



**David '81 and Lora (Marton) Matlock '81
Sister Marie Bernadette (Michele) Fusselman '83**
on behalf of St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M

August 14, 2008

Howdy Fellow Catholic Aggies of the 80's!

We are Lora Marton Matlock '81, along with my husband David '81, and Sister Marie Bernadette '83 (Michele Fusselman). We want to share some of our fondest memories from St. Mary's Catholic Center at Texas A&M and maybe reconnect those of you who have been away for awhile to the amazing blessings and activities there now. The Catholic Church is alive and well in Aggieland,



and the Matlock family has been blessed by the work of St. Mary's. Our oldest daughter is a member of the Class of '07, and two other daughters presently attend A&M, Classes '09 and '11. We can't imagine what their lives would be like without St. Mary's. St. Mary's is their home-away-from-home, where they can grow spiritually and make friends who will influence them in positive ways.

Former Newman Club presidents and sisters Lora (Marton) Matlock '81 and Dana (Marton) Cutbirth '80 with Sister Marie Bernadette (Michele) Fusselman '83.

At St. Mary's, there are over 80 programs, events and activities for our daughters to learn about their faith, minister to others and perform charitable work—including those headed up by our classmate Sister Marie Bernadette: Theology of the Body, RCIA, and *Spirituality Suppers with Sister*, to name a few!

With all that St. Mary's has been to us and our families, we hope that you will share in the mission and all the ministries that continue to enrich and transform so many young lives.

At A&M, St. Mary's was pretty much the center of our lives, with Mass on Sunday and Newman Club on Wednesdays. Under the leadership of Father Al Palermo and Father Bill Brooks, retreats, Eucharistic Adoration, Bible studies, Stations, and prayer groups were regularly available. We also kicked back with our annual raft trip to New Braunfels (still ongoing today!) and other fun activities.

At the beginning of our time at A&M, Pope John Paul II inaugurated a "new evangelization," which had a profound effect on St. Mary's. We thought we had a lot going on in the early '80s (and we did!), but Catholic campus ministry has exploded in the ensuing years.

Not only have the number of students grown at A&M, but the number of Catholics on campus has grown to about 11,500. **The total number of students we had participating in the Newman Club in the 1980s is now the number of dedicated student officers and leaders.**

Mass attendance on Sundays is usually standing room only--with young people choosing to come without parents breathing down their necks! We have been to daily Mass and witnessed over 200 kids taking time out of their busy college life each day to attend. Eucharistic Adoration is ongoing with so many students dedicating an hour or more of their week to be in His Presence. David and I had the privilege of helping our daughter as cook staff head at the Aggie Awakening retreat a few years ago. Seeing more than 300 kids give up a weekend of college life to participate in and staff a retreat is something we will never forget.

During their college years, students make decisions that affect the rest of their lives, and St. Mary's uses the riches and wisdom of the Catholic faith to prepare them to live out their vocation, whether it be as a priest, religious, single or married. Our oldest daughter Lauren met her husband Chris through St. Mary's--just one of the many, many married couples whose vocations thrive because they were prepared and challenged to discover God's call in their lives.

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.

The concept of class gifts started with the Class of 2005, which has committed more than \$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 1980s, to add our commitment to a permanent endowment fund, the proceeds of which will support Catholic ministry for future generations of Aggies--our children and grandchildren and beyond. Presently, \$10,500 has been committed to the Classes of the 1980s gift, and we know that you are just as excited about supporting St. Mary's as the older and younger Ags!

We invite you to join us in supporting the **Classes of the 1980s Gift** to ensure that St. Mary's remains the bright, shining light of Christ. Your generous and sacrificial gift is also a wonderful way to impact our culture by giving our young Aggie Catholics the faith foundation and leadership skills to "Go make disciples of all the nations."

May God pour out His abundant graces on you and yours.

Blessings,

Lora and David Matlock '81

Sister Marie Bernadette '83 (smb@aggiecatholic.org)

P.S. Please save the date! The Classes of the 1980s Aggie Catholic Reunion will be the weekend of September 26-28 (Aggies vs. Army). Please join your classmates for dinner and fun on Friday night and a reserved seat at 11:00 AM Mass on Sunday! Call Andrew Robison (979) 846-5717 or visit www.aggiecatholic.org/reunions to RSVP!

