Dear Guild Members,

The cause for canonization of the Servant of God, Rose Hawthorne, Mother Mary Alphonsa, O.P., is in its earliest stages of development. I would like to explain the purpose of the Guild and then bring you up to date on the current status of the cause itself.

The Guild exists for one primary purpose: to promote an awareness of the life and heroic virtue of Rose Hawthorne and to receive reports of favors received through her intercession. In this way the Guild serves as a kind of clearing house for the distribution of information concerning her and the progress of her cause for canonization. While not required by Church norms, the establishment of such a Guild has become a typical means of gathering information about a candidate for sainthood and communicating to a wider audience the good news about the holiness of this person.

But there is more. The Rose Hawthorne Guild is further intended to establish a spiritual link among those interested in her cause and to encourage the spreading of her story of selfless love and holiness of life. For this reason, the foundation of the Guild is the life of prayer, most especially, the prayer of the Eucharist, the celebration of Mass. Guild members are charged to offer spiritual support to the cause through their prayer and their participation in the Mass. We pray that God’s will be done in this as in all things.

Each Monday the members of the Rose Hawthorne Guild will be remembered in a special Mass celebrated for their intentions in the chapel at Rosary Hill. This is the motherhouse of the community of Dominican Sisters that she founded for the care of those afflicted with incurable cancer. It was at Rosary Hill that Rose Hawthorne died on July 9, 1926, and today her vision and spirit are communicated to novices who come to take up the work she established more than a century ago.

At the end of this letter you will find a form which you can use to send your intentions to the Guild office at Rosary Hill. These will be placed on the altar and you and your loved ones will be present as Christ again offers the perfect sacrifice of his own life to the Father. We look forward to hearing from you.

The cause itself continues to move forward. In November of this year the Archdiocese of New York will conduct an investigation into Rose Hawthorne’s reputation for holiness among the people of God. This means that a number of witnesses will be called to the chancery office in New York to express their conviction that the Servant of God was indeed a woman of great virtue and that she has been so recognized in the years since her death.

Given the length of time since her death, there are no eye-witnesses to Rose Hawthorne’s life and work. Nonetheless, it is important to investigate her reputation for goodness and holiness of life and to uncover any possible obstacles to such a high regard for the candidate for sainthood. No stone can be left unturned in the process. News both good and bad must be reported.

While eye-witnesses to Rose’s life may not be available, a great deal of historical evidence of her work and her spiritual life does exist. The archives of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne houses many of her letters, diaries and spiritual jottings. These have been carefully preserved for examination and study during the process currently being carried out by the Archdiocese of New York.

Welcome again to the Rose Hawthorne Guild. We ask your prayers and suggest that you pass on to a friend this Guild Newsletter. They may be interested in the story of this remarkable woman, as you are.

Each Newsletter will contain some information about Rose Hawthorne as well as the current status of her cause for canonization.

Devotedly in Christ,
Fr. Gabriel B. O’Donnell, O.P.
Postulator
A Convert's "Second" Conversion

Catholics commonly speak of "conversion" to the Faith when someone who is not a Catholic 'joins' the Church. This might be through Baptism or, in the case of one already baptized, reception into full communion with the Church. When Rose Hawthorne and her husband, George Lathrop, became Catholics in 1891, they were already baptized. They were instead received into full communion and received the sacrament of Confirmation. The "conversion" of the Lathrop couple caused a stir among the social elite in many parts of the United States. Wide newspaper coverage, and speculation as to possible motives for such a move, occupied journalists for weeks. To become a Catholic was to be out of step with the social mores of the day.

George and Rose embraced their new faith with enthusiasm and fervor. One need only read existing letters and Rose's diary entries to be convinced of that.

For Rose Hawthorne Lathrop this 1891 conversion to Catholicism was followed by a conversion even more dramatic and significant. Seven years later in 1898, Rose experienced a deeper and more costly conversion, the call to turn from life as she had known it and to embrace the life of a religious sister.

In January of that fateful year Rose had a vision of Christ being taken down from the Cross, Christ being cared for in his death by those who loved him. Her call to care for the dying was confirmed. In March of that same year a lovely young Kentucky woman, Alice Huber, joined Rose in her service to the poorest of the poor. Alice was to become Rose's dearest friend and companion. Finally, in April of 1891, George Lathrop died of liver disease in a New York hospital. Rose had suffered many losses in her life. She knew the pain of separation. Now, at 47 years of age, these events marked a new turning, a second conversion, in Rose's life. She had to depend upon God in a new, more profound way. She became his instrument and a servant of the poor. She was ready to embrace the demands of convent life.

The lives of all the saints are marked by such second conversions. For most this does not involve a new vocation, but a deepening of our relationship with Christ and a closer configuration to the mystery of his Cross. We are all called to that journey into holiness. We must learn of the repeated surrender to God's will and the triumph of his grace in our lives. Rose Hawthorne has much to teach us about the way to God.

The Rose Hawthorne Guild
600 Linda Avenue
Hawthorne, New York 10532

☐ I would like to become a member of the Rose Hawthorne Guild. Please send me information and the Guild materials.

Name

Address

City

State Zip

Please list your intentions...

Prayer for the Canonization of Rose Hawthorne

The following prayer invokes Rose Hawthorne's intercession. Should you receive favors, which you believe are through her help, we would be happy to hear from you.

Lord God, in your special love for the sick, the poor and the lonely, you raised up Rose Hawthorne (Mother Alphonsa) to be the servant of those afflicted with incurable cancer and with no one to care for them. In serving the outcast and the abandoned, she strove to see in them the face of your Son. In her eyes, those in need were always "Christ's Poor."

Grant that her example of selfless charity and her courage in the face of great obstacles will inspire us to be generous in our service of neighbor. We humbly ask that you glorify your servant Rose Hawthorne on earth according to the designs of your holy will. Through her intercession, grant the favor that I now present (here make your request).

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us! (3 times)
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father