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*Sisters of Notre Dame
of the United States*

California Region

Mission Advancement Egram

January 23, 2026

One Heart. One Hope. One Mission.

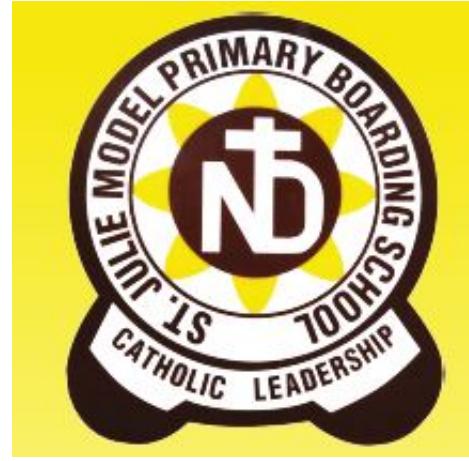
MESSAGE FROM MISSION ADVANCEMENT

... "a number of tears dropping from my eyes"

Dear Friends,

Current world realities regularly invite us to reflect on the importance of value-based leadership! Well, prepare to feel some chills and maybe even a tear or two.

On January 17, we received an email from Sr. Rozaria Katusabe from Buseesa, Uganda. The subject line said: JOY WORTH SHARING. Indeed, this news brings new awareness of God's goodness and the dedication of the Sisters of Notre Dame, especially those who ministered in Buseesa over the years. Here is Sr. Rozaria's message!



We are excited to share the news that Annet Nabaduka, a graduate of St. Julie Model Primary Boarding School and Notre Dame Academy in Buseesa, was elected to the Ugandan Parliament! She will be representing the Kibaale District, commonly referred to as "the poor district."

Many of her fellow graduates from both schools helped Annet campaign, including Micheal Garabuzi who was a campaign manager. Annet's election has galvanized the local schools and fostered a sense of collective identity and pride among the residents of the Kibaale District. This moment is being embraced as an opportunity for transformation, inspiring hope and motivating many to aspire to a brighter future.

We thank you dear sisters for supporting Annet's education; her mother worked at our farm for many years, trying to support her children. You were there for her to give scholarships when her mother couldn't manage the school fees. All of these efforts are helping now and for the future of our society. As I write this message, a number of tears have dropped from my eyes. Although we have many challenges, we believe that God will work miracles for us by transforming our area and granting success to the work of our hands. Thank you once again...

Sr. Janet Stamm, one of the pioneers to Buseesa, recently reminisced that "Our goal when we started St. Julie Primary in Buseesa, Uganda was to train for Catholic leadership so that, when the students would complete their education they would return to Kibaale District and help to lift their people out of poverty."

And so some 31 years after the SNDs first went to Uganda, it is a joyous blessing to see that many sacrifices are transforming lives. This news is also a powerful testimony to the thousands of donors who have made personal sacrifices on behalf of the children, their families and the missionary and native SNDs in our East African missions. Please know that we are all very grateful for your prayerful support and financial investments in these precious individuals. As always, we gratefully carry you in our hearts and in our prayer.

Wishing you great peace and joy,
Sr. Lisa Megaffin, S.N.D.
Director of Mission Advancement Services

FROM THE CALIFORNIA GRAPEVINE

Finding the SND spirit all over town...

**Special thanks to
Deacon Dave Smith
on his retirement**

Deacon Dave Smith of St. Julie Billiart Parish in Newbury Park has touched hundreds of lives with the SNDs through the mission schools in Uganda and in his many other outreach ministries. Recently offering gratitude and congratulations were Sr. Colette Theobald and Sr. Leanne Hubbard.



Also joining the festivities at his Jan. 17 reception were Sr. Luellen Boeglin, Sr. Kristin Battles, Sr. Regina Robbins, Sr. Julie Marie Arriaga, Sr. Joann Schlarbaum, Deacon Dave, Sr. Rebekah Kennedy and Sr. Karlynn Werth.



Retreat across the miles

In recent years, the SNDs have been encouraged to share resources within their global sisterhood and to celebrate the community's internationality. During the last week of December, Sr. Regina Robbins provided an on-line retreat for the SNDs in Patna, India. Here is her reflection:

Without getting on an airplane, it was a mutually delightful experience to connect with our sisters via ZOOM from the comfort of my own computer here in California! I had to make a concerted effort to remember that when I was speaking to them at 8:00p.m., they were hearing me at 9:30 a.m. the next day, so it was important to greet them with, "Good morning," and not "Good evening." The theme was "Fostering a listening heart: responding to the Word." As consecrated women religious, retreat is a sacred time to deepen our heart-to-heart relationship with God. It is a time to examine ourselves on how well we listen in faith to the ever-new calls of God. Indeed, our time together was mutually enriching. From the responses of the Indian SNDs, I am grateful to have shared this journey with them.



Notre Dame Academy has once again earned the College Board AP Honor Roll Platinum recognition, for the third consecutive year!

This highest-level distinction celebrates schools where:

- At least 80% of seniors take an AP exam
- At least 50% earn a score of 3 or higher.

It's a powerful reflection of the school's commitment to academic excellence, access, and student success--and a testament to the dedication of the students and faculty! Once again, congratulations!



Sharing the SND Highway to Hope on the Highway to Health

On Jan. 21, the SNDs participated in the annual Conejo Senior Volunteer Program Wellness Fest, with this year's theme being "Highway to Health." Various reminders of God's blessings provided participants with kernels of hope for their journey. Special thanks to volunteers Liz O'Brien and Tina and Dave Lavendier who helped stuff goodie bags. And to SND Associates Anne Interrante, Diane Hunn and Jen Coito who were on hand. Some guests had fascinating memories of SNDs from years past. One 90-year-old lady had attended Notre Dame Academy Elementary and fondly remembered Sr. Mary William Gara and Sr. Mary Giovanne Vidoni. Another participant was a 1970 graduate of St. Matthias High in Huntington Park who recalled two special teachers, Sr. Mary Kenneth Hegler and Sr. Mary Sheila (formerly Sr. Mary La Tier) Fay. The SNDs look forward to continuing the new friendships made at this event!

Saving lives through the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking

The SNDs are pleased to share [the 2025 Impact Report](#) from [CAST](#). The title says it all: **Standing Strong in a Year of Challenge and Change**. With Sr. Annearla Costello as the President of CAST's Board of Directors, the California SNDs consider CAST to be a vital partner ministry, reaching out to the marginalized. CAST's services include a hotline with emergency response, housing, case management, legal services, survivor leadership and policy advocacy.



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

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

Friday, Feb. 13 - 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.



Saturday, Feb. 14, 5:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Peace Parish
North Hills

Our Lady of Peace School 2026 Gala: A Night of Celebration & Gratitude

The SNDs are please to announce that Sr. Louise Marie Hlavac will be among the honorees at this special event. Sr. Louise currently serves as a religion teacher and religion coordinator at OLP. She is also well-known as the flutist at many SND liturgies.



The gala is a dinner-dance with live and silent auctions. Proceeds will support the OLP Scholarship Fund and general school needs. For ticket information, contact the school office at 818-894-4059. Congratulations, Sr. Louise!

Friday, Feb. 20 - Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Beatitudes of Our Lord Church

Whittier

Trusting in the Wonder of Resurrection

Sr. Rose Marie Tulacz will speak at the University Series on this topic, answering the question "How can you move beyond intellectual belief in the cross and resurrection of Jesus to a profound and personal trust that transforms you and your sufferings...into gifts?"



Please note that registration opens on Jan. 24. [Follow this link for more information](#) and to register.

Friday, Feb. 20 - Sunday, Feb. 22

Serra Retreat House

Malibu

Men's Retreat ~ Keep Your Eyes Fixed on Jesus

Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon and Fr. Jim Clark will be the presenters for this retreat. It will include conferences, liturgies, confession and much more. [Follow this link](#) for more information and to register.



Sunday, Feb. 22 - 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Oxnard

21st Annual Many Mansions Bowls of Hope

Bowls of Hope aims to raise awareness for the need for affordable housing in our community, as well as raise funds for Many Mansions' programs that serve the formerly homeless, veterans, seniors, and families of very low income.



Originally, Bowls of Hope was designed to honor the experience of a soup kitchen--a place where many residents once turned for food and connection. Now, Bowls of Hope brings together all members of our community to enjoy each other's company, savor delicious, comforting foods and much more!

Attending the Bowls of Hope is an investment in the community! All proceeds from this event support Many Mansions' efforts to provide affordable housing and life-changing services. Many Mansions communities are located in a variety of locations, such as Boyle Heights, Camarillo, Fillmore, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, Sun Valley, Sylmar and Thousand Oaks, with many new properties in development.

Please join us! [Here is a link to purchase tickets!](#)

Contact infoca@sndusa.org if you wish to sit at the SND table.

Friday, Feb. 27 - Sunday, Mar. 1

Serra Retreat House

Malibu

Women's Retreat ~ Keep Your Eyes Fixed on Jesus

Similar to the Men's Retreat, Sr. Antoinette Marie Moon and Fr. Larry Gosselin will be the presenters for this retreat. [Follow this link](#) for more information and to register.



Saturday, Feb. 28 - 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Notre Dame Center

Thousand Oaks

Embracing the Graces of the Twilight Years ~ a Retreat for "Senior" Citizens

Participants will reflect on the challenges and graces of the twilight years (beginning around age 60) and opportunities to grow closer to the Divine. Senior citizens' care givers are also invited.

[Follow this link](#) for complete information and please note that the RSVP deadline is Feb. 20.



Friday, Mar. 20 - 12:15 - 1:45 p.m.

St. Mary Magdalen Church
Camarillo

**How Do You Embrace God's Light
When You Are Experiencing Darkness?**

Come join Sr. Val Roxburgh unpack the richness of John 1:5: "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." At this talk which is part of The University Series, participants will be invited to experience a spiritual pilgrimage through scripture, relevant literature, and real-life inspirational stories of faith.



Please note that registration opens on Jan. 24. [Follow this link for more information](#) and to register.

[**SNDUSA Website**](#)

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

[**2024 Impact Report**](#)

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

[**Archives of the California Mission Advancement Egrams**](#)

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