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A new tree on the grounds of Villa Sacred Heart, motherhouse of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, in Danville, Pa.



by Bernadette Marie Ondus

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Because the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius have lived in Danville, PA for over 100 years, it is occasionally necessary to replace the trees that have died. Recently a couple donated two red maples, acer rubrum, which were planted on a lawn above a stream.

A red maple has several characteristics that remind one of marriage. For instance, the tree has winged seeds in pairs. It has leaves with five to three lobes, scarlet and yellow in autumn, signifying variety. The tree can flourish in any type of soil, moist or dry as marriage must.

In spring it has tiny red flowers; in the fall it is at its best with bright red foliage, an indication that marriage has many joyful moments. The acer rubrum does give maple syrup although the syrup from the sugar maple, acer saccarum, is better, proving all marriages do not yield the same sweetness.

-- Sister Bernadette Marie Ondus, SS.C.M. was born in Hackensack, NJ, grew up in Lenox, MA and graduated from St. Cyril Academy, Danville, PA and College Misericordia, Dallas, PA. After entering the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville, she became a high school English teacher. Later she studied Clinical Pastoral Education at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, and served as a chaplain in two PA prisons. Currently she is a chaplain at the Danville State Hospital.

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