



SND USA

SUMMER 2022

Vocation & Young Adult Ministry



ALSO INSIDE:

JOY Attracts Young Woman to SNDs

Young Adults Describe Personal Faith Journey

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l-r: Sister Rebekah Kennedy, *Thousand Oaks, CA*; Sister Shauna Bankemper, *Covington, KY*; Sister Regina Fisher, *Toledo, OH*; Sister Margaret Gorman, *Chardon, OH*; Sister Patricia Garrahan, *Chardon, OH*



LETTER FROM **SND USA PROVINCIAL TEAM**

Dear Friends,

We hope that summer finds you and your loved ones filled with hope. Amid the critical issues facing our world, we need more than ever to draw on sources of hope, especially for our young people.

This issue of *SND USA* magazine highlights our third national priority as Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States – Vocation & Young Adult Ministry. Current research shows that many Catholic young adults live their faith outside of the parish, especially in small faith-related groups. These are the young people that Sisters Ruth Lubbers, Valerie Roxburgh, Kelley Rush and Jennifer Zimmerman target through their ministry. They try to help young adults connect with God in new ways, and use the power of prayer and discernment to chart their path through life. Sister Val shares simple techniques for Prayerful Decision Making that can be applied to many life decisions or challenges.

You will also read about what draws young people today to religious life and hear from a young woman who has begun the formation process to join the SND congregation. We hope that the stories in this issue—and the young adults!—inspire you as much as they inspire us with hope for the future.

Thank you for your prayers and continued support of our ministries.

Gratefully,

The SND USA Provincial Team

Vocation & Young Adult Ministry



Sister Kelley Rush receives her ring from Sister Margaret Gorman, Provincial, signifying her perpetual profession of vows.

When the congregation unified its four provinces to become SND USA in 2020, the Sisters of Notre Dame identified three national mission priorities: Sponsored Education & Health Care Ministry; Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (or JPIC); and Vocation & Young Adult Ministry. In prioritizing Vocation & Young Adult Ministry, the sisters are acknowledging America's dramatic cultural shift from the past century and are implementing new, dynamic ways to successfully address the needs of today's young adults, including those who feel called to a religious vocation.



Sister Valerie Roxburgh (center) enjoys time with several young adults.

What are these changes? First, the rate of young people entering religious life today has leveled off. Second, many young adults are not—or are infrequently—attending church. A two-year national study published by Saint Mary's Press in 2018 suggests the Catholic Church needs to create a place where young people can freely wrestle with their questions about faith.

In response to these changes, the Sisters of Notre Dame are reaching out to young adults in new ways that will strengthen their faith and challenge young adults to follow Christ's example -- particularly by reaching out to the vulnerable and those in need. The sisters are also helping young adults make connections with other young adults, offering both space and opportunities to explore their direction in life, or as Pope Francis calls it, "accompaniment."

This article details why individuals are pursuing religious vocations today and how SNDs are ministering to young adults where they are —through the Vocation & Young Adult Ministry Team.

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or as Pope Francis calls it, "accompaniment."**

VOCATIONS: Entrance into Religious Life Today

According to a 2020 report by the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC), more than 3,500 women and men entered religious life in the United States from 2003 through 2018. On average, 200 people a year make perpetual profession, and approximately 400 begin the process of initial formation. (An individual must be 21 years of age and complete at least three years of temporary profession before making a perpetual or lasting commitment to religious life.) The rate of those entering religious life has remained consistent in the past decade which represents a leveling off from the decline witnessed at the end of the prior century.

Characteristics of these entrants typically include the following: young, culturally diverse, raised Catholic, and educated in Catholic schools. Most come from middle-class families and they considered religious life by the time they were 21. The average age of an entrant today is 28. Most perpetually professed members have at least a college degree and received support on their journey to enter religious life primarily from diocesan priests, religious friends, and parishioners. Family support grew stronger upon entrance. Most participated in “come and see” experiences before entering religious life.

Sister Jennifer Zimmerman, SND National Vocation Director, states “Women frequently contact us to talk about a call to religious life.” When asked about the decline in religious vocations in the United States she responds, “we do not have a vocation crisis in the U.S.; we have a prayer crisis. Young adults desire to grow in their relationship with God and deepen their prayer life. They also want to learn how to discern God’s will for their life, whether that is a call to marriage, religious life, the priesthood, or to remain single.”

“Most young women entering the Sisters of Notre Dame congregation are drawn to our charism, spirit, and community life,” says Sister Valerie Roxburgh with a broad smile. “The Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States are united in one heart, one hope, and one mission -- to proclaim God’s goodness and compassionate love for people of all faiths and cultures through a variety of ministries, both national and international, particularly serving those who are poor and marginalized.”

First-year novice with the Sisters of Notre Dame, Sister Kaitlin Marie Morse, says, “I was drawn by the love of the Lord for a life of service to others. I knew the Lord was asking me to follow Him as a vowed religious. I decided to enter the SND congregation because of the joy that I witnessed and experienced when I was with the community. The spirituality of the community, which focuses on the Trinity and the Incarnation, really struck me when I first learned about it. I felt my life and desires fit into the way of life of the sisters and their desires.”

“What attracted me to the Sisters of Notre Dame was their joy with each other, their joy with God, and their joy

in ministry. And whenever I spent time with them, I left feeling that joy myself,” recalls temporary professed Sister Nicole Varnerin.



Sister Nicole Varnerin.

“Most young women entering the Sisters of Notre Dame congregation are drawn to our charism, spirit, and community life.”

-Sister Valerie Roxburgh

Community Life

Like Sisters Kaitlin and Nicole, many new members are attracted to community life within a religious congregation. Praying together, celebrating religious holidays and feast days, and sharing meals are a part of community life, as is living simply in solidarity with and in service to the poor and marginalized.

Personal, private prayer characterizes the regular prayer life of people engaged in religious life today. Daily Mass, meditation-centered prayer, and communal prayer are also very important to those in religious life.

Today, slightly more than half of new entrants to religious life were engaged in some form of ministry on a full- or part-time basis before entering their religious community, whether that be campus ministry, young adult ministry, a Bible study group, music ministry, etc.

To learn more about
Vocation & Young
Adult ministry
activities, please visit
vocations.sndusa.org



Sister Jennifer Zimmerman leads a Zoom meeting with several young adults during the pandemic.

“The young adults we encounter deeply desire to grow in their understanding of faith and their relationship with God.”

-Sister Ruth Lubbers

Vocation & Young Adult Outreach

The Sisters of Notre Dame are reaching out to help young adults through the Vocation & Young Adult Ministry Team comprised of Sisters Ruth Lubbers, Valerie Roxburgh, Kelley Rush, and Jennifer Zimmerman. From the beginning, this team has made a concerted effort to engage all Sisters of Notre Dame throughout the United States in both their vocation and young adult outreach. The team distributed information packets to all sisters, which included the NRVC (National Religious Vocation Conference) booklet summarizing the 2020 NRVC study on newer members, reflection questions from the study, “50 Fun Facts” of the most interesting points of the study, and a flyer of upcoming SND Vocation & Young Adult Team events. They followed up with optional Zoom meetings with sisters in their local residences or individually.

“These meetings provided an opportunity to answer questions and receive ideas and input from the sisters. We are so grateful for the sisters who connected with us,” exclaims Sister Val. “Our monthly Vocation & Young Adult newsletter is another way we let the sisters and associates know what is happening and to ask for their help in promoting our events.”

In the summer of 2020, the SND USA Vocation & Young Adult Team offered a Virtual Summer Discernment Series for women seriously considering entering the Sisters of Notre Dame congregation. This six-week program enabled women to meet digitally with many sisters throughout the United States. Presentation topics included aspects of community life and ministries of the sisters.



Introducing the SND Vocation & Young Adult Team:
(back steps l-r) Sisters Kelley Rush and Jennifer Zimmerman,
(front steps l-r) Sisters Valerie Roxburgh and Ruth Lubbers.

Young Adult Ministry

While church attendance may be down, young adults throughout the United States still desire a close relationship with God through a more active understanding of faith through service to others.

To address those desires, the SND Vocation & Young Adult Team prepares a monthly e-blast newsletter that goes out to their many young adult contacts. Within the newsletter, there is always a prayer, an educational piece, and an invitation to join upcoming events. Although in-person service events were limited during the pandemic, young adults were recently invited to the Pay It Forward Service Day in April in Covington, KY. In addition, service programs are now being planned in Western Kentucky, New Orleans, and other areas around the country.

Specific SND Vocation & Young Adult Team goals include the following:

- mentoring young adults and inviting other sisters to develop such mentoring relationships
- inviting SND Associates to reach out to young adults
- continuing to reach out to young adults in whatever way helps them grow closer to God

Current statistics summarize the team's activities in 2021:

- 5,562 meaningful conversations
- 1,359 general vocation conversations
- 963 SND vocation conversations
- 3,119 young adults attending talks/retreats/ events and getting more involved in their faith

"The young adults we encounter deeply desire to grow in their understanding of faith and their relationship with God," Sister Ruth eagerly describes. "Their attendance at talks, faith-sharing, prayer experiences, or workshops demonstrates they are engaged and eager to explore elements of faith and their own development as persons of faith."

Adjusting Young Adult Outreach During the Pandemic

Well into the second year of the Covid 19 pandemic, SND USA Vocation & Young Adult Team strategies for outreach and events changed due to Covid-19.

"We needed to try new strategies due to in-person restrictions," explains Sister Jenny. "Rather than nurturing discussions and prayers around a table, we utilized Zoom for online meetings and discussions. The SND USA Vocation & Young Adult Team looked at creative ways to reach those searching for a greater faith connection or considering a religious vocation."

"Although the pandemic impacted our ministry and how we had to proceed with our outreach to young adults, it did not stop the work of God," Sister Kelley passionately adds. "Not only did the pandemic require us to make major adjustments in how we did things, but it also allowed us time to reflect on our priorities as a team and how we could help bring young adults closer to God in new and creative ways."

Sister Kelley says, "First and foremost, prayer is the primary focus of our Vocation & Young Adult ministry, and everything flows from there. After prayer and dialogue, we began utilizing social media more for reaching young adults and promoting offerings, which provided opportunities for them to deepen their relationship with God. By tapping into various social media channels, we were able to reach young people where they were in their lives."

During the pandemic Sisters Jen, Kelley, and Val participated in a four-week prayer experience based on the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. “Christus Ministries (a group that empowers young adults and parishes to grow spiritually, change lives, and transform communities) provided this online opportunity, called Breathing Gratitude,” Sister Kelley says. “Close to 100 participants and 20 facilitators took part in the experience. Using Zoom’s breakout room resource, 30-minute small-group conversations took place during the 90-minute prayer experience. Sister Val shared, “I facilitated one of the small groups, composed of six wonderful young women from Boise, Idaho; Houston, Texas; and Oakland and San Jose, California.” Sister Kelley added, “I am always in awe and wonder at how God works in and through the depth of sharing of the young adults we encounter.”

Sister Kelley Rush with young women attending a Caritas Retreat.



“Journeying with young adults, assisting them to grow in their relationship with God, and providing tools for life discernment is a joy.”

- Sister Valerie Roxburgh

During this time, Sister Val took part in a six-week retreat called, “Overwhelmed No More,” led by Becky Eldredge, an Ignatian-trained spiritual director, retreat facilitator, and writer from Baton Rouge, LA. “Small group conversations were an enriching part of this retreat. As we continue to discern ways to expand our online presence, this retreat was beneficial to experience firsthand how Becky created her online ministry retreat platform,” says Sister Val.


The SND USA Vocation & Young Adult Team chose not to rush into starting new online offerings because of the abundance of online spiritual resources begun during the pandemic. “In talking to young adults from various geographic regions, many expressed feeling overwhelmed by all the online options of late,” Sister Ruth says. “They were spending so much time online with school or their jobs while working from home that they did not have the time to participate in all the online events to which they were being invited.”

“We did, however, have a good response to our young adult book studies; we have sisters who are not part of the Vocation & Young Adult Team co-facilitating two of our current book studies,” describes Sister Ruth. “We have also offered online presentations with social justice themes. The JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) Office hosted a three-part series for young adults called ‘Rooting Out Racism’ that provided opportunity for rich conversation and sharing after the presentations.”

All four Vocation & Young Adult Team members see the positive outcomes that emerged from the pandemic. “We were able to complete projects that streamlined our internal operations, as well as discovering new approaches in reaching out to young adults, particularly those considering a religious vocation,” says Sister Val.

The Vocation & Young Adult Team is slowly moving back to in-person events while continuing online events. They offered young adult women’s retreats in Thousand Oaks, CA in August 2021, and in September 2021 at Lial Renewal Center in Whitehouse, OH. A young adult silent retreat was also held in March 2022 at St. Joseph Heights in Covington, KY.

Conclusion

“Our Vocation & Young Adult Team is enthusiastic and grateful to be involved in this grace-filled ministry,” Sister Val states. “Journeying with young adults, assisting them to grow in their relationship with God, and providing tools for life discernment is a joy. Young adults need people in their lives who are present to them and will listen to them rather than talk at them. They need people who will offer prayerful support and be a witness of God’s love, light, and peace. Young adults give our team tremendous hope for our Church and for our world.” 



Joy

Attracts Young Woman to Enter SND Congregation

“I decided to enter the Sisters of Notre Dame because of the joy I witnessed and experienced when I was with the community,” smiles Sister Kaitlin Morse. The 28-year-old novice is currently engaged in a period of training and preparation, prior to making her first profession of vows in the religious congregation.

“I have come to learn that this joy comes from a mix of prayer, ministry, and community, all of which the SNDs do well,” Sister Kaitlin considers. “I felt the most peace and joy I had ever felt in my life. I knew at that time I made the right decision.”


Sisters of Notre Dame

Be bold and
take real, concrete
steps toward
discerning and
living the life.”

– Sister Kaitlin Morse



Sister Kaitlin earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio and a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington.

“The most challenging part of my journey, thus far, was discerning and entering the community in the midst of the pandemic,” Sister Kaitlin admits. “My live-in experience began about three months before the pandemic started in 2020 so most of my time in the community has been during the pandemic. This has greatly limited my interaction with sisters and their ministries while also not allowing me to experience large community gatherings. As we safely gathered over the past year, I was slowly introduced

to more sisters, ministries, and the greater community. This positively enhanced my experience and reinforced my calling to the Sisters of Notre Dame.”

“Discerning a call to religious life and taking steps towards answering that call is hard enough but adding in the pandemic and my nursing career felt even more daunting at times,” she openly admits. “I am so grateful for the sisters I have lived with over the past two years. They have supported me in so many ways as I discerned and ministered during the pandemic.”

The young woman considers the most rewarding part of her spiritual journey to be the growth in her relationship with God.

Joy Attracts Young Woman to Enter SND Congregation

continued



Sister Kaitlin Morse is joined by her parents, brother, and sister-in-law at the celebration of her acceptance into the novitiate.


“Obviously, prayer is a major component of religious life, but especially during initial formation. Having dedicated time and resources for prayer has really changed my life. I was fortunate to go on a 30-day retreat this January to complete the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. The long period of silence allowed me to really encounter Jesus in a way I have never experienced; His humanity became so real to me. This encounter with the person of Jesus energized me and changed the way I see the world. I am certain I would have never had the opportunity to make this great retreat if I were

not in religious life. The community focuses so much time, attention, and resources into making formation an enriching experience for the whole person – for which I could not be more thankful,” Sister Kaitlin states.

She says the SND USA Vocation & Young Adult team “has been an absolute blessing and gift in my life, from the minute I met Sister Kelley (Rush), my first SND contact.”

The dynamic novice continued, “I feel what I bring to the community is a willing spirit and openness to try new things. I have heard stories of, and witnessed first-hand, many sisters who were asked to do extraordinary, unique missions to serve the people of God. I hope I can remain open, like them, to serve where God is calling the community to serve.”

Sister Kaitlin is quick to encourage other young people considering religious life to “be bold and take real, concrete steps toward discerning and living the life. Seriously discerning religious life does not mean you have to sign your life away and make vows immediately. For the Sisters of Notre Dame, initial formation takes at least eight years before final vows are made.”

She concludes, “Research religious communities, talk with sisters, brothers, or vocation directors, attend discernment retreats, and get to know other discerners. Our minds can imagine many things about what we think religious life is like, but you will never really know until you take real steps to learn about it. More than any other suggestion, though, I would recommend praying and really listening to what God is asking of you. God calls us each to our vocation in life and provides abundantly. We just have to be willing to listen to that call and follow where He is leading. Prayer is the first step in discerning any vocation.” 



David Nguyen

YOUNG ADULTS DESCRIBE PERSONAL FAITH JOURNEYS



Erin Nagy

"My faith is a part of my daily life," says Erin Nagy, one of thousands of young adults across the United States turning their passive faith into action and pursuing a closer personal relationship with the Lord.

The Perrysburg, Ohio, resident attended the University of Toledo, majoring in Communication and minoring in Religious Studies. Today, she works as the Pastoral Associate for Middle School Faith Formation at St. John XXIII Parish in Perrysburg. "I've worked at different parishes in different roles; however, this position attracted me because the parish is so alive, and I love middle schoolers. I work with fifth through eighth graders on a regular basis, encouraging them to get to know the Lord. It is a huge gift," Erin exclaims.

YOUNG ADULTS

DESCRIBE PERSONAL FAITH JOURNEYS

continued

"I make time every day for prayer and attend Mass most days. However, my faith wasn't always so important to me," the 29-year-old woman admits. "Growing up, it was a passive thing, and I went through a period in college distancing from the faith. But, through the grace of God, I was brought back and have enjoyed growing in my relationship with the Lord ever since."

Erin became acquainted with the Sisters of Notre Dame when she started working at St. John XXIII three years ago. "The sisters are so encouraging and willing to walk on the journey with me. Their involvement has definitely helped me stay faithful to the Lord," she says.

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— Erin Nagy

Erin participated in several young adult events and book studies over the past year through SND USA's Young Adult Ministry. "It was awesome to see so many young adults actually engaged and wanting to talk about deep faith issues," Erin recalls. "I think that openness comes from the way the sisters are able to create an environment where sharing is encouraged, and each person feels they are a valued member of the group. The book studies and events reach young adults where they are in their faith journey, which varies a lot. The sisters do a

great job, presenting a variety of offerings so there is something for everyone."

She encourages young adults who feel disconnected from God and their faith. "Be brave enough to reach out for guidance and help," Erin suggests. "Young adulthood is hard and, often, we feel like we have to figure out everything on our own, including our faith. It's normal to have questions and doubts. The issue is not having

questions or feeling disconnected; it is what you do when you start feeling that way. Reach out. Find young adult groups. Attend one of the SND Young Adult Ministry events. You will find a community of people who have similar questions and experiences and who will support you on your journey to get to know God better."

"I would definitely recommend SND Young Adult programs. I've recommended them to many of my friends who, after attending, also greatly enjoyed and felt edified by their experiences," Erin says.

David Nguyen, of Northern California, says, "To young adults who feel disconnected from God and their faith, I would say God is walking with you and waiting for you, whenever you are ready. He is patient. He is kind, and He loves you more than you know."

David remembers, "I felt disconnected from community and faith for some time after I graduated from college. The Caritas Retreat I attended in 2018 helped me reconnect with my faith in deep and unexpected ways. I encountered God in a real and personal way and was able to discover the depths of God's love in my life. I wasn't sure what to expect, but I accepted God's invitation to go to Caritas. It showed me the power of community. This retreat opened me to more meaningful connections and helped cultivate my desires to serve others in my faith community leading up to this day. I've learned that the moment I allow myself to accept God into my life, everything changes."

David attended San Jose State University and currently works in marketing for a financial firm near San Francisco, California. At 31 years of age, he says his Catholic faith is very important to him today. "My faith is now stronger than ever, and I hope to continue growing in it every day. I've found deeper meaning through my faith and feel like it is the greatest gift ever to be received."



Jake Blatnik and
his fiancée Monica

“It is important for young adults to live our faith so we can grow closer to God and our communities. Our faith helps us find deeper meaning in our lives. It’s through our faith where we can find more fulfilling joy and love, especially when we serve others,” David adds. “When we recognize that we have God walking with us – in both moments of joy and struggle – we are able to grow in hope and find fulfillment for what our hearts desire most.”

Jake Blatnik describes himself as a small-town kid, born and raised in Wisconsin, who graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with majors in Finance and Management/Entrepreneurship. He relocated to Northern Kentucky several years ago and recently became engaged to Monica. They are eagerly planning their wedding in the Catholic church for later this year.

The young man considers himself blessed, and his Catholic faith plays a significant part in his life. “The

Catholic faith has always been there for me, but I have not always been there for it,” he emphatically states. “Certainly, ups and downs existed in the teenage, college and young adult years as the combination of pressures for performance, romance, and vocation mounted, and health challenges seemed to be never-ending. God has put Himself in my life as my rock. He did so through the Catholic faith. I am so fortunate for Him to meet me where I am.”

Jake says he first learned about the Sisters of Notre Dame when he attended a Charis retreat after moving to the Covington, Kentucky area. “The retreat was a meaningful experience for building friendships and faith. Since then, I have been able to help with various retreats and stay in contact with Sister Ruth Lubbers, one of the SND leaders for young adult ministry. She has become a consistent, close friend - feeling like family even – and a tremendously impactful spiritual director,” Jake says.

YOUNG ADULTS

DESCRIBE PERSONAL FAITH JOURNEYS

continued

He continues, “Finding other Catholic young adults through the Charis retreat and other small-group offerings has been crucial to not feeling alone as a young adult in the aging demographics of the Catholic Church. SNDs always have events going on. It is so reassuring that they continue to provide opportunities, letting young adults know about them, and consistently checking in with the young adult community to learn how to better serve one another.”

Jake believes learning different forms of prayer, Ignatian spirituality, and many other topics within the Catholic faith strengthened his mind and heart with a fervor for his faith. “Just knowing that I am in the sisters’ prayers is such a weight/burden lifted off my shoulders,” he admits. “Their presence and prayerfulness help me feel I am not in this alone. Every SND Young Adult offering has been tremendously uplifting.”

Jake applies the discernment steps he has learned through the SND Young Adult offerings to many aspects of his life. “I followed the steps of discernment in preparing to propose to my fiancé,” he shares. The sisters’ focus is on helping young adults discern their own paths through life, no matter where their paths may lead.

Jake encourages other young adults: “Pray. Be still. Pray. Follow joy. Pray.”

Unlike the other three young adults above, Maria Hardgrove, 26, has been acquainted with the Sisters of Notre Dame from birth.

“My great-aunt became a sister when she was 18 years old in 1964. Another aunt joined the Sisters of Notre Dame in 2007 when I was about 12 years old. Both modeled grace and love for the Lord that I am so thankful to have had while growing up and currently,” Maria describes. “My great-aunt taught school, and I recall visiting her classroom as a young girl, meeting many other sisters who were all so kind. Through my aunts, I have met so many

Maria Hardgrove
with her husband
and daughter



wonderful women of faith in the SND community. I don’t think I fully understood, when I was younger, what a powerful and strength-based organization the SNDs are until I became involved in a SND Young Adult virtual event in 2020.”

“My faith is very important to me. I grew up attending Catholic school from kindergarten through high school,” Maria says. She attended many retreats and regularly attended Mass during this time. “One of my favorite in-person events was the TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) retreat during my junior year in high school,” she reflects. “This was a tear- and joy-filled weekend that really solidified my foundation in the Lord. I have frequently reflected on the miracles that have occurred at the retreat’s site in Carey, Ohio. Following my college graduation, I entered the workforce and made many wonderful friends, one of whom I ended up marrying.”

She continues, “I have been married to a wonderful man for three years, and we have a six-month-old daughter. She has been the biggest blessing we could ever imagine.” A social worker, Maria also works at a practice counseling individuals with mental health disorders.

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– Maria Hardgrove

Maria admits, despite experiencing many wonderful changes in her life, she found herself feeling challenged spiritually. “A wave of new experiences removed me from my normal routine. I had to figure out a new place to go to church and how to remain close to God,” she recalls. “During this time, I also experienced some personal hardships that created trials in my life. My family experienced multiple unexpected deaths. My husband and I suffered two miscarriages. This caused me to examine my faith and relationship with God. I tried to lean on God to guide me in continuing regular church attendance and maintaining my faith. I started to ask questions about my faith with the intent to learn more and grow with God. I wanted to know why I do things, and I longed to have comfort and love to manage some of my brokenness.”


It was around this time that Maria was invited to participate in SND Young Adult virtual events.

“These events were a definite nudge from God. I was searching for answers and positive connections during a negative time,” Maria describes. “God answered by sending the support of the Sisters of Notre Dame as well as many other personal relationships in my life that helped me to cope and heal.”

Maria says, since joining the SND virtual events, she finds herself diving into beautiful book studies and discussions with other young adults throughout the country. “It is very encouraging to know others go through similar struggles and they, too, have challenges with their faith. Conversations are always supportive and encouraging, deepening an individual’s faith, discernment, and relationship with God.”

“I feel comfortable being vulnerable with others on these events, which has increased my ability to be vulnerable with God. Isn’t that what He is calling us to do – to let Him bear our crosses?” Maria challenges us.

“I believe these SND Young Adult events speak to real life issues, and help to encourage honest and in-depth discussions,” Maria states. “The sisters are wonderful facilitators, and the questions they pose encourage honesty. Common topics include marriage, starting a family, discerning ministry, relations, and everyday challenges, like keeping up with household chores.”

The young mother encourages, “Whether you feel disconnected, alone, or scared, God is always with us. Sometimes a good first step can be talking to a supportive friend or family member or even a sister, priest, or spiritual director. I know the SNDs are more than a support to me and always ready to lend an ear at any time. During one SND event, we talked about Bible references stating, ‘Jesus wept.’ God sent His son to be human so we could be connected to Him. This means Jesus felt human emotions as we so often do during challenges. Jesus was frequently sad when loved ones passed or unfortunate things happened. I think God wants us to know He feels what we feel. We don’t have to be alone. We can invite God to be with us during challenges. He will comfort us. God is always with us and encouraging us on our journeys. We just have to listen and be with Him.” 

Associates Drawn to SND Charism



**“Time with the sisters
will reveal that the
path to a joyful life is
readily accessible.”**

– Greg Lontok

(far left) Greg and Tam Lontok with two other new SND Associates in Thousand Oaks, California



“Jesus calls us to respond in different ways depending on the season of our life,” Greg Lontok says. For him and his wife Tam, becoming SND Associates was a natural step in their desire to move closer to God.


Greg recalls, “In 2015, Sister Val Roxburgh gently encouraged and invited us to explore the SND Associate Program. Drawn to the heart, charism, joy, and way of living, we became free in our discernment to move towards this call and see where God may lead us. We appreciated knowing we did not have to do anything more as an SND Associate but continue what we were doing in our daily lives and share God’s goodness with others. The SND Associate program was a gift of grace we received before our daughter, Ollie, came into the world, forming us to better love and guide her and walk with those in front of us.”

Tam adds, “We were introduced to Sister Valerie Roxburgh (SND Young Adult & Vocation team member) during a meeting to prepare for an upcoming young adult retreat with Christus Ministries in 2013. Or truly, we were introduced to her by way of her contagious laugh. Her encouragement, presence, and genuine care remind us of God’s goodness in our lives. She has inspired us by simply being herself and living out her vocation. We love who we continue to become with Sr. Val’s influence in our lives.”

Greg, 42, is a professor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California. Tam, 41, is a writer and photographer. In addition to raising their now five-year-old daughter, they work closely with Christus Ministries in Los Angeles planning retreats and working on a series of small group meetings for young couples/families on parenting skills and faith.

Both Greg and Tam feel that young adults should consider spending time with the Sisters of Notre Dame. “Time with the sisters will reveal that the path to a joyful life is readily accessible,” states Greg.

Tam concurs, “After a meal, heartfelt conversation, or a prayer shared with the sisters, we can’t help but be attracted to the sisters’ way of life. Becoming a SND Associate is one way to spend time with the sisters and learn more about living a joyful life, grounded in gratitude for God’s goodness. Besides, the sisters are a ton of fun!”

Greg and Tam both share, “With Jason and Jen Coito (SND Associate) and the Christus Ministries Team, we are creating a space for young families to learn and grow in our faith. Through our experiences with young adult ministry, we feel called to impart what we learn from the SNDs to our daughter. The most important work we can ever do is within the walls of our own home. We trust the ripple it can create. As St. Ignatius once said, ‘Everything in the world is presented to us as a way of knowing God because God’s presence can mostly be found in the everyday activities of ordinary life.’” 

Prayerful Decision-Making

by Sr. Valerie Marie Roxburgh, SND

A topic of conversation that often comes up when talking with people in our vocation and young adult ministry is discernment. Discernment is a process of sifting through what is of God and what is not. God gave us the gift of free will, and we are meant to choose, but how often do we include God in our decisions?



Sister Valerie “Val” Marie Roxburgh is a native of Southern California and presently resides in Perrysburg, Ohio. Since entering the SND community in 2003, she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies from Mount Saint Mary’s University in Los Angeles, California. She has served in a variety of ministries in California including Office Manager at Notre Dame Academy in Los Angeles, parish ministry at St. Bartholomew Parish in Long Beach, part-time outreach at the Caruso Catholic Center at the University of Southern California, and council member on the California provincial leadership team. She moved to Ohio in September of 2020. Sister Val has been in Vocation and Young Adult ministry since 2008 and completed a Spiritual Direction Internship Program through Loyola Chicago University in April of 2022.

It is easy to decide between something that is clearly good versus something that is not, but it can be challenging to choose between two potentially good options. I have found in talking with people about their decision-making process, that they frequently base their decisions on the best logical choice, given the information they have at the time. This makes sense, but it does not always take into consideration the emotional and spiritual components of their lives. When I have asked them if they have taken this to prayer, their answer is often no.

God loves us so much and wants the best for our lives. As Psalm 139 states so beautifully, God knows us better than we know ourselves. When we bring what we are discerning to God in prayer, it is important to allow adequate time for reflection. In our fast-paced world today, we are often in a hurry and want immediate answers. God always answers our prayers, but in God’s perfect time and way.

The clarity we are seeking in prayer can come in a variety of ways:

- a conversation with a person God puts in our path to assist us in our discernment
- Scripture passages
- lyrics of a song or listening to a podcast
- reflecting on what we have written in our journal about the decision at hand
- making a list of pros and cons
- going on a retreat, etc.

The key is keeping our hearts and minds open, being attentive to our feelings, and trusting that God will guide us in making the decision.

When I was discerning about entering religious life in 2002, I felt great peace and joy, even though I knew this would entail a significant life change for me. Change can be challenging, and may entail risk, but if we include God in our decision-making process, we will not get stuck in what I call “analysis paralysis.”

There is a common fear of not making the “right” decision. I like the example that Sister Jennifer Zimmerman, our National Vocation Director, gave in response to the concern about making the “wrong” decision. In her talk “Prayerful Decision-Making,” she likened Christ-centered decision-making to a game show like the “Price is Right.” The contestants are asked to choose between door number 1, 2, or 3, but they do not have to be afraid because God is behind whatever door they select.

As a member of our Vocation & Young Adult team, I am grateful for any opportunity to talk with young adults about discernment and prayerful decision-making. It is a privilege to listen to their concerns and questions, and to support them in their faith journey.

Make the Sisters of Notre Dame a Part of Your Legacy

Your will is one of the most important documents you can own. It dictates how your assets and possessions will be divided after your lifetime. It ensures your loved ones are financially protected should something happen to you. It provides peace of mind for your family. A will also is the first step in creating your legacy.

Use Your Will to Give

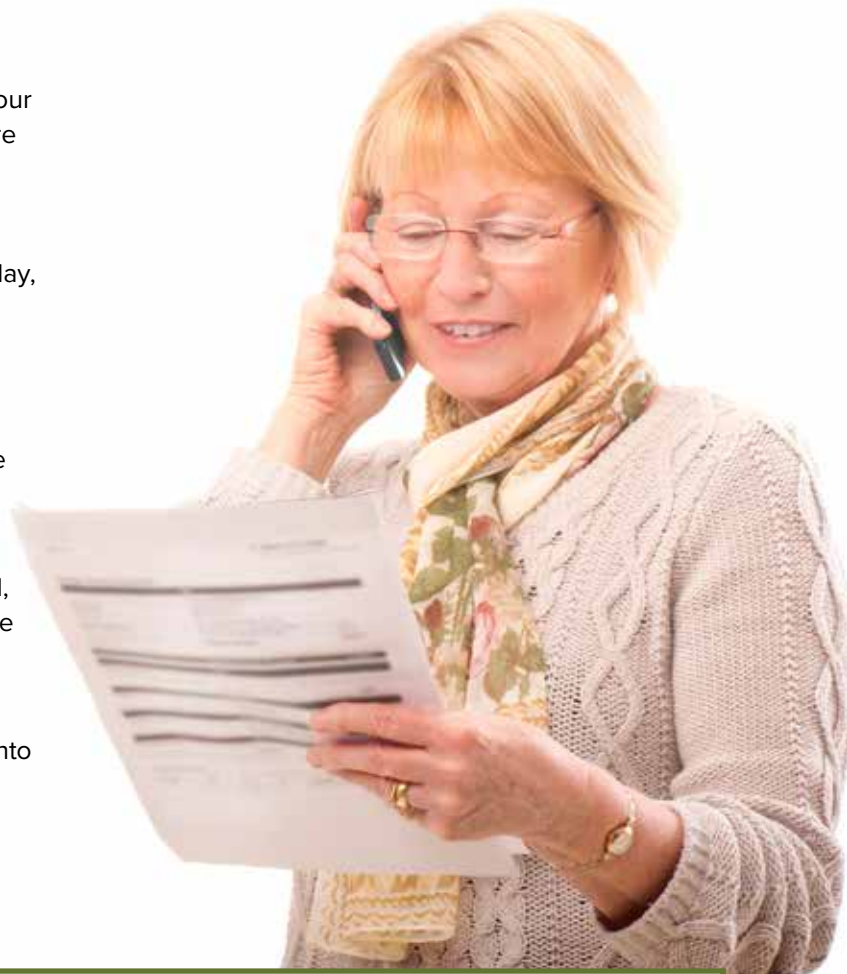
In addition to caring for loved ones, you can also use your will to extend your support of the organizations you care about most. This gift is simple to make – all it takes is one sentence. You can also update your wishes as life changes to ensure your will meets your needs. Plus, a gift in your will won't require you to part with assets today, but it allows you to make a big impact on SND ministry efforts in the future.

To make a legacy gift:

1. Contact the Sisters of Notre Dame to request sample bequest language to use in your will.
2. Make an appointment with your estate planning attorney to create your will. If you already have a will, your attorney can draft a codicil to add your gift to the existing document.
3. Notify the Sisters of Notre Dame of your intention. It would be our honor to thank you and welcome you into our Wolbring Legacy Society. Plus, your generosity may even inspire others to follow in your footsteps. (Wishes of anonymity will be honored if requested.)

Create Your Legacy

When you include the Sisters of Notre Dame in your will, you create a legacy of giving and ensure our ministries can continue well into the future. Contact your local Mission Advancement Representative below to get started.



COVINGTON, KY:

MARGIE SCHNELLE | mschnelle@sndusa.org

THOUSAND OAKS, CA:

SISTER LISA MEGAFFIN | lmegaffin@sndusa.org

TOLEDO, OH:

KERRI ROSE-ROCHELLE | krochelle@sndusa.org

CHARDON, OH:

CARRIE HIGGINBOTHAM | chigginbotham@sndusa.org



Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States

One Heart. One Hope. One Mission.

SND USA National Office

13000 Auburn Road, Chardon, OH 44024

SND USA Regional Offices

1601 Dixie Highway, Covington, KY 41011

1776 Hendrix Avenue, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

3912 Sunforest Court, Suite B, Toledo, OH 43623

www.sndusa.org

Chardon Office Prayer Line

440-279-1163 or prayersCH@sndusa.org

Toledo Office Prayer Line

prayersTO@sndusa.org

Covington Office Prayer Line

859-291-2040 or prayersKY@sndusa.org

Thousand Oaks Office Prayer Line

prayersCA@sndusa.org

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We Heard You!

With the many requests for additional information in various regions, the Fall 2022 issue of *SND USA Magazine* will look a little different. Rather than containing regional inserts, the national magazine will include a new section titled, "Regional Updates," reporting information of interest provided by all four regions: **Chardon, OH; Covington, KY; Thousand Oaks, CA; and Toledo, Ohio.**

Now, readers across the country will be able to learn what is occurring in each region. This revised format will also save costs and use fewer natural resources.

We hope you enjoy the change!

Check out our new Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation website at

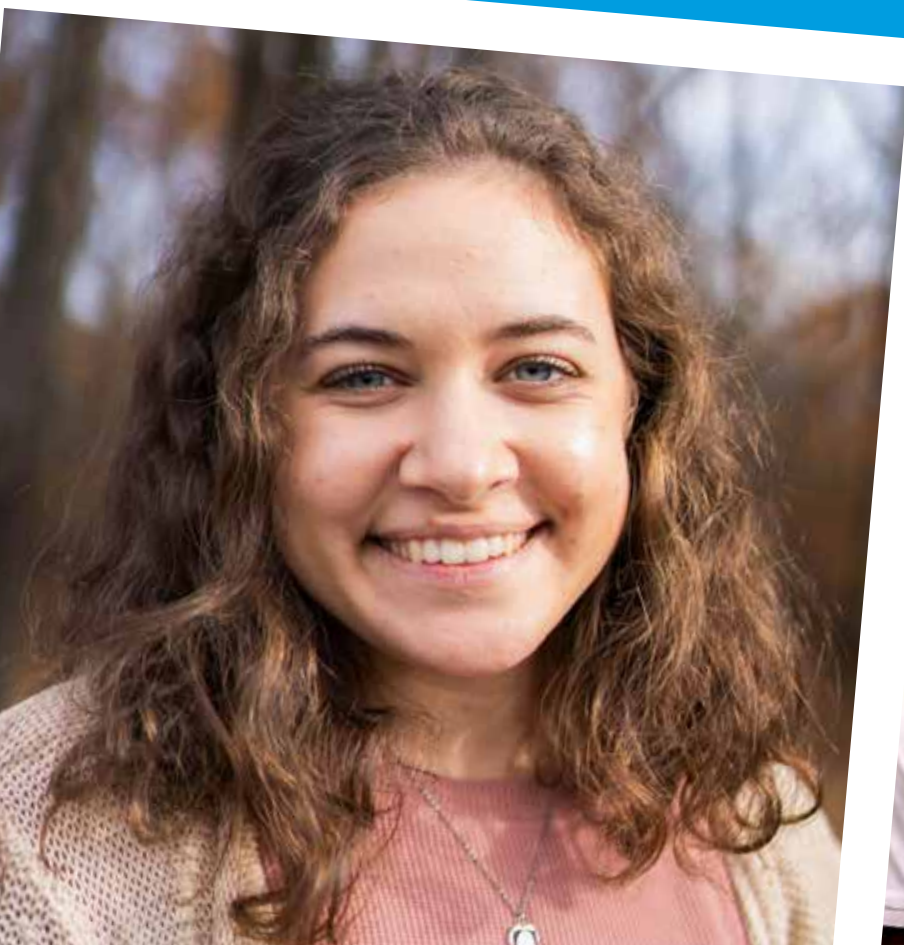
sndusa.org/jpic

Check out news and local happenings at

sndusa.org/regions



Local Young Adults Reflect on the Impact of SND Outreach



Summer 2022
Network

*One Heart.
One Hope.
One Mission.*

LOCAL YOUNG ADULTS REFLECT ON THE IMPACT OF SND OUTREACH

Sisters of Notre Dame prioritized Vocation and Young Adult Ministry as one of three mission priorities when the congregation unified its four provinces in 2020 to become SND USA. What's been the impact of this outreach in Northeast Ohio? We asked two local young adults to share some of their experiences. We hope their stories inspire you!

Send correspondence to:

Network

Sisters of Notre Dame

13000 Auburn Road, Chardon, OH 44024

www.sndusa.org

440.286.7101

On the cover: Jessica DiSalvatore (*left photo*) and Zachary Thomas, (*right, with a former program participant*), enjoy participating in SND Vocation & Young Adult Ministry activities.

JESSICA DISALVATORE

While surfing the internet one soggy fall day, Jessica DiSalvatore came across an invitation to a weekend silent retreat for young adults being offered by the Sisters of Notre Dame in November 2019. Her interest was piqued.

"I felt compelled to sign up," recalls Jessica. "It was the weekend after my wedding engagement. Funny enough, this retreat – unbeknownst to me at the time – kick-started my discernment of this relationship."

Jessica admits, "I barely knew what discernment was, yet I was soon in the middle of it. For the first time, I was asking questions – questions about both the relationship and the faith."

Jessica attended Pre-K through high school at St. John School in Ashtabula, Ohio. It was during junior high when Jessica first became acquainted with the Sisters of Notre Dame; her math teacher was a sister. Jessica went on to major in English: Creative Arts at John Carroll University, and upon graduation, began working part-time at her father's chiropractic office while searching for full-time employment. A year and

a half later, she was hired as a Grant Management Specialist at Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Cleveland.

Despite attending Catholic schools and weekly Mass, and participating in various religious groups, Jessica says her faith was only surface-level. "I would say I was drifting and did not begin to find spiritual stability until 2021," Jessica states. "If there is no internal conversation, if you do not know God's love for you, all the other things don't matter. I was very unhappy as a teenager, though on the surface everything looked fine. I was active in sports, held leadership positions in multiple clubs, even was Homecoming Queen, but my story is one testament out of many that you can have everything you could ever want in the

material world and still be unhappy if God is not in the center of it."

"As I got closer to God, I grew further apart from my ex. God's grace began to show the holes in our relationship, and signs that the foundation wasn't strong," she honestly reflects.

After the SND retreat and her relationship breakup, Jessica stayed in touch with Sister Kelley Rush, a member of the SND Vocation & Young Adult Team. "Sister Kelley suggested I join the monthly vocation meetings SNDs offered. These meetings have given me the space to voice my concerns about where my life is heading and the importance of a vocation. Currently, I am participating in monthly vocation meetings via Zoom with Sisters Valerie

continued on page 4

"These meetings have given me the space to voice my concerns about where my life is heading and the importance of a vocation."

– Jessica DiSalvatore





Writers In Residence teaches creative writing to inmates.

Roxburgh and Ruth Lubbers, along with several other young women. We are studying a book titled 'Your One Wild and Precious Life.' I also participated in a couple guided meditation Zoom calls during Advent."

"Sister Kelley is my spiritual director," the 24-year-old woman continues. "She was one of my rocks while I was discerning the engagement. She met me where I was with grace and understanding and helped me to discern what God was trying to tell me."

"I'm learning to look at the breakup as an act of compassion from God," Jessica says. "As terrible and agonizing as it was, it was a blessing. When we're at the bottom of a mountain, it's hard to begin climbing. The task seems insurmountable. But God wants us to climb that mountain. He needs us up there so we can become better versions of ourselves."

"Spiritual mountain climbing is not easy. Your heart hurts. Your body hurts. Your mind is being shaped, molded, and reformed. You scrape yourself. You might even slip and begin to fall, but God is the bungee cord who keeps you from falling into the abyss below. It is worth every step. You are being reborn."

Jessica continues to climb her mountain with Sister Kelley alongside her.

"Honestly, I don't know where I would be without the Sisters of Notre Dame," Jessica considers. "Probably still drifting. Stuck in bad relationships. Spiritually immature. The sisters have helped me on my journey to form a more loving and understanding relationship with God. Because of them, I am on my way to holiness and wholeness."

Jessica encourages other young adults to sign up for a SND Young Adult offering. "Signing up for the

retreat was one of the best decisions I've ever made," insists Jessica. "The sisters are amazing. They are wise, holy, grace-filled women. I implore anyone interested in deepening their faith, or struggling with it, to reach out to Sisters of Notre Dame for spiritual direction. It will change your life."

"The sisters have helped me on my journey to form a more loving and understanding relationship with God."

— Jessica DiSalvatore

ZACHARY THOMAS

Zachary Thomas grew up in Dayton, Ohio, attending Immaculate Conception Elementary School and Chamindade-Julienne Catholic High School.

"My family was spiritual, but we did not belong to any institutional religion. I personally decided to become Catholic in grade school," the 25-year-old man recalls.

Zachary continued his Catholic education, majoring in Creative Writing at John Carroll University in Cleveland. "In college, I began asking myself why I believed what I believed, exploring my own identity and becoming fully conscious of decisions I was making," Zachary says. "I drew closer to God in my own right rather than accepting what was transcribed through institutional religion. Something intellectually drew me to the Church – which appealed to my mind and heart."

"During my junior year, I enrolled in a service-learning course where I was able to pair my love of reading and creative writing with service. Along with the help of a few classmates, I founded Writers in Residence in 2017," the young man passionately describes. During the fall and spring semesters, they facilitated creative writing workshops for male and female residents at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center and at Ohio's Department of Youth Services, Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility. The 90-minute workshops were offered once a week for 12 weeks.



Zachary Thomas

"The writing helped to reduce their anger and stress while giving voice to their individual stories."

– Zachary Thomas

"I had no knowledge of the justice system. We were committed and driven to reduce the rate of recidivism within the juvenile justice system by facilitating an open forum for artistic self-expression and constructive self-reflection," explains Zachary, a creative writer in his own right. "We had no idea what we were doing; however, my anxiety wore off after the first week."

"A lot of the incarcerated youth didn't believe they were writers or strong readers. We worked on building

their confidence. At first, they hated writing; at the end, they couldn't stop writing. The writing helped to reduce their anger and stress while giving voice to their individual stories," Zachary enthusiastically describes.

Residents' creative writing was shared with fellow residents, the juvenile detention centers, John Carroll University, and the Greater Cleveland community as a form of advocacy and as a reminder that incarcerated individuals deserve to be treated with dignity. Dr. Philip Metres, a professor at John Carroll University, shared the program's amazing results with The Cleveland Foundation, which became involved. What began as a pilot program in college eventually became a part-time, then

full-time career for Zachary after graduating college in 2018.

Writers in Residence's mission continues to be to teach creative writing to youth who are incarcerated to empower their voices and assist in their re-entry into society. To date, Writers in Residence has provided workshops to more than 1,000 incarcerated youth, averaging 26 participants each week. As Executive Director of Writers in Residence, Zachary now travels to juvenile



Hiram College students participate in a Writers In Residence student volunteer training session during COVID-19.

facilities across the state of Ohio, thrilled to be able to utilize his gift in creative writing and his desire to engage in direct service to the marginalized in society.

"We punish in our society. We have no room for reconciliation," Zachary says. "I cannot imagine doing anything that is not linked with serving others, whether that be through my time,

"We are called to love God, love ourselves, and love those around us. No exceptions."

– Zachary Thomas

talent, or treasures. I believe it is my responsibility to demonstrate the love God gives to me. We are called to love God, love ourselves, and love those around us. No exceptions."

The organization recently launched a re-entry leadership initiative where they are looking to pair residents with positive, consistent mentors.

Zachary met Sister Kathleen Hine while participating in the Generative Spirit Ministry Leadership Program which pairs young adults with a sister from one of the five participating women's religious congregations. The program's goal is to provide professional development, leadership building, and spiritual formation.

Upon meeting Zach, Sister Kathleen was immediately impressed with him. "Zach recognized the vast needs of incarcerated youth and created the non-profit, Writers in Residence, to offer support and empowerment to that community throughout Ohio. With remarkable vision and purpose, Zach built Writers in Residence from the ground up. He obtained resources, found donors, and successfully engaged a committed board to support the ministry that is thriving today."

Likewise, Zach exclaims that the charisma of the Sisters of Notre Dame resonates with him. "We are all called to serve others, especially the marginalized," says Zach.

"To other young adults, if you want to get a better idea of where you see yourself in this world, I recommend direct service, particularly with those who are experiencing injustice. Writers In Residence enables me to bear witness to the stories of residents in juvenile facilities – giving them a voice."

*To learn more about SND USA Vocation & Young Adult offerings, visit the Sisters of Notre Dame website at www.sndusa.org

If you are interested in becoming a mentor with the re-entry leadership initiative, please email info@writersinresidence.org.

A Lasting Tribute

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



Sister Mary Catherine Romancik

(formerly Sister Mary Roy)

June 21, 1928 – March 9, 2022

Catherine Dorothy Romancik was born to Adam and Lottie Stanczyz Romancik in Cleveland, Ohio. Catherine had an older brother Raymond, and younger siblings Dolores and Joseph. At Our Lady of Good Counsel School, Catherine discovered a love for the arts and music. She attended St. Stephen High

School, Cleveland, and in her junior year accepted the call to become a Sister of Notre Dame. She became a postulant on September 8, 1946, and at investment received the name Sister Mary Roy.

Sister Catherine graduated from Notre Dame College, South Euclid with a B.A. in French and history. She earned a master's degree from John Carroll University. She taught high school for the next 31 years at Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Boniface, St.

Stephen, St. Francis, and St. Peter, all in Cleveland; and at Elyria Catholic and Regina High Schools. She spent five years as a writer for the *Light of the World* religion textbook series.

From 1987-1993 she served as Pastoral Minister at St. Michael Parish, Canton. In 1993 Sister Catherine began a new ministry in hospital chaplaincy. At St. Joseph/ Lorain Community Hospitals and Community Health Partners, she served with an interdenominational team of chaplains and coordinated spiritual care volunteers for 14 years. Returning to Chardon in 2008, she was a Pastoral Care volunteer at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. At the provincial center, Sister Catherine devoted many hours to the Prayer Line Ministry, speaking with callers and praying with them.



SAVE THE DATE!

September 25, 2022

Noon - 5 p.m.

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School

Chicken Dinner

Take Out Available

www.sndusa.org/bbq

2022-2023 Calendar Save the Dates!

Regina Alumnae Retreat 2023

When: February 24 – 26, 2023

Where: Bethany Retreat Center at Notre Dame Center

Cost: \$60 plus a “good will” offering.

Each participant will have a private room.

The retreat will begin on Feb. 24 at 7 p.m., ending on Sunday at noon.



Sr. Melannie Svoboda '62 will be the retreat director. A former teacher, she now writes, gives talks, and directs retreats internationally.

To learn more, visit her blog at <https://melanniesvoboda@snd.org> titled *Sunflower Seeds*.

Reservations due Feb. 11, 2023.

Questions – contact Sr. Kay at rhsalum@reginahigh.com or text at 216-905-4851.



Looking forward to seeing all of you again at Girls' Night Out

Girls' Night Out

Date: October 21, 2022

Place: The Jake at Pizzazz in University Heights across from JCU

Cost: \$30, includes food, gratuity, tax and soft drinks

Cash Bar

Reservations Due October 12, 2022

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

Small group reunions are welcome, just let us know.

Reunions

Class of '71

The Class of '71 will have their 50 plus 1 reunion on September 16 at the Mayfield Country Club. Contact Jody Hummer Salata for more information at jodysalata@sbcglobal.net.

Class of '72

The Class of '72 is making plans for their 50th reunion. If you haven't heard anything, you might be one of the 100 missing classmates. Please contact the Alumnae Office at rhsalum@reginahigh.com with your information so they can get in touch with you about plans. If you are on Facebook, there is a Facebook page RHS Class of '72.

Class of '82

The Class of '82 reunion will be on Saturday, October 8, at 7 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn in Mayfield Village. If you are not receiving emails from the alumnae office, please contact rhsalum@reginahigh.com to receive information and any updates on plans.

Class of '02

Emails have gone out to members of the Class of '02. Plans are underway for a 20th reunion this year. If you are not receiving emails from the alumnae office, please contact rhsalum@reginahigh.com to receive information and any updates on plans. Committee members hope to see all of you at the reunion!

Class of '81 Reunion

The Class of '81 held their reunion on September 26, 2021 at Hollbrook Hollow. They had a great turnout and are starting plans for the next one in 5 years!



Members of the Class of '81 reminisce with Sr. Mary Frances Murray before their reunion.

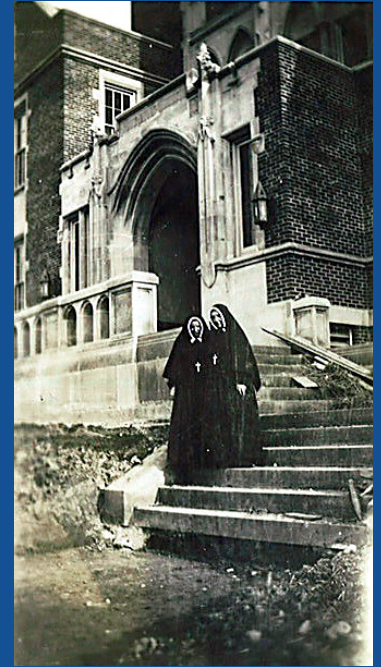
2022 Reunions

If any classes are planning reunions for 2022, please let the Alumnae Office know so we can pass on information when classmates inquire about them. The Alumnae Office will be happy to furnish you with whatever information we have to get you connected with members of your class at rhsalum@reginahigh.com or 216-905-4851.

the Pulse

SUMMER 2022

Updates from Covington, Kentucky



Celebrating the Festival's 100 Years! Yesterday and Today



Dear Partners,

SND USA ministries are far-reaching, but depend on the involvement of individuals at a local level. Contact us to partner with the Sisters of Notre Dame in Covington, KY:

Prayer Requests & General Info:

infoKY@sndusa.org

859-291-2040

1601 Dixie Highway,
Covington, KY 41011

Associates:

Sr. Luann Bender

lbender@sndusa.org

Donations and Mission

Advancement:

Margie Schnelle

mschnelle@sndusa.org

859-392-8229

Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC):

Sr. Rita Geoppinger

rgeoppinger@sndusa.org

Volunteer, Young Adult and Vocation Outreach:

Sr. Ruth Lubbers

rlubbers@sndusa.org

Careers with SND:

hr@sndusa.org

www.sndusa.org



**Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States**

We Remember



*Sister Mary
Bonita Schack*

06/02/1945 - 01/22/2022



*Sister Mary
Martha Beiting*

08/03/1934 - 02/19/2022



*Sister Mary
Norene McCormack*

11/3/1944 - 03/31/2022

*May Sister Mary Bonita, Sister Mary Martha, and Sister Mary
Norene delight in the embrace of our good and loving God.*

To read their full obituary please visit sndusa.org/tributes

St. Augustine - Covington, KY - Lent Penney War

The Parish of St. Augustine and the elementary school in Covington, KY, decided to make the Sisters of Notre Dame's Uganda Mission their Lenten project. The goal with the students



especially, but also the parishioners, was to allow them to experience the joy of giving of oneself, including financially. Our competition was a lot of fun and brought a lot of joy. We are pleased that we could share that joy with the sisters and children in Uganda in the amount of \$2,035. Pictured is the presentation that took place on April 13, 2022.

Pay It Forward Day



On Saturday, April 2, the sixth annual Pay It Forward Day took place. Fifty sisters, Associates, staff members, young adults, and friends joined together to reach out to our sisters and brothers in need across the area. After beginning our day with prayer, each group set out to their particular destination. One group provided a hearty meal to residents of the Center for Respite Care, homeless persons who are recuperating from or preparing for a hospital stay.

Another group worked with the Franciscan Daughters of Mary at their Rose Garden Mission preparing items for expectant mothers, sorting clothing and bed linens, and getting 300 Easter bags ready for their many young clients.



Blessing bags were the outreach of another group. They put together food and personal care items for our un-housed brothers and sisters in downtown Covington. The group then went out to various locations to deliver the bags and have conversations with persons experiencing homelessness.



Several groups went to senior living facilities and held bingo parties for the residents. Through the generosity of sisters and friends, a great selection of prizes was available for lucky winners. Most prizes were paper products and cleaning supplies since those items cannot be purchased with food stamps.



One of our yearly activities is to work with Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky (HONK) to rehab a home. HONK helps prepare low income families or individuals to become home owners. This group did painting, drywalling, minor repairs, and cleaning.

We came back together and ended our time by sharing experiences about how those whom we encountered touched our lives. The sharing of stories helps us connect with others. This is a true blessing for all.

Sister Mary Ruth Lubbers





Dear Friend,

In 1922, Warren G. Harding was president, the Cincinnati Reds played at Redland Field, WLW-AM celebrated its first radio transmission, and the St. Joseph Heights Society hosted the inaugural Sisters of Notre Dame July 4th Festival.

That first festival 100 years ago was held to raise funds for the construction of our St. Joseph Heights building on Dixie Highway. Just as the iconic building still stands today, so do the festival partnerships and traditions we have been fortunate to build over the last century!

The Festival is an important fundraiser for our ministries, including our 3 mission priorities: vocation/young adult ministry, ministry at the margins, and sponsored education and healthcare ministries.

I hope you will mark the festival on your calendar and join us in celebrating Independence Day and 100 years of family-friendly festival fun. (Please do come if you're in town! We've missed seeing all of our wonderful friends the past two years!)

Gratefully,
Sister Mary Dennise, SND
 Sr. Mary Dennise Wagenlander, SND
 Festival Chair

GRAND RAFFLE - YOU COULD WIN

 **\$5,000**
\$2,000
\$1,000

JUST \$5 PER CHANCE

JOIN US ON THE 4TH! - FAMILY FUN

 **FOOD (HARMON'S BBQ),
 MUSIC, FESTIVAL MARKET,
 100 YEARS OF MEMORIES,
 KIDS' GAMES & MORE**

ONLINE AUCTION - BID ANYWHERE!

 **AUCTION OPENS JUNE 27
 AUCTION CLOSES JULY 4
 SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

FESTIVAL CONTACT
 Margie Schnelle mschnelle@sndusa.org
 859-392-8229 www.sndusa.org/festival



Looking for a way to participate?

- Volunteer!
- Purchase raffle tickets online!
- Donate online!
- Bid on auction items!

Come and spend the day with us!
 We look forward to seeing you!!



Members of the OLD FAITHFUL CLUB have arranged a joyful sale for you at St. Joseph Heights, the current grounds of the Sisters Notre Dame. Our Kentucky Colonels will give you a most hearty welcome and the OLD TIME SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY.

Fourth of July Picnic
 benefit of the new
NOTRE DAME ACADEMY
St. Joseph Heights
 DIXIE HIGHWAY COVINGTON, KY.
 COMBINATION PRIZES GIVEN AWAY
 Sunday, July 4th, 1965

THE SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME INVITE YOU TO A DAY OF FAMILY FUN (100 YEARS IN THE MAKING!)

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

YEARS OF FESTIVAL FUN!

LET'S GO TO St. Joseph Heights
 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION
 CHICKEN Dinner served from 12 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 1965

ANNUAL
FOURTH OF JULY PICNIC
 Benefit of
ST. JOSEPH HEIGHTS
 Dixie Highway, Covington, Ky.
 Our Full Course Chicken Dinner 12:00-2:00 PM \$1.25
 with beer - extra 50 cents a plate
 NEW FUN - THROBLES - LAUGHS
 Don't Miss the "HAPPY" CHANDLER DERRY
 A. B. "Horse" Chandler Official Judge
 8 DONKEY RACES 8

JULY 4 FROM 1-6PM



Sisters in Ministry



Sister Jean Marie Hoffman

St. Elizabeth Healthcare, Edgewood, KY

In the mid-1970's, I was assigned to the Diocesan Catholic Children's Home in Fort Mitchell, KY, as a child-care worker. I was responsible to provide twenty-four seven care to boys who were assigned to DCCH because of their emotional, behavioral, and psychological issues. My responsibility was to be a surrogate parent to these children. One of my tasks was to see that they received the necessary medical help they needed. Often, I would take the children to St. Elizabeth Healthcare to receive medical care. When I visited the hospital with the children or for myself, I thought, "One of these days I am going to come here to volunteer." The thought of volunteering stayed with me for many years. I wanted to volunteer as a chance to give something back to the community. God has blessed me in so many ways that I want to show my gratitude for the lives of others.

In the spring of 2021, I contacted St. Elizabeth Healthcare to discuss my interest in volunteering. As a part of the interview process, I was asked to share information about my life. One aspect I shared was that I was a breast cancer survivor. At the conclusion of my interview, my interviewer asked if I would like to work in their cancer care center, where I would be meeting patients who were receiving chemo in the infusion department. I was excited to be part of this team of volunteers. I began this new ministry in May of 2021.

The patients I meet come from a variety of backgrounds. My tasks vary. When the patient arrives, I inquire if they would like something to eat or drink. I offer them a warm blanket to have during their treatment. I check on them frequently to see if there is anything they need. These short visits provide us both the opportunity to get to know each other. During our conversation, they may ask that I say a prayer with them. I make myself available to them for anything they need. When the patient is finished with his/her chemo treatments I sanitize the room thoroughly to make it ready for the next patient.

My time with these patients is spiritually enriching. When I forget myself and put others first, I consider it love in action. I am frequently reminded of Jesus' teaching us about the washing of feet, that we must be servants as He was a servant to us, every one of us.



Sister Marla Monahan, Vicar for Religious

Bishop John Iffert appointed Sister Marla Monahan, Vicar for Religious in the Covington Diocese as of March 2, 2022. This position serves as the Bishop's representative to the religious communities.

"In my life of ministry in the church, I have been blessed with many experiences and opportunities working collaboratively with other religious communities, laypeople, and groups. I thought this could be a way to share some of the experiences I've been blessed with, while continuing to learn and grow."

Currently Sr. Marla also serves as the chairperson for the St. Charles Community Board, Covington, and St. Claire Healthcare Board, Morehead, KY. Sister Marla is looking forward to learning Bishop Iffert's thoughts and vision and helping to facilitate the relationships between the Bishop, the diocese, and the men and women religious of the diocese.

Sister Mary Jolene Flynn-Outreach to Many

My ministries during the fifty-four years of my professed life as a Sister of Notre Dame have taken an unexpected turn. As former Provincial Treasurer, and member of various finance committees, I was involved in giving financial assistance to various organizations. Now I am on the other side of the desk, out working among those in need.

Northern Kentucky is blessed with several nonprofit organizations that exist to aid those in need. Five years ago, I began volunteering at Holy Spirit Outreach Ministry located in Newport, KY. The food pantry provides families with 6-7 bags of groceries and household supplies. The food comes from the government, community, and parish donations. Financial assistance is also given to help with utilities and rent. I work at the front desk recording the necessary information, providing invoices for financial assistance, and performing other duties as needed.



One day per week, I volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul Food Panty in Crescent Springs, KY. This program provides food for low-income families in Northern Kentucky. I record the intake information, assist families in selecting food products, sort food donations, and restock the shelves. Families are given a grocery cart to use as they “shop” in the pantry. The number of food items such as vegetables, soups, and cereals is determined by the number of people in the household. The food, household, and personal items come from St. Vincent de Paul’s connections with the local community and businesses. Additional food is provided at Thanksgiving and Christmas to ensure that families enjoy the holidays.

I also volunteer at Henry Hosea House in Newport, serving the evening meal to the men, women, and children of the Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati area. The primary focus of Henry Hosea House has been to provide a nutritious meal to those in need. The dining area was recently renovated to give the experience of dining in a fine restaurant. At Hosea House there is also the opportunity to meet friends and build community. Hosea House is partnering with local restaurants, fast food chains, and businesses to provide meals. Volunteers range in age and come from various backgrounds. Everyone tries to make it a wonderful experience for all who come.

My volunteer service at Notre Dame Urban Education Center on Mondays and Wednesday is a stretch for me personally. I had never worked in a school environment before. Now my work at the front desk consists of greeting the parents and children as they arrive for tutoring, taking in tuition, answering the phone, and giving any kind of assistance needed. My appreciation for teachers and those in education has deepened. This experience has been very rewarding.

All of my volunteer work has had an impact on me, each in its own way. How numerous are those who do not have enough food, finances to pay bills, places to stay, and children who need extra help with learning, etc. The gratitude each recipient shares is very humbling. Listening to their stories and life experiences has been such a privilege.



Sister Pat Kenney Julie Learning Center

I have been teaching 10 four-year-olds throughout the school year in our preschool at the Heights. We have a talking Bible on tape. I show the pictures as it is read. Then I give them a picture of the story to color and take home to share the story with their family. They have also learned the Angel of God prayer and their morning prayer. We are currently working on our night prayer. Both the children and I have enjoyed our time together.



New SND Associates

SND Associates are men and women, married and single, who are called to share in the mission of Jesus Christ through the charism, spirituality, and ministry of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Associates make a non-vowed commitment to serve as partners with the Sisters of Notre Dame and extend the mission in their own lives, family, work, and church communities.

On April 10, 2022, our new Associates participated in the Ritual of Covenant Ceremony. Along with their companions, they recited their covenant, signed their formal intent, and received their pins. Due to Covid, this was a 2 1/2 year process of being able to formally get together. In reality, they have been active in their associate duties for quite some time. We are so grateful for their dedication to the Sisters of Notre Dame. Our new Associates are:

Ceil Dorger, Linda Bricking, Char Fieger, Paula Fogt, Betsy Hausfeld, Jan Rosing, Beth Schwebler, and Deborah Wood.

Notre Dame Urban Education Center - SND Sponsored Ministry Celebrating What's New

Roof, fencing, security cameras = safety and sustainability

Our priority and goal is to provide transformative education in a safe and secure environment for everyone on our premises. Fencing is a sound investment that does just that. Our new fencing provides benefits such as increased neighborhood security, and reduced property theft and damage, and it improves the overall aesthetic quality of the premises.

Outdoor play area for fitness enrichment

We transformed our parking lot into a fun space where students and their mentors have access to out door activities. As a result, students learn teamwork, good sportsmanship, and the importance of following rules. It also improves their coordination and flexibility and releases endorphins, thus improving their mood. Children respond more quickly and with greater accuracy to various cognitive tasks after participating in a session of physical activity. When physical movement is used as a break from academic learning, post-engagement effects include better attention, increased on-task behaviors, and improved academic performance.

STEM Garden

This is an environmental project serving as an avenue toward enhancing eco-literacy, where students learn about food security, nutrition, and sustainability. It features quarterly StoryWalks®, where students can enjoy learning about animal and plant life cycles, practice reading in natural settings, and discover their own ability to create a spectacular urban garden, planted by children and supported by a village of partners working together.

Special Events

On September 22, 2022, Bishop Iffert will bless our new 12-passenger Ford Transit van. We will also have an open house inspired event, "Cheers To A New School Year."

Vision & Challenge

VOL. XXVII NO. 3
SUMMER 2022

A publication of the Sisters of Notre Dame, California | *One Heart • One Hope • One Mission*



This Synod is intended to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts, and restore strength to our hands for our common mission.

Synod Preparatory Document, 32



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Have ministered in California since 1924, bringing hope to humankind through education, faith formation, spiritual development, pastoral ministry, health care, social outreach ministries and missionary service. For more information, visit www.sndusa.org, and follow the link to Los Angeles, California.

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Pandemic restrictions were followed for all photography during that timeframe.

Please remember to recycle your copy after reading.

A Message from *Mission Advancement*

Dear Friends,

Within the last few months, many Catholics have been engaged in the Synod, an opportunity to meet Pope Francis' request to engage in dialogue for better understanding of our call to holiness and to participate in the life of the Church. Conversations are occurring around the world in preparation for the 2023 Synod of Bishops. Although summaries of these conversations will be provided to deaneries, dioceses and other Church entities, I believe that there are many opportunities for individuals to embrace the themes of the Synod and most importantly, to follow the lead of the Spirit within one's heart.

These synodal themes, as outlined on the Vatican website, are also incorporated throughout this edition of *Vision & Challenge*.

Communion

The communion we share as Christians is rooted in the love and unity of the Trinity. We have a role to play in discerning and following God's call.



Participation

In virtue of the graces of Baptism, Christians are called to serve one another. Using our own experiences and perspectives, we are called to pray, listen, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions which reflect God's will. Perhaps more importantly, decisions and actions need to start on the personal level, within one's heart and daily living.

Mission

Our mission is to demonstrate God's love to all humankind, especially to those who live on the spiritual, social, economic, and political margins of the world.

The photos on the front cover illustrate these three themes. The SNDs of the California region are

- at prayer,
- participating in a discernment exercise,
- initiating others into the Church,
- celebrating jubilees of religious profession...
- all under the patronage of Mary, Mother of the Church.

As Sisters of Notre Dame, we repeat these words in our vows: "I commit myself to serve the Church in the apostolic mission entrusted to this congregation." With this in mind, please know that we are dedicated to embracing this Synodal **communion**, **participation** and **mission**. And thank you for being our partners on this most awesome journey!

Gratefully,

Sister Mary Lisa Megaffin, S.N.D.

Sr. Lisa Megaffin, S.N.D.

Director of Mission Advancement Services

The Universal Synod at La Reina

DURING THE SPRING, THE RELIGION CLASSES AT LA REINA HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL PARTICIPATED IN A SCHOOLWIDE EXPERIENCE OF THE SYNOD.

Religion Department Chair Chad Ribordy felt that the Synod provided an important opportunity to engage the student body in conversations occurring in the parishes around the world. Religion teachers oriented the students to the purpose of the Synod, and using various resources,



Sandra Gutierrez shares her perspectives on the synod questions.



Ariel Sun and Anya Zhu participate in a table discussion across grade levels.

questions similar to those used in the parishes were prepared.

On March 21, students were divided into groups according to their religion classes, and sophomores, juniors and seniors acted as facilitators. Each group was a mixture of middle school and high school students. Sessions began with an opening song and prayer, a brief explanation of the groups' responsibilities, then group interaction. After some moments for silent reflection, the facilitator invited each member of the group to respond to each question. The sessions each ended with some brief sharing and a final prayer.

Eventually, the responses were compiled and a general form was submitted to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

In general, the students believe:

- The Church should be more open to listening to new ideas, especially coming from young people.
- They enjoy prayer; Mass gives them an opportunity to connect with God.
- There should be greater dialogue between the Church and other religions and with people with no religious affiliation.
- Some social issues need more attention, such as racism, poverty, the environment and the rights of those on the margins.
- More female representation in the decision-making bodies of the Church is needed.
- They like the fact that the Church gives them the opportunity to form community.

A senior who served as a facilitator summarized this experience: "I was able to see my relationship with the Church and God in a different light. This Synod exercise was an opportunity to accept the thinking of other students and respect them. I ended up opening my mind a lot, learning from the students, and making new friends."



(Left to Right) Ella Coleman, Sloane Yanicelli, and Lily Ladin engage in respectful discourse. Sloane recorded the group's comments.

Education, Empowerment, Leadership, and Service

On April 9, Sisters, Associates, and donors from across the United States tuned in LIVE with the SNDs in leadership in East Africa. Sr. Christine Syombua, Delegation Superior, was joined by panelists from Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda to speak about the milestones, blessings, and future dreams for the SNDs in their respective countries. Speakers included: Sr. Kellen Muthoni, Sr. Elizabeth Wanza Mulako, Sr. Rozaria Katusabe, Sr. Therese Marie Nabbaka, and Sr. Teresa Kimario. Donors and friends have the chance to see firsthand how their gifts have been making a difference on the other side of the world! Together, we experience the great blessings of being one part of an international congregation and a global Church.

The Notre Dame charism is so vibrant, alive and strong in the speakers and the ministries they represented. While many African women occupy the margins of their society, the educational opportunities and vocational training that the Sisters make available to them enables them not only to engage in dignified, self supporting work, but also prepares them for leadership roles within their communities. Many viewers commented that they had no idea of the scope and number of programs the Sisters of Notre Dame are supporting across East Africa. Suzanne Devaney viewed the Zoom from California. She wrote, “I was inspired that in a very short 25 years the vision of Saint Julie could be brought to this area of Africa and blossom in a new culture. It is amazing that the missionaries could listen so well and adapt to the needs, the desires, and the practices and culture of a new nation. The new growth is a tribute to the original visionaries.”



Pictured here are the California SNDs who served in or visited the East Africa mission. They are: (top row) Sr. M. Rebekah Kennedy, Sr. M. Colette Theobald, Sr. M. Paulyne Tubick, Sr. Jane Marie McHugh, Sr. M. Annette Adams (returned missionary from Chardon, OH), Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon, Sr. Mary Amy Hauck, Sr. Margaret Mary Scott, Sr. Rose Marie Tulacz. Front Row: Sr. Marie Paul Grech, Sr. Betty Mae Bienlein, Sr. M. Regina Robbins, Sr. M. Teresita Keliher.



East African SNDs preparing for their final vows minister in the Kicheko slums in Kenya.

An emerging priority for the East Africa delegation is justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. Every ministry site is making active efforts to conserve natural resources. Each Sister shared the ways that the ministries in her area were educating children and the community on ecology: from responsible use of water, to planting projects in both the city and rural areas. Sisters are also acquiring compressed firewood and educating their communities on how to use more sustainable fuel sources in light of the deforestation happening in Africa. Many of their upcoming projects reflect the need for environmentally sustainable infrastructure in East Africa.

The Sisters are incredibly grateful to the donors who helped fund a borehole well and pump in Buseesa, Uganda. Access to safe, reliable drinking water remains a concern across East Africa. Wherever Sisters of Notre Dame are serving, they work to bring this life-saving resource to the poor. The schools in Uganda and Tanzania are in need of water purification systems. Two sites in Tanzania were also identified as needing either a borehole or rainwater collection system.

Sr. Kellen Muthoni shared about the vocational training programs offered through the Zinduka Women's Centre in Tanzania, in particular the tailoring program for girls who do not receive an education past primary school. The sisters plan to develop vocational training programs for the semi-nomadic Maasai people in Simanjiro as well as for women and children in the urban centers of Mpala, Uganda and Arusha, Tanzania.

SND Associate Jim Ford expressed, “I was glad to have the opportunity to see the results of the hard work that the



Students at St. Julie Model Primary Boarding School perform household chores, such as washing clothes, from a young age. They are taught methods to conserve water while maintaining proper hygiene practices.

Sisters have achieved in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. The Lord has exceedingly blessed their handiwork.” The Sisters of Notre Dame in East Africa are witnessing to God’s good and provident care in these diverse, creative ministries. And thank you to each one of you who has prayed for and supported the work of the missionary sisters over the years. Their powerful legacy has indeed born lasting fruits!



Sr. M. Colette Theobald instructs young women interested in becoming Sisters of Notre Dame in Uganda, Africa.



You can view the entire presentation at
www.sndusa.org/africazoom.
Or simply scan this QR code.

An Amazing Adventure of Love

Sr. M. Colette Theobald, originally from the California region, ministered in Uganda from 2005 until 2022. All of the SNDs missioned to East Africa between 1992 and 2022 shared their reflections in a booklet compiled by Sr. Annete Adams and gifted to the East Africa Holy Spirit Delegation. Sr. Colette wrote these words of encouragement:

God has called each of us to an amazing adventure of love. We can reach the heights of holiness if we allow our charism, mission, spirit, vows, indeed the entire Constitutions, to fill us and transform us. Then we will be happy because we are living our calling.

*God’s love called us as we are to be consecrated to Him. Each of us, therefore, is loved more than we can ask or imagine. Of course, we are always trying to follow Christ more perfectly, not to earn his love, but rather to imitate our Beloved. I pray that each African SND will “be who she is” when she is alone, with friends, with community members, with superiors, even with the Pope! **Be who you are**, that is, the one God called.*

The SNDs in California have been thrilled to welcome Sr. Colette home. When you “meet” the East African leadership team through the recorded Zoom, you can witness their dynamic spirits and unique gifts.



SNDs in Tanzania operate three programs to prepare students in rural areas to enter primary school. Pictured here is a Tanzanian child learning to write with her finger in the dirt.

Journey to the Divine

THE SYNOD THEME OF COMMUNITY REFLECTS ONE OF THE KEY TENETS OF CHRISTIANITY. IN GATHERING THE APOSTLES TOGETHER, JESUS MADE IT CLEAR THAT FAITH IS NOT EXCLUSIVELY A ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONSHIP, BUT THAT FAITH INCLUDES A SHARING OF BELIEFS, COMMON PRAYER, FELLOWSHIP, MUTUALITY, SERVICE AND A SENSE OF SHARED DESTINY.

In the book of Genesis, God said, “It is not good for Adam to be alone.” Simply stated, everyone needs companions on the journey. In more contemporary parlance, “it takes a village” not just to raise a child, but for mutual support.

Contemporary Christian spiritual direction traces its roots to ancient philosophers and various faith traditions. It is the practice of sharing one’s experience of God and cultivating a life of ongoing spiritual growth.

The word “director” is a bit of a misnomer. The best example is from the entertainment industry in which a director interprets a script with a certain element of control over casting, artistic renderings, music, etc. By contrast, a spiritual director is a companion on one’s journey into a deeper relationship with God. In every spiritual direction conversation, there are three participants: the directee, the director and the Holy Spirit.

A number of Sisters of Notre Dame and SND Associates have heard the call to formally journey with others, and they have pursued the training and formation to be certificated spiritual directors. Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit, both the directee **and** the director experience transformation that is growth-filled and healing. The experience of being a spiritual director is summarized by Sr. Leanne Hubbard:

Being a spiritual director feeds my faith in the Living God. I am witness to the movements of grace in the everyday lives of my directees. Sometimes I feel like a safari leader looking at the same landscape together and being able to point out the wonders ever so subtly hidden in the ordinary brush. Sometimes I feel like a marriage counselor helping to facilitate the conversation between the directee and his or her Beloved. This work is “evangelizing,” that is, proclaiming the Good News that God is alive and active, loving, encouraging and saving even now, and especially in our age. Walking with others in spiritual direction in their “joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties” (Gaudium et Spes #1) is the closest I come to the heart of God in my own life of faith. I stand in awe at every encounter.

For further information about engaging with a spiritual director, please email your request to infoca@sndusa.org.



“WHAT IS SHARED IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IS UNIVERSAL. IT IS ABOUT HOW ONE LOVES, FORGIVES, GRIEVES, AND CHOOSES WHAT IS MOST LIFE-GIVING. IT WALKS THROUGH THE QUESTIONS: WHO AM I? WHO DO I WANT TO BECOME? HOW AM I GOING TO GET THERE?”
~ SND ASSOCIATE TAM LONTOK



Tam Lontok (right) shares a joyful moment with fellow Associates Terri Bond (left) and Tresa Gowland (middle).



“I AM AWED BY THE FACT THAT OTHERS TRUST ME TO KEEP OUR CONVERSATIONS CONFIDENTIAL. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE YOUNG WOMAN SAID, ‘I AM TELLING YOU, BUT I’M NOT READY TO TELL MY MOTHER YET.’”
~ SR. M. JUDEEN JULIER





"I WILL ALWAYS CHERISH A CONVERSATION WITH A BAPTIST MINISTER WHO SAID TO ME: 'WE ARE ALIKE, WE SEARCH, WE FAIL, WE WANT GOOD. SO WE SHARE QUESTIONS NOT TO FIND ANSWERS, BUT TO BECOME ONE.'"

~ SR. RITA MARIE SCHROEDER



"BEING A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE. ONE OF THE FIRST PEOPLE I DIRECTED, NOW DECEASED, WAS AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN EPISCOPALIAN PRIEST, REV. ALBERTINE. A POWERHOUSE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE HERSELF, SHE REMINDED ME OF WHAT A SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SUPERVISOR TOLD US ONE DAY: 'SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IS TWO PEOPLE SITTING IN A ROOM TRYING TO FIND GOD. THE SAVING GRACE IS THAT GOD DESPERATELY WANTS TO BE FOUND AND IS ALWAYS REVEALING HIMSELF.'"

~ SR. MARY AMY HAUCK



"Contemporary Christian spiritual direction traces its roots to ancient philosophers and various faith traditions.

It is the practice of sharing one's experience of God and cultivating a life of ongoing spiritual growth."

Paying It Forward

La Reina High School senior Emelia Reinoso felt a deep connection with the students at Notre Dame Academy in Buseesa, Uganda, even though she has never met them in person. After learning about the challenges they faced in accessing clean water for drinking, cooking, and bathing, Emelia organized fundraising efforts not only at La Reina High School, but also at her former elementary school, St. Mary Magdalen School in Camarillo, CA.

When students in California learned about the challenges faced by the students at the SND schools in Uganda, they realized how lucky they are. Emelia admitted, “I’ve left faucets on and never really had regard



Emelia Reinoso, pictured with her parents Dr. Marc Reinoso and Amy Jo Reinoso.

for it until I realized how scarce it was.” In addition to raising \$3,560, Emelia educated students in her community from TK-12th grade on the critical need for safe water in Africa.

Principal Michael Ronan said he was happy for the St. Mary Magdalen School (which is an SND Affiliated school) to be involved in the effort.

“It really seemed like a perfect opportunity for us to help open their

eyes to a global view and also support the good work,” the principal said. “It’s one thing to preach the faith, but this is a great opportunity for the kids to put their faith into action.”

NDA Media Symposium

In April, the Notre Dame Academy community engaged in its second Inquiry Symposium, a community-wide conversation about the media, with guest speakers and student-led workshops on topics such as “Is Free Speech Really Free?,” “How is Social Media Affecting International Relations?,” and “The Misrepresentation of Asians in the Media.” Students explored the media through multiple lenses and made



connections through conversations ranging from technological advances to how media’s usage affects changes in the relationships among people and countries, as well as how to become a responsible content creator.

Speakers included writers, producers, and global business leaders. The symposium is one aspect of NDA’s new Emphasis Program, which also includes experiential learning opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom. The Emphasis Program equips students with the skills needed to be innovative, critical thinkers, able to navigate complex global structures.

The Grapevine

MISSION MOMENTS

“My most recent memory which has been very powerful has been with Joe, a person in hospice care. He was a missionary in Israel in his younger years and has been a believer his entire life. I bring my Bible and read some of his favorite passages. All he does is listen, nods his head and whispers, ‘Amen.’ He tells me that he is so happy that the Lord brought me to his bedside. The feeling is very mutual.”
~Sr. Betty Mae Bienlein

SND Associate Warren Smith has 16 colleagues, employed by Boeing, in Ukraine. SNDs and Associates have volunteered to serve as their “prayer angels,” daily interceding for them by name.

STAY IN THE KNOW!

The California Mission Advancement is pleased to publish a monthly egram on recent SND life and ministry. To subscribe, send your name and email address to info@sndusa.org.

PLANNED GIVING

By including the Sisters of Notre Dame in a bequest or trust, or as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy, donors can share God’s goodness with thousands of lives entrusted to our care. These gifts enable your most cherished values to become your living legacy. Our legal title is “The Sisters of Notre Dame.” For further information, please contact Sr. Lisa Megaffin at the Regional Office. Thank you for the many ways you are in partnership with the Sisters of Notre Dame. Our prayers are always with you!

CROSSROADS



AN UPDATE FROM THE TOLEDO REGION | SUMMER 2022

*"Train up a child in the way they should go; even
when they are old they will not depart from it."*
Proverbs 22:6



Inside:
**Sisters Chat
About
Experiences with
Youth and
Young Adults**

God wants us to experience joy!

Summertime is here! Nature's beauty is on full display; flowers in bloom, lush shades of green all around, and the sun shining down on us. The longer days of summer remind us that God wants us to experience joy. Whether it is cooking out with neighbors, watching grandkids play baseball, or just taking time to go for a walk and enjoy God's creation, we hope that your summer is filled with opportunities to relax and have some fun!

Speaking of fun, I think you will enjoy this issue of Crossroads. The Sisters of Notre Dame have guided and nurtured so many young people to realize their potential over the years and they recall some of their favorite experiences working with youth and young adults in the Sister-to-Sister article. The crossword puzzle below will certainly be a fun way to spend a couple minutes of your day and be sure to note on the back cover the upcoming, fun events the sisters are hosting. On these pages we also pay tribute to the sisters who have passed recently. While we miss them here on earth, we know that they are experiencing eternal joy with our Father in Heaven.

On behalf of The Sisters of Notre Dame, thank you for your support and generosity. We continue to pray that you feel all the joy that this season provides.

Sincerely,

KERRI ROSE-ROCHELLE
Director, Mission Advancement

CROSSROADS CROSSWORD

CROSSWORD

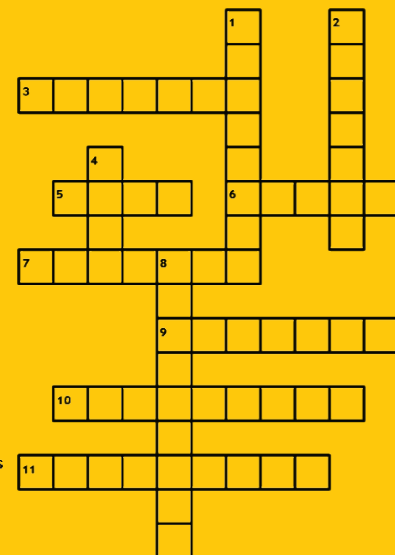
ACROSS:

3. SND USA Provincial Center city
5. Poverty, Chastity, Obedience
6. SND Toledo Region sponsors this many institutions
7. Country where SND was founded
9. Notre Dame in English (two words)
10. A woman in the first steps of religious formation
11. Flower sometimes associated with SND

DOWN:

1. The work of a sister
2. Term used for a sister's anniversary of profession
4. Number of regions that make up SND USA
8. Monastic and _____ are the two types of religious congregations

Find the answer key on Facebook on the Toledo Region group page:
Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States: Toledo, OH



TOLEDO REGION ADVANCEMENT DEPARTMENT



KERRI ROSE-ROCHELLE
Mission Advancement Director



SR. MARY CAROL GREGORY, SND
Advancement Team Advisor



SR. SALLY MARIE BOHNETT, SND
Donor Relations/Grant Writing



ERICA TYBURSKI
Advancement & Communications
Coordinator



SR. MARY VALERIE SCHNEIDER
Crossroads Contributor

Sister-to-Sister



SISTER BERNETA SCHNEIDER
Posted 1 hour ago

I received the nicest thank you note from Julie Kneip, a senior at Toledo Central Catholic. She said, "I was never supposed to be in Honors Religion this year, yet somehow I received my schedule and found my seat in your room during period one. Without this class I would not have grown in prayer and my relationship with God. It was not a fluke in the scheduling that caused me to be in your class; it was a work of God."

65

Love

Comment

10 Comments



SISTER VALERIE SCHNEIDER
Commented 45 minutes ago

What a lovely sentiment, Sister. We Sisters know it's no fluke that our ministries take us east to Port Clinton, OH, south to Jacksonville, FL, or west to Fort Wayne, IN. It's no fluke that we find ourselves smack dab in major parish or school issues and projects. It's no fluke when we lay our heads on our pillows at night and breathe with our last ounce of energy, "God, how did I ever get to do such beautiful work for you?" And it's no fluke that we Sisters are the recipients of belonging in this circle of daily grind and humor, which is another name for God's Plan deluged by the love of Christ poured out for the life of the world. I wonder how many other "flukes" sisters recall? Who can share a time when God had more in mind for the young people you work with?

70

Love

Comment



SISTER KRISTA BENDA
Commented 41 minutes ago

As a church musician and composer, I aim to create music that spiritually sustains God's people and praises God. I enjoy working with adult choirs and cantors for Sunday liturgies, weddings, and funerals, and I get to play for elementary school liturgies. I can't help but smile when I see the children's little bodies try to rein in excess energy for what may seem like an eternity to them. Whatever the age, I hope that I may always be a visible representative of God. Everything I think, say, do should be in tandem with what Jesus would think, say, do, as far as humanly possible, frail humanity notwithstanding.

64

Love

Comment



SISTER MARYA CZECH
Commented 37 minutes ago

It was no fluke when I answered an invitation from Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments to be on an advisory committee implementing an EPA Urban Waters grant. What became the Junction Urban Waters Project, funded by the federal EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, introduced me to the urban community with which I now walk—historically one of the oldest African American neighborhoods in Toledo. I am now working with a young ecologist, to develop a year-long program for "all things water" including area environmental careers and professions, our urban river system, the policies that protect water safety, and a summer service-learning trip to Lake Superior.

65

Love

Comment

1 Comment



SISTER VALERIE SCHNEIDER
Commented 14 minutes ago

And it was certainly no fluke that your parents survived Auschwitz and brought you into this world! You were God's plan!

50

1



SISTER JACULIN MANDERS
Commented 36 minutes ago

As a tutor and writing coach for the TRIO Student Services Program at Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio, I find that there is nothing quite like the energy and enthusiasm that young adults bring to every day. I look forward to each encounter with their honesty and straightforward communication, and I cherish all I have learned from them over the years. If they know that you care about them, listen to them, are genuinely interested in their thoughts and aspirations, and encourage them to believe in themselves, they will amaze you! There's nothing like their humor either. One memorable tidbit from those earlier years of high school teaching: One day students moved a computer classroom to another room still dusty from recent construction. Everything had to be scrubbed! One senior called me to his work area. He begged, "Sister, please don't tell my Mom I know how to do this!"

60



Love



Comment

1 Comment



SISTER CAROL GREGORY
Commented 20 minutes ago

Did you tell his mother? 😊 You have inspired many, Sister!

61



Love



Comment



SISTER DEAN PFAHLER
Commented 35 minutes ago

While living in California for three years, I hosted online retreats for adults and youth during the pandemic and continued to do so after returning to Ohio. I will never forget the conversations I had with a young person who was discerning marriage. Well, needless to say, she decided to marry and now the happy couple is expecting their second child. Hearing from them as they raise their family in Christ is always welcome!

68



Love



Comment



SISTER CELINE BUNDSCHUH
Commented 32 minutes ago

Ever notice how Middle School students don't admit it, but they love to be read to? As a teacher at St. Richard School in Swanton, Ohio, I help students fall in love with reading and writing. Motivating them takes numerous forms, including a class trip to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and a Cleveland Guardians game. Youth, especially seventh and eighth graders, are never what they seem to present. My philosophy is to always be firm, consistent, and funny with them. Lead them to make Jesus the center of their lives. I enjoy working with teens and have attended 13 TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) retreats. I feel blessed to work with youth and especially blessed as I watch them take on roles in the parish. They have helped me grow spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Sometimes I see a bit of me in them. I pray I do the same for them.

68



Love



Comment



SISTER KAREL SCHWARTZ
Commented 29 minutes ago

Like Sr. Celine, I also enjoy junior high students, a group that has a positive and hopeful view of life, eager to take on challenges, loyal to their friends and willing to be of service. A former student I had at Gesu School, Toledo, Dennis Garvin, worked for the Toledo MetroParks and would come to my classroom to give talks about parks. After his talks, Dennis and I would invite other former teachers from Gesu to join us at Starbucks to learn news of many former students. As time went on, Dennis was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, and soon after, his wife Annette died from a brain tumor. My friendship with Dennis grew closer and he called often as the disease began to take away his ability to live alone. We would pray together and he would amaze me how positive and peaceful he was before his death in November 2021. From student to friend—God certainly had more in mind when he brought Dennis into my classroom.

67



SISTER ELAYNE BOCKEY
Commented 25 minutes ago

I never expected to return to my hometown of Delphos, Ohio; however, an unexpected event led to my teaching all the Spanish classes at St. John High School, as well as weekly Spanish classes in grades one through four for the past five years. I often see several children from the same family in one day! I see my ministry as a joy and my presence in Delphos as a grace. I am amazed at the students' spontaneity. One day a girl blurted in class, "I'm thinking about being a sister." On another day this same girl asked, "What is hardest about being a sister?" Her curiosity led me to invite students to a meal with the sisters in the convent. Afterwards, one of the students excitedly told her mother, "Mom, they're so normal!" 😊 Recently I connected with a fellow NDA alum who asked, "Remember me?" Of course! She was class president for our senior class and I was senior class moderator while we were both at NDA, but also was the mother of five of her children whom I taught five years each in Spanish. One son of this family became a campus minister, and the circle of discipleship continues from town to town.

62



Love



Comment

1 Comment



SISTER SALLY BOHNETT
Commented 15 minutes ago

They're so normal, what? LOL. So happy to hear of the student becoming a campus minister himself!

21



Love



Comment



SISTER KATHLEEN KNUEVEN
Commented 21 minutes ago

God certainly had something more in mind when Sister Paulena Williams, and Sister Teresita Richards and I formed the small community in Leipsic. We are so happy to be part of St. Mary's Parish, where parishioners feel being part of community is as normal as breathing. I particularly enjoy simulation activities during Lent that opened students' eyes to the purpose of outreach, as they experienced firsthand how to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty. Groups of students were given points with which to "buy" food for a week for a family. Students carried one or two gallons of water eight laps around the gym (1/2 mile) to imagine what walking five miles carrying 40 pounds would feel like. When asked if they were thirsty, they were offered a bottle of muddy water. Students had just been awestruck after viewing a film in which persons in developing countries drank, showered, and washed clothes in dirty water.

67



Love



Comment



SISTER TERESITA RICHARDS
Commented 10 minutes ago

I loved when SND novice, Sr. Kaitlin joined us and was part of the Advent activity in which all the girls in grades 5 through 8 met near the Christmas tree to learn about being a Sister, while the boys in those grades met in the rectory with the pastor and a neighboring Precious Blood priest. Such activities help young people consider what else God may have in mind for them.

80



Love



Comment



SISTER VALERIE SCHNEIDER
Commented Just Now

YOU(th)are God's Best Gifts Ever. Madeleine L'Engle, author, wrote "I only know that the gifts are given and that I believe in them" (*Walking on Water*). Sisters of Notre Dame, our colleagues, neighbors and friends agree. We realize God has something more in mind for these young people, and we step aside with faith in God's possibilities for them.

67



Love



Comment

ETERNAL REST

In Loving Memory

**SISTER MARY DAMIAN MENG**

May 8, 1928 – December 21, 2021
Religious Profession: August 16, 1949

Born to Louis and Caroline Meng in Genoa, Ohio, and baptized Helen Mary, she was the oldest of three children. After attending Clay-Genoa elementary school and Notre Dame Academy in Toledo, she entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1946 and received the name Sister Mary Damian, an appropriate name of the saint she imitated through her care of the sick.

During the early years of ministry, Sister was a teacher and principal at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Toledo. She enjoyed teaching the students in Grades 1 and 2 preparing them for their First Communion. In 1970 Sister became a Licensed Practical Nurse ministering in the SND Health Care Center in Toledo for 22 years. She lovingly assisted many sisters recovering from major health situations and those in their final days.

After retiring from the health care ministry, Sister moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, where she volunteered at St. Jude School and Parish for 24 years. One of her duties was sacristan of the Church, which she loved because this brought her closer to the Blessed Sacrament. Other times you found her helping in the school as office assistant, nurse, teacher aide and religion teacher.

Sister Mary Damian loved life and people, ever generous, loyal, and jovial. Her exhilarating laugh made everyone laugh with her. Her hobbies included quilts for babies, bedspreads, making cloth dolls, and baking delicious cookies and pies. Sister Mary Damian was a delightful, generous, prayerful community member with a heart of gold.

Sister died on December 21, 2021, at Rosary Care Center in Sylvania, Ohio, in her 73rd year of religious profession.

May she rest in peace.

**SISTER MARY BRIGID KELLY**

April 2, 1937 – January 4, 2022
Religious Profession: August 13, 1957

Born of immigrant parents Margaret and Edward Kelly, Irene Brigid, one of five children, had a strong Irish Catholic upbringing. Life revolved around church, work, school, relatives, and a social club her father set up to help widows and children of Irishmen who died young. She was thrilled when in 1996 she was able to visit her parents' family in Wales and Ireland.

Irene entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1955 and received the name Sister Mary Brigid. She wanted to live life "to the utmost," after seeing her father almost die in a hunting accident. She desired a life dedicated to God and to do things that "made a difference" in people's lives. After graduating from Notre Dame Academy in Toledo she continued her education and became a teacher. Sister taught children in grades 5-8 for 21 years in Catholic schools in Ohio and Indiana.

Earning a Master's degree in Religious Education opened opportunities in religious education and pastoral work, such as coordinator of religious education at parishes in Carmel, Indiana and Sandusky and Delphos, Ohio and in pastoral services in Cicero, Ohio and Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1998 she began chaplain ministry at hospitals in Tiffin and Toledo and facilitated mental health services. She also volunteered in prison ministry at the Toledo Correctional Facility.

Sister Mary Brigid is remembered as prayerful, selfless, kind, someone fun to be with, genuinely good, and generous with her time and talent. She died on January 4, 2022, at Rosary Care Center in Sylvania, Ohio. May she now experience loving God and being loved by him in a way never thought possible.

Rest in peace, Sister.

**SISTER MARY REGEEN ULRICH**

May 6, 1936 – January 16, 2022
Religious Profession: August 11, 1959

Born to Ernest and Angeline Ulrich, Susan Marie was the oldest of five children. She became acquainted with the Sisters of Notre Dame in her early school days at Ladyfield School in Toledo and then again when she attended Notre Dame Academy. Susan entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1956 and became a novice in 1957 receiving the name Sister Mary Regeen.

Sister ministered as a classroom teacher for 19 years in elementary schools in the Toledo Diocese before becoming an Art teacher at Lial Catholic School in Whitehouse, Ohio. In 1987 Sister's heart turned toward pastoral ministry for the next 22 years at Toledo parishes visiting the homebound and bringing them Holy Communion.

During this same time Sister began volunteer work of art enrichment for residents at hospitals and shelter houses, especially with women on the margins. Discovering their talents under Sister's encouragement, these women let art bring peace into their lives and build up their self-esteem. In return, Sister Mary Regeen felt how life-giving it was to her. She wrote, "No doubt, I am better able to understand the poor and their real needs and be Jesus' loving presence to them." The poor were ever in her heart as she worked hard to find shelter, food, or companionship for them.

Art was Sister Mary Regeen's joy and, for the rest of her life, became a means of expressing herself. "The ability to produce beautiful pieces is an extension of God's beauty," Sister Mary Regeen wrote. After three months of needed skilled nursing care because of acute pain and illness, she who loved a splash of color and all things beautiful, slipped away to behold the Source of all beauty.

May she be enfolded in the beauty of the Creator.

**SISTER ETHEL MARY CAMP**

August 10, 1925 – February 5, 2022
Religious Profession: August 13, 1945

"Lord our God, you have been our dwelling!" These words from a hymn composed by Sister Ethel Mary and sung at her 75th jubilee exemplify her life. Sister's ministry of prayer and music placed her in God's dwelling.

Born in Norwalk, Ohio, Ethel Rose was the eighth of twelve children of the late Aloysius and Mary Camp. Sister attended St. Joseph School, Monroeville, Ohio, and Notre Dame Academy in Toledo. Ethel entered the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1943 following in the footsteps of her older sister, Sister Mary Magdalea. At her investment Ethel received the name Sister Mary Lalande but later returned to her baptismal name.

After teaching elementary school children for ten years in the Catholic schools in the Toledo Diocese, she began extensive study of music education at the Gregorian Institute of America in Detroit, Michigan, Catholic University in Washington D.C., and DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. In 1957 she dedicated herself fulltime as music minister, choir director, and organist at several parishes as well as the SND Provincial Center in Toledo and Lial convent, in Whitehouse. Many hours were spent giving private piano and violin lessons to children and adults.

Sister's desire for a contemplative life of prayer and service inspired her to dedicate 15 years as an Adoration Sister in the Notre Dame Motherhouse in Rome from 1974-1977 and 1993-2005. Besides her many hours of prayer in chapel, she prepared liturgical services, played the organ, and contributed to the community life. Upon returning to Toledo, Sister continued her ministry of music and service. At the age of 96 God called Sister to her heavenly dwelling from her residence at Rosary Care Center in Sylvania, Ohio.

May she be united in the love of Mary and Jesus in melodious contemplation for all eternity.

**SISTER LEONIE MARIE MAIGRET**

April 29, 1942 – February 10, 2022
Religious Profession: January 7, 1989

In The Netherlands during World War II, Leonarda (Leonie) was the second child born to Leonardus and Paulina Maigret. Due to Air Raid Warnings, her baptism was in the dark but there was great rejoicing due to a new birth. In her second year of high school, the family with three girls and two boys left Soesteberg, Utrecht to come to Toledo, Ohio under the sponsorship of the Schoen family.

Leonie began high school at Central Catholic High School in Toledo with no knowledge of English, and eventually received a diploma from Burnham High School in Sylvania. In time she became a Certified Podiatric Assistant. Several Sisters of Notre Dame went to the same doctor for whom she worked. It was to these sisters that Leonie spoke, "Do you think I could become a Sister of Notre Dame?" She joined the community in 1986, at age 45.

Attending Lourdes College, Sister received an associate degree in gerontology in 1990. For many years she worked with the elderly sisters in the SND infirmary as an activities coordinator. She loved taking them on trips to shrines and the zoo and was always ready to plan a party. Her hearty laugh was a joy to the sisters, as was her Dutch accent which she never lost.

Ready for a new experience, in 2007 she accepted the position of coordinator of religious education at St. John Parish in North Charleston, South Carolina. She also became the art teacher for the elementary children in the parish school taking pottery and watercolor classes at the same time.

Illness caused her move to Rosary Care Center in Sylvania, where she resided six months before requiring hospice care. On February 10 Sister Leonie Marie heard Jesus' final summons, "Come follow Me".

May she be filled with the joy of being in her eternal home.

**"By living in
the presence of God
in the spirit of faith
we trust that one day
we will be led
to the fullness of joy
when we shall see
God face to face."**

**CONSTITUTIONS OF
THE SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME,
ARTICLE 52**

Upcoming Events

SHINE

WOMEN'S SUMMIT 2022

Lift Up Your Voice

Save the Date

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

AT THE VALENTINE THEATRE
IN DOWNTOWN TOLEDO

1:00 PM - 6:00 PM



Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States

To learn more visit:
www.sndusa.org



Join Honorary Chair Fran Anderson at the Sisters of Notre Dame Inaugural *Shine Women's Summit*

Chrys Peterson will host a keynote conversation with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, the author of *What the Eyes Don't See*, and the pediatrician who worked to expose the effects of the Flint, MI water crisis on children, followed by a panel discussion with local leaders:

Amy Remer, Sr. Suzette Fisher, Wendi Huntley, and Fire Chief Allison Armstrong.

The event will culminate with a cocktail reception and book signing.

Expect an afternoon of inspiration that will empower women of all faiths and backgrounds to

Lift Up Your Voice and Shine!

LIAL RENEWAL CENTER

OCT
21

Brother Michael McGrath, OSFS

Join us for a weekend with Brother Michael McGrath, OSFS, a professional artist from Camden, NJ, who has a passion for writing about and painting pictures of the life and ministry of socially active people who made a difference that still ignites people's spirits today. The retreat will be held October 21 - 23.

NOV
22

Dan Schutte Concert

A concert by Dan Schutte is at the Sisters of Notre Dame Center on Friday, November 4, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Dan is one of the best-known and most influential composers of Catholic and contemporary music for liturgy in the English-speaking world. Some of his most popular songs are: "Before the Sun Burned Bright," "City of God," "Here I am Lord."

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