Dear Guild Member,

When we speak about the virtue of faith, the two exemplars of faith are scriptural: Abram and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Scripture tells us: “Abram believed the Lord, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:16) and “Blessed is she who trusted that the Lord’s words to her would be fulfilled” (Luke 1:45). Faith is a response to the word of God, an acceptance of what God reveals and speaks because we believe and trust Him. Baptism imparts this gift to us as one of the theological virtues. We receive this gift and cultivate it through a life of prayer, the sacraments and studying sacred truth. In this issue of the Guild newsletter, we will examine how Rose Hawthorne exemplified this “hearing and believing” in her life and service. Faith is the foundation of the Christian life - we can only live and act as Christians out of a trusting acceptance of what God tells us, because we know how much He loves us. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it: “Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed. As personal adherence to God and assent to his truth, Christian faith differs from our faith in any human person. It is right and just to entrust oneself wholly to God and to believe absolutely what he says. It would be futile and false to place such faith in a creature.” (CCC 150) How did this adherence to God and free assent to the truth God revealed develop and take shape in Rose Hawthorne’s life? We will begin our exploration of her virtues with faith as the foundation of her other virtues. We will also share with you in this issue the favors people have received through her intercession, exercising their own faith by asking for her help. We thank you again for joining us in praying for and working toward the canonization of Rose Hawthorne. In this difficult time all over the world, we should go to the holy men and women of times past more than ever for their prayers and example. May God bless you and your loved ones!

**Guild Membership and Spiritual Benefits**

Many Catholics are still unaware of Rose Hawthorne and her influence as a spiritual intercessor, mentor and friend. Because she was a convert, wife, mother and religious foundress, she serves as an example of Christian perfection and holiness to a wide range of people. As members of the Guild we should make her life and spiritual help known among family, friends and others who might benefit by her prayers and example. Please use the contact information on the back of the newsletter to direct others to the Guild so that we can let more people know the good news of Mother Alphonsa’s virtue, vision and mission. If you are interested in helping people to seek her intercession for their needs there is also a form to request prayer cards, which have the prayer for canonization on them. Don’t forget, there are spiritual benefits attached to Guild membership. Not only is there a monthly Mass celebrated for Guild members and their families, but during the seasons of Christmas and Easter members are remembered at a novena of Masses offered for their intentions. At other times, we will announce special novenas or Masses for the intentions of Guild members and their families. You are also joined in prayer to the Sisters whenever you pray the prayer for canonization.
One way to summarize Rose Hawthorne’s journey of faith is a movement from a student learning from the ideal teacher, to a spouse of Christ with her only true home in the Heart of Jesus. In a way, this is the journey of the Christian life for each baptized person. We all must move from learning the “rules” and teachings to having a living, enduring and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. For Rose Hawthorne this was a long journey beginning in her childhood and culminating in the founding of a community that carries on her calling and charism by service to the poor with incurable cancer. It is also important to know that this progression, in Rose Hawthorne’s life or in our own, does not imply a “leaving behind” but rather a deepening. Rose Hawthorne did not cease her discipleship as she grew into her identity as Mother Mary Alphonsa. Instead, she became more than a disciple as she discovered that the Lord is not only Christ the Teacher but Christ the Bridegroom. As a child God gave her the gift of faith in her baptism, it was nurtured by her family life, took root in her conversion to Catholicism and came to full bloom when she undertook her work to serve the suffering poor as a Bride of Christ.

Religion and religious thought were a constant part of Rose’s life from her girlhood. Her parents were both deep-thinking, loving and faithful individuals associated most closely with the Transcendentalist and Unitarian movements. Her mother Sophia gave young Rose a “constant example of faith in an all-loving, all-caring divinity” which “seemed to have touched her mind and shaped her soul for a life of religious faith.” (Culbertson, pg.26) In an exquisite letter to Rose on her 16th birthday, Sophia wrote what now seem almost prophetic insights to her young daughter:

> When we know ourselves, we can be kinder to ourselves, as well as more severe. I have always felt that it was most important for such a mind and character as yours that you should be truly religious. GOD alone can rule in your heart. Where He does, all other influence will be harmless. But you must have the highest motives for action, for no others will move you, except to scorn. (Culbertson, pg. 13)

In addition to the gentle influence of her mother, Rose always credited her father and his writing to forming her faith and her thoughts on Christ and suffering humanity. Because her childhood denomination was Unitarian, however, her own faith had to grow to come to see Christ as the Son of the God and Savior of mankind from their sins. As a young woman, she and George Lathrop married in an Anglican Church in 1871 and were comfortably part of the intellectual middle class, well aware of the political and religious discussions of their day. Based on writings by Fr. Alfred Young, Sr. Diana Culbertson observed that Rose and George’s conversion “may well have been perceived by both of them as part of a continuum...They found in the church, moreover, a devotional life that seemed to reach beyond institutional forms and to satisfy in Rose, especially, an emotional hunger that her previous experiences of religion had not offered.” (Culbertson, pg. 29) In the Catholic Church then, Rose found satisfaction for both her “emotional hunger” and her intellectual curiosity. Throughout her life, Rose had high standards for the style and content of the preaching she heard in any denomination. She had high standards for both truth and beauty in what she heard and saw from religious persons and institutions. Her conversion involved her heart and her mind as she read, studied and asked questions which led her deeper into the Catholic faith.

As she listened in prayer, what words might Christ have spoken to her believing heart? What told her about not just His teachings but His Heart? “I say unto thee, whatsoever you do to the least of these, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40) And when she faced opposition and difficulties? “Behold, I am with you always even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20) She believed the promises of Christ as she increasingly clung to Him alone in service and prayer. Through her letters, journal entries and other writings we get a glimpse of Mother Alphonsa’s faith as shown through her prayer. Even before the clearest incarnation of her living faith – the founding of the Servants of Relief – we see in her frequent references to prayer her growth from student to spouse of Christ. Mother’s writings strikingly show the simplicity and practicality of her faith. Her faith is tender but never saccharine and truly exemplifies the belief of one who loves and trusts the One with whom she is speaking. A beautiful example of this is from her journal entry of March 22, 1898 – three days before co-foundress Alice Huber joined her full-time. She writes:

> Our Lord seemed to say to me, on a visit to the Blessed Sacrament after confession – “I love you, and you love me–then what is the trouble?” Great peace overflowed me. I begin to love Him only, as I have prayed to do for three years. My shocking unworthiness strikes me almost more in the point of my having so little life left to offer, so little sacrifice to make in offering it. Yet Jesus loves me, and everything is simplified and exalted.
Despite the profundity of this experience, she accepted it with complete trust and simplicity. Clearly, after fewer than ten years as a Catholic she learned to know the voice of her Good Shepherd. There is no record of doubt or equivocation regarding this experience in prayer. It is also worth pointing out that her faith was inextricably linked with the sacraments of the Church – her conversation with God was after receiving the grace of confession and was to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Sacraments were the lifeline of her faith from the early days of her conversion until her death. Her faith, nourished by the sacraments of the Church, spiritual reading, the guidance of priests and her deep life of prayer fed her life of virtue. From her faith we see flourishing fortitude, humility, and perhaps most visibly charity. Although we must speak of faith as the foundation, we cannot separate faith and charity. As St. Maximus the Confessor wrote “For Jeremiah warns us: Do not say: “We are the Lord’s temple.” Neither should you say: “Faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me.” By itself faith accomplishes nothing. For even the devils believe and shudder. No, faith must be joined to an active love of God which is expressed in good works. The charitable man is distinguished by sincere and long-suffering service to his fellow man: it also means using things aright.” Grounded in a loving and trusting relationship with God, Mother Alphonsa indeed moved into a life of sincere and long-suffering service to her fellow man. May we go to her when our faith is failing or when we simply desire help in increasing our faith and ask for her prayers.

**NEXT TIME:** Faith comes alive in charity – as St. Paul tells us “show me your faith without works and I will show you my faith by my works” (cf. James 2:18). In our next newsletter, we will see how Mother’s great faith led to extraordinary charity in her founding of the Servants of Relief.

**Rose Hawthorne (Mother Mary Alphonsa), pray for us!**

Favors received through her intercession

A few months ago [I received threads from Mother Alphonsa’s habit] for my mother, who had been diagnosed with multiple myeloma...I had begun asking for Rose Hawthorne’s intercession for a week or two before I received the threads, and have continued, nearly daily for the past few months. My mother is in wonderful condition [now], and she is heading toward maintenance state with her medication. And in fact, her doctor recently told her that he had never seen any of his patients do so well, and at least one of the nurses remarked that my mother’s progress was remarkable!

-S.P. from Washington, D.C.

[The Guild] sent me Rose Hawthorne prayer cards and one relic card...for my son-in-law who has had severe cancer treatment for the throat and was in remission last year. The latest exam indicated he was no longer in remission because there were abnormal cells in some of his lymph nodes. He had surgery to remove them [and] they actually let him take the relic card into surgery with him. Afterwards, the surgeon was pleased with the surgery because he felt no damage was done but [said that] they had to examine to see if the cells were cancerous. His wife said many were praying that there was NO cancer but [the doctor] said he didn’t think that would be the case. [We just got] the results and the abnormal cells were not cancer, there was no cancer. Thank you for your prayers!

-T.S.

During a rough year [in my early years of formation] I had many doubts [about my vocation] and they persisted for some time... One evening, however, I had a dream. I was found, like the man in the parable of the Good Samaritan, along the road. However, it was an older Sister in a white habit with a very distinctive veil [who found me]. She brought me to her convent and cared for me. I remember being fed and cared for by this particular Sister. As she was doing such, she told me not to be plagued by these doubts. God had a plan for me and he wouldn’t have let me come this far in religious life had it not been his will. I can’t remember the specifics of her words but there was a comfort to her presence and a sense of encouragement...that what I had suffered...

[was] going to help me, in some way, fulfill the vocation to which God had called me... I kind of shrugged off this encounter as a dream [until the following year when] I saw a holy card of Mother Mary Alphonsa. While I didn’t recognize her at first, the style of her veil caught my attention. And when I looked up images for Mother Mary Alphonsa, there was a particular one from when she was older that gave me chills, so to speak. In that picture was the Sister that I truly believe she had been sent to me in a dream to help heal me from the spiritual cancer of bitterness.

—Anonymous

**Rose Hawthorne Guild**

1851-1926
What else can I read about Mother Alphonsa?


*If you would like a copy of _The Anthonian, Out of Many Hearts_ or _Mission Fulfilled,_ please contact us and we will be happy to supply you with those publications. Donations are accepted but not required for these materials.*

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**Mass Intentions**

*Please remember these specific intentions in the Monthly Mass offered for Guild Members*

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**Please support the Guild:**

For a $10 donation we will send one of the following gifts of your choice:
- Pink Acrylic beads Rose Hawthorne Rosary
- Brown Acrylic beads Rose Hawthorne Rosary
- Rose Hawthorne Guild Notecards—pack of 8 cards and envelopes

For a $15 donation we will send one of the following gifts of your choice:
- Rose Hawthorne Guild post-it notes—6 pads, 50 notes in each pad
- A booklet of Mother Mary Alphonsa’s quotes from her letters and writings
- I would like to spread devotion to Mother Mary Alphonsa, please send me ____ prayer cards (no donation necessary, please specify number of cards)
- Please send my prayer cards in Spanish

*The prayer for the Canonization of Rose Hawthorne is also available on our website*

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**The Guild Needs New Members!**

*Please contact us:
Phone (914) 769 0114 Fax: (914) 769 0827
Email: guild@hawthorne-dominicans.org
Website: www.hawthorne-dominicans.org
Postal Service: Rose Hawthorne Guild 600 Linda Avenue Hawthorne, NY 10532

I would like to join the Guild! Please add the following name to receive information and material from the Guild:

Name
Address
City
State Zip Code