

SPECIAL FOCUS

To drop suddenly out of the work of the classroom must be difficult for one who has been happily involved in it for well-nigh forty years. Retirement does, no doubt, bring with it some sense of relief — since years do take their toll even on the strongest of men and women. At the same time, there's no way that a teacher, who has truly enjoyed a good working relationship with children and young people, can just pack up her files and leave, without a sense of loss. Miss Koole testifies to the truth of that. Something of what gave purpose to life is gone, when September rolls around. . . and one stays at home. It's no simple matter, either, to come up with a substitute that satisfies.

The sense of loss, however, is not the experience only of the teacher who is retiring. In Miss Koole's case, at least, it's shared by those who are left behind — students, parents, fellow-teachers. Her delightful rapport with children, her wry wit, her helpfulness, her unpretentious spirit — all will be sorely missed, in the classroom and in the faculty room.

All those things, however, do not have to be missed by our Perspectives readers. All you need do, to continue to enjoy and benefit from them, is write "Dear Miss Koole." Our rubric by that name, you know, is still alive, howbeit not very well. . . hurting as it is from a lack of questions from our readers. With retirement, Miss Koole may have lost her class; but she's still able to give first-class advice. And since she has lots of time on her hands now, she'd like nothing better than to sit down and write on topics concerning which you, our readers, have questions. Let's keep her busy. Address your questions to:

**Dear Miss Koole
2068 Cranbrook Dr. N.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49505**

Meanwhile, we add our voice to that of Miss Agatha Lubbers, who in the tribute to Miss Koole that follows, wishes to her God's blessing in retirement.

Veteran Teacher Retires

Agatha Lubbers

The gift of a Christian teacher to the church and to the children of believing parents cannot be measured in monetary terms. Christian teachers, who have given their life to the profession, will be the first to admit that although teachers give much they also are the chief beneficiaries in the educational process. Miss Koole, who retired this year after a very fruitful teaching career, has frequently said that the most rewarding part of her day was the time

that she spent in devotions and teaching Bible to her students.

In September of 1950 Adams Street Christian School first opened its doors; and one of the teachers who greeted the students that morning was Miss Winifred Koole. In June of 1989, Miss Koole's teaching career came to an official conclusion. Thirty-nine happy and blessed years she had spent teaching covenant children in two different schools—Adams Street and Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School. For the first time in thirty-nine years Miss Koole would not, in September, greet a new group of students with her friendly smile and hearty laugh. Nor would she send them home with that special word — Mizpah.

Winifred Koole was the oldest child of five in the family of Jasper and Bessie (Wiersma) Koole. Her father was a painter. Her parents became members of the First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids soon after its organization. She received her grade school education (K-8th) at the Baldwin Christian School. Her secondary education began at Central High School. She enrolled in college prep.



Miss Winifred Koole

courses and then went to school for two years at Davis Technical High School. Here she took business courses. She has vivid memories of the Great Depression Years of the 30's. She did office work for several years and then took a four-year college course (in three years and three summers). She graduated from Calvin College with an AB in Education.

Miss Koole began the first of the twelve years she taught at Adams with forty-five pupils in grades five and six. This she remembers as a very discouraging and difficult start for her teaching career. The next eleven years of teaching at Adams were much more enjoyable, although for the most part the classes were 35-40 pupils and many times she taught either grades four and five or grades five and six.

Only three years after the inception of the school, the churches were rocked by the Schism of 1953. Many parents decided not to send their children back to Adams in the fall of 1954. Miss Koole remembers with fondness her sixth grade class because three of the students who returned that year entered the teaching profession and became her colleagues. One of these students was Tom DeVries, who has just taken Miss Koole's place in the fourth grade at Hope.

In 1962 Miss Koole moved to

Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School and taught the fourth grade there for twenty-seven happy years. During her tenure at Hope she worked on her Master's degree in Library Science. She used the skills that she learned to set up the library at Hope School and supervised it for many years. She relinquished her duties for a few years to Mr. Huiskens and took over the responsibility again when he went to teach at Covenant Christian High School. At present she is devoting part of each day to work in Hope's library.

Miss Koole is known lovingly by her twenty-three nephews and nieces as Aunt Win. She has many grand nephews and nieces and is great-grand aunt of four nephews and nieces. One of her nephews is a professor in the Protestant Reformed Seminary, and another of her nephews is a minister in the Protestant Reformed Churches. She has a niece, a nephew, and a grand-nephew who are teachers in the Protestant Reformed Christian Schools.

Miss Koole has been an active member in the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute since its organization thirty-five years ago. During the first ten years of the publication of the *Perspectives*, Miss Koole was the Business Manager of the magazine.

Miss Koole is well known for her enthusiastic teaching style and

for her love for children, and she is remembered by her former students as the teacher who read the *Little House on the Prairie* books, who permitted them to have Herm and Hermina (the word worms) on their desks when it was their birthday, and who told the best Bible stories. It is the latter for which she wants

the most to be remembered.

We know, Miss Koole, that it feels strange, still, to have no papers to grade and lessons to plan. We wish you God's blessing in these days of a more relaxed schedule.

Miss Koole, we have learned it well. We say, Mizpah! ■□■

FEATURE

The July, 1988 issue of "Mid-America Messenger" carried an editorial by Rev. Nelson Kloosterman which we thought to be especially thought-provoking. Rev. Kloosterman is professor of Ethics and New Testament Studies at Mid-America Reformed Seminary, in Orange City, Iowa. He wrote, for the "Messenger," a series of articles on Christian education; and this one in particular seemed likely to give pause to parents and teachers alike. We asked therefore for permission to print it in Perspectives. Here it is:

Christian Day Schools, What Controls Them?

Rev. Nelson Kloosterman

Last time we isolated what we think are three essential components of Christian day school education: *perspective*, *purpose*, and *process*. They answer the *What?*, *Why?* and *How?*

This time around we're planning to look at the *what* of Christian day schools. But before we get down to business, we need to take our mental vitamins; otherwise we'll tire out down the stretch. We need two vitamins in particular, both of the C-group: Vitamins C₁ and C₂. Vitamin C₁ contains parental Confidence that along with your child God gave you *competence* to nurture that child "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4; as I write these lines near Father's Day, I'm reminded that the apostle didn't delegate that duty!