

ITEMS

O F I N T E R E S T

New ESL Sister

Welcome to St. Louis, Damiana "Dami" Hamhyeeun, our newest international Sister.

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Be merciful

Sr. Mary Joy Benson talks about what it means for her to be merciful during the Holy Year of Mercy.

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SHADOWING WINIFRED AT UN

By Jeanette McDermott

I spent the first two weeks of February shadowing Sr. Winifred Doherty at the United Nations. My goal was to document Winifred's actions

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Green Corner

Good Shepherd Contemplative Sister Mary Therese Mott tells us what it was like growing up in a Quaker family that immersed itself in the beauty of God's great Creation. Sr. Therese said these early experiences left a lasting mark on her, giving her a deep sensitivity of and appreciation for natural beauty.

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PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

United Nations *Cont'd from p. 1*

as the Congregation's Main NGO representative to the UN so others might understand her role. The 54th Commission for Social Development (CSocD54) presented itself as an ideal backdrop for showing her in motion.

The Commission was open only to NGOs (non-government organizations) in special Consultative Status with the UN's [Economic and Social Council](#). Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd is one of 4,186 NGOs endowed with this status. Member States and NGOs came together over the two-week period to discuss how they will commit to the newly launched 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and utilize it to transform our world for the better.

The 2030 Agenda

CSocD54 took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from February 3-12, 2016. It was the first Commission held after 193 Member States (nations) adopted the [2030 Agenda](#) last September. January 2016 ushered in the official launch of the Agenda, which will now guide decisions that Member



Winifred Doherty and her assistant Cecilie Kern confer upon the day's events outside the United Nations Headquarters building.

States and the UN make over the next 15 years. The 2030 Agenda seeks to build on the [Millennium Development Goals](#) and complete what they did not achieve.

"When I come to the United Nations I'm just one person representing Good Shepherd. The power is when a number of NGOs come together, when we collaborate to bring forward the various multifaceted aspects of the 2030 Agenda's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

"I think this is the way we will actually implement the 17 Goals and move towards a world that is sustainable, a world where human rights are upheld, a world where there is dignity of the person and where the care of the person and care of the environment are at the



Winifred prepares to pose a question at the UN Civil Society Forum, a two-day precursor to the 54th Commission for Sustainable Development.

heart of everything people do," Winifred said.

Between bouts of snapping photos and rolling video, like everyone else in UN sessions I settled into my

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Networking among NGOs and Member States is critical to implementing the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals.

PROVINCE NEWS



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United Nations *Cont'd from p. 2*



A high-level panel on Human Trafficking involved experts on the subject, including a survivor (far left).

seat and listened to speakers and discussions. I was struck by the intensity of the UN's oral domain. Massive amounts of talking — and listening — structured each day. As I spied Winifred through the camera lens it became evident to me very quickly how fully in her element she is with international relations.

Lively, continually active and industrious, she is clearly empowered by Spirit. She is ready at all times to lead a discussion, join a conversation or accept an invitation to present a statement. She is also quick on the draw with questions and at the forefront of power networking.

Power networking

"No work can be done here unless one is connected on multiple levels. Connected in terms of NGO committees, groups, UN agencies and connected in terms of Member States. The relational aspect of the work is the most important, where we can enter into trusting relationship to discuss issues that really matter. Collaborating with people who have expertise, gifts and talents is very important in terms of our advocacy work," Winifred said.



"No work can be done here unless one is connected on multiple levels."

Watching Winifred conduct her networking skills was akin to watching a well rehearsed performance. She moves in and out of venues without breaking stride. Her energy is boundless as she darts from one venue to the other and clusters with a dizzying array of people to talk about the 2030 Agenda and its Goals.

As the days rolled by, I grasped the magnitude of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets. I began to



Left: Sr. Winifred leads a small group discussion with NGO representatives from the European Union and (top) meets with religious at the UN to discuss how to move policy forward.

wonder how any individual NGO could possibly succeed in implementing them. I asked Winifred for her take on the matter.

Implementing the goals

"That's a huge question," she replied. "But I think if we're saying people are at the center of the Agenda and every person is important, then Good Shepherd is already implementing these goals."

For the 2030 Agenda to work, the Commission for Social Development says some actions have to occur:

- Each Member State will need to involve civil society, business and

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United Nations *Cont'd from p. 3*

representatives of interest groups in the Agenda. Individual nations will need to review their progress and be able to report on it.

- At the regional level, countries will need to share experiences and tackle common issues.
- The UN will need to take stock of global progress annually, identifying gaps and emerging issues, and recommending corrective action.

The power of one

At the grassroots level, Winifred believes everybody makes an impact. She said, "If everybody — and everybody begins with the power of one — is actually reflecting on and trying to do their part at any of the levels of the 17 Goals, then I am positive we are on our way to a better and sustainable future. There is a movement toward the interconnectivity of all of life. As long as we are connecting with others, then each NGO can achieve these goals," Winifred said.

CSocD54 concluded on February 12, with the Commission adopting three resolutions that had been negotiated during the two weeks. NGO's who had not yet presented were given the opportunity to be



l-r: Winifred listens to a speaker through headphones while seated with her intern Amber Williamson and assistant Cecilie Kern.

Sustainable Development Goals



heard. In her oral statement, Winifred mentioned the Good Shepherd film Maisha as an example of how to implement the SDGs. Maisha is a collaborative grassroots project in the Democratic Republic of Congo where individuals and the community have become empowered and engaged with local government.

What's next for Winifred

Shadowing Winifred at the United Nations for two weeks was engaging and educational. As I prepared to leave CSocD54 and New York City, I asked her, "What's next for you?"

She rattled off a month-long series of UN activities starting with a meeting of the Core Group of the Global Coalition for Social Protection floors in Geneva, followed by the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women beginning on March 14 in New York City.

When I asked Winifred what level of participation in the UN is most significant to her, she didn't

hesitate to answer with a response not surprising for a Good Shepherd.

"I have a particular engagement with women's groups at the UN. I partake with NGO groups on the status of women because I believe we need to be where women and girls are being talked about. I'm a director of a working group on girls. What we do is bring girls to the United Nations to speak for themselves. I think it is tremendous to enable girls to speak on behalf of themselves and other girls."

Each night, at the end of long, focused days at the UN Winifred heads back to the Good Shepherd International Peace Justice Office to catch up on routine activity for a few hours before boarding the subway to home, where she catches a few winks before beginning again.

Like the Energizer bunny, she keeps on going. The flame that ignites her zeal appears to be a bonfire.

See the next next page for additional stories related to the United Nations.

PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

United Nations *Cont'd from p. 4*



Sr. Winifred Doherty stands by one of the many beautiful pieces of art at UN Headquarters.

How can I help with SDGs?

End extreme poverty. Fight inequality and justice. Fix climate change. Whoa! The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Goals are important, world-changing objectives. But how can I make an impact? Sr. Winifred Doherty, the Congregation's Main NGO representative to the United Nations, said, "I would want Good Shepherd to know all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. No doubt you will be drawn to one of the 17 goals in a particular way. Work for that one, knowing that it's in the context of the whole. Wouldn't we create a beautiful fabric if we were all working for every goal differently and yet together?"

United Nations System

In 1945 nations were in ruins. World War II was over, and the world wanted peace. Delegates of 51 nations gathered in San Francisco that year to sign a document creating a new organization called the United Nations. United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt coined the name. These 51 nations committed to maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights for fundamental freedoms. To embody these values, the organizers created a founding Charter, whose purposes and principles still guide the mission and work of the United Nations today.

Main Organs

Six organs (main bodies) form the United Nations, all of which were established when the UN formed in 1945:

1. General Assembly
2. Security Council
3. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
4. Trusteeship Council
5. International Court of Justice
6. UN Secretariat

ECOSOC

ECOSOC is where Good Shepherd fits into the United Nations picture. The Economic and Social Council is the UN's central platform for reflection, debate and innovative thinking on sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). ECOSOC engages a wide variety of stakeholders: policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, foundations, business sector representatives and non-governmental organizations. It comprises 54 Member States.

Step it up for gender equality

The 2016 theme for International Women's Day on March 8 is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality." On this day the United Nations will reflect on its commitments to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights. It will also focus on new commitments under the UN Women's Step It Up initiative. These efforts are aimed at building momentum of the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals so they can be implemented effectively. Learn more about International Women's Day online.



PROVINCE NEWS

ZEAL

Our newest international Sister

Sister Damiana “Dami” Hamhyeeun came to St. Louis on February 8 to begin classes at English Language School (ELS) on the campus of University of Missouri St. Louis. She expects to be here for a year. Dami, as she is called in her Province of North East Asia, is a smiling, eager to learn student. Her Province consists of South Korea, China/Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau.

Before coming to the United States she was missioned on the island of Jeju, South Korea and worked in the Jeju Center, our Good Shepherd Women’s Emergency Hotline. The program provides 24 hour counseling and referral services for women in crisis.

When Damiana arrived in St. Louis she was thrilled to see Sr. Christopher Mullan, who had taught her English in Korea. Sr. Christopher is now helping Dami with her homework from ELS. Sr. Dami also knows Sr. Nora Pat O’Flannigan and was so happy to recently receive a letter from her. Hopefully, they can connect sometime during Damiana’s time in the U.S.

It is so refreshing to have this enthusiastic, smiling student with us at the Province Center. We learned quickly that Sr. Dami loves the snow.

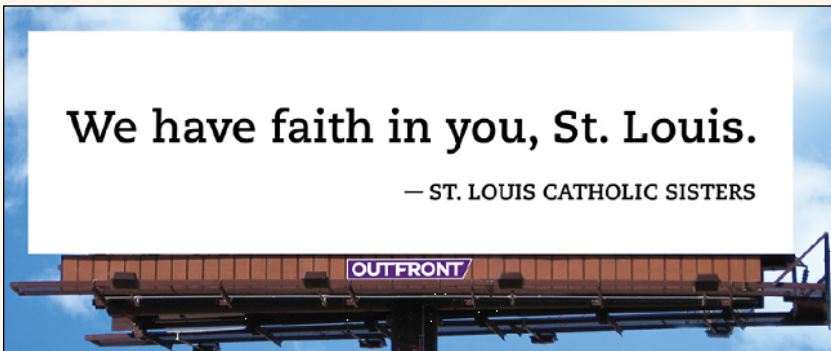
Submitted by Sr. Virginia Gordon



Sr. Dami built a snow woman and she and Sr. Marie Maurer basked in snow flurries after a recent morning snowfall.

We have faith in you, St. Louis.

— ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC SISTERS



St. Louis Catholic Sisters are launching a media campaign across metropolitan St. Louis featuring billboards with the message “We have faith in you, St. Louis.” The campaign, which coincides with National Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14, 2016, is aimed at instilling pride in the community and a desire to work for its betterment. Sisters, who for generations have taught and shaped the character of so many St. Louisans, know that St. Louis area residents are up to the task of being more loving, less violent and better neighbors.

Jeanette McDermott, Province Communications Coordinator and editor of *Items of Interest*, worked on the billboard campaign.

MINISTRY NEWS

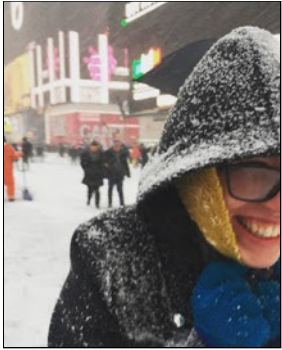


ZEAL



Good Shepherd Volunteers blog about their experiences

Good Shepherd Volunteers have a blogsite that is filled with personal accounts of their GSV experiences. Here are a few snippets from the site, called Just Love. You can visit the blogsite at <http://justlovegsv.blogspot.com>.



I had no idea what to write for this blog post. I asked coworkers and friends. I waited until after the retreat

because I thought I could talk all about that, but instead I wanted this blog post to be a letter of gratitude to the one who knows what I need even when I cannot see it myself. I wanted this post to show my doubt and to show my path to truth.

~ Chelsea VanOrden,
Astoria Community

In 2013, I spent the summer after my sophomore year at the University of Notre Dame, not at a fancy corporate internship like most of my classmates, but at Good Shepherd Shelter in Los Angeles volunteering and living at the shelter. Embarking on my eight week Summer Service Learning Program (SSLP)



experience, I never would have thought that those 8 weeks would completely change me.
~Deirdre Harrington,
LA Community



While reflecting back on my year of service thus far, I feel a sense of gratitude. My work with GSV has helped

me to see more clearly the beauty in each day and to focus on being more present to those moments. In particular, I am grateful to be a staff member at a high school where each day the students teach me about vulnerability and how effective vulnerability can be.

~ Laura Nagy,
Wickatunk Community

Church ushers bring a pajama party to GSS Baltimore

The Interdenominational Church Ushers Association (ICUA) of Maryland donated brand new fleece pajamas to all of the students at Good Shepherd Services Baltimore last month as part of its annual community outreach program. The group donated the pajamas on the heels of the winter blizzard that blanketed Baltimore under nearly three feet of snow.

In thanking ICUA for its generous gift, Chief Executive Officer Michele Wyman said, "Just feel the temperatures outside! To give our students something soft, warm and cuddly is the perfect expression of love. Your kindness shows our kids that you care about them and that they are loved."



GSS Baltimore staff and Sisters with members of ICUA of Maryland.

MINISTRY NEWS



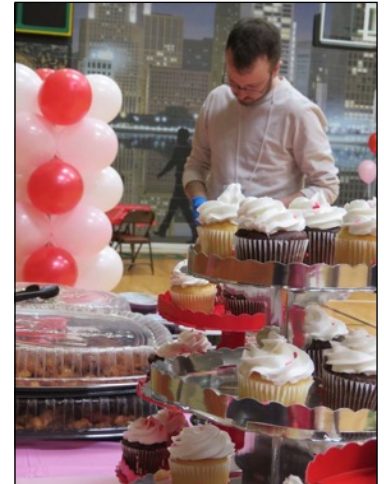
ZEAL



Showing kids some love

Good Shepherd Services Baltimore threw a whopping Valentine party and dance for their students last month. Chief Executive Officer Michele Wyman quoted Saint Mary Euphrasia when she said, "It's not enough that you love them. They need to know you love them."

"We're always trying to find ways to show our students that we care about them," said Teresa Jones, Director of Family Advocacy Services. What better way to show them some love than on Valentine's Day?



Taking on the 'Big Heart Gives' Challenge

The Rite Aid Foundation awarded Good Shepherd Services Baltimore a grant in the amount of \$20,000 last month. What GSS had to do to earn the award was sign up people for Rite Aid's KidCents program. Through KidCents, members of Rite Aid's wellness+ with Plenti program can round up their in-store or online purchases to the nearest dollar and give their change to a designated nonprofit focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children. Good Shepherd Services Baltimore is a designated nonprofit in the KidCents program.

Dalenna Martin, grantwriter for GSS, led the task of signing up employees. She said, "Our goal was to get 300 people to sign up for KidCents. By the end of the challenge, which ran from October 1, 2015 to January 31, 2016, we had logged 378 new designations for the KidCents program."

Signing up more than 300 people in KidCents earned GSS the \$20,000 Rite Aid award.

Photo from l-r: Diana Ellis, Development Director; Chief Executive Officer Michele Wyman; and Grantwriter Dalenna Martin.

MINISTRY NEWS



ZEAL

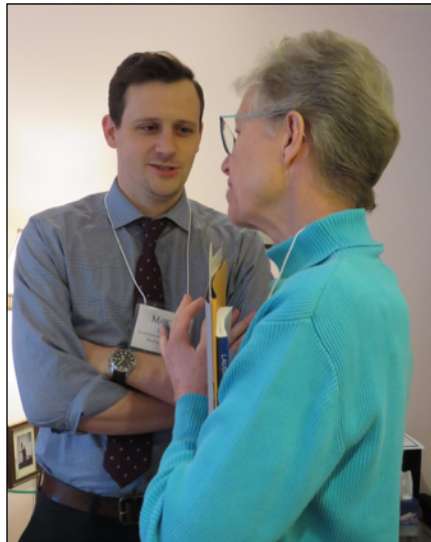


NAC packs agenda

Good Shepherd National Advocacy Center (NAC) held an energetic dinner meeting with its Advisory Board February 11. The evening included prayer, presentations, personal reflections, certificates of appreciation, formation of a task force and a home-cooked meal. All of this was in addition to the usual business at hand that is associated with board meetings.

Three members who retired from the advisory board each received a certificate of appreciation. Long-standing board members Sisters Kathleen Moore and Mary Carol McClenon retired, along with Michele Wyman, Chief Executive Officer of Good Shepherd Services Baltimore. Michele was among the first to sit on the Advisory Board for NAC when it formed in 2001.

Newest board members are David Steenburg, attorney for a Washington, DC law firm; Matthew Cuff, Policy Associate for Jesuit International Advocacy Office; and Monte Abbott, Operations Director for Sisters of the Good Shepherd Province of Mid-North America.



Board member Matthew Cuff and guest presenter Sr. Joan Spiering share points of view following the dinner meeting.

Sister Joan Spiering gave an inspiring keynote presentation on NAC's mission in light of *Laudato Si*. Her presentation led to a lively discussion afterward. Guest speaker Sister Gwynette Proctor, SNDdeN, Director of the Office of Black Catholic Ministries for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, spoke passionately about how NAC and her agency could collaborate to



Alan and Marilyn Riffkin's home-cooked meal (above) and NAC Staff Associate Fran Eskin-Royer's personal touch with dessert helped create a relaxed and homey Advisory Board meeting.



strengthen the black Catholic voice. Sr. Gwynette is discerning board membership with Good Shepherd National Advocacy Center.

GSS honors Snow Heroes

Senior Management staff for Good Shepherd Services Baltimore hosted a Snow Heroes Luncheon on February 17 for the 62 Mission Partners who performed heroic service during Baltimore's recent blizzard that blanketed the region in nearly 30 inches of snow. The staff who stayed at GSS around-the-clock accomplished a near-miracle: a "perfect" weekend (Friday through Sunday) with no crises, including no falls in the parking lot. Each of the Snow Heroes received a special T-shirt with the words "Shepherds Heroes" and a personal thank-you note from CEO Michele Wyman. The program included shout-outs to residential leadership and staff, dietary, facilities, nursing and administrative support personnel.

Submitted by Diana Ellis, Good Shepherd Services Baltimore



COMMUNITY LIFE



ZEAL



God loves new beginnings

Women and men living in a homeless shelter participated in a ritual service of blessing and prayer on Ash Wednesday. In the spirit of the Holy Year of Mercy and that of Shepherding God's Love, I invited staff, women and men in the homeless shelter to pause for a moment and enter into a contemplative dialogue on the meaning of Lent. In this circle we had an opportunity to receive blessed ashes on our foreheads and to understand the deeper meaning of Lent. I shared with participants that one of the things I love about our faith is that our God is a God of second chances, fresh starts and new beginnings. God is always waiting on us. Sometimes we may think we are waiting for Him, but that is never true.

We reflected together on these questions:

- What is happening in your life right now? What is not working? What great questions are you grappling with in your heart?
- Do you need a fresh start? In what area of your life is God inviting you to experience a new beginning?

I was deeply touched by the open sharing and noticed the deep pain on faces that were drenched with tears. Many asked for prayers for themselves and their families. Each person then received the blessing of ashes on their foreheads with the words, "God loves you, and you are special."

Our Service ended on a note of gratitude and peace in our hearts. We believe that Jesus is our ultimate new beginning. Jesus, help me to believe that a new beginning is possible.

Submitted by Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez, San Francisco Community and case manager/certified addictions treatment counselor at the multi-service center St. Vincent De Paul Society in San Francisco, California.

National Catholic Sisters Week

National Catholic Sisters Week (NCSW) is an annual celebration that takes place from March 8–14. It was created to honor women religious and bring greater focus to their works. National Catholic Sisters Week is supported by a \$3.3 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The Hilton Foundation hopes that as more young women learn about women religious, more will choose to follow their example.

NCSW is headquartered at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minn., and is held in conjunction with National Women's History Month. Communities and ministries throughout the Province have an opportunity during NCSW to tell the stories of the Good Shepherd mission. If you want to learn more about NCSW or would like to write a story about a Sister's ministry, please send an email to contact@nationalcatholicsistersweek.org. If you need an example of a Sister Story, they are in abundance at <https://www.sisterstory.org/intheirownwords> and <http://globalsistersreport.org>.

COMMUNITY LIFE

ZEAL

Baltimore community celebrates Sr. Gayle's Silver Jubilee

The Baltimore community celebrated Sr. Gayle Lwanga Crumbley's Silver Jubilee on February 8 with a festive lunch that included little silver baskets filled with Hershey kisses. Before the lunch ended, Sr. Mary Becker, who decorated for the affair, announced that the silver baskets were only "rented" and that she had to return them to St. Joseph Residence. As she began collecting the baskets all of the Sisters started donating their kisses to Gayle. We joked, "Don't leave a trail, Gayle," as each of us vied for a "better" suggestion of how



asthma. She renewed her vows. In a happy coincidence, two of our local Little Sisters of the Poor came to Mass (they do occasionally) so they represented another facet of our Eudist heritage on this Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Submitted by Sr. Mary Carol McClenon



Gayle could carry her loot without spilling it. The menu was tilapia, baked potato and spinach. For dessert we did not have the traditional sheetcake. We had a heaping strawberry fruit shortcake (only it wasn't short!) made by Marlene, kitchen staff in St. Joseph Residence. We then attended Mass at 5 p.m. with Fr. John Williamson, our pastor, presiding. Gayle had a red rose corsage which she had to take off because it was triggering her



Sr. Mary Carol McClenon entertains Sisters Nora Dennehy and Teresa Floyd with jokes published in Readers Digest.



Sr. Mary Ann Giordano's sense of humor is caught on camera as she enters her room in Baltimore.

COMMUNITY LIFE

ZEAL

A sweet visit to St. Joseph Residence

It was a happy day at St. Joseph Residence when babies and children from the Saint Philomena Home School Cooperative paid a Valentine's Day visit to the Sisters at St. Joseph Residence in Baltimore. Sr. Laetitia said of the afternoon, "Wasn't that just the most precious moment?"



Motown and Rock 'n Roll come to Immaculate Heart

The Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) livened up Immaculate Heart Convent on February 25 with staff and Sisters alike rocking out to karaoke tunes. Helen Rockman, volunteer with VNA, kept the songs flowing throughout the karaoke performance. She found some favorites that the Sisters particularly enjoyed, including "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" and the Motown hit "Stop in the Name of Love," which a trio of Immaculate Heart staff performed exceptionally well.

VNA is a frequent visitor to Immaculate Heart, with its volunteers always coming up with a new surprise for the Sisters.

"We always enjoy coming to Immaculate Heart to see the Sisters. This is a very special place," said Sue Risch, Volunteer Coordinator for VNA.

Local Leader of Immaculate Heart Sr. Pauline Bilbrough said the Sisters love it when VNA pays a visit.



JUBILEE OF MERCY

ZEAL

Q&A

Items of Interest published in its September 2014 issue a story about Monica Lapuente, who channels prayer and devotion to the Church into her ministerial work as a dollmaker. Since reporting her story, Monica has gone on to publish a two-volume book about her dolls and how they serve as visible and credible witnesses of God's mercy.

As a woman of profound faith and a devout Catholic, what does mercy mean to you?

Pope Francis invites us to contemplate God's mercy as the "wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace," calling mercy "the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us." It is the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to a hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness and brokenness. This brings us to Jesus, the heart of the Gospel and the revelation of the sacrament of the Father's merciful love.

How is your ministry as a doll maker rooted in the act of mercy?

Our humanity acknowledges that when we have merciful love in our lives, we are at our most joyous, creative and productive. Without it, our lives are empty and meaningless. I could have chosen to remain safe and untouched, but I decided to step a little more boldly into a path that would excite, astound and renew my spirit. All it took was a simple, providential act that refused to make love a prisoner

of the mundane and take away its passion.

That providential act occurred on a steamy May morning in a rundown shop that could aptly be described as my "Massabielle." I saw a porcelain doll scantily clad in a pink floral dress. She was tilted forward in a painfully awkward position and her head was split wide open. She appeared to have suffered appalling cruelty. A connection was made like two intersecting tributaries of mercy and miracle and she touched the very core of my existence.

The doll you discovered in that rundown shop affected you greatly. Can you explain why?

This *Monastery Belle* became a metaphor for all humanity, "the walking wounded." Her features were fine and fragile, but in near ruins. Even her chiseled legs were an anemic grey from starvation and from the cold within. At home I "performed surgery" (the medicine of mercy) on her head, gluing it together, scrubbing black Magic Marker from the soles of her feet, sewing an arm that had separated at the shoulder, cutting knots and a brittle rubberband from her matted hair, disinfecting her bruised and embattled body, and placing her in the sun to air-out and dry.

When I was folding some freshly laundered clothes, that seemingly insignificant and insufficient floral dress fell from my hands to the floor. As I reached down to pick it up, my grip activated a tiny box that had been sewn into a small white pocket inside the dress, invisible to the casual observer or those who "love at an arm's distance." That tender loving touch from the right hand unlocked a beautiful secret. Hidden inside, pressing against the chest of this doll, was the "music of her

heart" - joyful, original and classic. It had survived a major flood, a brutal wringing out, intense tumbling and heat, and a careless forsaking. And *still* the music played on for my benefit, and for others.

This doll changed your life. What happened after you patched and cleaned her up?

Clothed in the garment that signifies peace, this doll became the first of my 265 prophetic witnesses and channels of compassion and merciful love, gentleness, and respect for the wounded, the left behind, and the rejected and oppressed by the world. They remind society of the dignity and worth of every human being and of the seraphic symphony of love

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Monica Lapuente's book *Come, Walk with Me* displays the Good Shepherd symbol on the cover.

JUBILEE OF MERCY

ZEAL

Dolls *Cont'd from p. 13*

written inside each one them which becomes their spirit and life. As missionaries and practitioners of mercy, we *must* take the time to look at, care enough, listen to, and befriend one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Why do you transform the dolls into nuns?**

Each of the 265 *Monastery Belles*, which span six continents, represents a different Order of nuns and different community from all over God's Creation. Every habit is unique; therefore, each doll brings a unique face of mercy to this earth and bears witness to the basic truth that the God of Mercy is the center of being. He alone can satisfy the human heart because His love is everlasting. Every nun proclaims, as Christ did while He was on earth, the unconditional sacrament of the mercy of God for every single person who is a precious cell in His Mystical Body. That merciful love

reaches out through them to all Creation for global healing and to save what is lost. All of this is a part of the power of the dolls.

The Monastery Belles have taken you on quite an adventure, haven't they?

This "secret of God" (or charism) helped me live a miraculous adventure, the essence of which needed to be shared - especially during this designated Holy Year of Mercy. I absorbed this secret as I would sunshine and desire to radiate it as a light that pierces the darkness.

Since everything begins and ends with mercy, it is through these sacramentals, or "ships of God's mercy" (which are His many faces and smiles of merciful tenderness), that *all* are called to let go of their fears and surrender to God Whose name is Mercy. It is that face of welcome and grace which is part of my story here on earth. And it is an absolute certainty that Mary, the Mother of Mercy, accompanied me every stitch of the way to help create a "seamless garment" just as she did for her Son in Nazareth.

Where do you keep the Monastery Belles?

About four years ago I donated 120 dolls to St. Agnes Academy in Memphis, where each classroom has four of my dolls on display. The students begin their school day by praying for the Orders that the nun dolls represent. Father Tom Condon blessed the dolls after I donated them to St. Agnes.

A parish, Church of the Incarnation, in Collierville, Tennessee (north of Memphis) has received the rest of my little Monastery Belles. I have every faith that Our Lady will show

Fr. Ernie De Blassio where they need to be.

Was it hard for you to let go of the dolls?

I knew that these truly were never meant to be mine. They came through my hands, but they exist to help others and I could not hold on to them. But each nun was a part of me. I invested myself - heart and soul - in every stitch, and every jabbed finger. It is as if one could say, "If you want to get a glimpse of who Monica is on the inside, see the fruits of her labor." I did all in my power to make it as perfect an offering as a human could.

You have recently written a two-volume book that tells the story of your Monastery Belles. Where will the book reside? Is it for sale?

The books contain information about each Order, as well as a color photo of that doll. Both volumes of *Come, Walk with Me* will reside at the John Paul II Library at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. The books may be purchased directly from me.

Of the many symbols representing your 265 Monastery Belles, why did you choose the Good Shepherd symbol to grace the front cover of your book?

You can readily see how much I love and appreciate Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd by the cover of the book. On the inside of the front cover I explain the significance of using this symbol. I fashioned a very personal Monastery Belle after Sister Florence Chiriani, RGS, a member of the Province of New York and

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JUBILEE OF MERCY

ZEAL

Dolls *Cont'd from p. 14*

contemplative Sister living at Good Shepherd Center in Marlboro, Massachusetts.

I named the Monastery Belle Sr. Maria del Socorro, RGS. The Spanish name means a piercing cry for help and mercy. I name Sr. Rosalyn in my Acknowledgments because she sent me the Good Shepherd symbol from Astoria, New York. I thought it wonderful that I honor a lovely Sister of some 90 plus years who has served Christ faithfully.

What about the book's back cover? What is the story behind that symbol?

The Cross on the book's back cover was sent to me by Mother Antonia Brenner, ESEH - "The Prison Angel" (she passed away two years ago) who founded the Eudist Servants of the Eleventh Hour. She called me from Tijuana one Saturday afternoon. Her voice was shaky, but she was so genuinely appreciative of me "shining a light" on her Order that she sent me the actual Cross her Sisters wear. It is made by the inmates at the prison where she lived for over 30 years ministering to the inmates. The significance of the Star of David placed on the bed of nails is this (according to Mother Antonia): Judaism is the caterpillar and Catholicism is the butterfly. Jesus was a Jew. Without Him and Mary there would be no Catholics. It is honoring His roots. Many of our Catholic rituals are rooted in Jewish practice.

You can read the earlier story about Monica's [Monastery Belles](#) in Items of Interest on the province website. To order a book, contact Monica at lapuentef@bellsouth.net.

Be merciful

By Mary Joy Benson, RGS

As I pondered and prayed about the words "Be merciful" I realized that being merciful goes beyond how we act and what we do. It includes how we think of others. I need to be "merciful in my mind."



A few General Chapters ago, there was a "catch thing" — OWJ, which means Observe Without Judging. That phrase has been a big grace for me over the years. It ties in with my favorite quote from St. John Eudes: "To have no eyes to see the faults of others, nor ears to hear them spoken ill of, nor mouth to accuse, nor will to judge and condemn ..." It all begins with me. Being merciful in my mind includes these things:

- thinking the best of others
- giving each person the benefit of the doubt
- refraining from mental criticism/judging
- letting go any hurtful memories.

I ride the city buses in Philadelphia. This gives me abundant opportunities to practice being merciful in my mind. People block the front aisle, stand (park) at the rear exit, eat food and drink liquids, which often are spilled on the floor. In order to unlearn my critical way of reacting I've been practicing doing a mental hug - an intentional act of affirmation and acceptance of each person who is "doing it wrong," so to speak.

The persons aren't aware of my thoughts, and that doesn't matter. If it's true — and I'm convinced it is — that everything we *think* affects the world, for better or worse, then God's mercy is being spread a little bit in Philadelphia, and perhaps beyond. The new fledgling practice certainly is helping *me* to be a more peace-filled person!



GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



The beauty of God's creation

By Mary Therese Mott, RGS

A young girl sits in the back seat of a car, headphones on and eyes glued to the i-Pad on her lap. The car rolls through beautiful countryside. The girl doesn't notice.

This is a television ad I saw the other night. Unfortunately, it mimics reality. Watching the commercial made me feel sad and concerned for our world.

I grew up in a Quaker family of five. My father had four weeks off each summer, so we would take family vacations in a station wagon that also served as our camper. During these vacations we connected with the Sister we share our life with . . . and we learned to know the beautiful Mother Earth who opens her arms to embrace us. (*Laudato Si* 1).

We immersed ourselves in nature. We spent time in mountains, canyons and national parks. We traveled through deserts and along oceans. We visited dams, lakes, rivers and waterfalls. We hiked in gorges and fell spellbound by such places as Mount Lassen Volcanic Park and Joshua Tree National Monument.

My father was the bird expert; my mother the nature expert. I remember one mountain experience in particular. My father had the whole family lie down flat on the ground, not moving and not making sound. With arms outstretched, crumbs in our hands, we waited until birds came to eat from our palms!



Lake Tahoe was one of the many wonders that Sr. Mary Therese Mott experienced while growing up with parents who loved nature.

My parents taught us children to delight in nature. They taught us how to identify wildflowers, trees and shrubs. They taught us how to identify birds by their appearance

My parents taught us children to delight in nature. These experiences left their lasting mark, giving me a deep sensitivity to and appreciation for natural beauty.

and calls. These experiences left their lasting mark, giving me a deep sensitivity to and appreciation for natural beauty.

When I was in my twenties, I sought a teaching position in Alaska. I wanted a simple

environment, where wilderness still thrived. I went to the northern slope, expecting a place that had enough sun for a garden. I soon discovered permafrost and the fact that it snowed every month of the year, making gardening impossible.

Later, I moved 400 miles south to Fairbanks and rented a small house with a large backyard. I went to the university extension farm to study short-summer gardening. I learned to make crop rows that ran north and south, and were three feet apart. I learned to dig trenches in-between the rows, and how to keep the soil warm by covering each row with heavy, clear plastic sheeting.

I crawled around each row and hand-packed the edges of the plastic with soil. I walked the rows several times a day, and when I found a seedling I would cut it free from the plastic so it would not burn. I felt like I was nurturing life.

Continued on next page

GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



Beauty *Cont'd from p. 16*

I grew 19 varieties of crops, including three types of lettuce, and used no chemical sprays. Instead, I washed off insects and planted pungent marigolds at the end of each row. It worked.

I began to live in a new way. I taught school in fall, winter and spring and lived in my garden all summer long. I threw my wrist watch in the drawer and lived without awareness of time, as daylight is continuous throughout Fairbank's summer. Long walks and gardening filled my summer days. I loved being so close to nature and gave myself completely to this work.



Alaska night sky

In the winter of 1969 I was living in a village on an island off the northern slope of Alaska. There I experienced total darkness and the breath taking star-studded night sky. One night while walking from the village I saw the splendor of the northern lights. Aurora Borealis rippled

all around me in spectacular curtains of color. I was overwhelmed by the beauty. I found myself dancing and twirling over the frozen tundra in communion with my God. Memories like these never fade.

And so it was with my heart filled with remembrances of nature that I grew saddened while watching that television commercial of the young girl so enamored with technology that she failed to witness the beautiful countryside passing by. As I reflected more deeply on the ad, I realized how easy it is for us to get distracted and lose our sense of wonder for Creation. When our eyes are diverted and ears blocked, we don't see or hear the cries of wounded humanity and Earth. We miss the urging of *Laudato Si* -- to care for our common home.

Sister Mary Therese Mott entered the novitiate in Florissant, Missouri, on January 1, 1989. She professed her vows on May 2, 1991. Adopting a contemplative lifestyle didn't end Sister's travels to beautiful places. She has crossed the Atlantic Ocean no less than six round trips and has made two rounds trips across the Pacific, spending time with international Good Shepherd Sisters while teaching English and modeling contemplative life.



A Deepening Love Affair

Sister Madge is home! She returned to the Maria Droste Contemplative Community after visiting her family in the Philippines for nearly two months. Sr. Madge is reading a book that she highly recommends to others. The book is titled *A Deepening Love Affair, the gift of God in later life*. Author Jane Marie Thibault wrote the book to enrich the spirituality of older adults who are still searching for "something more" to allow them to experience the abundance of life that Christ has promised to us. The book has consistent 5-star ratings among critics and people who have read it.

Sr. Madge said, "I have always had a love affair with God. All of us Sisters have. This book shows us how to love God even more deeply as we age. It's really a very nice book."

LEADERSHIP TRAVEL

ZEAL

NAME	DATES	LOCATION
Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson	Mar 2-7 Mar 3-6	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis
Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez	Mar 1-7 Mar 3-6 Mar 9	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis Vocations meeting, Oakland, CA
Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth	Mar 2-7 Mar 3-6	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis
Sr. Maureen Johnson	Mar 1-8 Mar 3-6	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis
Sr. Dolores Kalina	No travel	No travel
Sr. Maureen Kunz	Mar 1-8 Mar 3-6	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis
Sr. Marie Maurer	Mar 2-7 Mar 3-6 Mar 15-17	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis LCWR Region X spring meeting, Dubuque
Sr. Mary Carolyn McQuaid	Mar 2-7 Mar 3-6 Mar 14-17	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis Good Shepherd Shelter Board meeting, Los Angeles
Sr. Madeleine Munday	Mar 2-7 Mar 3-6 Mar 15-17 Mar 19-28	Leadership Team meetings, St. Louis Transformative Visioning meeting, St. Louis LCWR Region X spring meeting, Dubuque Annual retreat

CSW60

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Commission on the
Status of Women
14-24 March 2016



PROVINCE CONTACT

ZEAL



"Don't let anything discourage you. See God in all things."

Saint Mary Euphrasia

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

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