Dear Sister

Let me bring you up to date on the Fontbonne news in this the first installment of the 1980 'Dust Mop.' While we were on retreat (some of us), Sister John Joseph recuperated from her surgery so well that last Friday we could bring her home. That same evening she walked over to the Ryan dining room (with the help of her trusty walker) to join us for dinner. And since then she has walked over to Mass, breakfast and dinner daily. The psalmist says something like this: 'Seventy years is our span and eighty if we are strong.' I think of John Joseph.

These days we're celebrating Mass in the community room to accommodate the extra people from the leadership workshop here in its second and final week. Among the participants is a Trappist monk from South Carolina who has won the hearts of all who've met him. I can't help thinking James Lorene would love to get ahold of his trousers to alter them. They're too long (the cuffs are rolled at least twice) and far too big. But then last week's gospel was all about not being anxious about what we wear--so not to worry about baggy trousers. Almost all the old pews have been removed from the chapel, and our maintenance crew are gradually moving in those from Southwest--very gradually. They're also attempting to mend the wall areas where in the past water has seeped through.

In the hall on third floor Medaille a new carpet has been finally laid in preparation for the arrival today of participants in Elderhostel. They'll reside in Medaille. Among the 24 participants is a darling 76-year-old lady who flew in from Seattle this morning at 6:08! Margaret Eugene and I met her at the airport. Other participants include a couple who drove in from Texas, another from Independence, and still another from another town in Missouri. Sister Drane met two women she knows from Peoria who arrived via bus this afternoon. They're quite lively and enthusiastic; one of them announced she brought along 16 pairs of shoes! Of the entire group about half are living on campus; the rest are commuters. Among the commuters are Frances Troemel and her longtime companion Gertrude Vanderschmidt. Tonight the participants and their teachers (Jean Manley who's teaching a course for them on the presidents; Mary Abkemeier who's doing something for them in computer literacy; and Pauline Bellingame who's offering a course in the merits of such products as Geritol, Roloids, and the like) had a buffet supper just outside the Medaille ballroom. They all seem happy in anticipation of their week here. My task, I think, is to take them on a few off-campus jaunts during the week. With my poor sense of direction, who knows where we'll end up?

Now for some comings and goings around here: Mary Grydos returned last week with superlatives for her Atlanta retreat; Tuesday she leaves with her sister Teresa for a three-week jubilee trip to California. Father Frank left yesterday, I think, for Taiwan where he'll give a retreat to the Daughters of Charity and then tour Hong Kong, Japan and Hawaii. Jane Reilhmann is at Rosary and Marcella at Berkeley. Alma drove to Pennsylvania last Saturday to attend summer session there. Jeanene writes that she's heading (by now has no doubt arrived)
for California. Last Thursday Josephine and Guadalupe left for their home visit in California and New Mexico. Tomorrow afternoon Agatha and Jane Frances leave for retreat at MAC. Ann Catherine is with her sister Mar, and Margaret Denise with her sisters Mary and Margaret in idyllic Michigan on the shores of Lake Crystal. Jane Nassett returned late last night from her jaunt in Europe.

Gala multi-colored flags and balloons lining the entrance to Fine Arts are vivid reminders that Children's Theatre opens this week, 26 June at 11 am, with "The Enchanted Forest." As usual Bobo the Clown smiles out from the large sign above the entrance. It all promises to be a very good season.

Last Friday Sister Madeline Sophie's brother Clarence (the meat man) died of a heart attack. He was in the hospital recovering from a colon resectioning (doctors had removed a malignant tumor from his colon) when the attack occurred. He will be buried tomorrow. By now most of you probably know that Sister Norbert from Nazareth also died suddenly last week. Mrs. Arnold is hospitalized for serious heart failure.

Happily temperatures here have remained pleasantly comfortable. The Huny opens this week with "South Pacific." Or rather I should say it opened last week with Walter Cronkite and Marsha Mason in a one-night performance, a tribute to Richard Rogers. The few from here who attended that performance seemed to me less than enthusiastic.

I suppose if I tried I could prolong this newsletter and thus complete this page, but I'm already late getting it out. Let me instead end with good wishes from us all and the hope that your days away will be all you want them to be. We miss you. Until next week—take care.

Fondly,

Sister Mary

PS: Ernestine wasn't around to draw my mop for me so I had to depend on my own resources. When I thought I had completed it, Sister Dorothy Ebbesmeyer who's here helping in the library said, "That looks more like a toilet brush than a dust mop." What resulted was my second attempt to achieve verisimilitude of sorts.