

CROSSROADS



WINTER 2021



Meet the Toledo Region Advancement Team. These hardworking individuals help to nurture relationships all year round.



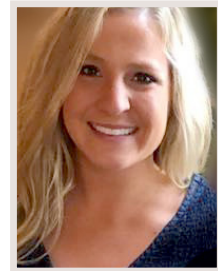
SR. MARY CAROL GREGORY, SND
Advancement Team Advisor

I am a lifelong Toledoan and I have been privileged to serve in Toledo for many years. My ministries have been primarily in the area of education and administration as an elementary, secondary and college teacher, Principal and President of Notre Dame Academy, Director of Central City Ministries of Toledo (CCMT), and Assistant Provincial and Councilor. Presently, I am delighted to be the Team Advisor and to work closely with a very dedicated and committed Advancement Team. Throughout these years, God has directed my life and I thank God for this special time to join you, our donors, to further the mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame.



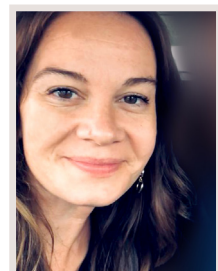
SR. SALLY MARIE BOHNETT, SND
Coordinator of Advancement/
Grant Writing

After graduating from college and working almost four years in a research lab, the tug in my heart to enter a religious community guided me to the Sisters of Notre Dame. The summer of 2020 marked my 40th year as a sister! Most of those years were spent in education, teaching in middle school or high school followed by campus ministry at the college level. Now God has led me to work with a great team in Advancement. What a joy it is to share with our donors our mission of making God's love present in the world through our service.



ASHLEY HATCH
Coordinator of Donor Relations

Four years ago, I began working for the Sisters of Notre Dame as the Communications/Advancement Coordinator. I am now the Donor Relations Coordinator. I have always enjoyed meeting our Toledo donors and learning the history behind their giving. Over my years working for the Sisters, I have made many lasting relationships with our donors and the SND community. I was taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame when I was in grade school and I find joy to now be working beside them.



ERICA TYBURSKI
Advancement & Communications Coordinator

I began working with the Sisters of Notre Dame in 2018 and I have enjoyed every minute of it! My role with the Sisters is the Advancement and Communications Coordinator. In this role I have the pleasure of compiling internal and external communication for our donors and extending our content across a wide spectrum of social media platforms. It is truly an honor to work alongside these empowering women.

The experience of God's goodness

Sr. Joanne Mary Frania, SND



Are you at a crossroads in your life, trying to discern where God is leading you? Do you feel the need to go deeper in your spiritual search, knowing there is something more to which God is calling you? Are you experiencing some confusion in your life in view of some values with which you can no longer identify? Do you feel drawn to something that you are unable to clarify? Is God tugging at your soul in ways you find it difficult to understand?

If any one of those questions has your name written all over it, you may want to pursue seeking out someone who can

companion you and assist in your search.

Spiritual direction, a sacred call, has been an ancient and tried service promoted and offered by spiritual giants like St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis of Assisi, St. John of the Cross, Thomas Merton, to name a few. Over the years many centers of spirituality have offered classes training individuals to accompany spiritual seekers on their journey.

So what is spiritual direction? It is an interpersonal relationship in which someone listens deeply and compassionately and encourages you to reflect on your life in the light of the Gospel and the workings of the Holy Spirit. Through this process, you are encouraged to become more aware of God's presence and love for you. This does not assume spiritual preoccupation, but, upon some reflection, becoming more aware of inner tugs or responses in day-to-day life.

The spiritual director does not solve problems or act as a therapist but can be compared to a midwife who pays attention to your experience and helps you see how God is an integral part of it. In other words, tending the holy within a person is of utmost importance and is a confidential and reverential in approach. God touches each person uniquely, freeing them to share openly and honestly.



Over time, the person in spiritual direction begins to treasure where God is leading her/him and experiences God's presence and guidance in new and exciting ways, instilling greater confidence and freedom of spirit.

The charism of the Sisters of Notre Dame is the experience of God's goodness and provident care in one's life. Therefore, the ministry of spiritual direction finds deep roots in our vocational call. We have a number of available trained spiritual directors so, if you feel the nudge to contact one in your area, check the list on LialRenewalCenter.org. You can then make an appointment and begin meeting once every 4-6 weeks.

God touches each person uniquely, freeing them to share openly and honestly.

Being grounded in who we are before God is a great help in living life's challenges, joys and sufferings and in knowing that God's presence and guidance is as certain as the dawn. The following reflections highlight how two individuals incorporate spiritual direction in their lives and the difference it has made.

Sr. Joanne Mary Frania was trained in spiritual direction and retreat ministry at the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville, PA, and has served in that ministry for 22 years. Prior to that she ministered as a high school teacher, formation director and in province leadership.

AN INTERACTION WITH GOD

Showing me the way

Rev. Dr. Ann Marie Montgomery
Presbyterian Pastor



My spiritual journey has been marked with a plethora of people who showed me the way, who walked part of the journey with me and who enriched my life with their gifts and encouragement and example. God has used authors, teachers, preachers, fellow Christians, family, friends, the Word to help me grow in my faith. I am a visual learner and so the created world, images and art have also taught me, spoken to me.

My paternal grandmother was a woman of great faith who happened to be a Catholic. She modeled for me a life of prayer and trust in God. She taught me many different spiritual practices,

without necessarily teaching me what they were called. She was a huge influence on my spiritual formation.

As a young adult, raising a family of my own, I found myself struggling with my faith. My best friend from high school was killed by a drunk driver and a few years later my mother died with breast cancer. I went to talk with a pastoral counselor, and he was wonderful. As we were completing our time together, he suggested I might want to meet with a spiritual director moving forward. I wasn't sure what that might mean or what it might entail. So, of course, I talked with grandma. She said that the Catholic Church had a long tradition of having spiritual directors. And so, it happened that I began to meet with Sister Mary in Nashville, Tennessee in the 1980's which began a lifetime practice of meeting with spiritual directors. I don't remember what order Sister Mary belonged to; I didn't know enough to even ask. But I know she was a holy companion on my way.

That's how God has continually worked in my life, leading, guiding, speaking, providing what I need many times before I even know I need it! God brings the people into my life that I need for a season or an event.

When I moved to Ohio eight years ago, just like finding a new doctor and dentist and hairdresser, I had to find a new spiritual director. Our Presbytery has yearly retreats at Lial Renewal Center in Whitehouse, Ohio.

So, I asked there about spiritual directors and began meeting with Sister Mary Dean Pfahler. Before she left for South Carolina she mentioned that new groups were forming to do the 19th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. That is where I met my current Spiritual Director, Sister Joanne Mary Frania, and had an amazing year of growing in my faith.

Participating in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius challenged me, stretched me, fed me and blessed me. My daily prayer life was enriched, my interaction with God's Word was deepened and I made so many connections in seeing the holy in my daily walk. There was laughter and there were tears as I participated in this months-long practice. I thought we would never get past looking at and talking about sin! But in the end, grace had the last word!

God has provided and that has been true in my being led to the Sisters of Notre Dame.

I need creative outlets for connecting my faith and life. Sister Joanne encouraged me to bring my poems and songs, my artwork, and various expressions of my faith. Over and over again in my life God has been faithful. God has provided and that has been true in my being led to SND!

I give thanks for the Sisters of Notre Dame, for your work and witness, for your willingness to welcome ecumenical connections within Christ's Body and for offering such a variety of ministries that bless the lives of others – like me!

Listening to the whispers of wisdom

Janet Hoey Robinson, PhD, RN
Nurse, Educator, Administrator



Spirituality is the reflective study, discernment, and appreciation of one's relationship with God Who calls us to ministry. In a pandemic world of complexity and confusion, deepening one's own self-awareness of their spirituality is critically beneficial. I grew up in a family of seven where the importance of spirituality was highly valued. We all went through at least twelve years of Catholic education. Our college choices, careers and long-term life commitments continue to reflect our values. My dad went to Mass every morning and my sister entered

a contemplative religious order 65+ years ago. I spent a great deal of time at convents and particularly enjoyed growing up at retreat houses. My husband and I even got married in a convent chapel 50 years ago because of visiting protocols for my sister during those years.

Lial Renewal Center is a holy place where individuals or groups come together for a retreat or renewal. I have been involved at Lial in both silent retreats and spiritual direction. Adults come to the quiet to replenish heart and soul in this holy space. Gifts from nature surround them. On a silent retreat, the directee meets daily with a spiritual director and shares their journey in whatever way is meaningful for them. Leaving home, jobs and family is often refreshing and relaxing in the quiet atmosphere that facilitates listening to the whispers of wisdom.

As a spiritual director, I try to be present to God and the directee with my whole heart, mind and soul, as directed in the gospels. For someone coming for spiritual direction, the director and directee meet regularly (often monthly). While I have met with sisters, laity, ordained priests and ministers and those with a variety of beliefs, I am always profoundly touched by their presence and pray with and for them. It is a wonderful privilege to share another's journey. There is a strong sense of the presence of God as the real director. I learned and have grown deeper in my own faith as I have ministered to others.

I sit alone before the Blessed Sacrament and renew and edit my thoughts. This practice has led me into a rich ministry of reaching out and listening to others.

The Sisters of Notre Dame have had a direct influence on my spiritual journey as spiritual director. As I prepared to decrease my full-time roles as an academician and administrator, I searched for a program to guide me into the role of a spiritual director. The Dominican Center at Marywood's three-year Spiritual Formation Program co-led by Sr. Joanne Mary Frania SND was a good fit for me. The sharing of reflective study with an emphasis on contemplative prayer was a treasure and will last a lifetime. The program invited us to develop our own personal Rule of Life to guide our practice of spirituality. I wrote my first one-page "rule" on Holy Thursday 2009. Every Holy Thursday since then, I sit alone before the Blessed Sacrament and renew and edit my thoughts. This practice has led me into a rich ministry of reaching out and listening to others. In conclusion, let us all join with the Sisters of Notre Dame to answer our own call to be committed to a contemplative, courageous, compassionate, covenantal relationship with our God.

Janet Hoey Robinson, PhD, RN, was a nurse, educator, and administrator at local universities. She taught a variety of nursing courses including ethics and diversity. She was active in the community in Catholic education, parenting and healthcare organizations. She helped facilitate the development of a community faith-based health care clinic and is currently an active board member. In addition to her passion for spirituality, her interests include grief and loss, hospice care and needs of the elderly. She has been married for 50 years and treasured parenting her three sons who are now fathers themselves. Her role as a spiritual director has been enhanced by the integration of her skills and experiences.

A sacred place to seek, renew and gather



EXPERIENCE LIAL

Lial Renewal Center is a welcoming, peaceful environment for personal or group prayer and reflection against the backdrop of nature's changing seasons. The center is located on 94 wooded acres in the beautiful Oak Openings region of Northwest Ohio. Experience God's goodness and provident care as you come for a retreat, group gathering or professional development.

- Four meeting rooms of various sizes with WIFI
- Chapel for personal and group prayer
- Dining room and lakeview multi-purpose room with adjacent kitchens
- Individual and double guestrooms, accommodates 26-32 guests, 14 feature private baths
- Handicap accessible guestrooms and meeting rooms
- Seven-acre lake, wooded walking trails and three decks
- Easy access from the Greater Toledo area and Toledo Express Airport

RETREATS

A Private Retreat allows a person time and space for deeper and quieter prayer in a beautiful, natural setting. This time alone with God may be one or more days.

DIRECTED RETREAT

A Directed Retreat provides quiet space for prayer, as well as meeting each day with a spiritual director. This retreat may extend over a weekend or several days a week.

GUIDED RETREATS

A Guided Retreat gathers individuals for a daily presentation and other group reflections.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Spiritual Direction encourages the seeker to become keenly aware of how God is present and at work in the person's life. Spiritual Directors are available to listen with you to the Holy Spirit, ask reflective questions, point out resources, assist with roadblocks and celebrate breakthroughs.

FOR RESERVATIONS OR MORE INFORMATION CALL 419.877.0432

LENTEN RETREAT



Making a difference

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE AROUND YOU?

This weekend online Lenten retreat for young adults, inspired by *Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life* by well-known author Joyce Rupp, will help find a way of being a compassionate presence that can help make a difference.

Through presentations, small group sharing, communal prayer, meditation and quiet times, Sister Mary Dean Pfahler, SND, a certified Boundless Compassion facilitator, invites young adult participants to open their hearts to themselves, to one another, to all living beings and to the earth!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

To register or more information contact Sr. Jenny Zimmerman at vocations@snd.org.

STORYTELLING

Storytelling for the soul

by Sheila Otto

MARCH 20, 2021
1PM-3PM

This virtual offering confirms that all things are possible. Brew up some strong coffee, pick out a sweet from the tray and sit with us at Lalla's Coffee Shop for a meeting of minds and souls across the ages and traditions. Lalla was a 14th century Kashmiri poet who is the hostess for the gathering. She usually invites a very diverse group - poets, preachers, troubadours and storytellers from across time to share their wisdom. Story is at the heart of many wisdom traditions. You will be transported on Sheila Otto's magic carpet. You never know who will show up!

Register for the event at:
LilaRenewalCenter.org

Donations are appreciated.

Sheila is a storyteller with a special interest in wisdom stories from around the world. Her underlying conviction is that play and pray are but one letter apart, so anytime she is telling stories there will be plenty of interaction, fun and even some learning.



A WORD FROM OUR DONORS

“The Sisters have been a part of my life since first grade and I appreciate all they have done in Monroeville, Ohio and wherever they are. So, I want to help them with furthering their mission.”

MRS. EVELYN RUFFING
MONROEVILLE, OHIO



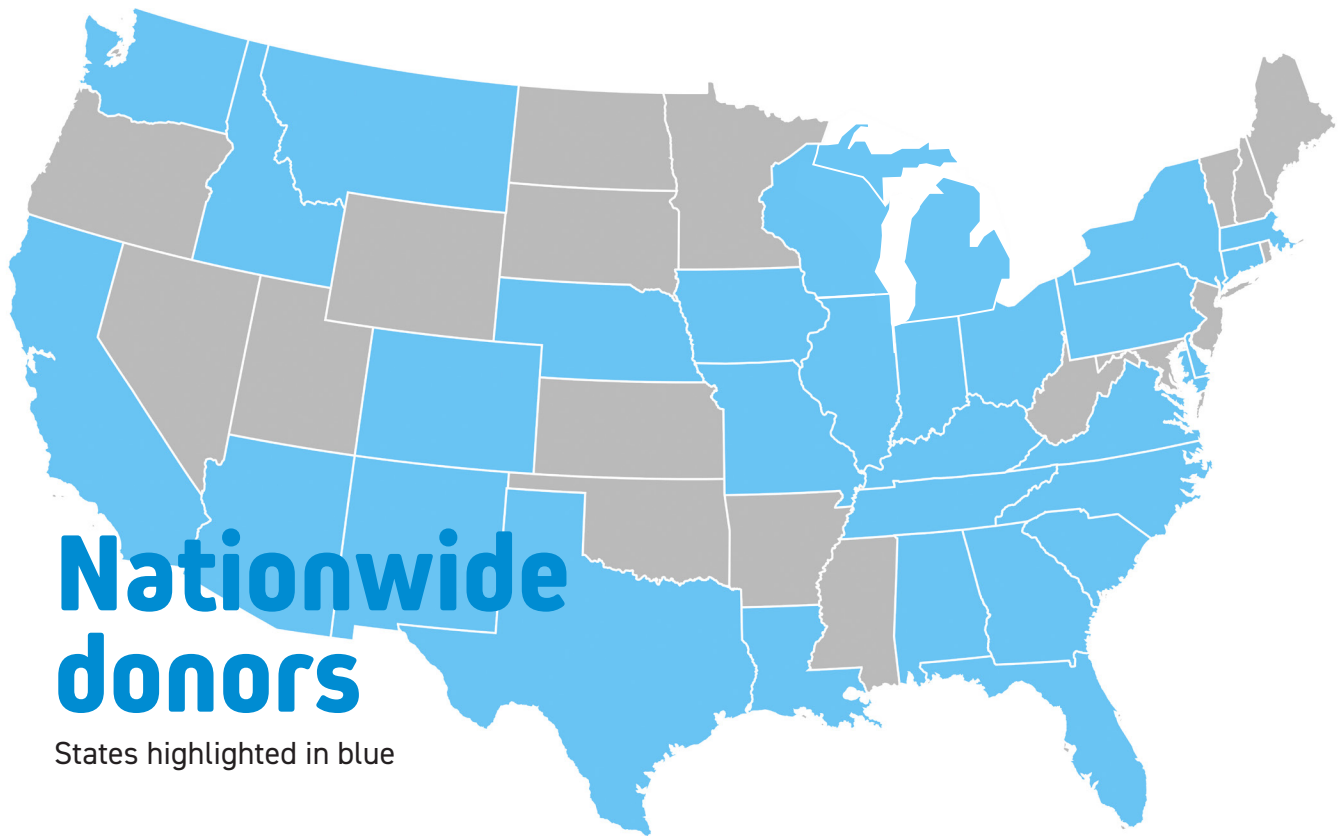
“The journey of strengthening the faith in my life led me to find the Sisters of Notre Dame in Toledo. I knew I needed to give back for all that God has blessed me with. They are good women doing good things and who spread God’s word. I support them in any way I can.”

ANDRES OCHOA
OREGON, OHIO

“The Sisters love what they’re doing and that was always evident to us and our children.”

BOB SCHULTE
DELPHOS, OHIO

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS! WE KEEP YOU IN OUR DAILY PRAYERS.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Sister Mary Joseleen Hemker

January 29, 1925 - December 15, 2020

Sister was 95 years old and in her 75th year of Religious Profession.

Sister Mary Joseleen lovingly dedicated 39 1/2 years as an Adoration Sister at the Motherhouse in Rome, Italy.

She returned to Toledo in December 2000. As she prayed daily for each of us, our congregation, and our world needs, we offer our prayers for her. May she be embraced in the loving arms of her Beloved.