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*Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States*

California Region

Mission Advancement Egram

November 21, 2025

One Heart. One Hope. One Mission.

MESSAGE FROM MISSION ADVANCEMENT

...transmitting a bit of hope



Dear Friends,

This quotation from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians really says it all! From our earliest childhood, we were taught to say "thank you" for whatever we receive. Gratitude has been ingrained in our souls as we humbly recognize our dependence on God and each other.

Pope Francis puts that spirit of gratitude in a larger context with these words:

During our lives, more than one person has gazed on us with pure eyes, gratuitously. Often, these people are educators, catechists, persons who carried out their roles above and beyond what was required of them. And they provoked us to be grateful. Even friendship is a gift for which we should always be grateful.

So whatever we are appreciating--the wonders of nature, cherished mentors or loyal relatives and friends--our celebration of Thanksgiving is a type of holyday of obligation. Fortunately, gratitude is at the heart of many faith traditions and the pilgrims to North America left us with an awesome tradition!

Current world realities can trigger angst and sadness. But once again, Pope Francis offers words of wisdom:

If we are bearers of gratitude, the world itself will become better, even if only a little bit, but that is enough to transmit a bit of hope. The world needs hope. And with gratitude, with this attitude of thanksgiving, we transmit a bit of hope.

On behalf of the Sisters of Notre Dame, please know that we gratefully include you in our daily prayer. We regularly receive many prayer requests. Some are written in a book of intentions at the entrance to our chapel. Others are included through our Gift of Prayer or Memorial programs. We may speak these aloud or hold them in the silence of our hearts. But as our relatives, friends, colleagues, students, volunteers and donors, you have "*provoked us to be grateful*" for your encouragement and support. So we are sending you an abundance of hope, accompanying our prayerful gratitude.

Happy Thanksgiving,
Sr. Lisa Megaffin, S.N.D.
Director of Mission Advancement Services

FROM THE CALIFORNIA GRAPEVINE

Experiencing and sharing our rich spiritual tradition...

As reported in our October egram, an international group of SNDs made a pilgrimage to Rome as part of our 175th anniversary. In this photo, Sr. Kathleen Burns (far left) is shown with Sr. Maria Anawim Zhang and Sr. Maria Catharina Ho representing the Korean province and Sr. Rozaria Katusabe from Uganda.

In her reflections, Sr. Rozaria wrote, "Exploring the holy sites such as St. Peter's Square and several ancient basilicas...filled my heart with awe and reverence. Each place offered a unique glimpse into the rich spiritual history and the divine presence that has touched countless lives over the centuries. What made this journey even more special was the internationality and loving presence of our SNDs from around the world. Their warmth, hospitality and shared faith created a sense of unity and sisterhood that transcended borders."



As Sisters of Notre Dame, we are grateful that God's call has enabled us to reach countless lives over more than 175 years...in hundreds of locations. Here are several recent opportunities when our hearts have been touched by warmth, hospitality and shared faith.



The Twilight Years Retreat offered reflections on challenges, desires and a practical spiritual toolbox. Shown here are Czarina Gatmaitan, Heidi Serbick and Colleen Macdonald.



This moment of shared prayer, including Kathy Tamashiro, Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos, and SND Associates Madalyn Horton and Mary Cathcart, occurred at the reception after the November 1 Memorial Mass.



As part of their study of religious vocations, the second graders at St. Jude the Apostle School in Westlake Village hosted a dinner for women religious. Sr. Archana Joseph and Sr. Shawn Marie Doyle enjoyed meeting new friends!



An invitation to visit NDA

Notre Dame Academy in West Los Angeles, a school for girls in grades 6 through 12, is sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame. Students and staff have issued a video invitation to see a vibrant and diverse community of young women striving for excellence as they prepare for lives of meaning, purpose and service. [Click this link for your visit](#) and [this link](#) for all of the admission information for 2026-27.



Is God calling you to the more?

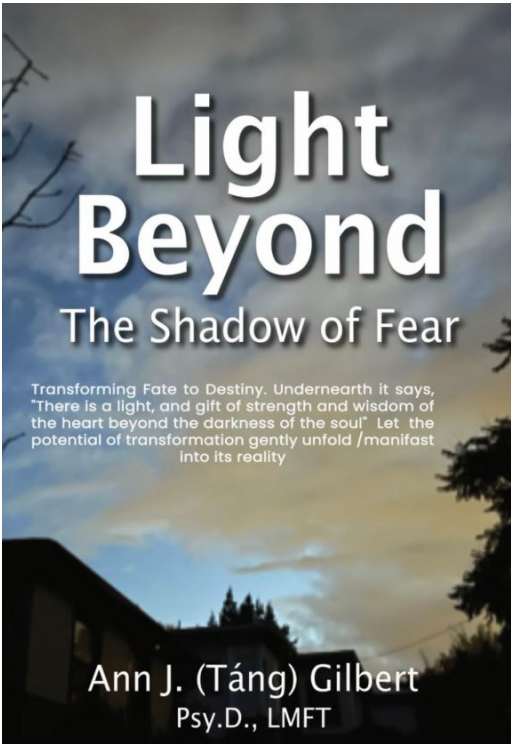
...growing closer to God, living as radical disciples of Jesus, reaching out to the poor and marginalized...

The smiles of SND Associates Marty Garcia, Brenda Garcia and Eileen Garcia reveal SND joyful simplicity! (Brenda is not related to Marty and Eileen. They are friends as parishioners at St. Julie Billiart Church in Newbury Park.) Associates are women and men who feel called to share the mission and spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame in their own lives. There are more than 500 SND Associates across the United States, and others in South Korea, Kenya and Brazil! To learn more about SND Associates, email SND Associate [Jen Coito](#) or [Sr. Lisa Megaffin](#).



**Light beyond
the shadow of fear**

The SNDs proudly congratulate SND Associate Dr. Ann Gilbert on the recent publication of her book! As Ann wrote in the Dedication, "This book is dedicated to anyone who seeks to discover more than their physical existence, has faced physical and emotional suffering, and has refused to let limitations discourage them from overcoming the shadows of fear they have endured. May you discover the innate bravery, trust, and joyful spirit within you to guide and lead you toward a wealth of freedom, well-being, and confidence. May you be awakened and transformed." A long-time staff member at Notre Dame Academy, Ann has been an inspiration to her thousands of students and clients over the years. [Her book is available through Amazon.](#)



Care for Creation Corner ~ with Santa!



- The giving season is upon us and there might not be anything better than giving creation some gifts as well! Some suggestions:
- Give gifts that are experiences rather than stuff. Take children or grandchildren to a zoo or an aquarium so they get close to nature.
 - Provide "sustainable outreach" to those in need, such as regular visits to shut-ins rather than dust-catching trinkets.
 - Give your digestive system a holiday by eating lower on the food chain.
 - Giving clothing as gifts? Opt for sustainable materials and avoid those which cause long-term environmental harm.
 - A tree can absorb 48 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. Plant a tree and let future generations breathe freely!

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

...living with one heart, one hope, one mission

Sunday, Dec. 7 - 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Notre Dame Center

Be Still and Know that I Am God

The Sisters of Notre Dame are pleased to offer an Advent Afternoon of Recollection. Participants will reflect on many types of stillness in preparation for the birth of Christ. [Click here](#) for complete information; please note that the registration deadline is Dec. 3.



Dec. 8, 10, 12 and 16 - Times vary
Fillmore, Oxnard, Sun Valley, Thousand Oaks

Many Mansions Holiday Helpers

Many Mansions is inviting volunteers to be Holiday Helpers, wrapping gifts that families choose at one of the Holiday Shoppes. [Follow this link](#) to register. [This link](#) provides information about other volunteer opportunities. **Thank you for sharing your time and talents.**



Friday, Dec. 12 - 5:00 p.m. (Pacific time)
Online

Young Adult Faith Sharing

Join young adults from across the country to reflect and share on the Sunday Gospel on the second Friday of each month. All young adults are welcome. And feel free to share this invitation with any young adult in your life seeking meaningful connections rooted in prayer. To register, contact Sr. Val Roxburgh via [email](#) or text to 805-452-9699.



Sunday, Dec. 14 - 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
St. Dominic's Convent
Eagle Rock

Sr. Joyanne Sullivan's Annual Art Show

Just in time for Christmas shopping, Sr. Joyanne is preparing for her annual art show. This year she is featuring a large collection of 5" x 7" paintings. For more information about the show or special orders, [email Sr. Joyanne](#).



[SNDUSA Website](#)

[SND USA Magazine, Fall, 2025](#)

[2024 Impact Report](#)

[Gift of Prayer & Memorial Prayer Cards](#)

[A Day at Notre Dame Academy](#)

[SND 175th Anniversary Messages of Hope for Young People](#)
including messages from Sr. Donna Appert, Sr. Luellen Boeglin, Sr. Ann Carla Costello,
Sr. Judeen Julier, Sr. Jolisa Lazaro, Sr. Val Roxburgh,
Sr. Colette Theobald, Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos and Sr. Karlynn Werth

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