



Richard and June Skerik '75 and '74
on behalf of St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M

August 22, 2008

Dear Classmates of the 1970s,

Please allow us a few moments to introduce ourselves and say a few words about our days at Texas A&M and our thoughts about St. Mary's Catholic Center. We are Richard and June Skerik, Classes of 1975 and 1974. Wow--it seems like a lifetime ago that we were at the greatest University in the world!

We had grown up together, fallen in love, and there we were in the spring of 1974 with June about to graduate and planning our wedding. We thought we were in heaven and that life couldn't get any better. At the time, Richard was Catholic, and June was Protestant. Richard and his roommates always went to Sunday Mass at St. Mary's, and June occasionally went with them. To make a long story short, June joined the Catholic Church after we were married. We have lived in the Waco/Abbott area most of our 34 years together, but we remember our first year of married life, in married student housing, with much joy and happiness.

As our children grew, they certainly were aware of our love for Texas A&M, but we never pushed them to go to college there because we wanted them to make their own decisions. Two of our daughters graduated from A&M and during their years as students, we started to understand, as parents, what the ministry at St. Mary's means to these college kids. It all started with St. Mary's Welcome Weekend retreat when they first came to A&M and continued with mission trips during Christmas and spring breaks, Aggie Awakening, Bible study classes, busy student retreats and so much more. Daily Mass and Eucharistic Adoration became huge parts of their lives. If you're like us, when you go to Mass at St. Mary's, you feel like you have truly experienced Christ's presence. It is so wonderful to see so many college students packing the pews.

St. Mary's forms the future leaders of the Church and society using the riches and **(OVER)** wisdom of the Catholic faith. We have visited the Awakening retreats and witnessed firsthand how lives are transformed through the simple communication of the love of Christ to college students. We know that our daughters are much further along in their spiritual walk than we were at their age, and we believe that is because of St. Mary's and the lifelong friends they have met there.

St. Mary's is a "home away from home," where the approximately 11,500 Catholics at Texas A&M can enjoy many fun and safe social activities and meet friends who will influence them in positive ways. As of Spring 2008, there were more than 80 organizations, activities and programs,



Our daughter, Kimmy (second from the right), and niece, Jana Harlow (third from the right), participated in St. Mary's "Nun Run 2005," traveling to different convents to learn about religious life.

encompassing everything from student-led retreats to Sunday choirs to the booming pro-life movement.

In order to help St. Mary's continue to be a rich environment for future generations of Aggies to grow in faith and leadership, it is up to us to help. We would like to encourage you to join us in honoring our Catholic and Aggie traditions by participating in the "1970s Class Gift" to St. Mary's. The concept of class gifts started with the Class of 2005, which has committed \$52,000 to the St. Mary's permanent endowment. Individual students pledged at least \$1,000 to participate in this gift. Inspired by these young Ags, a member of the Classes of the 1940s helped develop the concept of decade class gifts. To date, the Classes of the 1940s have committed more than \$70,000 to create their permanent fund. Most recently the Classes of 2007 and 2008 have collectively pledged nearly \$100,000 to continue the important work at St. Mary's.

Now it is our turn, the members of the Classes of the 1970s, to add our commitment to a permanent endowment fund, the proceeds of which will support Catholic ministry for future generations of Aggies--our children, grandchildren and beyond. Presently, \$6,000 has been committed to the Classes of the 1970s gift, and we know that you are just as excited about supporting St. Mary's as the older and younger Ags!

The decision for us to participate was inspired by St. Paul's letter to Timothy that says, "Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give happily to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up real treasure for themselves in heaven." (1 Timothy 6:18-19) St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews says, "In response to all He has done for us, let us outdo each other in being helpful and kind to each other and in doing good." (Hebrews 10: 24)

So come on 70s Ags, let's "outdo" the other classes in being helpful, kind and in doing good for St. Mary's, and showing our love for our fellow Aggies, through prayer and our financial gifts!

Enclosed is information about the "1970s Class Gift." Thank you for prayerfully considering how you can help. May God bless you and keep you in His care.

In Christ,



Richard & June Skerik '75 & '74

P.S. Please save the date! The Classes of the 1970s Aggie Catholic Reunion will be the weekend of October 31-November 2 (Aggies vs. Colorado). Please join your classmates for dinner and fun on Friday night and a reserved seat at 11:00AM Mass on Sunday! Call Andrew Robison (979) 846-5717 or visit www.aggiecatholic.org/reunions to RSVP!

