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California Region

Mission Advancement Egram

June 30, 2026

One Heart. One Hope. One Mission.

MESSAGE FROM MISSION ADVANCEMENT

...promoting peace, a breath of the eternal



***"Peace wants to dwell within us.
It has the gentle power to enlighten
and expand our understanding;
it resists and overcomes violence.
Peace is a breath of the eternal..."***

Pope Leo XIV

Dear Friends,

These words of Pope Leo XIV, launching 2026 as a Year of Peace, are timeless. They echo Jesus' words and the living witness of many who preceded us. This mural on the campus of St. Lawrence of Brindisi School in Watts, a school founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1924, showcases the traditions of peace modeled by St. Francis of Assisi, St. Julie Billiart, Sister Maria Aloysia Wolbring and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As consecrated women religious, the Sisters of Notre Dame are committed to this legacy, sharing **the peace which wants to dwell within us**. Our ministries in prayer, spiritual formation, education, social work and healthcare foster peace as **a gentle power which enlightens and expands understanding** in countless minds and hearts. And the potential ripple effect is vast.

With heartfelt gratitude for the spiritual and financial support of our many partners, we invite you to invest in the lives of those entrusted to our care. Your donation will bring forth **peace as a breath of the eternal**. As always, be assured of the deep appreciation and prayer of each Sisters of Notre Dame, both locally and around the world.

Gratefully wishing you an abundance of peace,
Sister Lisa Megaffin, SND
Director of Mission Advancement Services

FROM THE CALIFORNIA GRAPEVINE

...all around town...and the world!

Join us for an East African update

...celebrating God's goodness

Two East African SNDs will be visiting Southern California in mid-August! On Saturday, August 15, please join us for a Mass for the feast of the Assumption at 9:30 a.m., followed by a reception until noon. Sr. Pascaglia Kathikwa and Sr. Catherine Muema from Kenya will be our honored guests and will provide insights into the mission and ministries of the SNDs in East Africa. The festivities will be held at Notre Dame Center in Thousand Oaks.

For further information and to RSVP, visit [this webpage](#).



Sharing SND leadership

...working to end human trafficking

We congratulate Sister Gina Marie Blunck who was recently appointed as the North American Representative for Talitha Kum, the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Human Trafficking. The phrase “Talkitha Kum” originates from Mark 5:41 when Jesus spoke these words to raise Jairus’ 12-year-old daughter from the dead.

The organization is a global umbrella network of more than 6,000 Catholic sisters, allies and friends. Its mission is to end human trafficking and exploitation through collaborative initiatives--prevention, protection, social reintegration and rehabilitation of survivors. It includes more than 60 local networks in 90 countries. [Follow this link](#) to learn more.



Sister Gina Marie currently serves as the Executive Director of the Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters and is also an Executive Board Member of the Alliance to End Human Trafficking. The SNDs are grateful to her for representing our congregational commitment to end trafficking around the world.

Unique guest at NDLC

...experiencing the joys of creation!

The children at Notre Dame Learning Center Preschool were recently treated to a visit by a very special guest! "Shi Indian" delighted the students and gave them the opportunity to touch his mane, watch him munch on carrots, graze on the grass and much more!



Distinguished Graduates

...taking the SND spirit and mission into the future

The Sisters of Notre Dame proudly congratulate these students from the California region who received the Distinguished Graduate Award upon their recent graduation. This recognition honors students from schools sponsored or affiliated with the Sisters of Notre Dame, as outstanding witnesses to Notre Dame education. The criteria include practice of one's faith, service and academic achievement. We wish them many blessings in their future endeavors and we thank the educators who have guided and inspired them through the years. Sister Rebekah Kennedy congratulates Ariana Minoui from Our Lady of the Assumption School, Ventura.



Caroline DuRoss	St. Jude the Apostle School, Westlake Village
Alexandra Gomez	St. Helen School, South Gate
Sophia Guilford	Notre Dame Academy, Los Angeles
Ariana Minoui	Our Lady of the Assumption, Ventura
Giata Prato	Notre Dame Academy, Los Angeles
Emmett Sutherland	St. Jude the Apostle School, Westlake Village
Olivia Udabe	St. Pius X - St. Matthias Academy, Downey

Mission Moment

Honoring Noboru Honda ~ Fundraiser & saint-in-the-making



In 2005, Sister Jane McHugh returned from her pioneering days in Uganda and she began teaching at St. Dominic's in Eagle Rock. Her missionary heart and 10 years of experience there has inspired her students to raise funds for their "sister school," St. Julie's in Buseesa.

Noboru Honda has been at St. Dominic's since preschool, and as a 5th and 6th grader, Sister Jane was his religion teacher. In 2024, two SNDs from Uganda visited, and after their presentation, he decided to earn money for St. Julie's. He told his parents that he was going to collect cans and bottles for recycling and donate the funds to St. Julie's.

Sister Jane reports "He made his first donation in 2025 and recently gave another \$120. When he told his mother that he would continue doing this next year, too, she informed him he would continue doing this until he finished eighth grade. So his future as a mission fundraiser remains to be seen! Noboru is a great kid, works hard in school, is very polite and is well liked. As a well-rounded person, he golfs, participates in the Junior Academic Decathlon, sings in the choir and is a Sunday altar server! Please keep him and his parents in your prayers as he strives to become the saint he wants to be."

Mission Moment is a regular column in our monthly egram. We will feature SNDs, Associates, and ministry partners who exemplify the SND spirit and mission. To make suggestions and provide testimonials, please email infoca@sndusa.org.



Creating Sacred Beauty

...connecting creativity, beauty and faith

Be sure to enjoy Creating Sacred Beauty, a video recently released by Family Theatre Production. Sister Rose Marie Tulacz takes viewers behind the lens and into the heart of her sacred art photography ministry. She shares how she got her start with a borrowed camera, photographing scenes from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church when it was damaged by the Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987. [Follow this link](#) to view the video...and be inspired!

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

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

Friday, July 10 - 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 Sister Val Roxburgh via [email](#) or text to 805-452-9699.



Saturday, July 11 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Mary & Joseph Retreat Center
Rancho Palos Verdes

Women's Discernment Retreat

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is hosting this retreat for single women ages 18-39. This retreat will offer a relaxed, prayerful space to listen for God's voice in a loud world. Participants will meet consecrated women, spend time in Eucharistic adoration, attend Mass and reflect on their personal vocational paths. Registration is free, but the **RSVP deadline is July 1**. For further information, email Sister Leanne Hubbard or to register, [follow the QR code on this flyer](#).



Saturday, July 25 - 12:00 noon
St. Maximilian Kolbe Church
Westlake Village

2026 SND Jubilee Mass and Reception

We will be honoring eight Sisters of Notre Dame for their years of dedication to God and the Church. We congratulate.

JUBILEE OF JOY ~ 75 YEARS
Sister Mary Antonine Manning *

IRON JUBILEE ~ 65 YEARS
Sister Mary Joanne Wittenburg *



DIAMOND JUBILEE ~ 60 YEARS

Sister Gina Marie Blunck
Sister Mary Richardlyn Jones
Sister Shirley Marie McGovern
Sister Mary Joyanne Sullivan

RUBY JUBILEE ~ 40 YEARS

Sister Donna Marie Appert
Sister Mary Colette Theobald

The ceremony will be livestreamed [through this link](#). For further information, email infoca@sndusa.org. Please note that an asterisk indicates that this Jubilarian will be celebrating privately.

Saturday and Sunday, July 11-12
[St. Michael Parish](#)
Livermore, California

Sunday, August 16
[St. Ambrose Parish](#)
Berkeley, California

Saturday and Sunday, August 22-23
[Ascension Parish](#)
Los Angeles, California



Mission Co-operative Update and Appeal

The Sisters of Notre Dame are grateful to share our passion for our global missions in various Catholic churches across the United States this summer. We look forward to sharing the impact of your spiritual support and financial generosity. Thank you for joining us in making the good God known and loved! Additional locations and dates will be published in the coming months. For further information, please contact Sister Lisa Megaffin via email.

[SNDUSA Website](#)

[SND USA Magazine, Spring, 2026](#)

[2025 Impact Report](#)

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

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

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