her at lunch several years ago after celebrating Mass at her convent for all the sisters celebrating jubilee anniversaries. Sister de Chantal had made her first profession of vows in 1925 and that day she was celebrating her 80th anniversary. She died this past year at age 105.

Sharp and ready with a smile, Sister de Chantal told me of her years as teacher, principal and coach. She relished a particular story.

Many years ago, when she was coaching a girls' basketball team in addition to teaching, a local Monsignor who coached at another girls' school was looking for competition. The superintendent suggested Sister de Chantal's team. He begrudgingly agreed, wondering out loud if a team coached by a nun would be much competition.

"We beat the socks off them," Sister de Chantal said with a laugh. "I have to admit, that was one of the wins I enjoyed most of all."

She reminisced about many people and many events that day, and it was



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SARTAIN

clear that her heart was full of loving, moving memories. She spoke of the other sisters she had known in the convent, the kids she taught, the teachers she mentored, the visitors who still came to see her.

Turning from personal memories to personal recollections of important news through her years, she mentioned Lou Gehrig, a favorite baseball player. "I'll never forget when he got sick," she said. "It was so sad."

Sister de Chantal was like hundreds of thousands of sisters and brothers whose lives and apostolates have spanned the decades and whose dedication to Christ has inspired and transformed countless others. This week's Progress honors the religious women of the Archdiocese of Seattle who are marking particular jubilee years. We celebrate with gratitude both to them and to God who called them.



Sister de Chantal

## Grounded in Christ

Some of their personal reminiscences appear in the pages of this issue, but those represent just the tip of the iceberg of the impact these women consecrated to Christ have had on us.

Immersed, grounded in Christ, it is his truth and love they live. Speaking with them, I am always fascinated by their stories. Telling their stories, they mention kids, teens, adults, fellow religious, the poor, the sick, the imprisoned — and all those whose lives they've touched — as if speaking of family.

In fact, that is exactly what they are doing. Their religious consecration, having brought them into a particular kind of relationship with Christ, has also transformed every other relationship through him. Thus, all of us are indeed their sisters, their brothers.

## Witness to love

And when we speak of them — the sisters we have known through the years and those with whom we maintain friendships today — we also think of them as family.

Their importance in our youth, their witness today to Christian love, their joy, their prayerfulness — all these things bring us hope and help us round out our understanding of the variety of

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ways of living out one's baptismal call. Moreover, their commitment to their own communities gives us added insight about how we can live in our own families.

And then there is the witness of fidelity and perseverance. Like any life, religious life has its ups and downs, its struggles and triumphs.

Honoring our jubilarians, we recognize their steadfast clinging to Christ, their faithfulness to him — just as he

was faithful to his Father. Remaining in him, they have also remained here, for us, and have shown us the depth and absolute faithfulness of God.

Along with all who read these words, I offer my congratulations and prayerful best wishes to all religious women and men of the Archdiocese of Seattle. Thank you for your generous response to God's call! Thank you for teaching us, serving us, loving us.

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