

Sisters Have New Habits, New Ways

It hardly merits a second look these days to see a nun or two or three—in a short habit and simple headpiece. The sisters of the heavy robes and stiffly starched linen are the rarity now, and it's hard to remember that the change has been effected in just a few short years.

And most of those choosing the new type of habit can stand back and view it—in its role as a small part of a great change in the Catholic Church—as an innovation that brings both more freedom, and more responsibility.

Sister Mary Martina of Madonna College's faculty put it this way:

"You do feel a new freedom of movement. It's certainly an advantage in going up and down stairs."

"But you also feel restraint—the need to be careful in sitting down and bending over."

"I think it adds to our self-discipline."

SISTER MARTINA, a member of the Felician order that established staffs Madonna, traced the change in habit in her order, commenting that probably the method was typical of most orders.

"It was Vatican II that began the move to make the church more contemporary, more a part of these times," she said.

"One part of this was to update the garb that had been designed for the religious of medieval times."

The move found immediate acceptance among Felician sisters at least one count.

"Our headpieces were starched and needed a lot of ironing," Sister Martina explained. "The manpower problem was enormous."

THE FELICIANs' first move toward change was in the headpiece, and the first experiments were done by the community life committee in October and November of 1967.

"We set up some guidelines by sending out questionnaires to all nuns in our community," said sister Martina, who headed the local Felician's community life committee.

"We found there was a definite desire for change, but not drastic change."

Two new models of headpieces evolved, and the one that found the greatest acceptance was known as the Livonia model because it was worked out in the part of the order in this area. Instead of a long veil and faces framed in lots of starched linen, "it consists of



PRETTY MUSIC Sixteen-month-old Tracy Keith, who is going to like the record player that The Welcome Wagon Club of Livonia presented to St. Mary Hospital last week, along with a \$400 savings bond for purchase of other new equipment in the hospital's proposed playroom. Sister Brian Marie holds Tracy, and Mrs. Stanislav Walsh represents the newcomers' organization. (Observer photo by Vince Wick)



THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT Two faculty members and a student at Madonna College show the variation in garb currently being worn by Felician Sisters. Sister Mary Maureen, left, nursing instructor, wears the traditional habit that was the only one until a couple of years ago. At the right is Sister Mary Madonna, head of the biology department, in the contemporary habit. Sister Mary Joanne, center, is a student from South America and she wears a contemporary version of the light habit used in Latin climates. (Observer photo)

Family Sees Difference

It's Just A Symbol, But

(The clothing doesn't make the nun, of course. But Observer staff member Sue Shaughnessy found that a new individual emerged when her own sister simplified the religious garb she had worn for years. Possibly other families have noted a like change.)

By SUE SHAUGHNESSY

The change in nun's garb might be startling and the most noticeable, she said, is merely an exterior symbol.

What follows is a purely personal view of the changes made by the various religious orders. It's the reaction of one person in a specific situation. It wouldn't be surprising, however, if the reaction and experiences are shared by others.

CONSIDER that I was just

11-years-old when my older sister packed her bags for the journey to Monroe and vocation as a teaching member of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SIHM) religious community.

Add almost 19 years and the inevitable expansion of a family with assorted in-laws and the next generation ranging from teenagers to babies.

During this time the contact with the nun-sister have been relatively infrequent and formal.

One day during a visit the nun mentions that the community's habit is being changed.

"We have to make our first new habit or wait for them to be made," she said. (I don't really know, but I strongly suspect that my sister and I are very much alike in our approach to sewing. That is, we don't like to sew and are not very adept at all.)

It so happens that one sister-in-law is a very accomplished seamstress. (This too might point up a similarity. You always mention such tasks within the hearing of people who are competent).

The inevitable result? You guessed it.

My sister-in-law made the habit. Grandma provided the babysitting service with the four youngsters and the nun commuted from Fenton to Livonia for fittings.

What did I do? I avoided the scene of all the activity.

ONE Saturday afternoon, however, I did happen to stop for a visit, and found the sewing machine running in high gear.

The kids were playing in the living room as Grandma was in Florida, while the adults were congregated around the dining table which was covered with sewing tools.

In the living room some sort of game was in progress and, not surprisingly, a disagreement

Y Offers 'Compleat Stratford'

"Ye Compleat Stratford" might be a good way to describe the package service offered by the YWCA for one-day trips to the Canadian Shakespearean center this summer.

The package includes air-conditioned motorcoach transportation, matinee theatricals and dinner at Stratford's restaurant. A YWCA escort accompanies each group.

Stratford for this season are "Measure for Measure" on

The Observer Women

Pesticides Subject For L-VV

Pesticides will be the topic of the Livonia League of Women Voters' last meeting until fall, Thursday, June 12, at 8:15 p.m., in the home of Mrs. Winthrop Sears, 16848 Canterbury.

A program will be presented on pesticides by Mrs. Sears and Mrs. Jay Lively.

Two questions on pesticides will be considered for consensus.

The first is whether the use of DDT and other persistent pesticides should be restricted until such time as the scientific question of their effect on water quality has been conclusively resolved.

The other question is whether other agencies and means besides the Department of Agriculture should be included in making final decisions about pesticides use.

Also on the agenda for the evening will be a report on the state convention to be given by Mrs. David Andrews and Mrs. Robert Bennett.

Any women interested in attending the league meetings are welcome. Prospective members may call Mrs. David Andrews at 464-0070.

Hearty Spring Dish

Let your first cookout feature milk-fed spring lamb and zucchini. Use shoulder lamb chops, browned in a skillet, over a barbecue briquette fire.

Remove chops and drain off the drippings. Cook onion, garlic and zucchini for a minute or two in a hot serving dish before adding the lamb chops and the vegetable sauce to the fire.

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