



School Sisters
of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Bend of the River

Carving by
Mary Ann
Osborne, SSND

Celebrating
150 years of
School Sisters
of Notre Dame
in Mankato

September 2015



Bend of the River carving

Probably the most striking thing you notice at first glance about the piece is the route and blue color of the river. It represents the Minnesota River and its flow from the southeast to Mankato and then the course of the river turns northeast. The name Minnesota means “sky-tinted water or cloudy-sky water” and the stain color I chose was the closest I could come to that image. At the bend of the river where Mankato is, I made the SSND symbol out of wire, which identifies all SSNDs in our international community.

The four women on the top part of the carving represent Sisters Ambrosia, Johanna of the Cross, Rebeccah and Candidate Mary Helling who traveled from Milwaukee, Wis., in 1865. The man gazing out into the future toward the bottom part of the carving is to represent the original calling for SSNDs by school board member Leo Lamm in 1864 and later Father Valentine Sommereisen in 1865.

The leaves shooting out in different directions represent how education provided new life and growth for the community and eventually spread to other locations. I chose to depict lines from Psalm 150 representing the past 150 years of praising God with dancing, pipe organ, trumpet, stringed instruments and tambourine.

There are outlines of people carved that show our connection and outreach with different communities over the years. Some of the people shapes are in copper to signify those who have gone before us and to whom we owe much gratitude. The part of the Psalm that I quoted with the text, “Let everything that has breath praise God” is the perspective SSNDs take for our celebration of 150 years in Mankato.

Mary Ann Osborne, SSND