



Family Tree of 1933 -

The School Sisters of Notre Dame in Germany created this artistic “family tree” commemorating the first one hundred years of the congregation.

Each bunch of grapes is a different Unit of the congregation with grapes representing individual missions. The roots come from Mary and the sustaining “trellis” for the grapevine is the cross.

- Mankato Province -



SSND FAMILY TREE PRAYER

THE FACILITATOR prepares and distributes copies of both the 1883 and 1933 pictures of the SSND Family Tree (available on CD, **SSND Family Tree in Artistic Form**).

THE FACILITATOR says: Some German School Sisters of Notre Dame pray by taking a picture, or other art form and invite participants to look at it together either in silence or with soft music in the background. After a few minutes they are invited to share what they see. A similar type of group meditation can be focused on a snowfall, falling rain, thunderstorm, etc.

After a time of quiet, looking at pictures of the 1883 SSND Family Tree, THE FACILITATOR says: what do you see in the picture? (roots are coming out of the hearts of the three founding persons: Bishop Wittmann, Mother Theresa, and Fr. Job. To the left is Bishop Augustine and to the right is St. Peter Fourier.)

THE FACILITATOR says: If anyone can read what is printed on the branches, they will find our major motherhouses as they existed in 1883, with missions also named. What does this tree tell us about the role of Mary among the School Sisters of Notre Dame?

THE FACILITATOR says: Now let's look at the 1933 SSND Family Tree. Allow time for quiet reflection. Then THE FACILITATOR says: Do you see any similarities or differences in the two trees? (That the tree has become a vine and that the bunches of grapes signify various missions.)

THE FACILITATOR say: Remember that this is an artist's rendition shortly before 1933. World War II would severely "prune" the congregation. How did this SSND vine, Family Tree, grow through this pruning? How would you depict the SSND FAMILY TREE today? Conclude with reading a portion of the contents of SSND FAMILY TREE that is meaningful to you/group: i.e. Reading from Augustine on community.

An appropriate hymn could complete this prayer.

NB. This visual prayer may be used to begin **The Vine and the Branches** prayer.