

# Vine and the Branches: Tablecloth & Napkins

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The “Vine and the Branches” tablecloth forms the centerpiece of Sturdy Roots. It becomes a game board on which topics adhere, showing the “fruit” of the vine of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Each topic is available on the “Sturdy Roots” CDs. These provide “food for thought” and discussion. They are placed in a picnic basket which can be borrowed from SSND Units.

Four napkins in four different languages accompany the tablecloth. These represent the internationality of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who are in more than thirty countries today. The words in German, English, Japanese, and Spanish express the SSND motto: “All the works of God proceed slowly and in pain; but then, their roots are sturdier and their flowering the lovelier.”

Facilitator directions offer suggestions on how to share the tablecloth and napkins with a group as well as the other contents of the basket. The use of a tablecloth and napkins to describe the corporate personality of the School Sisters of Notre Dame came to the author as a way of expressing a feminine aspect of educating youth, the poor, and women over the past 172 years. A blend of handmade tablecloth and napkins along with technology seemed an appropriate way to tell the story of this religious community of women. May these “Sturdy Roots” continue to deepen in the hearts of those who use this resource.

