

# THE WANSBORO AWARD



*Katherine S. Wansboro, RSCJ*

In 1972, the Wansboro Award was initiated to honor individuals in the Sacred Heart family who by their lives and activities have demonstrated Confidence in the Heart of Jesus. The recipient of the award need not be a Sacred Heart alumna, as indeed Sister Wansboro was not, but the recipient must share with Sister Wansboro that strong commitment and dedication to the Heart of Jesus and Sacred Heart education.

After her graduation, Sister Wansboro needed a year to decide about her future. Being acquainted with the Kenwood Convent of the Sacred Heart for some time, she understood more deeply the spirit of the Society, believing it could bring to fruition all she was searching for in religious life: total consecration to the love of Christ. His love was her constant support during her more than 50 years as a Religious of the Sacred Heart.

As a religious, Sister Wansboro received an M.A. from Boston College and her undergraduate degree in Library Science from the State University of Albany. She frequently attended summer school to better prepare herself to meet the educational challenges in a changing world. As a teacher or coordinator of studies, Headmistress or Superior, she served in several houses in the Province, including Newton, Washington, D.C., Buffalo, Greenwich, Rochester and 91st Street. Her longest stay was in Michigan, where she spent 25 years, one at Grosse Pointe and 24 at Lawrence Avenue and Bloomfield Hills. She was Superior at Lawrence Avenue when the decision was made to establish a house in Bloomfield Hills. With only \$8,000 to buy land and build a new school, the task seemed impossible! It was clear to her that it could only be built on Confidence in the Heart of Jesus. It was through this Confidence that the project became a reality and Sister Wansboro became Superior of Bloomfield Hills, serving from 1958-1964.

Sister Wansboro insisted on excellence from her students. She endeavored to see that the Charity of Christ was the basis of all school activities. She worked behind the scenes by providing support and encouragement to her students and their families. She founded the Fathers' Club and the Janet Stuart Association to develop understanding between home and school. On August 2, 1990, Sister Katherine Wansboro celebrated her Diamond Jubilee as a Religious of the Sacred Heart. The Lord called Katherine Wansboro home on March 13, 1998.

This award is presented annually in the name of Katherine S. Wansboro, RSCJ, whose life exemplifies Confidence in the Heart of Jesus.

# THE 2008 WANSBORO AWARD RECIPIENTS



Walter and Sis Fisher

In 1975, the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills inaugurated one of the first Boards of Trustees for Sacred Heart schools in the United States. This was not long after the Religious of the Sacred Heart had withdrawn from 10 schools across the country, including our Academy in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. There was great concern that we would do the same thing at Bloomfield Hills and other locations and it was a very unsettled era in many areas of life in the United States. In order to prevent the further closing of schools, a group of very visionary leaders got together

from the Sacred Heart Order and pulled together a plan to enable our Boards of Trustees to take responsibility for the future of our schools. Many wonderful people were willing to help us in areas of finance, facilities, legal advice, fundraising and the like, but they insisted that we, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, develop a clear statement of our philosophy of education and provide a way for monitoring the implementation of this philosophy in our schools. Thus, over a period beginning in 1970, the Network of Sacred Heart Schools was formed.

Walter Fisher was among the very first Board Members at Bloomfield Hills. He was enthusiastic about Sacred Heart education through the long experience of his family with various Sacred Heart educational institutions. Also, his daughter, Elise, was enrolled in the Academy at Bloomfield Hills. He and Sis, overall, for many years since 1975, have been extraordinarily loyal supporters of Sacred Heart. They were among the founding families of Kensington Academy and worked hard to promote the success of that wonderful institution. It is, indeed, fitting for Sis and Walter Fisher to be given the Wansboro Award after giving evidence of so much courage and confidence over these many years.

The story of Sis and Walter Fisher and the way that God has used them as instruments of hope has begun a new chapter. It was the deep care for both Kensington Academy and the Academy of the Sacred Heart that led the Fishers to connect those who would eventually facilitate the reunion of our family through the merger between the two. With deep commitment to the *Goals and Criteria*, integrity made visible in leadership and the fidelity of the next generation of Fisher children and grandchildren, Sis and Walter Fisher continue to lead by example, commitment and the courage to take action for the sake of the children. How grateful we are for the leadership, vision and enthusiasm for the Sacred Heart that has characterized the lives of Sis and Walter Fisher, their children and grandchildren. The entire Sacred Heart family extends both gratitude and deep love for all that they have given.