



# THE PEARL OF LIFE

The Story of Hilligonda Wolbring,  
The founders of SND Congregation Coesfeld

*Sr. M. Syaloma SND*

## FOREWORD

The booklet the "PEARL OF LIFE" tells the brief history of Hilligonda Wolbring Sister Mary Aloysia, the founder of the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame, Coesfeld, Germany which was established in 1850.

The tracing and religious values of every event in Hilligonda Wolbring's life is a series of processes. As God's way of educating, guiding, and directing her life that she can focus her life on "*His Divine Providence*"

Inspired by Bernard Overberg's spiritual education on Christian renewal which was very famous in Munster, Germany at the time. The spirit has taken root and develops into Charisma and Spirituality of Sister Mary Aloysia, our Congregation Founders.

Together with Lisette Kühling, co-founder of the Congregation who was known as Sr.M.Ignasia SND, both of them with the guidance of Father Theodore Elting initiated and pioneered the establishment of the Congregation of SND Coesfeld, Germany. The congregation constantly renewed it self based on the Christian values In facing the time.

Hopefully, this booklet will help the readers to find God in daily events of their life, and give thanks to all them. "SOLI DEO, GOD ONLY "

Pekalongan, January 9, 2012

Regards,  
Sr.M. Syaloma Murniningsih SND



*SOLI DEO*

The words means for God alone. To find God in everything we do. The contents:

- God's love is driving force.
- The glory of God is the main goal.
- God's will is life's guidance.
- Simplicity is the way of living
- Seek and find God in everything.

*Sr. M. Syaloma SND*



## 1. THE SEEDS OF LIFE

A tiny baby named Hilligonde Henrica Wolbring was in a sling of Elisabeth Morin, a wealthy Thorn child, a merchant from Rotterdam-Netherlands, accompanied by her husband Otto Arnold Wolbring. A metal crafter, born in Stenern, Westfalia Germany, happily he pet Gonda, who was born January 9, 1828 at the third Schieler Zeedijk, Rotterdam - Netherlands.



## 2. MY BEST UNCLE

Hearing that Gonda lived with her step parents, Johannes van Rijbroek, who did not pay attention to her education, then her uncle, in spring 1835, Gerard Wolbring, picked her up. After that, she was put in Bernard Wolbring family, one of Gonda's cousins. So that Gonda could have love and a good Christian education in the family that was very important for her future.





### 3. THE HARDNESS OF HEART

One morning in spring, Gerald Wolbring took Gonda to the fields, to help Catherine and Lizzy. Hearing his uncle's request, Gonda became angry

She stomped feet. She cried and said, "No... I Do not want to.....! I will not go to the fields. They will order me to milk the cow.... I do not want to do that. I'm RICH!"



### 4. TRANSFORMATION

Thanks to Bernard's family devout upbringing, eventually Gonda began to love the countryside and all its activities.

She would feed the cows, provided their food, and milked the cow and helped Chaterinne and Lizzy. One summer day in the open air, seated on the straw, she enjoyed the delicious apples from the her own garde.



## 5. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

"Gonda have to learn everything that can be learned, she needs to get a good education." That was the will of Gonda's parents read by her uncle and aunt.



## 6. THE FIRST COMMUNION

At the age 13 years old on May 3, 1841 Gonda received her first Communion at the Parish Church of St. George, Bocholt.

Gonda received the Sacrament of Confirmation on July 5, 1842. Afterthat, she finished her school in Bocholt Elementary School.





## 7. THE VOCATION AND SELECTION

Gonda was 16 years old when she had completed the Girl Education School in Tangerangding for two years. That was in 1844.

One day Gonda's uncle took her to ride a beautiful carriage. She was introduced to a rich man, so that he might had proposed her. However, Gonda declined the proposal by saying: "A cage can be a very beautiful place, but a bird will not let itself be trapped in it."

## 8. EXEMPLARY TEACHER

August 23, 1848 Gonda graduated from teacher education institutions in Bernard Overberg - Munster, and she was accepted as a teacher in Parish St. Lambertus Elementary in Coesfeld. At the new school year, Gonda received a letter of appointment from the Department of Education in Munster.



## 9. LEARNING TO TEACH

Father Elting came and taught religion twice a week in the same place where Gonda was teaching. She was the first grade teacher. She was so impressed and intrigued by the method and how Father Elting approached to his students so she did not waste the opportunity, she also joined the classroom.



## 10. ENCOUNTER AND FRIENDSHIP

Gonda visited a friend's house, her name was Lisette, a Senior Teachers In Parish Sint. Lambert Elementary School.

Both were graduates of Bernard Overberg Teacher Institute. The friendship of two teachers had been the beginning of a holy friendship.

They started the Implementation of the divine plan of God in knitting History of the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame in Coesfeld at a later date.





## 11. THE STABILIZATION

Gonda and Lisette asked for consideration from Father Elting, spiritual mentors. It was about their longing for "A devotion their entire power and possessions in order to establish education for orphaned and abandoned children" Father Elting suggested that they could unite themselves with an institution of Religious dedicated to the education of children



## 12. THE AGREEMENT

In Munster in 1848 with the blessing of Bishop Johann Georg Muller, Father Joseph Elting came to see Mother Superior General Kongregation of Sisters of Notre Dame of Amersfoort in the Netherlands. He begged her to send some of her Sisters to Coesfel Germany. To train two teachers who had religious calling to be a Sister of Notre Dame, under the Constitution SND-Namur.



### 13. HOLY FASHION

On the first of October 1850, Gonda received holy attire in the name of the monastery of the Holy SND as Sr. M. Aloysia, and so did Lisette, as Sr.M.Ignasia SND from the Bishop of Munster Johann George Muller. The first of October 1850 became a milestone in the history of founding the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame of Coesfeld - Germany. Its founder were Sr. M. Aloysia Wolbring SND.



### 14. PERPETUAL VOWS

On the fourth of October 1852, Sr. M. Aloysia, the founder of the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame- Coesfeld and Sr.M. Ignasia SND - Co Founder, stated their eternal vows, which were administered by the Bishop of Munster Johann George Muller.





## 15. THE FIRST MISSION

November 1853, Sr. M. Aloysia SND received a new mission for her first work as one of the Coesfeld Community. She worked as a teacher in Aldekerk elementary school. She was appointed as the leader of the SND Coesfeld Community accompanied by two young sisters.



## 16. A GROWING SEPARATION

After five years, the SND Coesfeld Community flourished. The community was strong enough to become an independent one. On the eight of June 1855, there was an election and there was a personal decision to disengage from the SND Amersfoort. Finally, there were eleven professed-sisters and twenty-two novices joined the SND Coesfeld. That day had become the milestone of SND Coesfeld Congregation, which was free from SND Amersfoort General Leader responsibility.





## 17. DEPARTURE

Prussia Culture Camp issued a regulation in May 1874. It became the start of the eviction and Confiscation of Church property, which marked the history of secularization struggle.

June 19, 1874 Sr. M. Chrysostoma, Sr. M. Aloysia and seven other sisters fled Prussia and went to Cleveland, USA. They boarded 'Rheine', a ship which landed in New York on July 4, 1874.

It was the celebration of Independence Day in USA. They were well received by Bishop Richard Gilmore in Cleveland Ohio USA, and got a teaching job at a parish school called St. Peter. The parish was led by a priest, Father Francis Wisterholt.

## 18. THE VALUES, BLESSING AND OBEDIENCE

When Sr. M. Aloysia received consent for her vocation from the General Mother, she answered, "Nunc Dimitis Benedicite". It meant "Send Me" and "Praise you" after that she said, "Dear General Mother, I used to have a dream to become a religious teacher. I want to sacrifice my life and my possessions to initiate a *"place for orphaned and abandoned children abroad as my missions."* This is only my wish. But I've never disclosed it to anyone. I feared it could affect my superior's decision so that it differ from what was planned and willed by our compassionate God, who had been pleased to receive my entire religious life to become a holy sacrifice for the sake of my obedience to the superior. But now, with great joy, I thanked God for his love and gentleness. He has fulfilled my life complete my deepest longing and desire which were hidden inside my heart. This was the answer. When Sr. M. Aloysia humbly received the blessing for her vocation from Mother Chrysostoma to become a leader, a mother, a friend of children and the elderly in Mount St. Mary's Buckeye, Cleveland.





## 19. SENT TO SERVE

Is a leader, Sr. M.Aloysia motherly attitude was very much felt by the children and the elderly at Mount St. Mary's orphanage in Buckeye Cleveland - USA. This attitude stayed in her. In front of children at school she stood as a teacher. In the presence of poor and homeless children, she placed herself as a mother. In the presence of girls and young people, she stood as an example. To the elderly she stood as a friend. To her fellow Sisters of Notre Dame she stood as her sister. Compassionate attitude was inherited by Sr. M. Aloysia to the other Sisters of Notre Dame to be maintained and preserved as a legacy of which was engraved in the spirit of life from generation to generation.



## 20. THE LAST COMMUNION

At the time Sr. M. Aloysia went through her critical period Mother Mary Chrysostoma was in Europe. Sr.M.Modesta who was appointed as leader of the province accompanied Sr. M. Aloysia. On the fifth of May 1889, Sr.M.Aloysia received communion of mercy sacrament. She died on May 6, 1889 at 2:00 am, she looked so beautiful, peaceful and quiet. Sr. M. Aloysia, the founder of the Congregation of SND in Coesfeld, Germany, breathed her last breadth at Mount St. Mary - Cleveland, USA.





## 21. THE PAST AWAY

SR.M.ALOYSIA SND funeral day the Founder of Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame Coesfeld – GERMANY - 6 May 1889

Due to bad weather, a heat wave suddenly came, consequently they put Sr. M. Aloysia's funeral ahead of time. The difficulty of communications at that time caused the Sisters of the outside community could not come. Some children were ill so that they could only escort until the gate of the monastery. Those who came to the cemetery were Sr. M. Modesta, Kikum Director, Sr. M. Raphaele and Sr. M. Casmira.

Sr. M. Aloysia final resting place was in St. Joseph cemetery. The location was in a top a small hill, along with 23 Sisters of Notre Dame who preceded her. Watching the funeral profession the founder of the Congregation of SND that lasted so simple, our heart felt sick.



## 24. SR. M. ALOYSIA MOTTO:

"SOLI DEO"

The words means for God alone. To find God in everything we do. The contents:

- God's love is driving force.
- The glory of God is the main goal.
- God's will is life's guidance.
- Simplicity is the way of living
- Seek and find God in everything.



## 22. THE TREE OF THE CONGREGATION SND COESFELD , GERMANY



1. **SND Namur - BELGIUM – FRENCH**  
Founder: Santa Yulia Billiard  
Established: February 21, 1804  
Spiritual Mother: SND Coesfeld – Germany.

2. **SND Amersfoort – NETHERLANDS**  
Superior General: Mere Joseph SND –  
Amersfoort – Netherlands.  
Congregation standing: Th. 1825  
June 3, 1850: Mere Amersfoort Sister  
Joseph sends three to Germany.

Sr. M. Brigitte, Sr. M. Ursula and  
Sr. M. Agnes. The three of them educate  
and Lisette Hilligonde to become a  
member of the Congregation of SND,  
which is based on the Constitution SND  
- Namur. Th. 1855 The three of them  
were returned to Amersfoort, as  
assessed SND Coesfeld was able to be  
independent.

## THE PEARL OF LIFE

Author – Editor : Sr. M. Syaloma, Murniningsih SND  
Translator in English : Dian Anggraini  
Graphic Design : Antonius Budiharjo  
Published by : Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame,  
Mother of Good Counsel Province,  
INDONESIA,  
: Jln. Veteran 31 - 51 146 PEKALONGAN

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Braun, Sr. Mary Sarah, SND. 1996. History of the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame of Coesfeld, Germany (1855 – 1877) and (1877 – 1888)
2. Sister Mary Margaret, SND. 1961. In Our Lady's Household (diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia oleh Sr.M. Irmine, SND th. 1997)
3. Sistesr Mary Helmtrud, SND. Origin and History of the Congregation of the sisters of Notre Dame of Coesfeld. (diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia oleh bpk. R.E. Indratamtomo.. S.M. th. 1996)