

# Classic Franciscans

## Golden Faith and Marriage

By Julia Pearson, SFO



Odilon Redon

*"We manage by prayer . . ."*

The year 1958, was a priceless one for Jerry O'Loughlin and his beautiful bride, Iolanda. Shared faith, celebrated and strengthened through daily Mass and the rosary, has always been part of their relationship. They met through Our Ladies of the Angels Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. On April 12, they were joined in holy marriage in Holy Ghost Church in Portsmouth, with Father Tarenti officiating. Iolanda's profession to the SFO was in June, 1958 and Jerry's profession was in December, 1958. Another blessed memory will be their 50th wedding anniversary, acknowledged during Sunday mass. Their bishop was celebrating and brought the holy Eucharist to them."

Within eight years, six children were born to the couple: Marie, Peter, John, Susan, Thomas and Stephen. Jerry worked for the Newport Electric Company, now the National Grid Company, as a drafts-man and fieldsman. Iolanda worked a number of years as a pharmacist with the Newport Hospital, but always the children were her first "job." She can say with a laugh that all mothers are working mothers.

The years have indeed been filled with golden moments - daily mass, taking communion to the hospital to ill

parishioners, enjoying and loving each other and the four grandchildren in their family: Alexandra, Corinne, Julie, and Emily. A great grand-daughter, Avery, has a precious place on the O'Loughlin family tree.

Iolanda, now 79 years old, and Jerry, 84 years old, live in a complex about twenty minutes from Portsmouth. Jerry's health has been riddled with complications since a fall seven years ago. Neither Jerry or Iolanda drives now, so a son takes them to doctor's appointments and to Mass at St. Anthony's Church on Sunday mornings, stopping for small errands on the way home.

Prayer, family, and loved friends are the center of their days. Their parish priest, Father Daniel Gray, has meaningful homilies and is greatly appreciated by the O'Loughlins. Iolanda's sister and niece visit every month. Children and grandchildren gather together for holidays and summer cookouts. Iolanda reflects on the specialness and comfort of the regularity in their lives. But she does miss driving.

Iolanda says the prayer of St. Francis is a good way to start the day. At 8 AM every morning Jerry and Iolanda "attend" daily Mass on station EWTN, the Catholic TV station. Jerry enjoys the company of books, many of them with religious themes. Iolanda loves to cook. Together they try to say the rosary every day, and Jerry feels that the Chaplet of Divine Mercy is also an important part of their daily devotions.

Iolanda sums up: "Life is good, and I'm grateful for patience to do the ordinary things day by day."



Iolanda and Jerry O'Loughlin, SFO