

ITEMS

O F I N T E R E S T

Role of contemplation

Sisters consider the role of contemplation in our modern day at the annual LCWR gathering.

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Brains, brews and BBQ

DeNeuville Learning Center's first trivia fundraising fete is a rousing success.

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A vocation story

Sr. Eileen Robinson shares the tale of her determined yet winding road to entering religious life.

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Killed for loving

Maria Agustina Rivas, RGS, is being considered for Beatification as a holy martyr.

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The Leadership Team for Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd attended an art opening at Good Shepherd Gallery during the Companions bi-annual gathering in St. Louis.



Green Corner

This year marks the second anniversary of the publication of Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment *Laudato Si*. The Global Catholic Climate Movement has initiated a pledge campaign to engage more Catholics to answer the call of the encyclical. You can sign the pledge at www.Globalcatholicclimatemovement.org

The pledge is simply stated:

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SHARING OURSELVES

Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd take vows and lead a consecrated

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Companions *Cont'd from p. 1*

life in our own homes and work environments. We are self-supporting. Committed to the Good Shepherd mission, we take private vow(s) and renew them each year.

Companions have the option to either take the vow of Zeal alone or to also take any of the other vows that Sisters profess: poverty, chastity and obedience, based on the call each of us feels.

We strive, in every situation and relationship, to personally witness to Good Shepherd's core values of mercy, zeal, reconciliation and the value of each individual person that our charism calls us to.

Gathering for retreat

The Companions gather for retreat every two years at the Province Center in St. Louis. The retreats feed our spirituality and provide an opportunity for us to gather as Community to catch up with one another on our lives. The gatherings also bring us together to handle the group's administrative functions and plan for the future.

We covered a lot of turf during this year's retreat, which ran from

August 3-5. We ratified our revised Constitution, created a brochure, updated our membership list, discussed making charitable donations and explored ideas for promoting group cohesion and support. We also began the important process of documenting and archiving our history. We renewed our vows during mass, conducted a memorial service for deceased Companions and attended an artist reception and art opening at Good Shepherd Gallery (see page 8) in Ferguson.

The Companions joyfully welcome Catholic women who feel drawn to the Good Shepherd mission and spirituality. Bernie Bates, who has been a Companion for 32 years, said, "My spiritual life has grown a lot through my love for the other Companions. I have also grown very close to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. I love seeing the Sisters at our retreats and thank God for their willingness to share with us their lives and how God's love keeps them going forward."

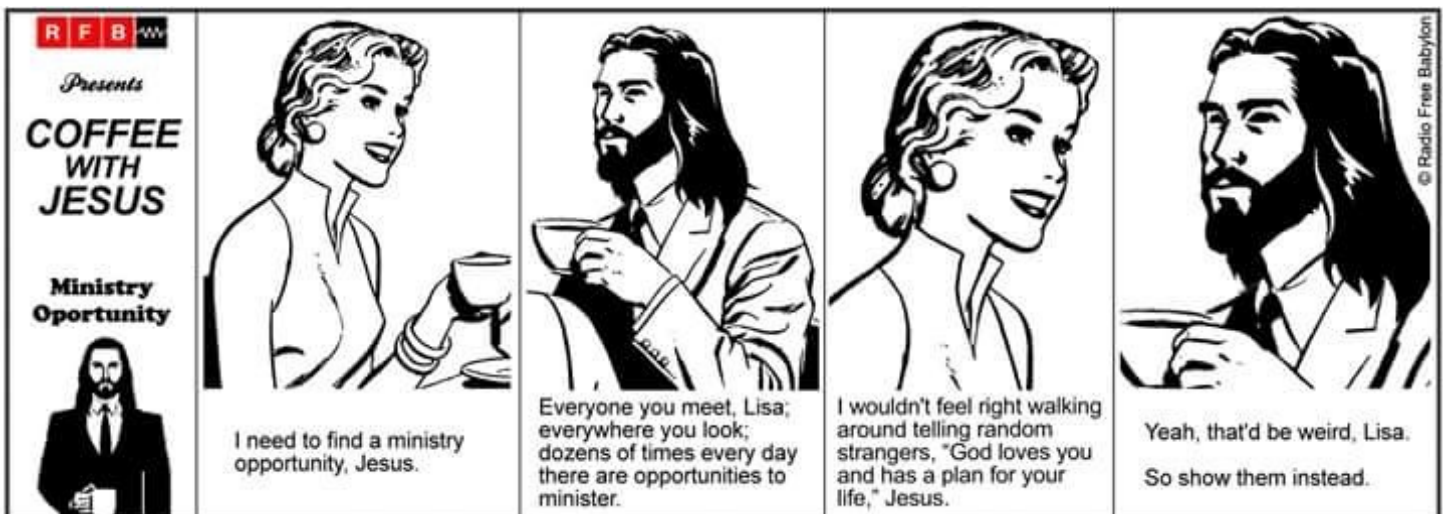
The process of becoming a Companion of Jesus the Good

Shepherd usually takes about three years. During this time a personal mentor familiarizes each Companion with the Good Shepherd spirit and mission, including what living the vows might mean in one's daily life and situation. Mentors help Companions understand the works of the Order's founders Saints John Eudes and Mary Euphrasia, and guides the Companions as they pursue a deepening relationship of love with Jesus the Good Shepherd.

"Being a Companion sustains my spiritual sanity. Shepherding and being shepherded is such an intricate and intimate part of my life. I am so very grateful for it," said Mary DeSane.

To learn more about becoming a Companion, please contact Veronica Brantz at 402-651-7019 or dvb01@aol.com, or contact Alice Caulson at 570-347-6802 or alicem.caulson@gmail.com.

Submitted by Joan Clancy, Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd. Future issues of Items of Interest will feature Companions engaged in their ministries.



PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

Role of contemplation in our modern day

More than 700 Sisters gathered in Orlando, Florida, from August 9-11, 2017, for the annual assembly of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). Participants represented about 80 percent of the 48,500 women religious in the United States.

For the first time, LCWR presented its Outstanding Leadership Award to a Contemplative Sister, Carmelite Sr. Constance Fitzgerald, for her academic work in transforming understanding of contemplative life today.

The theme of the assembly, "The Transformative Power of Love" was interlaced with the theme of grief. Province Leader Sr. Madeleine Munday was inspired by Outgoing President Sr. Mary Pellegrino's call for religious to move from the narrative of diminishment to a narrative of communion.

I experienced a fresh, even a resurrection-like challenge: let's create a "new narrative" for religious life.

Sr. Madeleine said, "I find communion, how we are with one another, a consistent message that our province has heard through recent years with The Journey of Transformation, Sr. Rekha, the 2015 congregational direction statement, and more recently, the work with core groups for mission. We are called to inclusion and communion where all are welcome."

Sr. Maureen Kunz said she felt a shift in LCWR and wonders if this year's gathering will function as a turning point for the organization.

"On the first two days of the assembly speakers and contemplative dialogue groups addressed issues of grieving the many losses in religious life. On the third day I experienced a fresh, even a resurrection-like challenge: let's create a "new narrative" for religious life in this part of the world. I found this fresh perspective mirrored in the election process itself. Two "younger"

Continued on next page



Contemplative councilors and province leaders sharing experiences at LCWR:

Left to right: Madeleine Munday, Maureen McGowan, Sharon Rose Authorson, Edith Olaguer, Carol Seigel.



Standing, left to right: Edith Olaguer, Carol Seigel, Maureen Kunz, Paulette LoMonaco, Jean Marie Fernandez, Mary Carolyn McQuaid, Francisca Aguillón, Maureen McGowan, Martha Hernandez, Veronica Villareal. Seated, left to right: Rosalyn Menard, Sharon Rose Authorson, Ellen Kelly, Elaine Basinger, Madeleine Munday

PROVINCE NEWS



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LCWR *Cont'd from p. 3*

women moved into roles of past-president and president. A third "younger" Sister was chosen as president elect. Seeing this new team was remarkable to me. I experienced energy, humor and vitality in these new LCWR presidents. That itself seemed to be a step in choosing a "new narrative," Sr, Maureen said.

Fifteen Good Shepherd Sisters from the Province Leadership Teams of Central South, New York/Toronto and Mid-North America attended the assembly. Sr. Ellen Kelly, Congregational Leader, also came to the gathering. Sr. Ellen and the Sisters from North America met four different times throughout the LCWR assembly to share information and deepen their relationships.

"Our conversations gradually coalesced into the desire to create a vision for Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the

Good Shepherd of North America. Conversations to be continued!" Sr. Madeleine said.

All of the Sisters felt that it was a powerful and moving experience to join with so many in prayer, contemplative dialogue and fellowship.

Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez said, "My experience at LCWR has renewed my enthusiasm and energy to live into Christ Consciousness characterized by communion and interdependence."

Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson said, "I loved the contemplative pace of the assembly. It was calm, peaceful, and very prayerful. I am happy I went, as it was a blessed experience."

Sr. Mary Pellegrino's remarks for shifting the narrative is available online at <http://bit.ly/2vFE2XS>.



Sr. Fran Lomeo, RGS, New York/Toronto Province, is surrounded by the new crop of GSVs. For many years she has attended the GSV opening orientation to support and provide spiritual direction to Good Shepherd Volunteers.

Good Shepherd Volunteers assigned to ministries

Meet the Good Shepherd Volunteers for 2017-2018. The young people completed orientation in August and have headed to their assignments.

Amethyst Lewis (front row on right) has been assigned to the Good Shepherd Shelter in Los Angeles. She will help at the school there and live in community with the LMU Ignation Service Corps. The other GSVs have been assigned to Good Shepherd ministries in New York, New Jersey, Thailand and Bolivia.

The Executive Director for Good Shepherd Volunteers is Diane Conroy diane@gsvolunteers.org. The Program Coordinator is Kara Cunnane kara@gsvolunteers.org.

You can read blogs that Good Shepherd Volunteers post about their experiences at <http://justlovegsv.blogspot.com>, or learn more about GSV at <http://gsvolunteers.org>.

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Connecting St. John Eudes with our daily lives

Many of us gathered at the Province Center in June for a workshop on St. John Eudes. Sr. Marie-Françoise Le Brizaut, RGS, is a scholar of Eudist spirituality and guided us through the workshop.

While planning for the workshop, Sr. Marilyn Atwell offered some of her own thoughts to help us connect John Eudes with our daily lives. She considered the experiences and qualities of John Eudes that impress her and appear relevant to the 21st century Good Shepherd Mission, and which may reveal his ongoing significance for our times and what his challenges might be for us.

In the next few months we will offer more of Sr. Marilyn's work, so keep coming back to this spot. In the

meantime, the following is the first of Sr. Marilyn's reflection questions, which she asks us to ponder:

St. John Eudes addressed the immediate spiritual and temporal needs of many groups, and was able to incorporate structure into these zealous concerns by his impressive inspirations. He had a depth of understanding and awareness of the human condition, and he knew how to take targeted action in meeting these needs.

Taking into consideration the goals of all three CORE GROUPS, who or what do you feel remains particularly marginalized or vulnerable and speaks to your own heart? In what ways would you begin to address these?



More than 60 people attended the St. John Eudes workshop at the Province Center in June.

Submitted by Sisters Maureen Kunz and Marilyn Atwell

Inter-community Ecological Council celebrates creation

The Inter-community Ecological Council (IEC) of St. Louis focuses on the sacredness of Earth. Members of the Council represent 15 congregations of women and men religious and an ecozoic center who are called to act individually and communally to promote a sustainable, healthy environment for all species. Province Communications Coordinator Jeanette McDermott represents the Province of Mid-North America at the monthly meetings.

IEC collaborates with other groups and invites speakers to the meetings to help each group move its agenda for the environment forward. For example, at the meeting in August, Sara Edgar, a Sierra Club representative, presented an overview of the [Redistricting Ballot Initiative](#) that could reshape the way boundaries are drawn for Missouri's House and Senate districts. She also spoke about Sierra Club's [100% Clean Energy](#) campaign to get cities to commit to clean energy.

IEC is celebrating the Season of Creation with a prayer service that includes education (readings) and a commitment to action for Earth.



The IEC meeting in August had a solar eclipse theme that included a smorgasbord of goodies like Sun-Maid raisins, sun tea, starbursts and the like. Council members opened the meeting with the Cantic of the Sun prayer.

PROVINCE NEWS



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Summertime and the picking is easy



From left: Sisters Magdalen Bui, Monica Duong and Nora Pat O'Flannigan and discerner Theresa Nguyen (rear) carry boxes of freshly picked peaches.

Grocery shopping is par for the course for Sr. Monica Duong, kitchen manager for the Province Center in St. Louis. Her favorite shopping experience is the U-pick trip she takes each summer to harvest fresh berries, peaches and apples from Eckert's Farm in Belleville, Illinois. She said, "I love Eckert's. The open space. God's beauty. Fresh fruit for my pies. And experiencing community from picking fruit together."



Photo directory pictures provide a good laugh

Some of the pictures in the new Province Photo Directory carry the element of surprise. Sisters (from left) Anne Kelley, Liz Schille and Regina Do reviewed the directory while attending the St. John Eudes workshop this summer and got a good laugh out of it.

If your community or ministry has not yet received the new Photo Directory, please contact Jeanette McDermott and request a copy at jmcdermott@gspmna.org.

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Art exhibit at Good Shepherd Gallery provokes thought



The art exhibit featured black and white photographs that triggered thoughts of and similarities to the civil rights movement of the 1960s.



Aiyana Davison said the photos on display were a reminder to her that television doesn't portray life's full reality of being Black.



Amal Taylor believes Henry Chaney's photographs recognize the humanity of Black people, as depicted by the photo to the right.

The art exhibit "Change the Narrative" drew a large crowd to Good Shepherd Gallery on opening night August 4 and generated deep reflection and conversation among viewers. Henry Chaney's photographic works depicted the positive outcomes in St. Louis that have emerged from the 2014 Ferguson unrest over the police killing of Mike Brown. An unrelated, add-on exhibit featured Black people wearing a royal crown.

"Showing Black people in their every day lives juxtaposed with the crown shows that whoever Black people are and whatever they do, they have value," Henry said.

Personal responses

People responded emotionally to both exhibits. Lynette Williamson said, "I'm a product of parents who lived through the civil rights marches and movement. Henry's use of black and white photography tied in the civil rights era with what is happening today. That was powerful for me. The diversity, the people of faith, the urban scene he depicts took my breath away" said Lynette Williamson.

"The photos pull you in and allow you to relate. It's interesting to see how Henry captured the Ferguson protests. He reminds us that what we see on TV isn't all that's going on," said Aiyana Davison.

"A lot of portrayals of people that look like me are generally bad portrayals. The media presents one side. When people see me they don't see a medical student at Washington University. This exhibit recognizes our humanity as Black people," said Amal Taylor.

"These are the photographs I'd like to see in the history books. History repeats itself. Things like Ferguson did not stop happening after civil rights, and they are likely to continue. The photograph with the arch makes me wonder how many protest marches the arch has seen," said Mandie Sehr.

Good Shepherd Gallery Founder and Manager Glynis McManamon, RGS, said, "Henry and Good Shepherd have the same hope of healing. Henry sees God working in and through the situations we find ourselves in and bringing good to it."



MINISTRY NEWS



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Good Shepherd Gallery akin to aromatic nard, part 2

By Glynis McManamon, RGS

This article completes the two-part story that began in the August issue of Items of Interest. The article sets the tone for reflecting on perception and individual worth. Is something a beautiful thing, a kindness, a waste of money? What kind of thing is Good Shepherd Gallery? You can read the first segment of Sr. Glynis' story online at <http://sistersofthegoodshepherd.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Items-of-Interest-August-2017.pdf>

Alex is a little over twenty-one, African-American, and like James, unemployed. He worked for a factory, but since it closed he hasn't found another job that fits his abilities and his limitations. Alex may be on the autism spectrum. He is shy. He is obsessed with fantasy figures, wrestling, cars and trucks. Alex has an art portfolio thicker than a phone book with pencil drawings of cards and trucks he has made, some his original design. They are quite good. He knows I cannot hire him. He asks to volunteer. I offer him an apprenticeship. He can help around here and then he can do artwork. When he comes in, he is often rattled. Something is not right at home – he lives with his mother. He likes the quietness of Good Shepherd Gallery. He feels safe here.

Princess is probably schizophrenic. She wanders up and down South Florissant Road talking and singing to herself – or to unseen companions. Sometimes she is happy, other times angry. I become aware of her interest in the gallery when I start noticing smudges on

the windows. Fingerprints, nose prints, lip prints. Then one day she stands outside the door. I welcome her in. She wants me to explain about Archangel Raphael. Now she comes in regularly to view exhibits.

When Fine Line Studios (adults with developmental disabilities who create and sell art) put a music listening station in as part of their exhibit, Princess was enthralled. She sat on the floor with the earphones on for two hours. Princess is always respectful, checking what the closing time is so she does not stay too long.

However, some days, as she goes around an exhibit talking to the paintings and her invisible friends, she sounds quite agitated. I have found that if I ask, "Princess, is everything all right? Are you okay?" she manages her agitation and becomes a little calmer.

Geoffrey has a reputation. People have tried to help him, and he does not keep his end of any bargain, like showing up on time for a job that someone has jumped through hoops to get for him. I told him first off, I don't give out money. I don't say that I can't, or even that I won't: I am clear that I do not. Nonetheless, hot tea is available. Or cold water. Or soup if he is hungry. He can sit here as long as he would like. He is quite angry at all the churches that refuse to help him (after they have many times and have had him betray them).

I'm sure he tells people that I'm not a good Christian, and I honestly

Continued on next page



September art exhibit

This month's art exhibit at Good Shepherd Gallery opens on September 9 with a reception for artist Mary Martin from 4-6 p.m. Mary brings to life through colorful collages and mixed media paintings the lyrics of the traditional hymn *How Can I Keep from Singing?*

Her images and the song's lyrics proclaim that we can keep an unshakable calm in our hearts and a song on our lips despite the trials and tribulations of this life when we cling to the Rock who is Lord of heaven and earth.

The art exhibit shares the title of the hymn and runs through September 30. Contact rgsicons@yahoo.com for more information.

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Aromatic nard *Cont'd from p. 8*

don't care. He's right, I'm a mediocre Christian at best. And I don't give out money to panhandlers. But they are always welcome here.

Stuart never asks for money. He tells me his troubles and asks me to pray. He looks at the art and makes insightful comments.

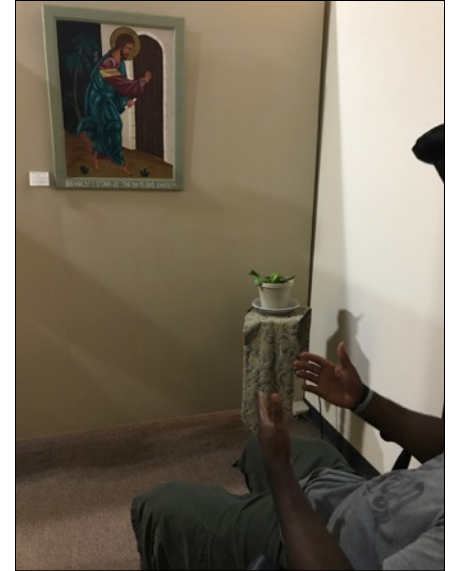
So, what's the point? Well, in part, if you are poor, people will give you food, and clothing, and temporary shelter. If you can follow all the rules, you may get a job and more stable housing. But you really are not welcome everywhere. Also, it is hard to find spots of beauty in your life.

Robert Motherwell says, "Art is much less important than life, but oh what a poor life without it!"

We have the poor with us, and our generosity is not economic. It is social; it is hospitality.

So, Good Shepherd Gallery is like that aromatic nard; the funds that support it, like the broken alabaster jar. We started as a place of peace and beauty here in Ferguson, and we continue to grow along those lines in new and unexpected ways.

We have the poor with us, and our generosity is not economic. It is social; it is hospitality.



Good Shepherd Gallery has a prayer/meditation space where all are welcome.

NAC decries legislation targeting immigrants

Good Shepherd National Advocacy Center (NAC) sent a press release to the media speaking out against the RAISE Act. *Our Parish Times*, a free Catholic newspaper for Montgomery County, Maryland, published the release as an article on page three of its [August issue](#). The publication is distributed in bulk to every parish in Montgomery County for parishioners to take.

Montgomery County is a portrait of contrasts. The county's population is just over a million, with the median household per capita income of nearly \$100,000, making it one of the wealthiest counties in the United States.

However, according to the most recent U.S. Census, 11% of Black and 11.6% of Hispanic county residents live below the federal poverty level. Individuals with less than a high school education live in poverty at a rate of 16.4%. One-third of Montgomery County residents are foreign born.

NAC Director Larry Couch stated in the article that "when we deny entry to immigrants at all skill levels, we are limiting our potential as a nation." You can review the

Faith Leaders Call on Congress to Reject RAISE Act Over 600 Faith Leaders Sign Letter to Congress

"We are deeply troubled by the introduction of the RAISE Act by Senators Cotton (R-AR) and Perdue (R-GA), as it would deny millions the opportunity to reunite with family members and contribute to our shared communities. Such efforts ignore the importance of family unity and deny the essential contributions immigrants make that have allowed our country to thrive, strengthen, and welcome new peoples and cultures," wrote a coalition of over 600 faith leaders to Member of Congress. [Text of letter is available on NAC's website.]

Lawrence Couch, Director of the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, is a signatory.

"This letter is a signal of the strong unity among the faith community and everyday faithful



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up! Act for Justice

against this hateful and narrow-minded legislation. The RAISE Act would encourage a "brain drain" by siphoning off the highly educated people from poor countries. Meanwhile we would not give priority to family reunification. All of this is being done in the name of jobs but it is a policy of no growth and no win. Aside from the immorality of these policies, they are also economically disastrous," said Couch.

"Immigrants have not only provided brain power in the Silicon

Valley, they also harvest our crops, construct our buildings, prepare our food, and provide hospitality services. When we deny entry to immigrants at all skill levels, we are limiting our potential as a nation.

"Somehow we have forgotten that immigrants are people who may have needs but they also have gifts to offer. When we think of immigrants as commodities we lose sight of their humanity and run the risk of losing our own humanity," said Couch.

OP1

RAISE Act at <http://bit.ly/2uoXTjb>. You can learn more about the National Advocacy Center at <http://www.gsadvocacy.org>.

MINISTRY NEWS



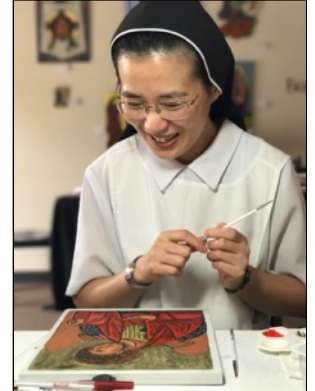
ZEAL



Sisters learn to write icons at specialized retreat



Sr. Cora



Sr. Michaela



Sr. Rosemary



Sr. LeeAnn

Layers. Refinements. Borders. Boundaries. Detail. Clarity. The icon will come forward and tell you. Darkness supports the light.

This cryptic language formed the basis of an icon retreat at Shepherding Images Studio, where Sr. Glynis McManamon imparted her knowledge of icon writing to Sisters eager to learn the craft.

Five Sisters participated in the icon retreat from August 7-11. After listening to instruction and watching Sr. Glynis demonstrate painting techniques each day, the retreatants practiced what they had learned and let the spirit move through them as they worked on their icons. The experience was vastly different for each participant.

Sr. Cora Malinay had never before picked up a paint brush and had no idea how the retreat would unfold. She said, "I have always had a high regard for artists. I never, ever thought that I would hold an artist's brush. I was nervous, but Sr. Glynis

We cannot judge an icon; it's an act of prayer.

is so patient and clear in her instruction that she helped me build confidence."

Sr. LeeAnn Mackeprang made an icon under Sr. Glynis' tutelage last year and knew what to expect. She said, "Writing icons is helping me learn to trust and have more courage in my life."

Sr. Michaela Kim has always had a lot of curiosity about icons. She said, "I was so glad to hear Sr. Glynis say that anybody can create an icon. I am finding that the Holy Spirit is guiding my hands and inspiring me. It's a little hard, especially to find the balance between light and dark, but I feel peaceful doing it."

Sr. Rosemary Hewapattuge intentionally stepped onto a new path by taking the retreat. She said, "Icons are beautiful. I want to go into my life making beauty. I feel that this is God's plan for me."

Sr. Nora Pat O'Flannigan was absent when the photographs were taken and unavailable for comment.

As for the teacher, Sr. Glynis says, "We cannot judge an icon; it's an act of prayer. There comes a point in icon writing when we no longer see a picture, but are led to messages. Everyone's experience is unique."

The retreat ended with a closing session and Father Ron Chochol's blessing of the icons after mass.

MINISTRY NEWS



ZEAL

Brains, brews and BBQ

By Jeanette McDermott, Province Communicator

Our Province Leader asked me recently if I enjoyed traveling to visit Good Shepherd ministries. I answered with an emphatic, “yes!” I meant it. I really do love visiting our sponsored and affiliated ministries and am inspired by seeing them in action.

I’ve been to every one of our Province ministries and have documented their outreach programs and special events. There’s a feeling that I experience with each visit that I can honestly describe as joyful and monumentally rewarding. I’ve narrowed down what gives me that feeling; it’s the wondrous core value of zeal: love in action. You just don’t find this thing called zeal in most places of employment. It sets Good Shepherd apart.

But it’s more than zeal; it’s also the core value of individual worth that makes me feel so good during these visits. When I see Good Shepherd programs and experience their events, I witness respect — staff respecting one another and their clients, guests, volunteers, board members and ... well, to be honest, everyone who walks through their doors. The respect is not just about dignifying one another; it carries over into genuine friendliness. It’s a respect for actual friendship.

My most recent trip took me to DeNeuville Learning Center last month. DeNeuville was holding its first ever trivia night as a fundraiser on August 19, which I wanted to document for *Items of Interest* and our website as a news story, and which I happily saw outstrip all expectations of success. The event, called Brains, Brews and BBQ, maxed out seating capacity, already sending DLC staff in search of a larger venue for next year’s second annual.

Nearly 150 people (22 trivia teams) packed DeNeuville Learning Center, eager to tax their brains, drink locally crafted beer, eat a home-cooked barbecue meal and support what they applauded as a mighty fine cause.

DeNeuville has a distinctive following — community members who are passionate about supporting a cause that supports their beloved city of Memphis. Because DeNeuville fits that bill, word-of-mouth spread quickly about the event, and it wasn’t long

Continued on next page



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DeNeuville *Cont'd from p. 11*

before the fundraiser was sold out.

Local brewmasters donated their crafted beers and served them up at the trivia night. Food companies donated the chow and caterers prepared the BBQ feast pro bono. Small businesses and individuals contributed auction prizes, and even the Trivia Question Master and tech service provider donated their time, all of which meant 100% of the night's proceeds rolled back into DeNeuville's programs that empower women through education, life skill development and community enrichment.

Evan Comeaux was one of four local brewmasters who enhanced the trivia night with hand-crafted beers. Evan said, "DeNeuville provides a lot of services that people need in Memphis. Sharing beer is a great way for us to support this center that helps so many people."

Marina O'Rourke radiates zeal and plays prominently in the life of DeNeuville. She is Honorary Chair of DLC's fundraising auction in November and a regular supporter of the center. Marina is passionate about empowering women.

"I believe empowering women builds strong families. So goes the mother, goes the children. And strong families build a strong Memphis community. DeNeuville is critical to Memphis and its families."

As all good things do, DeNeuville's trivia night eventually came to an end, but not before many new friendships had forged. People who hadn't known each other before the trivia night were making plans to see each other again in the community and at other DeNeuville fundraisers.

Executive Director of DeNeuville Learning Center Lori Bramlett said, "Tonight was lively and so much fun. People don't come to our events to be seen. They come to give back," she said.

Ashley Pennington is one such community member who rallies behind a cause. She attended trivia night after learning about the fundraiser the day before while volunteering at DeNeuville as part of "We Serve Day" with her employer, Service Master. For the past four years Service Master, a corporate giant headquartered in



Marina O'Rourke, Honorary Chair of DeNeuville's fundraising auction in November, enjoys a donated all-natural, hand-crafted Memphis delicacy, the MEMPOP.

Memphis, has selected DeNeuville as one of its charitable causes.

But that's another story for another issue of *Items of Interest*. Stay tuned and read about We Serve Day at DeNeuville in the October issue of the Province newsletter.



The winning round.



The trivia graders.



The trivia night organizers.

COMMUNITY LIFE

ZEAL



Sr. Maxi Holy Spirit DeSouza makes the rounds at St. Joseph Residence in Baltimore to say goodbye to Sisters and Staff as she departs for her new mission at Immaculate Heart Convent in St. Louis. Province Health and Wellness Coordinator Vicky Barshis accompanied Sr. Maxi on the flight to St. Louis on August 17, 2017.



Sisters Rosalinda Sobremisano (left) and Danielle Fung reconnected in St. Louis while Sr. Danielle was on retreat at Immaculate Heart Convent this summer. Sr. Danielle lives in San Francisco, where she works with mentally disabled adults. Sr. Rosalinda is missioned to Immaculate Heart Convent.

NOTICE

We have received some comments that the articles in *Items of Interest* sometimes run too long. What do you think? Do you prefer shorter or longer articles?

The whole Good Shepherd family hold in our hearts and prayers the people, plants and animals who are suffering from unprecedented loss and damage from Hurricane Harvey. We pray for our fragile environment and the local, state and federal governments whose economies are being affected by Hurricane Harvey, the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history. We stand in solidarity with all of our Earth communities who are weathering the storms around our planet.

MINISTRY NEWS



ZEAL



Crocheting for a cause

It's not unusual for Sisters to be called upon for prayer support, counseling and spiritual guidance. But it's not everyday that a Sister gets called upon to teach adults how to crochet so they can pass the skill on to at-risk youth.

Amber Harris is a Certified Medication Technician at Immaculate Heart Convent. She is also a volunteer with [Restorative Justice Movement](#), a program in St. Louis which acknowledges that when a person does harm, it affects the people they hurt, the community and themselves. The program addresses victims' harms and needs, holds offenders accountable to put right those harms and involves victims, offenders and communities in the process.

Amber wants to teach children whose significant adults are involved in restorative justice how to crochet. She believes crochet can help children learn a different set of values than what they are accustomed to in their home environments.

The problem is that Amber doesn't know how to crochet. So she has called upon Sr. Pauline Bilbrough, Local Leader at Immaculate Heart Convent and accomplished needleworker, to teach her. Sr. Pauline accepted the invitation and has been teaching Amber and a small band of women who volunteer with Restorative Justice Movement how to crochet, including Tammy McNeil, another Certified Medication Technician at Immaculate Heart.

The lessons with Sr. Pauline take place at Immaculate Heart Convent

when Amber and Tammy are off-duty from work. One of the volunteers, Gloria Broderick, is a needleworker and pitches in with the crochet lessons.

"When Amber asked me to teach the women how to crochet I thought it was a wonderful opportunity. I love to crochet. It calms me, and I thought it could calm others, especially children who might need calming. Crocheting is very social. You can talk while crocheting. It's blessed. Children are so beautiful. Anything we can do to bring people together to help them is a good thing," Sr. Pauline said.

Everyone in the crochet group is convinced that crocheting can calm kids down and give them something constructive to do. Instead of fidgeting in a courtroom or lawyer's office, they could be developing hand-eye coordination and creating things with their own hands that they can feel proud of making.

What we are doing is divine

"I think what we are doing is divine," Amber said.

"God has put people in our path who are helping us in the Restorative Justice Movement. It's an awesome feeling to know that God is directing us," she said.

Ms. Noreen Burnett is a faithful volunteer and learner. Her church is going to start a school in North St. Louis and she plans to use the crochet skills she is developing to teach the students.

"We've got to help children learn everything possible so that they can become well-adjusted and well-rounded," Noreen said.



Top to bottom: Sr. Pauline Bilbrough teaches Amber Harris basic crochet knots. Tammy McNeil (left) and Amber Harris get crochet tips from a book. Sister Pauline's crochet lessons at Immaculate Heart often turn into a community affair, with Sisters and other staff showing up to join the effort.

"When you're a shepherd, you're a shepherd and The Good Shepherd follows," Amber concluded.

COMMUNITY LIFE

ZEAL

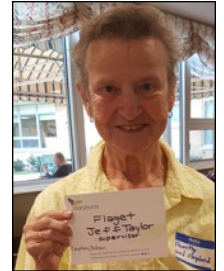
Cincinnati and Louisville hearts blend as one



"When I hear what's going on, I wouldn't want to be anything else but Good Shepherd," one member of the group quipped. A Sister said, "My heart is in Louisville at Maryhurst." Another Sister said, "I'm so excited to hear about the work that's being done." One of the Mission Partners said, "I feel so affirmed by the Sisters and what we do."

Maryhurst Mission Partners visited Sisters in Cincinnati last month. It was their fourth trip to see the Sisters, and they plan to return for Christmas.

"Our usual fare is to share cookies, something to drink and just talk about the holy work of Good Shepherd. Everyone is touched and inspired by the visit," said Melinda Stricklen, Mission Effectiveness Coordinator.



During the visit, each Sister committed to praying for a cottage at Maryhurst and the staff person responsible for supervising the young people living in the cottage. Seated from left: Sisters Marguerite, Louise, Noreen, Marsha, Sisters Clare, Dorothy, Collette. Standing from left: Andrew, Jackie, Melinda, Mark, Becca, Jennifer, Sr. Rene, Lori, Sr. Connie, Sr. Rose Henry, Von and Sr. Marilyn.

Fun summer picnic

Fun Day is the new norm at Immaculate Heart Convent, thanks to a creative receptionist, fun-loving local leader and staff that exemplifies the meaning of teamwork. Each month Sr. Pauline Bilbrough and Shirley Norful conjure up what "national days" are being celebrated for the month, and then Shirley goes into full tilt drive to plan, coordinate and organize a party that combines each of the national days. The summer Fun Day Picnic on July 31 celebrated summer picnic food, ice cream and St. Mary Euphrasia's birthday. Hot dogs, games and karaoke were the order of the day.

Sr. Dorothy Renckens snagged a rubber ducky on a fishing line in 10 seconds flat and declared, "What do you expect? I'm from Minnesota!"

The Fun Day in July was an especially festive affair and *Items of Interest* captured it for your delight.



Top: Sr. Dorothy Renckens with her fresh-caught rubber ducky. **Top right:** Sr. Josephine Fritz and Elizabeth Cook whoop it up after Sr. Josephine nails the ring toss. **Below right:** Staff organizers of the picnic demonstrate that they are true masters of fun.



COMMUNITY LIFE



ZEAL



Congregation Councilor visits Contemplative Sisters in PMNA



Left: Contemplative Sisters in St. Louis gather for a photograph with Sr. Mirian Colala after mass in the Immaculate Heart Convent chapel on August 13, 2017. Right: Sr. Mirian is with Sisters Clare Bingham and Colette Sauers at St. Margaret Hall in Cincinnati. Sr. Mirian is link Sister with the Contemplatives in the Congregation. She spent time with Contemplative Sisters throughout the Province of Mid-North America during her visit to the United States this summer.

Mystery photo ... guess who?



*Who is this Sister? What event is she attending?
Where and when? Does anyone know?*

Last month's mystery photo turned out to be Sr. Brigid Lawlor. Many of you recognized her. Thanks to Sr. Clare Nolan, we also learned that Sr. Brigid is better known as a violinist than a guitarist. The photograph was taken on November 21, 1967, at her parents' home in Reading, Pennsylvania. Sr. Brigid was a Postulant and wore a black suit with a white blouse. She had received special permission from Mother Ursula Long, Provincial, to attend her parent's 25th wedding anniversary celebration. Sr. Brigid's sister, who was a temporary professed Immaculate Heart Sister, took the picture while Sr. Brigid and the rest of her family were doing a little musical entertainment.



And now for this month's mystery photo. Who is the Sister on the left? When was the picture taken? Where? Why are there flowers on her head?

COMMUNITY LIFE



ZEAL



Left: Contemplative Sisters Agnes Yamamoto, Sharon Rose Authorson and Magdalen Oliva gaze in awe as the moon blocks the sun during the total solar eclipse. Above, from left: Sisters Magdalen Oliva, Sharon Rose Authorson, RoseMary Ha and Elizabeth Garciano watch as the sun regains its radiance after being eclipsed by the moon.

God's divine touch

By Elizabeth Garciano, CGS

All of North America experienced an eclipse of the sun on Monday, August 21, 2017. Anyone within the path of totality saw one of nature's most awe-inspiring sights — the sun's corona and the moon's complete blockage of the sun. Observers outside this path saw a partial solar eclipse where the moon covered part of the sun's disk. Sisters in the Maria Droste Contemplative Community watched the eclipse in St. Louis.

We witnessed the gentle movement of the sun and the moon, which I believe was a wonderful reflection of God's Divine touch. In a very mysterious and miraculous way God gave us a sign of what will "come: "A great sign appeared in heaven....." Rev.12:1

The gentle encounter of sun and moon was incredible, and it changed the atmosphere in the United States. At the very moment of the sun's eclipse all were one and united with the awesome beauty of creation. Everybody in

our Community had a different point of view on how the eclipse reflects God's beauty in our lives.

As the Contemplative Sisters in St. Louis, USA, we watched the solar eclipse from the beginning to its end. We spontaneously prayed the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father and sung the Celtic Alleluia as an expression of our joy, love and gratitude to God the Creator. We heard the crickets join the choir which resonated with our prayers.

It is a popular misconception that the phenomenon of a total eclipse of the sun is a rare occurrence. Quite the contrary. Approximately once every 18 months a total solar eclipse is visible from some place on the Earth's surface. But how often is a total solar eclipse visible from a specific location on Earth? [That's another story.](#)

GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



Season of Creation *Cont'd from p. 1*

I pledge to:

- *Pray for and with creation*
- *Live more simply*
- *Advocate to protect our common home*

If you would be interested in doing this as a community you could take the pledge during an evening prayer celebrating the gift of creation. See the Province website for a prayer at <http://bit.ly/2xBRRYF>

Catholic Climate Movement also suggests a symbolic action to express your efforts to care for the environment. For example, individuals or communities could refrain from buying bottled water, recycle items that you may not be recycling yet or eat less meat.

During this time of year many Christians from around the world celebrate the Season of Creation or Creation Time beginning on September 1 and ending on the Feast of St Francis on October 4. The purpose of this season is to renew a personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the gift of creation and to pray for the preservation of creation.

The Season of Creation has become a part of the liturgical calendar for many Protestants and Orthodox communities.

Catholics such as Archdiocese of Manila and some European Dioceses also have yearly celebrations. This has not taken place in the United States. While Pope Francis has instituted the World Day of Prayer, he has not done so with the Season of Creation.

However, he does mention it in his 2016 World Day of Prayer Message.

Pope Francis sees Season of Creation as one of many ecumenical initiatives that are “promoting environmental justice, concern for the poor and responsible social commitment for bringing together people, especially young people, from diverse religious backgrounds.” (Show Mercy to our Common Home, 9/1/2016).

Liturgical worship

Last year Sisters Virginia Gordon, Beth Garciano and I worked with Father Ron Chochol to bring the Season of Creation into our liturgical worship in St. Louis. We had six Masses: September 1, the following four Saturdays and the Feast of St Francis, in which we incorporated and celebrated different aspects of creation.

We celebrated the gift and beauty of creation, gave thanks, acknowledged harmful actions, asked for forgiveness and prayed for restoration. We also created a weekly bulletin board display on each aspect of creation that we celebrated. We came away from this experience with a new awareness of hope and sadness regarding what has been happening to our created world.

This year we will integrate the Season of Creation into our evening prayer once a week. We will celebrate the Earth in its water, fires, seasons, storms, fields, forests and gardens. We will do this in Christ who is, as St. John Eudes has written, “the being of all that exists, the life of all living things, the beauty of all things beautiful.” (1)

It is the Christ whose risen presence is the cosmic power at work in reconciling and restoring creation.

(1) Lectionary Proper to the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, St. John Eudes, p 74.

Submitted by Sharon O'Grady, RGS

Announcements

Sr. Mary Carolyn McQuaid celebrates her 50 Year Jubilee on September 8. Read all about it next month in *Items of Interest*.

Significant progress is being made in the cause for recognizing St John Eudes as a [Doctor of the Church](#). This would make him the first such representative of the French school of spirituality. The Catholic Church bestows this very special title upon certain saints whose writings and preachings have been important to the Church, particularly regarding their contribution to theology or doctrine.

A *Life Satisfaction Scale for Apostolic Women Religious* is available online to help Sisters individually and communally discern current levels of satisfaction with religious life and healthy ways to move forward. You can find the study at <http://www.duq.edu/lssawr>.

Good Shepherd Justice Peace International Office has posted a prayer for the children of the world on the Congregation website at <http://bit.ly/2wyw5HV>.

VOCATION STORY



ZEAL



My vocation story

By Eileen Robinson, RGS

My vocation began when I was an infant. In honor of that ancient tradition of dedication in Scripture, my Auntie Amy placed me on the altar and dedicated me when I was just a few months old.

Since I attribute my vocation first to Auntie Amy, please humor me as I write about her. Second, I will write about my family, for I believe their faithful Catholic witness contributed greatly to my religious vocation.

Auntie Amy was special in our family. One of nine children born and raised in England, she was my mother's oldest sister. As a young woman, she aspired to enter the *Sisters of the Good Shepherd* at their London novitiate.

Sadly, she had what was termed in those days "weak lungs," and her doctor strongly advised her to emigrate to a warm, sunny climate.



Our first house in Korea was in Ok Pong, a farming village several miles from Kunsan and within one mile of the American Air Force Base. We lived on a bay of the Yellow Sea and had a lovely view of the water on one side, our house on the other and our vegetable farm in the middle. The well is in the background.

Following her brother and several of her sisters, she emigrated to the U.S. and settled in California. Eventually, she moved to San Diego where she lived with the Nazareth House Sisters and taught in their orphanage school.

My mother was our chief catechist, primarily through the stories of her life of faith in England.

I was not aware that she wanted to be a Good Shepherd Sister. However, our entire family knew that she was very close to God and lived as a consecrated woman. One of my most charming memories of Auntie Amy is seeing her sitting on the beach in Ventura with all of her nephews and nieces racing around her. In her hands were her rosary beads; nothing could distract her from saying her beads!

Faithful Catholic witness

During my childhood, my family lived in a small town. When we first moved to the town, before my birth, there was no Catholic Church. My father drove my mother and the older children 140 miles round trip to attend Mass.

A few years later, a priest came a couple of times a month and we heard Mass in a borrowed building. Through the auspices of my father, a small church was built and the Bishop of San Diego agreed to send us a parish priest. The parishioners



I'm carrying something from the well, which served double duty as our "refrigerator."

were delighted to finally have a church and pastor.

By the time I was of school age, we had catechism classes, went to weekly evening benediction and regular confession. It was a full Catholic life!

My mother was our chief catechist, primarily through the stories of her life of faith in England. As a young adult, she joined the Catholic street evangelists. She never let us forget that we were descended from the English who were martyred during the reign of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

From my father, I imbibed his strong, practical social justice

Continued on next page

VOCATION STORY



ZEAL

Sr. Eileen *Cont'd from p. 19*

stance. Many immigrants were employed in our town. He made certain that those working for him had just wages and excellent housing. I witnessed his daily vigilance for the vulnerable in our society.

Although we did not have a Catholic school, I had quite a bit of exposure to Sisters. My English aunts were very much involved with the Nazareth House Sisters in San Diego and the Holy Cross Sisters in Ventura, California.

For several years the Nazareth House Sisters came to our small town to beg. We were the fortunate hosts of those delightful Irish Sisters. One of my Ventura aunts was a volunteer driver for the Holy Cross Sisters. Our long summer vacations were spent in Ventura and we had many occasions to interact with the Holy Cross Sisters.

My mother knew that I wished to be a Sister. As the years progressed, she was concerned that I would not be free to follow my call.

When it was time for college, I attended Immaculate Heart College as a boarder. Life changed radically for me that first year. While in high school I had all the ordinary dreams of college, marriage and children. Once I settled in at Immaculate Heart, I felt a longing to spend my life in the Lord's House, close to the altar, attending Mass every day. I



Here I am with Sr Rose Virginia Hayes and Sr Anna Marie Willig relaxing on the porch of our clay house. I believe at that time we still had a straw roof. One day the typhoon-like winds blew the straw roof off and the villagers came in the dark of night to replace it with an aluminum roof.

literally could not get enough of the Lord's House!

My dream was put on hold

At the end of that year, my father retired and the family moved to Santa Monica. However, my dream of following the Lord as a Sister was put on hold. My father died suddenly, leaving my mother with four of her seven children still living at home.

In order to help support the family, I worked in a bank for a year and then found employment in the Admitting Office of the hospital of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. After a couple of years, I was introduced to the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondolet. They were looking for a teacher. For two delightful years, I taught first grade to 63 children!

My mother knew that I wished to be a Sister. As the years progressed, she was concerned that I would not be free to follow my call. My eldest brother was consulted and he talked

Continued on next page



Sr. Rose Virginia Hayes and I heard Mass every day at the American Air Force Base where Fr. McCullough served as chaplain. We were the darlings of the Base.

VOCATION STORY



ZEAL

Sr. Eileen *Cont'd from p. 20*

with all my siblings to arrange a life for my mother and youngest brother without my financial support. Now I was free to follow my dream.

The problem was, I did not know which Order the Lord wanted for me. My parish Legion of Mary experience left me with a desire to help others find God or renew their relationship with God.

However, I also wanted to enter a contemplative Order of Sisters whose life was centered on the Eucharist and the Divine Office. One day, my mother mentioned Auntie Amy. She said to me, "Why don't you go visit the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, the Order Amy wanted to enter."

Well, that was a new thought. I had never heard of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and certainly had no idea of their lifestyle or their apostolate. Fortunately, the parish priest was familiar with them and provided us with their Los Angeles address.

Our first visit was all I needed! I felt immediately that I was "home." Sister Mary John of the Cross Kroner greeted us and answered my questions. We went up to the choir loft and watched the Sisters as they prayed the Divine Office. In those days, the Sisters wore the soft white habits. I had not thought much about habits or styles, but again, I felt comfortable with their gentle appearance.

Then we went to a second large building where our beloved teenage girls resided. As we passed through the halls, the girls sang out, "Hello, Mother!" I was deeply impressed that these girls had a Mother-Daughter relationship with the Sisters. My heart was taken and I wanted nothing more than to spend my life in this special house of the Lord! When I was introduced to the charism of Zeal of the Good Shepherd Sisters, I could see it lived out in the compassionate care of these teenage girls.



I am holding one of identical twin boys. This is the very healthy twin Brennan Edward. The other boy, Parker Eugene, is in an incubator with serious heart complications. Two years later, the first boy is enormous and the second one is holding his own. The boys are two of the 22 great-grandchildren of my oldest brother, Mark.

It seems that due to the Providence of the Good Shepherd, I came full circle through the intervention of a dear Aunt who herself longed to be a Sister of the Good Shepherd and the deep faith of my family!



This is my family.

ACROSS BORDERS



ZEAL

Beatification of Sr. Aguchita Rivas in the works

The Congregation for the Causes of Saints has approved Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd's request to open the cause toward Beatification of Maria Agustina Rivas Lopez, RGS, as a holy martyr.



Sr. Aguchita (left) taught cooking, made candy and supported the dignity of girls in the poor central jungle region of Florida, Peru.

Killed for loving the poor

Members of The Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) publicly executed Sr. Agustina on September 27, 1990. They killed her in Peru's central jungle area, along with six local villagers. Her executioner was a 17-year-old boy. Her crime was loving Peru's poor and indigenous people.

Political corruption and fanatic terrorism haunted Peru from 1980-2000. The majority of the violence during this troubled time took place in the central highlands, among the indigenous Quechua speaking populations. These people are the poorest and most politically marginalized groups in the country, even today.

This was also the location of the most significant growth of the Evangelical Church in Peru in the

years leading up to and during the period of violence. It suffered disproportionately to the rest of the country. In some instances, entire villages of Christians were wiped out in massacres by The Shining Path, a militant wing of Peru's Communist Party that based its extremist philosophy on Maoist principles.

Group members sought out priests and nuns routinely to condemn and execute them. The Shining Path's manifesto was to kill those who preach peace. Christians involved in social work, feeding the poor, for example, were singled out. The Shining Path accused them of using charity as a tool to oppress the people.

"Religion is the opium of the people, a way of keeping them under control," The Shining Path had declared.

A truth commission found that nearly 70,000 people perished in the conflict, with The Shining Path responsible for more than half the deaths and security forces blamed for roughly two in five.

Sr. Agustina was fondly known as Aguchita. She was 70 years old and not a political activist when she was executed. She worked at the Good Shepherd program in Florida, Peru, which focused on young women and women farmers in the local jungle areas – the poorest in the valley.

Sr. Aguchita was a simple minister who taught cooking, made candy and supported the dignity of girls in

Florida's poor jungle region. She was well-loved.

The new martyrs

Sr. Aguchita was the first woman religious to fall victim to The Shining Path. The second was Sr. Irene MacCormack, who was killed in a public trial along with four other persons in May 1991. Three priests who were also murdered by The Shining Path rebels in 1991 became Peru's first martyrs beatified by the Catholic church. Under Vatican rules, martyred saints do not require the same evidence of miracles performed.

Pope Francis has said, "The number of martyrs today is greater than in the early centuries [of the Church]. The 'new martyrs' is a term that is used to refer to the thousands of Christians who lose their lives today because of their faith.

The latest report generated by [Open Doors USA](#), a nonprofit organization focused on serving persecuted Christians, found that one in 12 Christians today experiences high, very high, or extreme persecution for their faith. Nearly 215 million Christians face high persecution, with 100 million of those living in Asia.

Through the years, some have spoken of a de facto new standard for martyrdom called odium amoris, "hatred of love," which could apply to candidates such as Sr. Aguchita.

"May Aguchita's life of total commitment to love of God and people inspire and renew us all in the months ahead," said Sr. Ellen Kelly, Congregational Leader.

There is a shrine of Sr. Aguchita at the Good Shepherd Motherhouse in Angers, France.

Story compiled from news reports and articles published on the Congregation website.

LEADERSHIP TRAVEL

ZEAL

NAME	DATES	LOCATION
Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson	September 6-21	Visiting family
Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez	Sep 7-16 Sep 17 Sep 19 Sep 28	PLT meetings, St. Louis Good Shepherd Gracenter gala, San Francisco Meeting of Women Religious, San Francisco NRVC Local Bay Area meeting, Los Altos
Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth	No travel	No travel
Sr. Maureen Johnson	Sep 12-14 Sep 14-17 Sep 17-18	St. Louis Visiting family St. Louis
Sr. Dolores Kalina	Sep 3-6 Sep 7-17 Sep 18-30	Cincinnati, OH St. Louis Baltimore
Sr. Maureen Kunz	Sep 7-17 Sep 17-18 Sep 28-Oct 2	PLT meetings, St. Louis Good Shepherd Gracenter gala, San Francisco New York/Toronto Assembly and visit with Contemplative Sisters in Connecticut
Sr. Mary Carolyn McQuaid	Sep 8 Sep 11 Sep 9-15 Sep 28-29	50th Jubilee celebration, St. Louis Financial Advisory Board meeting, St. Louis Apostolic Council and Integration Team meetings, St. Louis Atlanta
Sr. Madeleine Munday	Sep 11 Sep 9-15 Sep 17 Sep 19	Financial Advisory Board meeting, St. Louis Apostolic Council and Integration Team meetings, St. Louis Good Shepherd Gracenter gala, San Francisco Good Shepherd Shelter Board of Directors, LA

PROVINCE CONTACT

ZEAL



"Correct with kindness and love but also with zeal and holy freedom. If you do not speak out, if you do not sound the alarm when it is needed, you will be justly convicted by your silence."

*Saint Mary Euphrasia
Conferences, p. 336*

Left: Sr. Gertrude Sen exudes zeal for mission at Immaculate Heart Convent.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

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