



The Mountaineer



Volume 15, Issue 2 Summer 2022

Message from the President

Dear Friends,

I know you will forgive me if I begin this letter by talking about the events of April 30, 2022, in Milan where three Missionaries and I were fortunate enough to be present for the Beatification of our founder, Armida Barelli (1882-1952). The Mass and ceremonies were rich, glorious, moving – all at the same time. There were two “beati” at this Mass: Armida Barelli and a young Milanese priest, Father Mario Ciceri.

The entire city of Milan appeared to be engaged in this event as the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, which Barelli founded along with Father Agostino Gemelli, OFM, held conferences, discussion groups, and displays over the importance of this incredible woman who had worked so hard for the promotion of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Catholic Action for Feminine Youth in Italy, the founding of the Catholic University of Milan, and of course founding the Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ.

Influential in the education of women before, during, and after the first and second World Wars, Armida’s example was commended by Pope Francis in a preface to a new book he wrote saying she “fostered the conscious participation of women in social and political life, making a decisive contribution to the establishment of democracy in Italy.”

This came about as she had worked tirelessly at the prompting of the Cardinal at the time for Milan, forming the National Girls Youth of Catholic Action and for more than three decades, helped women to be formed in a “Eucharistic spirituality and to recognize their equal baptismal dignity with men.” She mobilized thousands of young women, helping them to find their baptismal dignity and substantial freedom with recognition of equal dignity with men all rooted in a Eucharistic spirituality. She also, with Father Agostino Gemelli, founded the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart.

Armida Barelli’s missionary efforts in promoting love of the Sacred Heart can be fostered by us today in deepening our prayer life and spending more time before the Blessed Sacrament, the source of all graces and mercy. Certainly as we use the warmer weather to renew and re-energize our bodies and spirits, an hour spent regularly with the Blessed Sacrament will afford the opportunity for the graces that will be poured out on us and inspire us to dedicate ourselves more intensely to the spreading of the Kingdom in ways small and large with all whom we meet. (There are more details about Armida Barelli in an article later in this issue.)

Happy summer to all, Sue Larkin

Inside this issue:

From the President	1
SIM Centennial	2
Beatification of Armida Barelli	3-5
Final Vows within a Priest Secular Institute	5
Creation – Noah’s Ark	6
Mountaineer Data	7
Mark Sept 9-11, 2022	



She “fostered the conscious participation of women in social and political life, making a decisive contribution to the establishment of democracy in Italy.”
- Pope Francis



St. Francis



St. Clare

Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Institute in 2019



Church of San Damiano in Assisi, Italy

The Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ

The Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ (SIM) is a secular institute having its charism in the Franciscan tradition, seeking to imitate Saint Francis, whose immense love of Christ impelled him to follow Him poor, chaste, and obedient.

SIM was founded in 1919 in Assisi, Italy. In that year, Armida Barelli, a leader in the Catholic Action movement, and 11 other women consecrated their lives to God at the church of San Damiano. Their spiritual advisor was Fr. Agostino Gemelli, OFM. Some 28 years later, in 1947, the Church gave official recognition to secular institutes as a new form of consecrated life and SIM received provisional Papal approval the following year, and definitive approval as an Institute of Pontifical right in 1953.

Today, SIM numbers over 2,800 members in 29 countries. In 2019, the Institute celebrated its 100th Anniversary, remembering the 12 women who professed their vows at the church of San Damiano in Assisi on November 19, 1919.



Our Roots in Italy



April 30, 2022

Milan Italy



Beatification of Armida Barelli: April 30th, 2022



Susan L., Mary Lou C., Rita B., Maritina P., & Doreen R. at the tomb of Blessed Armida Barelli.

Here are the compiled reflections of four SIM Missionaries who attended the Beatification of Armida Barelli in Milan, Italy, on April 30th, 2022.

The beatification of Blessed Armida Barelli was for me a very moving and profound experience.

What struck me deeply was the enormous amount of hard work, time, and energy that she dedicated to the co-founding of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, the establishment of the National Girls Youth of Catholic Action, and the founding of our Secular Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ.

Shortly after our arrival, one of the Italian Missionaries accompanied us to the chapel at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart. In the crypt, we were able to see the tomb of Blessed Armida. Just being there at the University and visiting her tomb in the lower chapel was impactful. You could feel her holy presence. It was also amazing to see the students attending the University that she co-founded. I thought how much they benefit from the fruits of her hard work and labor of love for young people.

Saturday we made our way to the Duomo di Milano for the Beatification Mass. It was exciting just to be in the piazza, taking in the view of the Cathedral and the beautiful architecture. I love the ceremony and symbolism in the Catholic Church but this Mass took it to a level I've never experienced before. Rich in music, incense, 100 vestment-robed priests, 25 bishops and two cardinals - it was dramatic to say the least. I was also touched to see so many Missionaries from different parts of the world at the Beatification Mass as well as people from Catholic Action and from the University. As the veil was removed from the portrait of Armida Barelli upon the prayerful "Proclamation of Blessed" by Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Congregation of Causes of Saints and representative of

... Armida Barelli *continued*

Pope Francis, the bells tolled and the Congregation of Missionaries filled the Cathedral with joyous, energetic applause as Armida Barelli was now “Blessed.”

I felt pride seeing my sister missionary elevated to blessed. I was grateful for her following Our Lord’s call and founding SIM: consecrated life lived in the secular world. I was challenged to live my vocation as Armida did. I was challenged to encourage other women to carry on this vocation. I remember praying to her at that moment to give me the strength I need to be the best missionary I can be and to bless all our missionaries, especially those in the United States, with an increased fervor to carry on in her footsteps.

From the moment she met Fr. Gemelli in 1910 until her death in 1952, Armida Barelli devoted her whole life to the Lord and worked non-stop in promoting Christian values among young women in a world that was fast losing its religious and moral compass and helped them to take an active role in society. Her main mission was to promote the primacy of Christ in education and in all levels of social life.

She confronted and worked through very difficult challenges throughout those 42 years, especially living through two world wars. When the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart was bombed and destroyed in WWII, she immediately, with the strength of the Holy Spirit, began to seek funds to begin the reconstruction of the university. She would travel on dangerous roads during WWII to meet with Missionaries in various parts of Italy to give them encouragement and moral support.

For her to accomplish what she did is a testimony of her deep faith, trust, perseverance, and total surrender to the Lord. He was the love of her life and he was truly the center of her life.

The Beatification itself not only honored Armida’s sacrificial love of the Lord but most importantly it honored God who worked in her and through her. She accomplished what she did because of her deep prayer life. This occasion brought tears of joy. Armida brought holiness to our Consecrated Lay Vocation with humility, zeal, and fidelity to Christ in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

This high that I had upon coming home has continued, but changed and sobered. In reading the remarks of the Cardinal Archbishop, he referred to the two beati as “following the perfume of Christ” and I have been reflecting on the lives and contributions of women whom I have known who walked in the footsteps of Armida Barelli, and have gone to their reward.

What a gift to the Church is this Institute present in so many countries where women are hidden workers for good. I give thanks to God for Armida Barelli and thanks to Armida Barelli for the Institute of Missionaries of the Kingship of Christ.

The Minister General of the OFM, Fr. Massimo Fusarelli, said: “Prayer is transformed into will, will into work, work into prayer and deed. Barelli was a woman of prayer; the yearning for an intimate dialogue with God, as she herself said, accompanied her from the beginning and found in her its presence in relationships, work, travel,



**“Prayer is transformed into will,
will into work, work into
prayer and deed.”**



projects, anxieties and hopes in ever more natural environment. Armida lived an incarnated spirituality which makes of all life a prayer, a transforming action of the world so that the seed of the Kingdom may grow.”

Maritina Paniagua, Doreen Rowtie, Mary Lou Carr, & Susan Larkin

Please note this Updated Information from our Spring *Mountaineer*: The Archdiocese of Santa Fe has had Pilgrimages for Vocations for a little over 50 years now. These past 3 years, we were unable to do any pilgrimages because of COVID. We anticipate that next May and June, we will be able to resume them. The May "Mother's Day" Pilgrimage for Vocations is a one-day event. The 100-Mile Pilgrimage for Vocations, held the first week of June, is a week-long journey. I serve on the Steering Committee, which plans for these pilgrimages, and have only walked or participated in these pilgrimages for 10 years. -Rita Santistevan, SIM

On February 14, 2022, Father Scott Jones, a priest of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, professed his final vows in the Secular Institute of the Priests of the Heart of Jesus. The Vow Mass was held at Saint Mary Church in Fullerton, California. In addition to the members of his institute, two Apostolic Oblates of the Pro-Sanctity movement were in attendance. That afternoon the members were given a personal tour of the Cathedral in the Diocese of Orange.

Contribution from a secular institute nursing friend:

1. The inventor of the treadmill died at the age of 54
2. The inventor of gymnastics died at the age of 57
3. The world bodybuilding champion died at the age of 41
4. The best footballer in the world Maradona, died at 60.
5. James Fuller Fixx credited with helping start America's fitness revolution by popularizing the sport of running died of a heart attack while jogging at 52 years of age. **BUT...**
6. The KFC inventor died at 94
7. Inventor of Nutella brand died at the age of 88
8. Imagine, cigarette maker Winston, died at the age of 102
9. The inventor of opium died at the age of 116 in an earthquake
10. And the Hennessey Liquor inventor died at 98

How did these doctors come to the conclusion that exercise prolongs life? Especially when sprinters live long lives; but, long distance runners wear out their heart and die younger.

The rabbit is always jumping up and down but it lives for only 2 years and the turtle that doesn't exercise at all, lives 400 years.

Do take some rest, stay cool, eat, drink and enjoy God's gift of your life all summer long ...

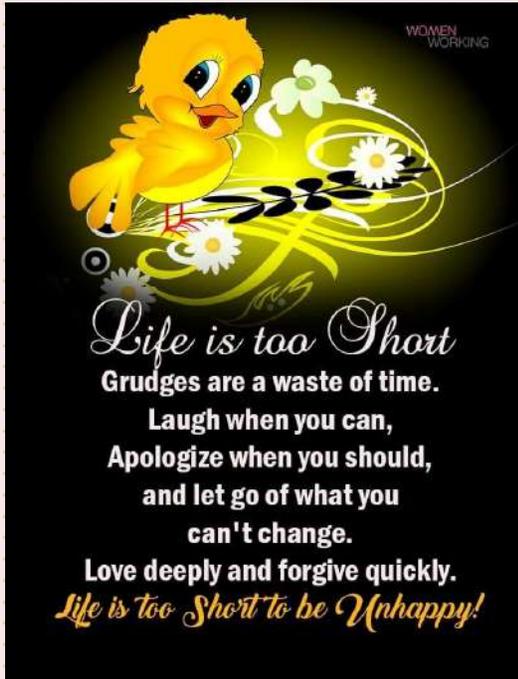


How Wise The Lord Is In All His Works of Creation!

How wise the Lord is in all his works of creation!

Each Watermelon has an even number of stripes on the rind.

Each Orange has an even number of segments.



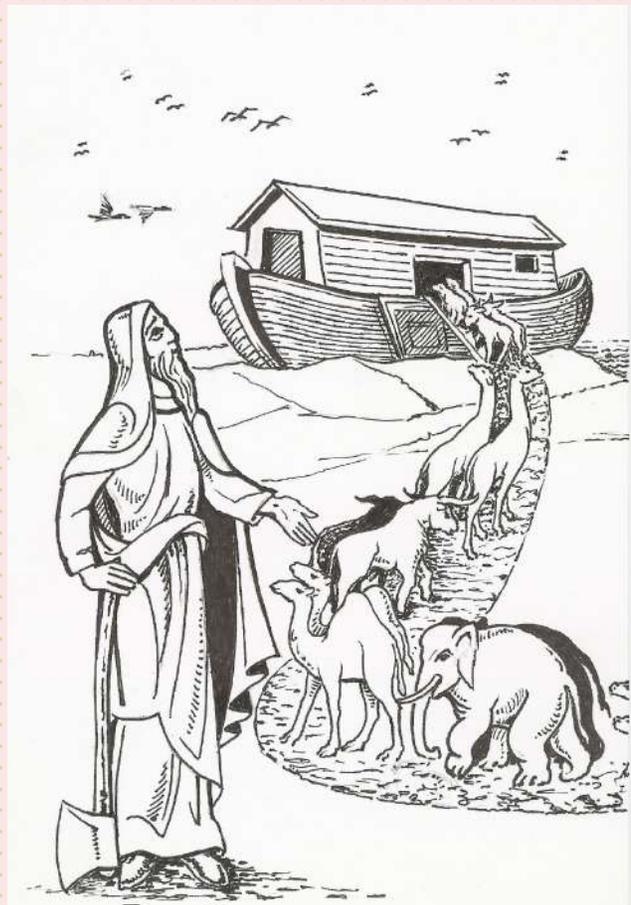
Each Ear of Corn has an even number of rows.
Each Stalk of Wheat has an even number of grains.

Every Bunch of Bananas has on its lowest row
an even number of bananas,
and each row decreases by one,
so that one row has an even number
and the next row an odd number.

The Waves of the Sea roll in on shore twenty-six to
the minute in all kinds of weather.

Everything I need to know,
I learned from Noah's Ark...

- ONE:** Don't miss the boat.
- TWO:** Remember that we are all in the same boat!
- THREE:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
- FOUR:** Stay fit. When you're 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- FIVE:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- SIX:** Build your future on high ground.
- SEVEN:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- EIGHT:** Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on with the cheetahs.
- NINE:** When you're stressed, float awhile.
- TEN:** Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
- ELEVEN:** No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.



USCSI Mountaineer Data

☞ USCSI Mission Statement:

- The USCSI shares in the mission of Jesus Christ in serving its member institutes by providing education, resources, and support for member institutes.
- The USCSI is an organization of member institutes committed to making known, understood, and appreciated the call to consecrated secularity in the Catholic Church.
- USCSI collaborates with other groups to present consecrated secularity as a viable option in today's Church.

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Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/secular_institutes_usa/

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☞ Please share joys & blessings from your institute. Contributions and photos for our **Fall Mountaineer** can be emailed to jessica@schsrsmmary.org by **October 1, 2022**.

☞ Making donations to USCSI:

We are most grateful for any amount. Please send donations (checks made to "USCSI") to:
Deacon Paul Lang, 26 Settler Court, Tinton Falls, NJ 07753

Plan to join us in person for the

National Meeting of the US Conference of Secular Institutes

September 9-11, 2022, at Marytown Retreat Center, Libertyville IL

Secular Institutes and Synodality – What we offer!

Presenter Fr Scott Jones, Institute of the Heart of Jesus