

Experiencing Joy In Serving the Sick and Dying



Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States

Summer 2021

Network

*One Heart.
One Hope.
One Mission.*

Experiencing Joy in Serving the Sick and Dying

(L) Sister Mary Hunter, SND



Sister Mary Hunter, SND, finds joy in serving as a pastoral minister at St. Joseph Senior Living in Louisville, Ohio, where she has been missioned for the past 15 years. “Each day, I would pray, ‘Jesus, just help me to get to someone who needs a spot of joy today.’”

According to Susan Strutner, CEO of St. Joseph Senior Living, “Sister Mary is an empathetic listener, and her approach to pastoral care is one of compassion. She has regular visits with residents

and provides support. Sister Mary likes a good joke and to see the residents smile.”

Prior to her role in pastoral ministry, Sister Mary served as a teacher for 39 years. She enrolled in the Clinical Pastoral Education CPE program at Cleveland Clinic Akron General Hospital which trains spiritual caregivers to work in hospitals and other healthcare institutions. “Of course, everything is different now with the coronavirus,” Sister Mary explains of her role at St. Joseph Senior Living. “Typically, I would visit each

resident at least once a month. I would talk and encourage them, pray with them, and give Communion to those who are Catholic. I also visit people who are dying. It is a privilege just to be with those at the end of their lives and show them how much you care.” Sister Mary states, “Currently, with the pandemic, it has been hard. We just had 10 people die, and I was not allowed into the nursing home.”

Sister Helen Burdenski, SND, works as a spiritual care volunteer at Hospice of the Western Reserve (HWR) in Cleveland. “My objective as a spiritual care volunteer is to provide a compassionate presence to the dying person as well as to the family and friends of that person. This involves taking cues from the patient and meeting them where they are.”

As a Spiritual Care Team member at Hospice of the Western Reserve, Sister Helen often reads to or prays with patients and provides companionship and support to patients and their families. “I enjoy listening to patients talk about their family, hopes and dreams,” she describes. “Other job responsibilities as a spiritual care team member include documenting each patient visit within 24 hours of the visit, demonstrating the ability not to impose my own beliefs and values on the patient or their family members, participating in at least two continuing education units offered by HWR each calendar year, observing appropriate boundaries when interacting with patients and families, knowing and following all HIPAA regulations, and more.”

“I enjoy the one-on-one time that I am privileged to share with patients and their families, as well as the interaction with other members of the Hospice of the Western Reserve staff,” states Sister Helen. “The HWR staff are wonderful people – very caring, dedicated, highly competent – and they treat every person with dignity and respect.”

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Send correspondence to:

Network

Sisters of Notre Dame

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www.sndusa.org

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On the cover: Sister Kendra Bottoms, SND, serves as the Director of Pastoral Care at St. John Medical Center in Westlake.

Sister Helen Burdenski, SND



“The HWR staff are wonderful people – very caring, dedicated, highly competent – and they treat every person with dignity and respect.”

— Sister Helen Burdenski, SND

(L-R) Sisters Kay O’Malley and Lenette Marcello at Notre Dame Village.





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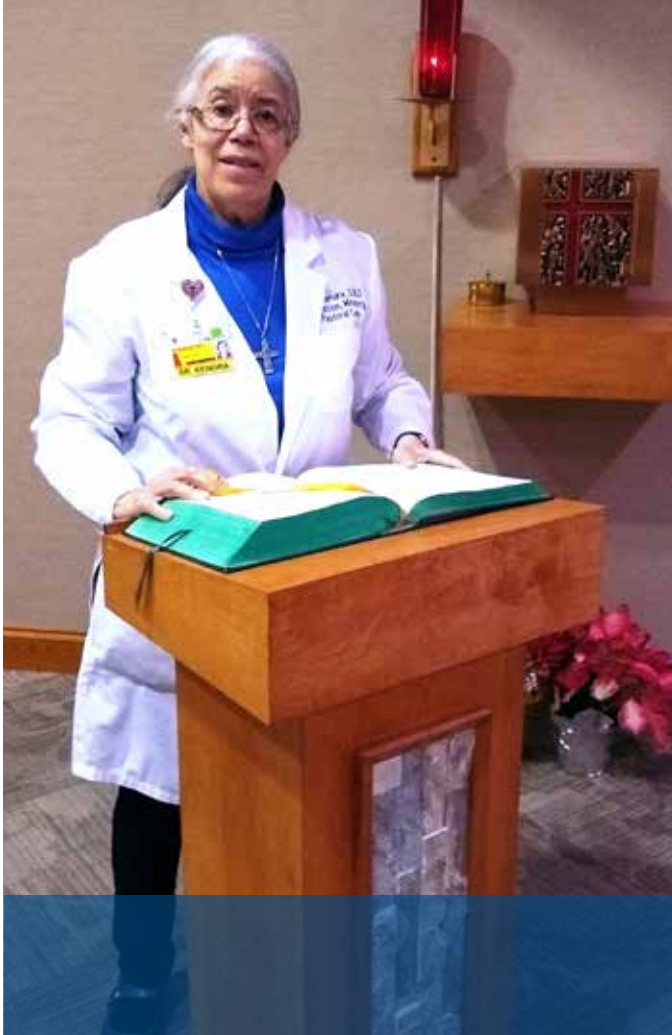
Prior to this ministry, Sister Helen taught high school for 11 years, and then at Notre Dame College for 38 years. “These years in the educational field strengthened my communication skills; enabled me to feel comfortable with people of all backgrounds, beliefs and values; gave me the ability to stay calm in emergency situations; taught me confidence in handling challenges; and, most importantly, showed me the precious value of each person and the absolute need to treat them with respect, love, and sensitivity to their unique needs. It is amazing to discover how many people I meet in ministering with patients remember me from my teaching days. The stories they share of those years bring joy and often laughter to the patients and their families.”

“Ministering as a spiritual care volunteer at Hospice of the Western Reserve is a perfect way to share God’s goodness and provident care with others. The job description itself encourages and actually demands that I do just that,” exclaims Sister Helen. “When I walk into a patient’s room, I am mindful that my sole responsibility is to show God’s goodness and loving

care to that patient and the family members who are present. Caring for someone at the end of life is not only an honor and a precious privilege, but it is also an opportunity to witness lives well lived and the wisdom that usually comes with the ending days of life’s journey. No book ever written comes anywhere near the value of lessons I’ve learned at the bedside of dying persons.”

Sister Helen offers this advice to someone nearing the end of life’s journey: “Slow down, listen to the voice within, express gratitude for all the gifts one has received, ask forgiveness for times you stumbled, and relax in the love of God, family and friends.”

“When caring for a loved one who is dying, the most important thing is to spend time with them – just be there with them rather than simply doing things for them. And talk to them. Usually, a person can hear right up to their last breath even if they are not responding. If possible, find their favorite kind of music and play it softly at their bedside,” Sister Helen suggests.



“God allows me to reach back into my own life history and find something which reflects what the person is experiencing.”

— Sister Kendra Bottoms, SND

Sister Kendra Bottoms, SND, has served as a hospital chaplain at St. John Medical Center in Westlake since 2005. “During 2004-2005 I was a resident chaplain at St. Vincent Charity Hospital,” she says. “Prior to serving as a hospital chaplain, I taught high school Biology, French and religion for 30 years.”

Sister Kendra says, “When I first started working at St. John Medical Center, I was responsible for visiting each patient at least once, offering to call their pastor, seeing if they wanted communion, helping them finalize Advance Directives if they asked for help, and morning prayer over the hospital PA. I received permission to sing these prayers. After some time, I was moved to the position of Director of Pastoral Care and became responsible for scheduling staff, Masses, religious events, making sure there were crosses in every room in the hospital, visiting patients in the emergency room if someone needed a pastoral care visit, prayers before meetings which I attended, and making sure we stick to the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care.”

Sister Kendra states, “I did not decide on this line of work as part of my religious vocation. As everything in my life, God did it.” She also shares that a beloved brother died of liver cancer when he was only 40. “This totally broke my heart. I was involved in the Diocesan Black Catholic Advisory Board, and I met an African brother who suggested I try Chaplaincy. I remember stating I did not do hospitals, death or dying, but I did do people, so I would try. I did and here I am many, many years later. One of the most rewarding parts of this ministry is being called to someone’s room or accidentally going into a patient’s room and seeing that God speaks. God allows me to reach back into my own life history and find something which reflects what the person is experiencing.”

Sister Kendra adds, “I feel this work enables me to demonstrate the charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame. I love people, and I know how important it is to be cherished.” †

A Lasting Tribute

May our deceased sisters rejoice in God's everlasting love.



SISTER MARY ROMAN

September 16, 1924 - January 13, 2021

Born to Roman and Christine (Boylan) Ress, Agnes and her three brothers grew up in a closely-knit family, centered in home, faith, and their beloved St. Mary Church in Massillon. In 1944, she entered the Sisters of Notre Dame as a postulant. At investment, she received the name Sister Mary Roman.

Sister ministered as an elementary and secondary school teacher before beginning nursing studies. She graduated from St. Alexis School of Nursing in Cleveland (1954) and earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in nursing (1964, 1966) from St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1986 Sister Mary

Roman completed requirements for a doctoral degree in nursing education from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She was an instructor at St. Alexis School of Nursing, St. Michael School of Nursing in Toronto, Canada and at Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University. She established the nursing program at George Brown College (Toronto). For more than 30 years, she served as coordinator and consultant for the health needs of the sisters. She also served on disaster response teams for the Red Cross.

With great awareness of the poor, Sister joined with two colleagues at Geauga Hospital, Dr. Arturo Dimaculangan and Susan Juhasz, to establish the Good Tidings Choir in 1989. Annual concerts benefit the Geauga County Hunger Task Force.



SISTER MARY ALICE

June 20, 1944 - March 24, 2021

Alice was the third of four children born to Vincent and Stella (Jursinovic) Dugar in East Cleveland, Ohio. She attended Notre Dame Academy, Cleveland, as an aspirant, and entered the novitiate on February 2, 1962.

She earned a B.S. degree from Notre Dame College, South Euclid, Ohio in 1967 and taught high school math and science for 23 years in Ohio at Regina High School; Notre Dame Academy/Notre Dame Cathedral Latin School, Chardon; and at Notre Dame Academy, Middleburg, VA. In 1985 she earned a M. Ed. degree from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

Sister Alice ministered as a chemistry tutor and mentor to college students with diverse ethnic, cultural, racial and religious backgrounds. She served those seeking careers in health-related fields at Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland, and supervised student teachers and managed the Chemistry Department laboratory at Notre Dame College, South Euclid.

Sister Alice was a dedicated member of the SND Peace & Justice Committee since its founding in 1980, and worked with quiet determination to teach and practice good stewardship of the earth and all its resources.



SISTER HEDY MARIE

July 23, 1932 - December 27, 2020

Sister Hedy Marie Olesky owed her life to the flu pandemic of 1918. Her parents, Charles Olesky and Nellie Dominikowski Kowalski, lost their spouses during that epidemic. After the pandemic ended, they met and married, blending their five children into a family. Over the years, eight more children were born; Hedy

was the second youngest. She entered Notre Dame as a postulant on February 2, 1951. At investment, she received the name Sister Mary Claudia.

Sister began her career as a primary grade teacher. In 1966 she earned a bachelor's degree in education from St. John College in Cleveland. An excellent, creative teacher, she was frequently called upon to mentor beginning teachers, guiding and encouraging them to be the best.

In June of 1982, due to health issues and the need to help care for her mother and siblings, she requested a dispensation from her vows.

Hedy continued to teach the primary grades. In 1991 she was asked to assume the role of Director of Religious Education. She resumed her studies, earning a Master of Pastoral Studies degree from Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana. During these years, Hedy began to visit and volunteer in the Health Care Center in Chardon. She renewed acquaintances and became interested in the Associate relationship, making her Associate Covenant in 2001. Her love for the sisters and the congregation prompted her to seek readmission to the Sisters of Notre Dame in 2006. As a pastoral care volunteer, she ministered to the sisters in the Health Care Center.

BACK TO BASICS!

Sisters of Notre Dame

BBQ 2021
& BOUTIQUE

Sunday, September 26

12 noon - 5 pm

Chicken Dinner

\$15



Take out available.

Expanded indoor seating.

All meals will be boxed.

Look for more info in July on our website:

www.sndusa.org/bbq

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin gymnasium

On the Notre Dame Center campus

13000 Auburn Rd., Chardon (South of Mayfield Rd.)

Handicapped accessible

Girls' Night Out 2021

When: October 22 - 6:30 to 10:00 pm

Where: The Jake at Pizzazz in University Heights

Cost: \$25 includes food, gratuity, tax & soft drinks

Cash Bar

Reservations Due October 8, 2021

Send checks made payable to Regina Alumnae Association, 9918 Johnnycake Ridge Rd., Mentor, Ohio 44060

Pizzazz follows all CDC rules. With social distancing, capacity is 45, but if the rules change, may go to 65.

Regina Alumnae Retreat 2022

When: February 25 – 27, 2022

Where: Bethany Retreat Center at Notre Dame Center

Cost: \$55 plus a "good will" offering.

Sr. Melannie Svoboda '62 will be retreat director.

To learn more about her, visit www.sndusa.org

and visit her blog titled **Sunflower Seeds**.

Reservations are due February 11, 2022.

More information will be following.

If you have moved, gotten married, or changed your email or phone numbers in the last 10 years, PLEASE let us know.

2021 Reunions Class of 1960

Our 60th class reunion, one year late, may occur in the fall. Look for more information in the next issue of Network or on emails. - Sandy Novak Gecsi

Class of 1961

The Class of 61 reunion will be changed to a date later in the summer. Questions: Beth Ulery Parnin at funwithfit@sbcglobal.com.

Class of 1966

Regina High School Class of 1966 Virtual Reunion Memoir Project

Please tell us where you are today and how you got there. **Our goal is to collect updates on the lives of everyone in the Class of '66 by May 15.** Please participate and encourage your old friends to do the same.

You can send us as much—or as little—as you wish to share in whatever form works for you: --**Your story:** a paragraph; a list of lessons learned; an autobiographical essay (Word doc)—long or short, it's up to you; or just **email a greeting** to the class—**Your story in pictures:** a photo or photos of yourself, your family, your handiwork, a painting, a garden, a favorite place, a beloved pet (Please provide a list of brief captions). More than 30 of our classmates are deceased. If you have a **favorite memory or anecdote of a departed friend**, please send it along. The collection of stories, memories, photos, etc., will be assembled as a composite PDF and sent to everyone who wants a copy.

Deadline: MAY 15

**Contact: Mary Maher, Project Co-Editor | mmaher2049@aol.com
1838 Fendall Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22903 | 434.825.4473
FB group: [facebook.com/groups/reginahighschoolclassof66/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/reginahighschoolclassof66/)**

Class of 1970

50th + 1 Reunion Save-The-Date

Weekend of October 9 & 10th, 2021 - 2 events for double the fun!

Saturday, October 9th at Pinstripes, 111 Park Ave., Beachwood, Ohio
Cocktails 5 pm, Dinner 7 pm (Includes drink tickets for wine and a cash bar)

Sunday, October 10th. Potluck Picnic Brunch at Holbrook Hollows Park, 7250 Country Lane, Chagrin Falls (time t/b/d)

Cost: Approximately \$100 - \$125* per person for both. Includes food & beverage, gratuity, tax, decorations, supplies, misc. (More details including cost per event will follow soon. Final cost will be dependent on how many of you RSVP before May 1) FB page: [Regina@50](https://www.facebook.com/Regina@50).

Please forward \$25 deposit to Annie Robare via Venmo (@Annie-Robare) or mail a check to Annie, 1401 Summit Drive, Mayfield OH 44124

**We want the reunion to be as affordable as possible for all who want to attend. A private Angel Fund was established to help reduce the cost for those for whom Covid (or any other life circumstances) has been financially draining. If you're interested in receiving financial help or pitching in extra, please let Annie know. All will be done anonymously.*

Class of 1971

October 22 at Mayfield Country Club. Cocktails & dinner - *Ladies only.* Invitation to follow. Questions contact Jody Hummer Salata at jodysalata@sbcglobal.net. Use Regina in the subject line when emailing.

Class of 1975

Save-the-Date and spread the word... Reunion, Saturday, October 23, 2021 at The Firehouse Grill & Pub, Willoughby Hills. Details to follow this summer. Check out the **Regina High School Class of '75** Facebook page. (to get onto the page, send a request to join.) Questions can email Claudialund9@gmail.com. The reunion committee Pam Koeth, Mary Kay Conway, Lynn Reardon Fistek, JoAnn Balmat Bacnik, Mary Nitsche Ilc, and Claudia Wahl Lund.

Class of 1976

Come celebrate and reminisce the Class of '76 reunion at **Girls Night Out** at Pizzazz on October 22. Check the details above.

Class of 1980

Because of the pandemic, we are waiting to make plans for our reunion. Please contact Pam Bell Huth with suggestions and your information at bellhuth@yahoo.com.

Class of 1981

Holbrook Hollow Lodge on Sunday, September 26 | 1 - 5 pm
\$45 for food and drink. The invitation can be found on the Facebook Page Regina High School Class of 81 rhs81alum@gmail.com

Class of 1996

25 year reunion.

Saturday, August 7th at Firehouse Grille & Pub from 6-11 pm
located at 2768 Stark Drive Willoughby Hills, Ohio.
Cash bar and menu options available.
For any questions or to RSVP, email Joy Carey Parker reginahighschoolco1996@gmail.com

Class of 2001

If you are interested in a reunion, please contact ReginaHS2001@gmail.com with suggestions and your information.

Class of 2010

Send suggestions for a reunion date and information to RHSroyals2010@gmail.com