

Sisters Maria Daniel and Samina Iqbal make final vows

By Maureen Fiedler SL

NERINX, Ky. — Loretto is reaching out ... “beyond boundaries ...” (*I Am the Way*, Article 35). That was the theme of Mary Catherine Rabbitt SL’s homily at the liturgy celebrating the final vows of Maria Daniel and Samina Iqbal in the Motherhouse church Aug. 8, 2015. Mary Catherine noted that the “House of Loretto” has often seemed more like a mobile home than a single foundation ... leading us out of Kentucky to Missouri, to Santa Fe, China, Latin America and countless other places ... and now ... to Pakistan. “We are in good company,” she said, “when we say that the future is unknown to us.”

The celebration of the final vows began the evening of Aug. 7 in that same Motherhouse church. The Loretto Community present joined Maria and Samina for a ceremony commonly practiced in Pakistani society before a wedding or a vowed commitment. Community members came forward, one by one, to bless Samina and Maria with oil on their foreheads and henna on their hands. Then Maria and Samina went throughout the congregation to bless each person with oil.

The next morning at Mass ... Maria and Samina each spoke before pronouncing



From left: Father Irwin Mouser, Loretto Vice President Vicki Schwartz SL, Sisters Samina Iqbal and Maria Daniel, and Loretto President Pearl McGivney SL. Below: These Sisters dressed in white saris, the traditional religious garb of Pakistan, stand with their fellow Pakistani Sister Nasreen Daniel, second from right.

vows. Maria, reflecting on her vocation, recalled that “the deepest prayer I have ever said was without a single word. It was when I held the hands of the grieving people in Peshawar after the church bombing where so many were killed. ... I felt my Loretto commitment come to life.” She was referring to the suicide bombing of a church in Peshawar, Pakistan, in Sept. 2013, which took at least 81 lives and wounded many more. Maria, Samina and

their fellow Sister Nasreen Daniel went to Peshawar after that bombing in a courageous act of solidarity and an effort to help.

Samina echoed that spirit: “I am able to go wherever needed. This availability for mission calls me to live in a spirit of trust following in the footsteps of Jesus. ... The situation in Pakistan is growing more and more risky. We live in a dangerous world, but it is ‘home’. We have hope. Many sisters who have gone before us knew dangers and fears. Their courage, concerns, their lives in community are a legacy of hope for us.”

Then Maria, followed by Samina, pronounced final vows in both English and Urdu. Loretto President Pearl McGivney SL and Vice President Vicki Schwartz SL formally received their vows. The congregation stood in applause. After communion, Nasreen Daniel thanked the Loretto Community in both English and Punjabi, for joining with them in the Pakistan mission. The Mass was followed by a festive dinner, and later a special evening celebration complete with Pakistani food, song and dance.



Webster University offers three new scholarships to students graduating from Loretto high schools

Scholarships honor Webster’s original founders, the Sisters of Loretto

By Patrick Giblin

ST. LOUIS — Webster University has established new scholarships to honor the Sisters of Loretto, the founders of the University, and to strengthen ties between Webster University and high schools established by Loretto. Starting next year and annually thereafter, three Webster University Loretto Community scholarships will be available to graduating seniors from Loretto-affiliated high schools who intend to enroll at Webster University.

“These scholarships recognize the history, mission and service heritage of the Sisters of Loretto and honors their rich tradition of making higher education available to young women,” said Elizabeth (Beth) J. Stroble, president of Webster University. “I am delighted to use this Centennial year to build new bonds among our institutions. Our histories are shared, and we wish to mark this occasion with a commitment to a shared future.”

Three students each will be awarded a \$5,000 scholarship. The award is renewable for a total of four years.

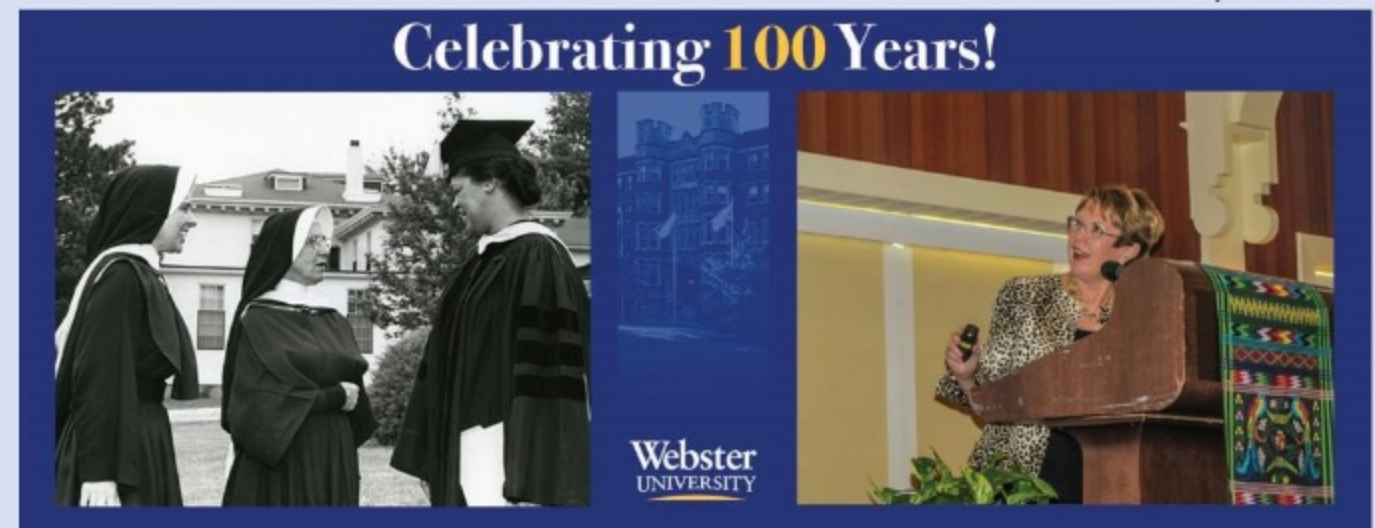
To be eligible for the award, the seniors must have graduated from one of these high schools: Nerinx Hall High School in Webster Groves, Mo.; Loretto Academy in El Paso, Texas; or St. Mary’s Academy in Denver. Eligible students will have a 3.0 or higher cumulative grade point average and an ACT score of 21 or higher, or a combined SAT reading and math score of 1,000 or higher.

Like Webster University, all three high schools were established by the Sisters of Loretto to provide young women with an education. The Sisters of Loretto established hundreds of grade schools and high schools across the United States during the past two centuries, but over time, many were absorbed by other Catholic schools or closed. The three schools are the last of the Loretto-founded high schools in the United States that are still affiliated with the Community. The Havern School, a school for learning-disabled children in Colorado, also is affiliated with the Sisters of Loretto.

Webster University was founded in 1915 as an all-female institution. Although all three high school programs enroll only females (El Paso and St. Mary’s accept boys in the primary grades), Webster University began admitting men to a limited number of programs in 1963 and became fully co-educational in 1967.

This is one more way that we can build connections with our communities that will enhance Webster University’s second century with exceptional students who will become exceptional alumni committed to global citizenship and individual excellence,” Stroble said. “We look forward to welcoming the first Webster University Loretto Community Scholars in fall 2016.”

Banner by Nicole Martinez



Loretto

M A G A Z I N E

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On the path forward:

Loretto's presidents, past and present, share their wisdom on confident leadership in uncertain times

Loretto's thriving Volunteer Program reaches quarter-century milestone

New local outreach program kicks off at Loretto Motherhouse

*Though the path be obscure,
Fear not, for God is light and truth*

Ordained Co-Members enrich Loretto through their ministries

Loretto is fortunate to have as co-members several women and men who are ordained priests and ministers. These co-members, Catholic and non-Catholic, enrich the community through their ministry and through the varied perspectives they offer to their community groups and the Congregation as a whole. Here are some examples:



Karen Wehrman CoL was ordained as a Presbyterian minister (PCUSA) in 1982. She has served on staff in congregations as well as being a Pastoral Counselor (AAPC) and most recently a learning facilitator. She meets with clients for counseling and for learning issues, preaches when colleagues are on vacation and sometimes serves as the on-call person for a congregation whose pastor(s) are on vacation. She is also the minister-at-large for people who live in nearby communities and have a need for a pastor but do not attend church. "This give me the opportunity do memorial services and weddings among bright, spiritual people who have been hurt and/or unhappy with organized religion." Karen learned

about Loretto from a minister who knew Sister Elaine Prevalett. She went to the Motherhouse for a retreat and there met Elaine and began returning to Kentucky once or twice a year. "Meals with sisters, walks in the woods, sitting beside Mary's Lake was restorative for me," she says. During one retreat, she met Co-member Peg Jacobs working in the organic garden. "Peg helped me realize that as a non-Catholic, I could be a co-member," she notes. "Over my many years as a co-member, I have definitely been blessed."

Kaye Edwards CoL was raised in, ordained by and retired from ministry (6 years ago) with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ministry with children has always been her passion. Currently she is working with the Loretto Child Care Center and the Loretto Head Start Program. She is also babysitting for Co-member Jessie Rathburn and her husband, Andy, as they have just taken in two foster children, ages 4 years and 4 months. All of this plus her own 6 year old granddaughter are her current "ministry with children." Kaye has been a Co-member for about 37 years. She started coming to Knobs Haven on retreat when she was in school at Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, KY. After moving to Virginia, she continued to come on retreats and brought many women with her over a period of several years. "I have loved the place and the people since first stepping on the Motherhouse grounds in the late 60's," she says.

Ray Ensmann CoL is currently retired and living in Ohio. Father Ray entered Co-membership at the urging of Sister Evelyn O'Houlihan, whom he met while they were both studying at Boston College in the 70s. During his years of ministry, Father Ray taught school, was the pastor at several parishes and served in administration of the Catholic Diocese of Toledo, Ohio. "I thought the Sisters of Loretto were so interesting," he says. "They were engaged in so many different ways to help women and children in need."

Scott and Susan Winkler CoLs are co-pastors of Old Union Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. Susan has retired after 25 years of active ministry, but Scott continues to serve and describes the church as "small, but vibrant and healthy." Although Susan is retired from active ministry, they are both fully involved in the daily life of their church, which Scott describes as "small, but vibrant and healthy." Scott and Susan, who have two grown children, have been pastoring for 27 years. "We are now seeing children of the children we worked with more than twenty years ago," noted Scott. "It is very gratifying and gives a strong sense of family to all that we do." Scott and Susan first came to know the Sisters of Loretto when they attended retreats at the Motherhouse - sometimes private retreats at Cedars, other times with a group at Knobs Haven. "We loved the simplicity of the Sisters, and the peacefulness of the Motherhouse. As we came to know the Sisters better we knew we wanted to be part of their work." Scott and Susan have been Co-members for more than 20 years.



Peter Urban CoL currently lives at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Denver, where, in addition to his dedication to Hispanic ministry, he works to support the Miguel Pro Mission (MPM), founded in 2010. Along with Tonanzin Sisters and other dedicated individuals, MPM serves the people of Juarez by improving living conditions and offering educational support to keep kids in school. In 1976, spurred by a friendship with Sister Elizabeth Dyer, Peter became a Loretto Co-member. His commitment included an agreement "to share concern which all members have for each other, to nourish, extend and share Loretto's vision, and to gift personal talents and ministry." Father Urban celebrated his 60th year as a Catholic priest in 2018.

Jacque Foster CoL first connected with the Loretto Community in 1998 when the Loretto Women's Network gathered several ordained women to talk about ordination of women. "I found the community to be so engaging that I continued to connect following that gathering," she says. Ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1982, she served congregations in Massachusetts and Indiana before arriving in St. Louis in 1996 to serve as pastor of Compton Heights Christian Church (DOC). In the 22 years that she have served this congregation, she has worked to create a community of affirmation and welcoming ministry for people of differing races, sexual orientations and identities. Jacque also serves as adjunct faculty at Eden Theological Seminary. Jacque notes, "I continue to feel a profound connection to the Loretto Community through the ministries I live out and the passion for justice and the God's realm that we all share."



Irvin Mouser CoL is the longtime chaplain at the Motherhouse in Kentucky. There he celebrates Mass and the sacraments for the sisters, visits in the infirmary and listens when needed. "My role is to meet the spiritual needs of this ever-growing community," he says. "In that way, I am 'blessed among women.'" Father Mouser has been a co-member for 20 years, having been encouraged by Sister Carol Ann Ptacek. "Being one community is a good idea," remarked Father Mouser. "We respect each other and learn from each other in many ways. I have always had a strong sense of justice, and Loretto definitely supports that!"

Loretta

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A continuing mission in Pakistan, Loretto Co-Members, and Motherhouse activities give energy to the New Year.



**In Pakistan,
Loretto builds
on its 200-
year history of
education**

