

February 10, 1996

Dear Sister Anna Louise,

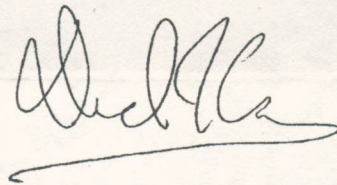
Here's the "blurb" I wrote about the "Sun" folk group. I hope it meets your needs. As I said over the phone, feel free to edit it as necessary.

May I make one request, please? Since my mother is now a member of St. Helen's parish, she may not get the opportunity to see the finished version of your history of St. Augustine's. If possible, when you are finished, would you please arrange for her to get one? Here's her information:

Mrs. Norma Caiazza
59 Lexington Parkway
Rochester, NY 14624
247-4324

Again, thank you for the opportunity to contribute to your effort. I hope I was, in some way, helpful.

With the best from my family,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Caiazza', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Caiazza

"Sun"

by Dave Caiazza

The Sun folk group was formed in 1971 with the support and blessing of St. Augustine's pastor, Father Edward Tolster. Sun welcomed members from within as well as outside the St. Augustine's parish, and at its height, had well over 30 members. Interestingly, Sun was run entirely by its teenage members, never having had an adult leader. Sun's leader was Michael Ciminelli, who led the group for five years.

Selection Musically, the group was directed by Dennis Caiazza with Mike Ciminelli choosing the songs. Sun's unique approach to its musical style was to find spiritual meaning in the popular songs of the day as well as traditional melodies and apply them to worship. Accompaniment for the singers came from guitar, bass, mandolin, harmonica, drums, flute, tambourine, and bells. Our practice sessions in the church every Monday evening allowed us to perfect our popular combination of joy and reverence through song. This inspiring presentation of meaningful music, enthusiastic young people, and dedication helped make the weekly 9:30 a.m. Sunday mass by far the best attended service of the week at St. Augustine's.

In addition to the weekly mass, Sun's community activities extended our Christian ministry beyond the boundaries of the parish. With concerts—sometimes several a week—at nursing homes and other settings throughout the Monroe County area, we were able to bring happiness through music to thousands of people. This dedication to the uplifting and entertaining of others was as much a part of Sun as our participation in the liturgy. One of our most popular concerts was at the Newark Developmental Center—we visited our friends there several times a year—where handicapped adults and children not only enjoyed listening to Sun, but were often invited to join the group in song. These concerts were truly inspirational, so much so that Sun was invited back often, even long after the group had disbanded!

A high point in the history of the group was the recording of our album in 1973. The album was entitled, simply, Sun. Produced by Lifetime Recordings, the album included 13 of our most popular songs. Funds for the production were advanced by the parish and all the profits were used to pay back the parish and support St. Augustine's school. With its combination of great music and an eye-catching cover design by Susan Imperial, the album was an immediate success. Recorded on the altar of St. Augustine's, it faithfully reproduced the sound and emotion of a Sun mass, which undoubtedly contributed to its popularity with buyers in and outside the parish.

Today, many members of the parish look fondly on their memory of the folk group. [During a period of turmoil, Sun encouraged many kids to stay involved in their church and spend their time helping others. Through our music, joy, and enthusiasm, and by the legacy of our record, we helped make sure the "Sun" would always shine at St. Augustine's.]