



SND USA

SUMMER 2023



VOICES

ALSO INSIDE:

House of Hospitality Opens Its Doors to Border Volunteers

The Adventure of a Lifetime

The Gift of Mission



SND USA

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LETTER FROM **SND USA PROVINCIAL TEAM**

Dear Friends,

Ahh. Summer! As Ralph Waldo Emerson challenged us, together let's "Live in the sunshine. Swim in the sea. Drink in the wild air." We invite you to explore the transforming power of goodness that is all around us.

In this issue of *SND USA* magazine, we switched things up a bit. Rather than hearing from sisters about various SND activities and ministries across the country, readers will hear directly from individuals personally impacted by a sister engaged in one of our diverse ministries. It was both humbling and inspiring to hear the "voices" of so many individuals who experienced God's compassion and love through our work.

As in past issues, you will also read about an SND Associate, Jen Coito, of Thousand Oaks, California. She considers her involvement with the sisters "an adventure of a lifetime." Jen first became an SND Associate in 2007. Her work in the Mission Advancement Office, facilitating workshops and prayer series for young adults, connecting other SND Associates through the Associate newsletter, and many, many other activities continues to be a blessing to all of us.

We are also excited to share the opening of House of Hospitality in Laredo, Texas. This house provides lodging and transportation for sisters and Associates of any religious community, young adults and others volunteering at La Frontera Respite Center. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Laredo recently opened La Frontera where migrants who are seeking asylum are able to rest and are given food and clothing.

As always, thank you for your prayers and continued support of our ministries.

Gratefully,

The SND USA Provincial Team

VOICES

Since this *SND USA* magazine began publishing in Fall 2020, its articles have informed readers about the exciting happenings within the congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame and their outreach across the country. Issues reported on the reunification of the four SND provinces, and the three ministry priorities of SND USA: Education and Healthcare Ministry; Vocation & Young Adults Ministry; and Ministries on the Margins (JPIC). Other issues reported on SND's global missions, the heart of parish ministry, Catholic Social Teaching, and how lay leaders are embracing the SND mission and charism. Each magazine also included an article on an SND USA Associate and a spirituality article authored by a different sister each time.

Now we would like to share the unique voices of individuals and a couple who experienced God's goodness and care firsthand through various SND ministries. You will hear from Becky, a homeless woman, who found comfort and love at the Women's Outreach Center in Cleveland, Ohio; Tameka Bohanon, a former inmate at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville, Ohio, who met a treasured friend in Sister Dion Horrigan; Ramone, a young single father in Lorain, Ohio, in need of someone to care for his young children while he served time in prison; husband and wife Rafael Matos Ramirez and Ana Calderon Gesualdo who received assistance from Sisters Mary Jo Toll and Elizabeth Maria Garcia at Cristo Rey in Fostoria, Ohio; and Ernie, a young father — estranged from his children — whose life was turned around thanks to sisters at the Center for Living and Learning in Thousand Oaks, California.

We hope these and other voices to follow demonstrate how a life can be changed, a family can be reunited, and a heart can be warmed through simple acts of kindness and justice. Enjoy!

“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.”

- Micah 6:8

Shelter

And if I pass this way again,
you can rest assured

I'll always do my best for her,
on that I give my word

In a world of steel-eyed death,
and men who are fighting to be warm

“Come in,” she said.

“I'll give you shelter
from the storm.”

- Bob Dylan

Becky sits on the rough, red-brick wall outside of Franklin Circle Church (FCC), trying to escape the wind as it whips across Fulton Road in Cleveland. At her feet are two black garbage bags that contain all her worldly possessions. Her face is deep red and chapped due to days spent outside in the cold. Today, the temperature has dropped below 20 degrees, and tonight the forecast calls for single digits. Despite the bitter cold, Becky waits patiently for the doors to open.

FCC is home to the Women's Outreach Center, open from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. each Wednesday, offering women in this economically depressed neighborhood a safe place where they can learn to crochet and knit, engage in book discussions, participate in art and yoga therapy, enjoy a variety of field trips, and simply enjoy fellowship

from the Storm

with other women. As the doors open, Becky sighs with relief, anxiously gathers her belongings, and smiles. “Hello, I’m Becky. What’s your name?” she says. She also greets Hazel, another regular at the Center.

The Women’s Outreach Center was founded 19 years ago by Sisters Patti Gentile, SND, Felicia Petruziello, CSJ, and Carrie Vall, CSJ. “Women’s Outreach is a circle of women who gather together to support each other, create together, share their joy, learn from each other and celebrate successes. Many of the women in the circle have experienced homelessness. All are welcome to the circle. We are all one,” Sister Carrie explains.

Sister Patti concurs. “We began as a Center FOR women, and it has evolved into being a Center WITH women. That distinction is very important to us.” The program integrates elements of art therapy, poetry, personal reflection, and community building.

Becky graciously accepts a warm cup of coffee and a few ginger cookies. Today, the ladies will make jewelry with beads and string donated to the Center. The talk around the table is genial; many of the women attend each week and consider Sisters Patti and Carrie good friends. Hazel taught herself to knit and crochet by watching YouTube videos. A former Marine, Hazel works for Metanoia, a program that

Sister Patti Gentile chats with Women’s Outreach Center guest Becky.




runs the warming centers at Franklin Circle and Bethany Church where Becky has been sleeping.



(L-R) Sister Carrie Vall, CSJ, Becky, Sister Patti Gentile, SND, and Hazel

Soon, Becky’s head drops to her chest as she falls asleep. Tonight, like most nights, she will sleep next door at the neighborhood shelter, open for homeless at risk due to the low temperatures.

“I really like it here,” Becky says as she prepares to leave the Women’s Outreach Center and head back to brave the streets. “I’m glad it’s here.”

**To learn more about this joint ministry of the Sisters of Notre Dame and Congregation of St. Joseph, visit www.riversedgecleveland.com/womens-outreach. *

“Glory be to God!” Exclaims Former Prison Inmate

*Dear Sister Dion,
I just received your letter today. It is always a pleasure hearing from you. I am sooooo excited about our visit. I can't wait... This is a place that's hard to be at day in and day out, but it has taught me there's a consequence for making bad decisions. I don't want my kids to find out the hard way. Glory be to God! He has allowed me to come to such a place so my eyes, ears, and heart could be open to truly, truly receive Him. Now I can do things right, make better decisions, and teach my kids right. I thank you for praying for me daily.*

This letter was written to Sister Dion Horrigan by Tameka Bohanon on September 12, 2012, while Tameka was an inmate at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville, Ohio. Tameka had received a 17-year prison sentence for her role as the getaway driver during a home invasion. “Tameka wrote me from jail and asked if I could visit her,” Sister Dion recalls. “Our visits soon became weekly while she was in the Cuyahoga County Jail and then every three to four months while she was in Marysville. We also wrote hundreds of letters to each other while she was in prison.”

Sister Dion became active in prison ministry in 2010. She says the goal of prison ministry is simply “to be present to each woman and support her, particularly through intentional listening. Being in jail is a lonely experience. In prison ministry, I simply explore what areas are important to the women and follow their lead. I feel privileged and humbled to stand with women who are incarcerated.”


Tameka was eventually released from prison after serving 13 years. Today, she is home, employed, and thrilled to still be in touch with Sister Dion.

“Tameka is honest. Real. An intense person, and her priority is her children. I’ve kept this letter all these years because it touched me so deeply,” says Sister Dion, gently placing her left hand over her heart.

“Sister Dion has made a huge impact in my life,” Tameka declares. “I always believed in God. That’s how I was raised. However, I am a visual person, and I had not seen His power. Sister Dion exhibited the love of God so that I was able to see Christ through her. I was in the darkest part of my life. I didn’t hear or see my family or friends as time passed in prison. Sister Dion was with me throughout those 13 years. Sister Dion was faithful. She is an amazing woman.”

The mother of six says she acknowledges God is still at work in her life. “I know God is preparing some things for me,” Tameka emphatically states. “Today, I went to church and cried so much my eyes hurt. I wasn’t crying because I’m sad. I was crying because I love God so much. I can’t see what He’s doing, and I don’t understand a lot of my circumstances, but that’s ok. I trust God and know His word will never come back void.”

Now employed full-time in manufacturing, Tameka plans to stay connected with Sister Dion and intends to speak to women in prison. “The cards and letters inmates receive mean so much to them. Many never have any interaction with people on the outside. I would encourage others interested in getting involved to write the women who are incarcerated or send them periodic cards.”

She concludes, “I would eventually like to open a re-entry home for women who have been incarcerated. I know the struggle of re-entry. If I can make it easier on these women, I would love to do that.” 



Tameka Bohanon and
Sister Dion Horrigan, SND

Ramone and his two sons
at Blessing House

The House With A Heart

Thirty-three-year-old dad Ramone visits Blessing House, located in Lorain, Ohio, to share how one Sister of Notre Dame and her ministry dramatically impacted his life and that of his children. At the onset, the soft-spoken gentleman wants to be clear: “I made some very dumb decisions several years ago, and I was on my way to prison. At the time, my son, Zion, was only one-and-a-half years old and my other son, Ramone, was just six months old. I had custody of the boys. It was a crazy time. I needed to find someone to care for my boys. I needed to talk to someone. I went to a Catholic church and was given Sister Mary Berigan’s name and that of Blessing House.”

Blessing House is a children’s crisis care center, caring for children birth through age 12, whose parents or caregivers are facing a crisis or emergency or experiencing a high stress level that might put their children at risk of abuse or neglect. In addition to founders Sister Mary Berigan and Donna Humphrey, Blessing House is staffed with trained employees who care for the children in a safe and loving environment. Open every day of the year, Blessing House is licensed to care for up to 20 children at a time.

“We provide information and assistance to families to help them address their crisis,” states Sister Mary with a smile. “Anyone can make a referral or request placement for their children at Blessing House. Placements depend on the availability of space and the circumstances of the children and families. Families maintain custody of their children while the children are at Blessing House. We believe all children have a right to be in a safe environment and families in crisis need support, encouragement, and connections to positive, helpful resources.”

“When I first met with Sister Mary, I broke down crying,” Ramone humbly admits. “She agreed to take care of my boys while I was in prison.”



He sadly considers those missed years. “Ramone started walking while he was here at Blessing House. Zion calls Blessing House a ‘happy place.’ Sister Mary and her staff really care about children and their safety.”

Ramone is glad to be home now and have full custody of his boys. “This would have never happened without Sister Mary and Blessing House. I know my kids would have been ten times worse staying with their mother or grandmother. I still question my parenting sometimes — there is no book on how to be a perfect parent — but I know as long as I show them love and give them love, everything will be fine.”

*For more information on Blessing House or to help support this ministry, please call us at 440.240.1851.

CB

**“...but I know as long
as I show them love
and give them love,
everything will be fine.”**

– Ramone

¡Viva Cristo Rey!

Parts of this interview were transcribed through translation by Sr. Elizabeth Garcia

Staffed solely by two Sisters of Notre Dame, Cristo Rey Center Immigration Services operates out of a small square building in Fostoria, Ohio, about an hour southeast of Toledo. The sisters joined efforts with the Cristo Rey Center in the neighboring community of Fremont to set up this ministry in 2022, but Sisters Mary Jo Toll and Elizabeth Maria Garcia, both accredited representatives of the Department of Justice, collectively have seven decades of experience helping immigrants, specifically through their work with the former En Camino organization.

Today, husband and wife Rafael Matos Ramirez and Ana Calderon Gesualdo have come by the center after work to visit. The couple is celebrating Ana passing her citizenship exam. Ana and Rafael are clients of Sister Elizabeth. With Sister's help, Ana prepared for two

months for the 100-question interview and exam.

"This office is wonderful because it helps the migrants," says Ana.

"Migrants from many lands," adds Rafael.

Sister Mary Jo mentions that the sisters have helped people from 17 nations since 2006.

"And the price is just right," laughs Rafael.

Sister Elizabeth explains that it can become very costly to hire an attorney to help navigate the naturalization process. The Cristo Rey Center charges clients only a nominal fee to help cover expenses of administrative costs. The operating expenses for the center are offset by donors; even the office building where Sisters Mary Jo and Elizabeth host client visits has been donated.



Rafael Matos Ramirez and Ana Calderone Gesualdo

Sisters Elizabeth Maria Garcia and Mary Jo Toll at the Cristo Rey Center Immigration Services office



“The way we have been treated here is so wonderful. Not every office treats immigrants with respect and dignity,” Ana says.

Ana and Rafael live an hour away from the Cristo Rey Center, but Rafael says it is well worth the drive to work with someone who cares so much.

The day before Ana’s exam, Sister Elizabeth called her to put her at ease and give her an informal pre-test. Sister Elizabeth says Ana answered all the questions and was confident that she would excel, but Ana emphasizes that she was still very nervous. Gesturing to her heart and wide-eyed, Ana said, “¡El corazón me láte muy rapido!”

Ana says it was important to her to become a citizen. “I have wanted to come to the United States since I was a little girl. Now that I am a citizen, I feel like I have raised myself up. I can walk with my chin a little higher.”

Although the preparation was a lot of work, Ana says she was happy to learn the information on the citizenship exam because it gave her an even greater appreciation for how wonderful the United States is. “In America it doesn’t matter how old you are. You can still learn and contribute as much as you want to.”

Rafael explains that in his native Dominican Republic it is usual for people to stop working at 45 to 50 years old. “When you stop working, you feel less valued, less worthy. Here, it is so great to see people live their full potential for as long as they choose to,” he says.

When asked what she would say about Sister Elizabeth’s assistance, Ana exclaims, “Beautiful!” in

English as she smiles and joyously throws her arms up in the air. “She stuck with me to make sure I passed. She cared about me passing as much as I did.”

“Sister Elizabeth has become such an important person in our lives. She even traveled with us to Cleveland to get my fingerprinting done,” says Rafael.

Sister Elizabeth humbly interrupts, “Oh, but it was a fun trip, even if it was a cold day in Cleveland! ¡Muy frio!”

“The way they work with people — the respect, the thoroughness — you can see how much they care about the people they are helping,” continues Rafael.


After her experience, Ana has already recommended Cristo Rey to three friends. Although word of mouth is the only way Cristo Rey advertises, the sisters stay busy with a constant stream of clients. The Fostoria area is home to many migrant farm camps and a large immigrant population, making this ministry vital to the community.

“We usually serve around 50 clients a year,” says Sister Mary Jo. “It is a privilege to work with so many people who, like Ana and Rafael, are willing to work hard and are very passionate about achieving their goal of citizenship.”

Ana wants to keep working and continue learning. Her next goal is to improve her English.

Rafael continues to prepare and is waiting for his exam date to be scheduled with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

In Spanish, *¡Viva Cristo Rey!* means *Long live Christ the King*. It is certain that Christ’s abundant love is alive in this ministry. As Rafael and Ana wrap up their visit and prepare to make the 60-minute trek home, Ana waves to all in the room and says, “Dios los bendiga. (God bless you),” then embraces Sister Elizabeth tightly and tells her in perfectly clear English, “I love you.”

For assistance with immigration services in Northwest Ohio, or to learn more about Cristo Rey, please call 419-619-3625. 

“The way we have been treated here is so wonderful. Not every office treats immigrants with respect and dignity.”

– Ana Calderon Gesualdo

Border Crossing Experience

By Ann Clark, co-director, JPIC

In January 2023, I was part of a Notre Dame group volunteering with immigrant families on the Mexican side of the Mexico-California border. At this Border Compassion experience, I was joined by Sisters Judeen Julier, Paulynne Tubick, Val Roxburgh, Kelley Rush, and Kaitlin Morse.

We worked with Sister Suzanne Jabro, CSJ, the founder and organizer of Border Compassion, a faith-based non-profit organization working at the Calexico-Mexicali border. In addition to helping migrant families, Border Compassion welcomes faith communities to share the “crossing over” experience through compassionate service at the Cobina Posada del Migrante Shelter in Mexicali.

Because it’s a four-hour drive from Long Beach to Calexico, our SND group traveled on Wednesday to Calexico where we met people from various groups who were also going to Cobina Posada del Migrante on Thursday. Three people were from Capacitar, Inc., an organization that offers techniques for healing to children and adults dealing with trauma and anxiety. We also met several young people from iACT, a Los Angeles-based NGO focusing on organizing global humanitarian aid.

At 9 a.m. on Thursday we crossed over into Mexico and arrived at Cobina Posada del Migrante in Mexicali. Once at the shelter, we were greeted by staff members and by those who have had to make this shelter their home, some for over 18 months, some just arriving the previous day.

Each time Sister Suzanne “crosses over,” she brings people like us to offer care and compassion. Our tasks included shopping for food, serving lunch, playing with the children and doing crafts and activities with them, and just being present. Those who speak Spanish have conversation; those who do not, find someone who is bilingual.

The Cobina Posada del Migrante is a repurposed hotel about two miles from the border. Women and children stay in the rooms of the old hotel, two or three families to a room that measures about 10 feet by 12 feet. The men sleep outside in tents in the courtyard area. Another part of the courtyard serves as the play space for the children. This area must also be set up and torn down for tables and chairs for mealtimes. There is also a kitchen area



Sisters of Notre Dame work at the Calexico-Mexicali border.

where three meals are prepared each day for the 300 people living at Cobina.

On an ordinary day at Cobina, the men are out working, while the women stay at the shelter, cooking, attending to daily tasks, and caring for the children, who range in age from two months to teenagers.

We met with many of the people staying at the shelter. Here are a few stories.

One man was from Guatemala, where he was a shoemaker. Because of horrific violence he was forced to leave his home and travel toward a safer place.

Another young man was leaving Guatemala because of the threat of violence against him, including assault and death. He wanted to get to some family members in California. A “coyote,” someone who smuggles people into the United States, had promised that he could get this young man to his relatives in California. But because the young man did not understand the process for claiming asylum, he was taken advantage of by the coyote, and was stranded in Mexicali.


We met a mother traveling with her five children, fleeing from another part of Mexico because her fifteen-year-old son was threatened with death. Her four younger children ranged in age from early teens to six years old. As I was speaking with her, her son was not feeling well, and he looked so uncomfortable.

A young man from El Salvador was threatened by gangs because he helped identify his attackers. Afterward, he

was targeted by the cartel, threatened with murder, and had his home bombed. He was robbed in Mexico, and his phone – which had held the proof of these crimes back in his home country – was stolen.

Right now, the U. S. is requiring that those seeking asylum come to the United States from their country of origin, which means they must fly in. That is not possible for most immigrants. They must also use a particular app on a smartphone to apply, which is difficult to use and often crashes. They must also have a passport from their country and have a financially responsible person in the United States willing to sponsor their arrival. The asylum seeker must show proof of the violence and circumstances that they are claiming. For many, this is on their phones. Very often on their journeys they are robbed, losing the proof they had for their asylum case.

This was a humbling experience, leaving me with a profound sense of the motivation and struggles migrants face when trying to flee their home countries for a better life in the United States.

To learn more about Border Compassion visit www.border-compassion.org. 



Each time Sister Suzanne “crosses over,” she brings people like us to offer care and compassion.

Sister Kelley Rush, Sister Valerie Roxburgh, Sister Kaitlin Morse, Sister Judeen Julier, Sister Paulyne Tubick and Ann Clark

Our Home Tells A Story Of Hope

Located in a rust-orange brick building alongside St. Monica Parish's office on Rockside Road in Garfield Heights, Ohio, is Zelig's Home. A black, steel grill butts up to the entrance wall while a pink Big Wheel, a two-wheel bicycle with training wheels, and two picnic tables at the entry way porch provide the only clues that women and children reside in this former convent.

Zelig's Home is a caring community that empowers pregnant and parenting women to take positive and effective action on behalf of themselves and their children. Sister Kate Hine explains that "Zelig's Home is a home of hospitality that provides an option for moms desiring to make positive changes in their lives through physical, professional, and spiritual care. Currently, there are ten moms living in Zelig's Home and seven children."

Naomy, 18, is glad to have found Zelig's Home as she nears the end of her pregnancy. Her son, to be named Kadryle, is due in a few weeks. "I was in a shelter and heard about this place from a lady there," Naomy recalls. "I've lived here now for three months. When I was young, I lived with my grandparents, but as they aged, they could no longer care for me. From age 11 to 18, I've been in foster care. My mom passed away and my dad is a drug addict."

Naomy curls up on an upholstered chair in a sitting room at Zelig's Home. "I didn't like foster care, and I was headed down a bad path," she honestly reflects. "I ran away a lot, and for that, I was locked up a few times in the juvenile detention center. This place gives me stability. I was on the streets, homeless multiple times. I'm a survivor."

Naomy has forged a friendly relationship with the staff and volunteers at Zelig's Home. "Sister Kate is good. I don't like trusting people, but she does not give up on me," Naomy says with a chuckle. English is Naomy's second language, alongside her native Spanish. She currently attends

Sister Kate Hine, Desiree and Bella at Zelig's Home in Garfield Heights, Ohio

Lake Erie International High School in Cleveland. "My immediate goal is to graduate from high school. I would recommend Zelig's Home for any woman in need of help. I am so excited to hold my son. I want to teach him morals – to be honest and humble. I also want to teach him how to clean and cook," she adds with a smile.

Desiree, 31, gave birth to her fourth child, Bella, two months ago. "I was previously in another facility, and my counselor connected me up with Zelig's Home," she explains. "There are no words to describe Zelig's Home. They have been amazing. They gave me a car seat, and I cried. They make sure Bella and I have everything we need. They go above and beyond for both of us.

"Sister Kate is one of my favorites. She is great with all the kids. I didn't find out she was a 'sister' until we were on our way to the hospital. I asked her, 'Why do they call you 'sister'?' My goal is to become a better, stable person for myself and my kids."

"Desiree is a very devoted, caring mom and a strong, courageous woman," Sister Kate quickly adds as Bella squirms in her lap. It appears it's time for mom to feed her.

*If you are interested in learning more about Zelig's Home, visit www.zelieshome.org. If you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities or to financially support this important ministry, please call 216.307.1106. 

"They make sure Bella and I have everything we need. They go above and beyond for both of us."

– Desiree



The Notre Dame Urban Education Center



Sister Nance Hehman works with a student at the Notre Dame Urban Education Center in Covington, Kentucky.

The main floor buzzes with students engaged in the Homework PLUS program at the Notre Dame Urban Education Center (NDUEC) in Covington, Kentucky. Students are building skills crucial to academic success. Each child is paired with a mentor or tutor, many of whom are current students at Notre Dame Academy. On the second floor, arts and enrichment activities are underway. Creative work lines the walls, and children learn about music, the arts, and culture. The lower level of the building is dedicated to recreation and creative play. Laughter and cries of joy resonate throughout NDUEC's three floors this day.


The Sisters of Notre Dame founded the Notre Dame Urban Education Center (NDUEC) in 2009. The Center offers transformative educational programs to individuals and families, providing support, restoring hope, and promoting a fully human life for all. In addition to

providing academic enrichment for children, particularly students in urban schools, the center's staff helps students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math; offers students a broad array of enrichment activities that complement their regular academic programs; and provides literacy and other educational services to families of participating children. These programs are offered after school, on weekends and on summer breaks.

"It's great to come here. Everyone is friendly! I have fun while learning," states one student with a smile. "During the Enrichment session I can play drums or basketball and work on puzzles, Legos, games, and more. I like coming to Notre Dame Urban Learning Center because I get

my homework done, and I learn about new things such as countries and places all over the world. During Enrichment I especially enjoy drumming and playing on the piano."

"Volunteering at NDUEC has given me life and purpose. I come here for the kids. I know I make a difference in those I tutor," an NDUEC volunteer states. "I enjoy working with the students at NDUEC. I have a passion for learning, and I hope I can pass it on to them. It's a wonderful way to give back and help our children achieve."

Safety and security are a priority at NDUEC. Students learn teamwork, good sportsmanship, and the importance of following rules. NDUEC Director Sister Maria Therese Schappert is a gifted gardener who uses her green thumb to convert NDUEC's outdoor flower beds into a lively and colorful STEM Garden. 

Center For Living And Learning

The Center for Living and Learning prepares individuals transitioning from rehabilitation or with barriers to employment to enter the workforce and become contributing members of society.

“I used to just think only about myself and nobody else. Now I am seeing that happiness means doing something for others and...what it brings inside of me. I missed that feeling all these years.”

With these words, Ernie, a young father estranged from his children, has seen his life turn around at the Center for Living and Learning (CLL) in Van Nuys, California, thanks to Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos. At the Center for Living and Learning, Sister Jan Marie Villalobos ministers to Ernie and others like him who want to re-enter the workforce after experiencing homelessness or being released from prison or a substance-abuse treatment facility. With job training, support from co-workers, steady income, and structure to his day, Ernie has been able to live with greater purpose and meaning, with a focus on what he can do for others.


Sister Jan reflects, “At CLL, as a listener and an encourager to Ernie and other clients and staff, I get to witness God’s grace working in our clients’ lives.”

The CLL staff recognizes the impact Sister Jan has on the staff and clients. Most staff members are former CLL clients and have themselves surmounted significant personal barriers to becoming self-sufficient. One co-worker told her: “You bring a special light to CLL. Thank you for always making my days brighter and for all you do...” Another said, “Your soul is kind, your service constant, and actions love-inspired. Thank you!”

Sister Jan Marie Villalobos
with a Center for Living and
Learning staff member in
Van Nuys, California

Background on CLL

Founded in 2001, CLL has become a leader throughout the San Fernando Valley in meeting the comprehensive needs of adults with significant employment barriers in order to help them obtain self-sufficiency. The unemployment rate in this area is higher than the state and national averages. Individuals may have multiple employment barriers, such as gaps in work history, lack of education and training, prior criminal convictions, and unstable living situations.

Some clients lack the social support and the means to regain custody of their children. Gaining and retaining employment is essential for this reunification. These individuals are then at risk of chronic unemployment, relapse, recidivism, and homelessness. CLL reverses this cycle by preparing difficult-to-employ persons for the workforce with on-the-job training, guidance to living wage jobs, and supporting job retention through comprehensive services. As a result of the agency’s unique peer mentorship model, which has successfully guided thousands of individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, they have become known as a leader in the San Fernando Valley and throughout Los Angeles in meeting the comprehensive needs of adults with significant employment barriers. Further information at CLL is available at <https://center4living.org/>. 



3 GREAT WAYS TO GIVE FROM YOUR IRA

An IRA is an appealing way to save for retirement: Contribute and enjoy tax savings. But eventually, the tax bill comes due—when you take your annual distributions and again when you leave your assets to heirs. If you want to avoid the tax bite and make an impact, consider a gift to support the ministries of the Sisters of Notre Dame.

1. MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY

If you're 70½ or older, you can make a tax-free gift (up to \$100,000 in 2023) to SND. Benefits include:

- See the difference you're making today.
- Pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer doesn't generate taxable income or a tax deduction.

If you are required to take minimum distributions, your gift can satisfy all or part of your obligation.

2. MAGNIFY YOUR IMPACT AFTER YOUR LIFETIME

You can name the Sisters of Notre Dame as a beneficiary of your retirement account. This is a great option for extending support from your IRA beyond your lifetime. It costs you nothing today.

Here's how:

1. Contact your IRA administrator for a change-of-beneficiary form, or simply download a form from your provider's website.
2. Name the Sisters of Notre Dame and the gift percentage on the form.
3. Let us know about your plans so we can thank you.

Whether you make your impact today or after your lifetime, your gift matters. Please contact your local Mission Advancement representative below to learn more.

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TOLEDO, OH:

KERRI ROSE-ROCHELLE | krochelle@sndusa.org

THOUSAND OAKS, CA:

SISTER LISA MEGAFFIN | lmegaffin@sndusa.org

CHARDON, OH:

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THE ADVENTURE

For Jen Coito, becoming involved with the Sisters of Notre Dame has been “an adventure of a lifetime.” The 38-year-old wife and mother of three (Paul, 8, Clare, 6, and Matthew, 3) was first introduced to the religious congregation when she was a seventh grader at La Reina Middle School in Thousand Oaks, California. After graduating from La Reina High School in 2002, Jen attended Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Los Angeles, California, earning a bachelor’s degree in history with a minor in philosophy. She then earned a master’s degree in pastoral theology with a certification as a spiritual director, also from LMU.

“I started working for the SNDs when I was 15 years old,” she recalls with a broad smile. “I worked the switchboard and front desk at Notre Dame Center on weekends and often when the sisters held special events. In fact, I worked on the day of our very first Associate Covenant ceremony in California because the regular switchboard operator was one of the first candidates. Sister Lisa Megaffin had just concluded her term as principal at La Reina and had taken over the California Province’s Development Office from Sister Kristin Battles. They would bring me little jobs to do for advancement while I was working at the front desk, assembling cards and mailings.”

Upon completing her master’s degree, Jen began working for the California Province of Jesuits, supporting lay faith formation and young adult ministry. “Together with lay and religious staffs, we developed leadership trainings and faith-sharing materials for use in diverse settings as part of an Ignatian program for college students and other young adult groups.” She also worked closely with the Korean and Vietnamese language faith-sharing groups in Southern California. “We launched a website with five years’ worth of Ignatian prayer materials for young adult groups. It was a monumental feat that involved Jesuits, lay leaders, and collaborators across the country. During this time, we discerned the need for a dedicated,

Ignatian, young-adult ministry to serve the West Coast. Thus, Christus Ministries was born.”

Jen says Father Tri Dinh had the dream, and she proved to be the architect, visualizing how Christus Ministries was to be constructed.

Christus Ministries connects young adults with their faith and with the Catholic Church. The program involves parish leadership training, young adult retreats, multi-generational, direct service to the poor, and spiritual formation for young parents. Sisters Valerie Marie Roxburgh and Leanne Hubbard were integral parts of the first advisory board. “Over the past 10 years, numerous SNDs have participated in silent retreats, Caritas Retreats, Ignatian prayer series in everyday life, and communal discernment workshops. Through this partnership, I was able to help bring young adults from diverse backgrounds into relationships with the sisters as they, too, discerned their own callings in life,” Jen adds.

Jen became an SND Associate in 2007. Sister Kristin Battles, then provincial superior in California, served as Jen’s spiritual director and mentor while two close SND friends — Sisters Regina Robbins and Leanne Hubbard — were



OF A LIFETIME

her sponsors. “They remain important parts of my life to this day,” says Jen. “I knew a part of me was drawn to the Sisters of Notre Dame, and I became an Associate. Sister Leanne was working on her master’s degree in Christian Spirituality at a different Jesuit university while I was

working on my MA at LMU. We would get together to talk and share what we were learning. We collaborated on several projects. We ended up developing a session on the Ignatian roots of our SND heritage and spirituality which we now present each year in California to Associate candidates. Together, we have also offered communal discernment workshops to sisters and Associates, among other groups.”

Jen has worked full-time for the Sisters of Notre Dame in California since 2017 in the Mission Advancement Office. “My biggest responsibility is the Nun Run. I also support the wider Mission Advancement Program. One of my greatest joys is working with our sisters in East Africa.”


“The SNDs opened the mission in Uganda while I was a student at La Reina,” she recalls. “Some of the sisters who were very close to me were

missioned there. My family became supporters of this mission long before I worked for the Sisters of Notre Dame. Today, I support the African sisters with their grant writing efforts. It is energizing to see the mission alive and thriving.”

“I cannot imagine my life without the Sisters of Notre Dame. They have been my friends and companions, and significantly formed my sense of church.”

- Jen Coito

As an Associate, Jen and her husband, Jason, facilitate workshops and prayer series for young adult parents through Christus Ministries alongside Associates Tam and Greg Lontok. Jen also serves on the SND USA team for the Associate newsletter, giving her a chance to connect with Associates across the country. She contributes to several blogs on Ignatian spirituality, particularly concerning family life and faith. “I also write for the Christus Ministries’ reflection series in Advent and Lent, the Jesuit Prayer App, and Into the Deep, a blog facilitated by Loyola Press author Becky Eldredge that collates women’s voices in Ignatian spirituality,” Jen states.

“I cannot imagine my life without the Sisters of Notre Dame,” she exclaims. “They have been my friends and companions, and significantly formed my sense of church. My eight-year-old and I ran in the first Nun Run together before I worked for the SNDs. My daughter took her first steps in the chapel at Notre Dame Center. Sister Leanne is the godmother to Matthew. Our family’s story is interwoven with the sisters’ stories. I don’t know what the future holds, but I know my children and family have already been shaped by the SNDs in meaningful ways. Getting involved with the sisters certainly continues to be the adventure of a lifetime.” 

SND Associate
Jen Coito and
her family



The Gift of Mission

A Catholic congregation of women religious, 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.

– Mission, Sisters of Notre Dame U.S.A.

As Sisters of Notre Dame, we say that we are missioned, sent, to make God's love and goodness known to our world. Our Constitutions says, "God gives us the GIFT of mission..." It is a gift "to proclaim to others God's overwhelming goodness and provident care" (Art. 6). It is a gift to be part of something bigger than self, to participate in the mission of Jesus Christ together with the whole Church and with all our sisters. "With complete trust, we freely respond to the call of God's love by our total gift of self to Jesus Christ" (Art. 6,7). Together we bring to our world the much-needed gifts of goodness, care, and love. So how do I live out this mission? To whom have I been sent? How am I proclaiming God's goodness and compassionate love?

I journal every morning. Each entry usually starts with, "Good morning, Love! Thank you for this new day," or "Thank you for the restful night, for life, and health!" Often the next line tends to be, "What do you want of me today? How are you asking me to be?" or "Where am I to serve today?" "All is gift. How would you have me use these gifts?"

Early in my life, I thought I was called to do something wonderful for God. It wasn't long until I realized that God is doing something wonderful for me. Now, however, I believe that God is doing something through me. My job is to get out of the

way. My prayer has become, "Use me, God! Love and serve in me, through me! Be the goodness!"

Trusting in God's love at work in my life, I spend two mornings a week ministering to the residents of Carmel Manor, a skilled and personal care community. It is with these good men and women that I see the face of God regularly. I bring Holy Communion to Catholics, and bless everyone. We are simply present to each other. The connection with each person is touching especially with those living with some form of dementia. There is a glow about the residents after each visit.

Gratitude is written all over their faces.

It makes my day!

And I know it is God at work in every encounter. God's goodness and compassionate care touches the lives of the residents as well as my life.

As a member of St. Joseph Parish, I serve as a catechist in our Adult Faith Formation and the R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) programs.

Here too, I know God is working in and through me. There is something about walking with adults on their faith journey. No matter the topic, it is not what I am sharing as much as what God is doing. This becomes obvious especially during "Breaking Open the Word" at dismissal each Sunday when the candidates and elect begin to articulate their faith. It is then that you see the


"I journal every morning. Each entry usually starts with, "Good morning, Love! Thank you for this new day."

– Sr. Mary Shauna Bankemper, SND

love relationship of Jesus with the candidate becoming a reality. God is at work!

Community has been an important part of my life, and being of service through leadership roles has been a continued experience of God at work. I have had the privilege of seeing God's work in the lives of our sisters internationally as well as nationally. It is overwhelming to know just how varied and yet universal we are, as a community, witnessing to God's goodness and care. All of which is possible because we allow our Creator God to work in and through us.

Ministering to and with my sisters over the years has been a transforming gift. Their generosity and dedication to mission is humbling. It is God ministering to God's people in big and little ways through each and every sister. I pray that my ministry of leadership provides the structures and support that allows God's love to flow in and through these good women today and every day.

At the end of the day, I sometimes must "dig deep" and trust that God is, indeed, at work — especially when I mess up, fumble, and perhaps "get in the way" of grace. At those times, I trust that God is working even through my feeble efforts at loving. Every moment, whole or broken, is like an ambassador declaring the will of God. The goodness and compassionate care of God shines through each person, event, and encounter, if I but renew my "yes" to Love! 



**Sister Mary Shauna Bankemper,
Assistant Provincial, SND USA**

Sister Shauna was born and raised in Covington, KY and is a 1965 graduate of Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills. She has degrees in elementary education and administration, earning a Master of Education in 1979 from Xavier University. She has ministered in education as teacher, principal, superintendent, and president of Notre Dame Academy, Park Hills. After completing 25 years in education, Sister served in congregational leadership on both the provincial and international levels. Sister Shauna is presently ministering part-time in pastoral care at Carmel Manor Nursing Home in Ft. Thomas, Ky. She also ministers as a catechist in RCIA and Adult Education at St. Joseph Parish, Cold Spring. Sister Shauna serves as Assistant Provincial on the leadership team for SND USA.

House of Hospitality Opens Its Doors To Border Volunteers



The Sisters of Notre Dame of the United States are living their mission of proclaiming God's goodness and compassionate love for people of all faiths and cultures through a variety of ministries. One added ministry that resonates with this mission is House of Hospitality (Casa de Hospitalidad).

House of Hospitality, located in Laredo, Texas, was founded by Sisters Joyce Bates, of the Toledo, OH region, and Roseanna Mellert, of the Chardon, OH region. The House provides lodging and transportation for sisters and Associates of any religious community, young adults, and others who want to volunteer at La Frontera Respite Center in Laredo, Texas.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Laredo recently opened La Frontera in 2021 when the Border Patrol announced it would be releasing immigrants from detention centers to the streets. Sister Joyce, JPIC National Office staff member,

formerly served as Administrative Assistant at St. Mary Parish in Wakeman, OH, and worked part-time at Miriam House, a transitional home for homeless women, pregnant women, and children in Norwalk, OH. Sister Roseanna, formerly ministering in Jinotega, Nicaragua for 10 years, did volunteer ministry, including PSR at Sagrada Familia Parish in Cleveland, OH, and worked with the homeless through Labre ministry with students at St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland.

Arriving September 26, 2022, after a four-day drive from Ohio, Sisters Joyce and Roseanna moved into the new residence in Laredo. They purchased four twin beds from Habitat for Humanity Restore at cost for volunteer guests, and completed many other tasks to ready the house for visitors. After the allotted 38 days, the moving van with additional furniture finally arrived. Their first overnight guest, Sister Maryann Weber, SND arrived on December 2 and stayed for three weeks.



Sister Roseanna Mellert holds a child at La Frontera.

Do not neglect hospitality,
for through it some have unknowingly
entertained angels.

Hebrews 13:1-8

“There are actually two shelters in Laredo: La Frontera and Holdings Institute, a Methodist center,” Sister Joyce explains. “When people are released by Border Patrol, they bus them to Holdings, where they are tested for Covid. If anyone tests positive, they must stay in a separate room there until testing negative. Half of the Covid-free people are then driven by bus to La Frontera,” Sister Joyce explains. New arrivals at La Frontera, which translates as “the Border,” go through a registration process and then receive clean clothes, a shower, a meal, and help in arranging transportation to their host families. Services also include overnight accommodations, transportation assistance, and travel food packets. House of Hospitality volunteers assist in providing these services at La Frontera.

“We discovered boxes and boxes of chocolate cake mixes in the pantry at La Frontera,” remembers Sister Joyce. “Inquiring about them, we learned the

cooks there never bake. They don’t have time. So we asked Becky, the Director of Catholic Charities, if we could take home some boxes and make cupcakes for the migrants. She thought it was a great idea and good way to free up pantry space. Ever since, Sister Roseanna makes several batches per week to take to La Frontera for the migrants. Their eyes light up when they see the treats.”

In December 2022 alone, more than 10,000 people stayed at either one of the two Laredo shelters, including 795 children. According to Sister Joyce, most were fleeing gang violence, criminal government leadership, or environmental disasters that occurred in their home countries, or were in search of employment. Many migrants told the sisters they could not support their families on current pay scales ranging from \$2 to \$7 a day in their home countries.

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House of Hospitality Opens Its Doors To Border Volunteers

continued from page 19

“Most migrants and asylum seekers arrive at La Frontera after traveling for weeks from their homes in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Cuba or Haiti to the border and spending time being processed in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers, or by Border Patrol at Processing Centers,” adds Sister Roseanna.

Sister Joyce refutes various misconceptions concerning these migrants. “Drug dealers and gang members already know how to get into our country without going through Border Patrol,” Sister Joyce explains. “Those are not the people entering our country at the border. These asylum seekers are coming to find a better, safer life. They are so happy to get to our shelter. Unfortunately, they think their hardship is over, but it really is not.”

People crossing the border share horrendous stories with the two Sisters of Notre Dame: some have been kidnapped by gangs and held for ransom; others, including children, have been raped. Many had their hopes and dreams dashed by “coyotes” – people who claim to be able to smuggle migrants across the U.S. border, extorting money, and then leaving them to die in the desert, in locked vans, etc. “Many come with photos of their husband who was murdered by the gangs. To be eligible for asylum, they must have a personal, credible fear story.”

“On December 13, we attended the cemetery service for two young women who drowned while attempting to cross the Rio Grande,” Sister Roseanna says. “Their family could not come for the funeral, though a cousin from another part of Texas did attend with her husband and daughter. Several staff from Catholic Charities also attended and a deacon led the service. The funeral home live-streamed the service so family in Venezuela could watch. The women’s bodies were cremated and buried in the Laredo Catholic Cemetery.”



Sister Joyce recalls a Cuban professor who lost his job at a university because “he spoke out against the corrupt communist government.”

“A single person, male or female, who crosses the border must stay at the detention center a month, on average. If there is a child with an adult, then they are taken to a Processing Center run by the Border Patrol and usually stay for only two or three days before they are brought to our shelter,” she says.

“We are sending volunteers down to the bridge connecting Mexico to Texas to let the migrants know about the shelters available to them,” Sister Joyce says. “We welcome them into the United States, explain where they can catch a bus that will transport them to the shelter, and explain what services are available. If they decide to come to our shelter, our small bus can accommodate 16 people. I have driven the bus at times,” chuckled Sister Joyce. “I used to drive a bus for the congregation in Toledo, OH.”

Sister Joyce says that since January 7, 2023, the numbers of migrants and asylum seekers has dropped substantially due to the U.S. government making changes to the Title 42 Border Policy – requiring migrants to use the CBPOne app on their phones to schedule a date and time to cross the bridge and be processed by CBP (Customs and Border Patrol). However, with the scheduled lifting of Title 42 on May 11th, a surge of migrants crossing the Mexican-American border is expected.



(l-r) Sisters Roseanna Mellert and Joyce Bates at House of Hospitality



Associate Gardenia Witherspoon helping prepare lunch.

“To enter legally, Venezuelans have to have a passport, be totally vaccinated, and fly into the U.S.,” says Sister Joyce. “In other words, you must be wealthy. This eliminates the poor who have limited resources.”

For individuals or groups interested in volunteering at La Frontera, the Sisters of Notre Dame at the House of Hospitality will provide transportation from the airport to the House of Hospitality, free lodging, and free meals. “The four-bed capacity can be increased using inflatable mattresses if needed,” Sister Joyce considers. “We serve a nice meal at supper. Guests can fix a breakfast of their choosing and eat lunch with the guests at La Frontera. Sisters Jennifer Zimmerman and Ruth Lubbers, SND Young Adult and Vocation team members, recently visited to determine if they can bring young adults to House of Hospitality to volunteer.”

“These asylum seekers are coming to find a better, safer life. They are so happy to get to our shelter.”
Sisters Joyce Bates, Toledo, Ohio

Anyone interested in volunteering at La Frontera who wishes to stay at the House of Hospitality should call Sister Joyce Bates, SND, at (419) 304-1244 to see if a bed is available before scheduling a flight. American and United are the only airlines that fly directly into Laredo, Texas. Sister Joyce will email forms to fill out for the Diocese of Laredo and provide a link to the safe environment video to view. Donations of toothbrushes, shoelaces, new underwear for children (all sizes) and for adults (small and medium sizes for women and men), baseball caps and socks are always appreciated.

“It is unpredictable how many people will arrive at the shelter each day,” admits Sister Joyce. “Our focus is on welcoming and caring for our guests. As to what tomorrow will bring, it is all in God’s hands.”



IN THE NEWS

Many Meals THOUSAND OAKS, CA

Founded by SND Associate Pat Yost in 2008, Many Meals is a non-denominational, nonprofit volunteer organization that provides delicious, home-cooked meals to the underserved in Camarillo, California. This outreach is a collaboration between St. Mary Magdalen Parish and other Christian churches. More than 80,000 people have received a hot meal served by more than 80 weekly volunteers. Food and household supplies are also made available to guests, and bounty bags are given to the homeless.

All services are provided through the generosity of volunteers and donors. To learn more about Many Meals of Camarillo, visit www.manymealsofcamarillo.org. To join the California Associates in this or other SND outreach activities, contact infoca@sndusa.org.



SAVE THE DATE



**TUESDAY
JULY 4**

1:00-6:00 P.M.

**1601 DIXIE HWY,
COVINGTON, KY**

Food Trucks Music

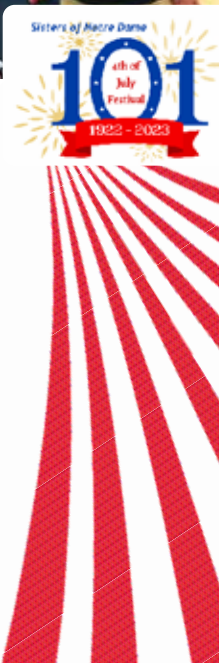
Games Grand Raffle

Silent Auction

4th of July Market

Games

sndusa.org/festival



How do you help a woman **SHINE?**
SUPPORT HER. HONOR HER. INSPIRE HER. NURTURE HER. EMPOWER HER.



SAVE-THE-DATE | 2ND ANNUAL SHINE WOMEN'S SUMMIT

NOVEMBER 2, 2023 | 5:00 PM | TOLEDO, OHIO

SHINE Women's Summit is an event that brings women of all faiths and backgrounds together to support, honor, inspire, nurture, and empower each other. The event features inspirational speakers, networking, and celebration of women who are doing great things to make the world a better place. Proceeds raised from this event help fund the work of the Sisters of Notre Dame SHINE Coalition, a group of representatives from area organizations who work together to help women shine!

2023 KEYNOTE SPEAKER: VERONIKA SCOTT



Veronika Scott—founder and CEO of The Empowerment Plan—has built an organization that began around a single idea: to design a coat specifically for the homeless. The coat is self-heated, waterproof, and transforms into a sleeping bag at night. That idea has now transformed into a system of empowerment in which homeless women are paid to learn how to produce coats for people living on the streets, giving them an opportunity to earn money, find a place to live, and gain back their independence for themselves and their families.



For ticket info
scan QR code or visit:

<https://qrco.de/SHINETIX2023>



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**Sunday, September 24, 2023
Noon - 5 p.m.**

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SND Nominated for Jefferson Award

TOLEDO, OH



Sister Joyce Bates was recently nominated for the 2023 Jefferson Award – Volunteer of the Year – for her work at the La Frontera Humanitarian Shelter in Laredo, TX. She serves immigrants from various countries by providing food, clothing, medical attention and shelter.

Food Drive – Big Success! TOLEDO, OH

To celebrate Catholic Sisters Week, the Sisters of Notre Dame joined in prayer and with volunteers from the Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Sylvania Franciscan Sisters, Tiffin Franciscan Sisters, Ursuline Sisters, and the Sisters of the Visitation. They hosted the third annual “Stuff the Truck” food drive to support the SeaGate Food Bank on Friday, March 10 at Walt Churchill’s Market in Maumee, Ohio.

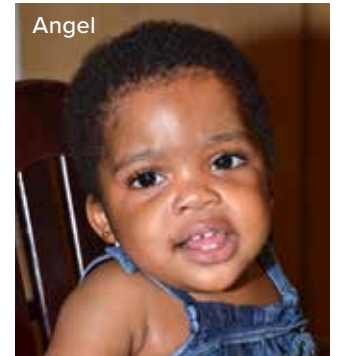
Thank you to everyone who supported and donated to the Food Drive. In total, we collected 4,861 pounds of food and \$1,475.15 of monetary donations!



Second Zelig’s Home Opens

CHARDON, OH

Due to increasing need, a second Zelig’s Home recently opened at 1635 Alameda Avenue in Lakewood, Ohio, a former Sisters of Notre Dame convent. The Grand Opening/ Blessing of the home by Bishop Michael Woost occurred on May 22.



“The initial Zelig’s Home, located at 13643 Rockside Road in Garfield Heights, is currently at capacity with 10 moms living there,” Sister Kate Hine says. “Prior to opening the second home, we had a waiting list.”

Zelig’s Home staff welcome volunteers who are willing to give of their time and talents. Donations are also greatly appreciated; call (216) 307-1106. For more information, visit their website: zelieshome.org.

Partners in Mission Luncheon CHARDON, OH



(seated far left) Lynne & William Waldron

The Sisters of Notre Dame Partners in Mission luncheon in April celebrated several individuals whose lifetime experiences -- initially formed through an SND education -- inspired them to use their time, talent, and treasure to advance the SND mission.

Individuals recognized included **William & Lynne Waldron, Elizabeth J. Trombetta, and Pamela W. Waitinas.**

In their own ways, these individuals exemplify the vitality of the extended SND family. Whether their experience was through education, shared friendships, or a variety of volunteer opportunities, their connection inspires them to live the SND mission in their own lives.



Elizabeth Trombetta (seated) with her family, Nick Molnar; Isabel, Margie, Tim, and Nicole Trombetta, and Jeanette Molnar.



SND Associate Pam Waitinas with her daughters Laura Vokoun (L) and Carol Alauqua (R).



Guests leave Mass and head to the luncheon.

A LASTING TRIBUTE

SISTER RONAULD FROHNAPPLE, SND




December 18, 1925 – February 9, 2023

Dorothy Anne Frohnapple was the third of four children of Bernard and Margaret (Connors) Frohnapple. Dorothy met the Sisters of Notre Dame as a seventh-grader at St. Francis School. Realizing God's call more deeply, she chose Notre Dame

Academy for her final two years of high school and became a postulant on February 2, 1944. At investment she was given the name Sister Mary Ronald.

In 1945, she began an educational ministry that spanned seven decades. She taught primary grades at schools in Canton, Cleveland, Gates Mills, and University Heights, all in Ohio. She earned a bachelor's degree from St. John College, Cleveland, and a master's degree in education from Xavier University in Cincinnati, OH. Her excellence in teaching brought a seven-year assignment as a demonstration teacher and mentor for student teachers at the renowned Campus School of Catholic University in Washington, DC. Sister Mary Ronald served as principal at schools in Ohio, Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia for more than 20 years. Beginning in 2000, she was a tutor at the ND Skills Lab, first in South Euclid and then in Chardon.

In her later years she was in ministry to the homebound and on the Prayer Line, always a ready listener. 


SISTER MARY JANELLE STRACENSKY, SND



June 29, 1931 – January 29, 2023

Roberta Stracensky, known as Bobbie, was the oldest of nine children born to Nicholas and Margaret (Pacanosky) Stracensky. Roberta was taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame in elementary school, and she continued her education at Notre Dame

Academy on Ansel Road. Aware of her call to religious life, she planned to enter the novitiate after graduation, but a diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis resulted in several years of treatment and a delay in pursuing her vocation. As she regained her health and strength, Roberta began studies at St. John College, Cleveland and earned a bachelor's degree in education in June 1955. She became a postulant on September 8, and at investment received the name Sister Mary Janelle.

Her teaching ministry spanned 29 years, mostly in primary grades, at schools in Ohio, Virginia, and North Carolina. She spent five years at schools with the Sisters of Notre Dame in England. An excellent teacher, she said that she wanted to give the children the best they could receive. After retiring from full-time teaching, Sister Janelle remained eager to serve others. For 30 years she generously ministered in parishes and in the SND community as receptionist, sacristan, and PSR teacher. She was a Pastoral Visitor at Heather Hill Care Communities in Chardon for 13 years. She devoted many hours to the SND Prayer Line ministry, assuring the callers that their requests for prayer would be remembered as she wrote their intentions in a large notebook. 

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


SISTER MARY JAMESETTA KRAFTY, SND



June 13, 1921 – February 6, 2023
Baptized Roseline Mary, she was the youngest of nine children born to Michael and Helena (Lilly) Krafty in the village of Venice, Ohio. Sister Mary Jamesetta professed vows with the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1941, joining her older sibling Sister Mary Walter Krafty.

In the first few years of ministry, she was a cook for the novices in the community. She received a BA in Education at Mary Manse College and began teaching grades 3 through 8 in Monroeville, Maumee, Norwalk, Delphos, Bellevue, and Napoleon. Within 10 years she became a principal with the dual role of teacher at Sacred Heart and St. Michael schools, Toledo; St. Mary School, Leipsic; and St. Augustine School, Napoleon.

Her missionary heart led her to Papua New Guinea for 11 years (1967-72) when she taught Standard 6 in Banz, and from 1993-99 she assisted in the Vocation Program.

In the interim between her times as a missionary, Sister Jamesetta ministered at St. Joseph School in Erie, Michigan; St. Mary School, Norwalk; Mary Immaculate School and Notre Dame Academy, Toledo; and in a leadership role at Lial Convent in Whitehouse, Ohio. Returning from Papua New Guinea permanently, Sister Jamesetta undertook volunteer ministry at St. Michael Parish in Toledo in 1999 and became pastoral minister there in 2004 through 2015. Sister kept in contact with many parishioners from St. Michael Parish for the rest of her life, just one of the many ways she shared her joy, laughter, and attentiveness to others. 

SISTER MARILYN SCHILLER, SND




October 24, 1942 – April 18, 2023
As the only child of Lawrence and Louise (Turk) Schiller, Marilyn was the center of her parents' lavish affection. At St. Margaret Mary Parish, Marilyn was introduced to the Sisters of Notre Dame as her teachers. Three years later, she entered Regina High School. Just

before graduation, her parents gave permission to enter the community. She became a postulant on July 2, 1960. At investment she received the name Sister Mary Loraine.

Sister Marilyn earned a bachelor's degree from St. John College in Cleveland and a master's degree in education from John Carroll University in University Heights, Ohio. She ministered as an educator for 28 years. Whether serving as teacher of junior high students, principal or director of religious education, Sister had a passion for Catholic education.

In 1993 Sister continued her studies, earning a master's degree in counseling and human services from John Carroll University. After completing certification and licensing requirements, Sister Marilyn served as a counselor, therapist or social worker at various centers and hospitals in the Greater Cleveland area for 16 years.

For many years, Sister Marilyn faced the limiting effects of Parkinson's disease with determination and optimism. After moving to Chardon in 2011, she shared her presence and loving heart with the sisters in the Health Care Center. 



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

1656 Henthorne Drive, Suite 200, Maumee, OH 43537

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

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Mary Kathleen Tobin

Marcia Willkomm

Diamond Jubilee

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Mary Judith Averbeck

Mary Vivette Baker

Mary Luann Bender

Mary Ann Burke

Mary Tereze Deye

Mary Ann Hvizda

Mary Teresita Keliher

Mary Barbara Klodt

Mary Shannon Kriege

Mary Roseanna Mellert

Mary Joanne Miller

Mary Barbara Morscher

Mary Constance Przybylski

Susan Marie Reineck

Maureen Spillane

Mary Louise Teckman

Mary Jane Vovk

Mary Gail Wrasman

Golden Jubilee

50 YEARS

Dorthea Marie Arndt

Mary Janet Lee Helphrey

Mary Charlotte Hobelman

Marie Kathleen Hood

Eileen Marie Quinlan

Janet Marie Smith

Anna Maria Vasquez

Jean Marie Walczak

Ruby Jubilee

40 YEARS

Allison Marie Gusdanovic

Patricia Marie McClain

Maria Therese Schappert

Silver Jubilee

25 YEARS

Mary Lillian Lillian