

ITEMS

O F I N T E R E S T

Spring Area Meetings

Spring Area Meetings are in full swing across the Province. Sisters say they like seeing other Sisters.

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Panel on migration

PMNA Justice Peace office joined a panel on migration at Ecumenical Advocacy Days.

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Heart of El Salvador

Two Mission Partners experienced first-hand the work of Good Shepherd Sisters in El Salvador.

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Peace Prize winner

Sister Micheline Lattouf came to St. Louis to receive a Peace Prize for her work in Lebanon.

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L-R: Sister Maureen McGowan, Nancy Parker, Sister Claudia Palacio

MISSION & VALUES RETREAT

Ministry executives, the North America Mission & Values team, and province leaders gathered in March to reimagine how Good Shepherd mission and values can be deepened and sustained in North America.

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Green Corner

The celebration of Global Earth Day on April 22nd gave us opportunities to reflect deeply on our relationship with all creation and need to act with justice. By the time you read this the official day will be over. However, we can still take time to pray for Mother Earth. The Earth Day theme for this year was *Protect our Species*. This means protecting all creatures on our planet who have the capacity to generate life. All animals and plant life, as well as insects, fungi, and microorganisms are included

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PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

Mission & Values, *cont'd from p. 1*

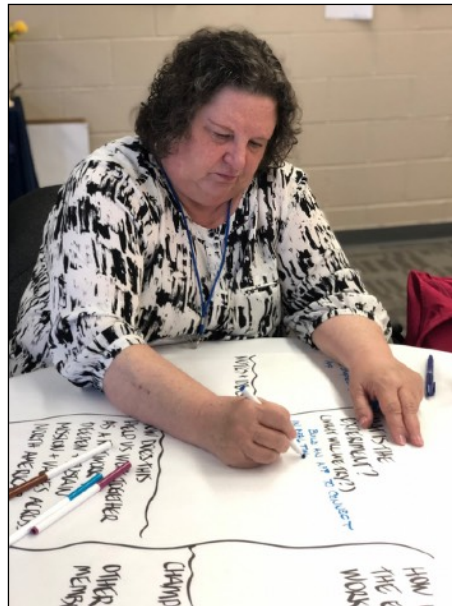
Participants met in St. Louis to examine new ways of organizing mission and values within the context of teams and agencies. They asked themselves what is needed to sustain passion for the mission for the long haul. And they discussed how they can share resources and co-create across the Good Shepherd North America network. They pondered each of these issues with the goal of leaving the gathering with a portfolio of experiments and a big picture timeline to represent the group's collaborative actions.

Throughout the four-day event, the participants held to the principles of listening with curiosity, speaking with intention, asking for what they need and offering what they can, and pausing from time-to-time to reflect and process what they were hearing from one another. Again and again, they asked themselves and each other, "What could we do better together across North America that we cannot do alone to integrate, sustain, and deepen the mission and values work? What emerging possibilities do we want to explore?"

They also dreamed — exploring wide open possibilities of what could be if time, money, personnel and geography posed no challenges, and wondered how things would work if there were a common mode of communication or structure.

What is important to do

Breakout sessions allowed participants to delve into topics that they had identified as being important for attaining success. Topics included Mission Effectiveness orientation for board members; developing a cell phone app for North America; and rethinking the Good Shepherd



Clockwise from bottom left, representing Mid-North America and New York/Toronto provinces: Lizzie Cody and Sister Tram Nguyen; Cheryl Cutrona; Sisters Paulette LoMonaco and Dolores Kalina; Michael Shanahan.

Executive Director quarterly meetings to be more inclusive and focused. One breakout session focused on defining what the success of Mission Effectiveness looks like for new hires, leaders, tenured staff and board members. Another group met to brainstorm ways to infuse peace and justice into action at the organizational level.

Each component of the Mission Values meeting connected back to

the purpose of the gathering, begging the question: *what are the things coming up that feel important to do?*

Within this context, participants addressed additional questions:

1. What are the world and our local communities asking of us now in how we embody mission and values?
2. What are the ways of being that

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PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



Mission & Values, *cont'd from p. 2*

we are trying to create to bring mission and values to life, and how do we nourish and deepen them?

3. What are our areas of strength or emerging practices of mission and values work and their impact?
4. What gives us optimism and how do we personally sustain mission and values work for the long term?

Participants shared their thoughts and ideas by posting comments on sticky notes and adhering them to the wall for all to see and consider.

Seminal work

Michael Shanahan, CEO of Maria Droste Counseling Services in Boston, Massachusetts, praised the retreat. He said, "We will look back on this retreat one day as being seminal. What we do here during these four days will carry Good Shepherd into the future."

"We are talking about big ideas at this meeting and figuring out how to implement them together. Each of us is serious about this process and will be leaving with action steps. It's joyful and beautiful work. I'm filled with gratitude for being with energetic like-minded people to carry out such an important endeavor," Michael said.

Rebekah Albert, CEO of Rose Haven in Portland, Oregon, said, "I am happy to have this time to connect with my Good Shepherd family who serves people in their communities with love and acceptance. I am sitting by this pond with geese in it who move gracefully and effortlessly from one environment to another. We are doing that here at this leadership retreat — remembering



Rebekah Albert, CEO Rose Haven, Portland.

how we got here as Good Shepherds, and how we will transition naturally with ease."

Amanda Fenton facilitated the meeting. She has worked in the cooperative sector for nearly 17 years and is skilled in designing participatory gatherings, using circle-based methods to host and harvest conversations for thoughtful change.

The Good Shepherd family across the United States and Canada was represented by CEOs from 13 agencies, province department heads and leaders from the provinces of Mid-North America and New York/Toronto. The participants are staying connected and advancing the work online.

By Jeanette McDermott, Province Communications Coordinator



Amanda Fenton facilitated the 4-day gathering of Good Shepherd ministry executives, Mission & Values team members, and province leaders.

PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

Sisters enjoy province spring Area Meetings

The annual Spring Area Meetings for the Province of Mid-North America began in March and are being well received. The meetings allow the Province Leadership Team to communicate and consult with Sisters in the province. With the Congregational Chapter looming in 2021, this year's meetings are focusing on the Congregational Vision and Mission, as well as the Core Groups for Mission.

The logo for the Congregational Chapter was unveiled in February of this year: *Drawn by Love Passionate for Justice*. Sisters are seeing the logo and discussing its meaning for the first time at the Spring Area Meetings.

The prevailing sentiment among Sisters at the Spring Area Meeting in St. Louis is that the meetings are invaluable in keeping Sisters

connected with one another and staying informed of news across the province.

"I love coming to these meetings from Atlanta and seeing the Sisters I rarely have an opportunity to see," said Sr. Christine Truong.

"For me, the best part of the meetings is seeing the other Sisters and hearing about everything that's going on in the Province," said Sr. Patricia O'Sullivan.

The Spring Area Meeting in St. Louis was held at Mason Pointe Care Center, where Sisters from Immaculate Heart Convent relocated last December.

Photos in right column: Sisters enjoy lunch, conversational breaks and a bit of beauty that was brought into the meeting space.



Small group discussions allow the Sisters to share ideas and go deeper into conversation about topics that are broached in the large group sessions.

PROVINCE NEWS

ZEAL

Good Shepherds make headline news

Sr. Josephine Fritz

Sister Josephine Fritz made headline news in the *St. Louis Review* on her 100th birthday. The news article showcased Sr. Josephine's remarkable dedication to crocheting baby blankets for clients of Birthright, a support agency for pregnant women and girls. *St. Louis Review* is a publication of the St. Louis Archdiocese. You can read the story about Sr. Josephine online at <https://bit.ly/2FSfhx5>.



CORA Services



CORA Services made news in April for continuing its community series on opioid addiction and other abuse substances. State Rep. Joe Hohenstein (center) sponsored the third CORA community conversation focusing on addiction and treatment. Attendees of the series received relevant information and were personally trained to administer Narcan. Narcan (Naloxone) binds to opioid receptors in the brain in place of opioid drugs. It prevents opioids from binding there, which can temporarily reverse an overdose. "Anyone in the community who has a concern about substance abuse of all kinds can benefit from this series," said Mary Doherty of CORA. Hohenstein said the end goal is to have neighborhoods where people aren't dying on the street and in their homes from drugs. Read more at <https://bit.ly/2W8Qv3x>

Sr. Glynis McManamon

The March issue of *Items of Interest* reported on the #StandWithSisters social media campaign. The campaign was a part of National Catholic Sisters Week. It celebrated the ways women religious stand up for social justice in their communities. Four Good Shepherd Sisters participated in the campaign. You can read their essays at www.sistersofthegoodshepherd.com. The *St. Louis Review*, a Catholic newspaper in St. Louis, reported on the #StandWithSisters campaign. Reporter Jennifer Brinker (right) interviewed Sister Glynis McManamon, RGS, for the article. You can read Jennifer's story at <https://bit.ly/2ZDGMhm>

Good Shepherd Volunteers



GSVs are keeping Good Shepherd in the news at Global Sisters Report at <https://bit.ly/2UJPpx>

PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



Congratulations to former staff at Immaculate Heart Convent



Congratulations to Salene Avery, Diane Byrd, Sierra Evans, Grace Kogbara and Alice Monroe for completing the Certified Nurses Assistant (CNA) Training Program at Mason Pointe Care Center. These successful women had been long-time caregivers of aging Good Shepherd Sisters at Immaculate Heart Convent. They moved with the Sisters to Mason Pointe when the Sisters relocated in December. The graduates received their certificates at a recognition ceremony on March 4, 2019, at Mason Pointe, with Good Shepherd Sisters, family and friends looking on proudly.

CNAs help patients with activities of daily living and other healthcare needs under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse. Certified Nurses Assistants are commonly referred to as Nursing Assistant, Patient Care Assistant, or Nurse's Aid. Whatever name they go by, we call them superstars!



PMNA's Human Resources Manager Yolanda Camp (left) and her big sister Alice Monroe beam brightly after a ceremony that marked the achievements of Alice and four other women who are dedicated to the care of Good Shepherd Sisters.

Service Day at Maryhurst

Maryhurst hosted two groups on campus for the Mayor's Give a Day of Service on April 18. Metro United Way brought a group in the morning to organize Maryhurst's donation closets. Another group, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.-



Beta Alpha Xi Zeta Chapter in Louisville, beautified the Maryhurst campus with landscaping. Louisville's mayor Greg Fischer stopped by during the day to learn about Maryhurst's work in the community.

Good Shepherd blogs

Winifred's blog from the United Nations
<https://gsiipoffice.com/>

Larry's blog from National Advocacy Center
<https://www.gsadvocacy.org/>

NAC environmental blog by Jack Lawlor
<https://www.gsadvocacy.org/stewardship>

Blogs from Good Shepherd Volunteers
www.gsvolunteers.org

PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

Blessing and gift

Ten years ago the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd created the Good Shepherd International Foundation (GSIF). What began as a modest one-person office has grown into a high performing nonprofit that impacts the lives of more than 200,000 women and children across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America.

The Foundation celebrated its 10th anniversary on April 7, 2019, with an awards program that recognized "Outstanding Mission Partners" in a number of categories. Treasurer of the Province of Mid-North America, Sister Mary Carolyn McQuaid, received the Foundation's award in the category of Mission Partner Good Shepherd Sister. She received the award for her commitment to helping the Foundation achieve its mission through her passion, talent and generosity.

Sr. Mary Carolyn said, "I am honored and grateful to have received this award. Being a part of GSIF since the Congregation hired



Left: Sister Mary Carolyn McQuaid receives the Outstanding Partners in Mission award from Sister Frances Robinson before addressing (right) an audience of well wishers.



Cristina Duranti and opened an office has been a blessing and a gift for me. I have experienced the fruit of the vision of St. Mary Euphrasia - the blessing of the generalate, of an international Congregation. As a Mission Partner with the Good Shepherd International Foundation office, I have been privileged to work on behalf of the Good Shepherd mission in about 20 countries. I have experienced that the gift we have received, we give as a gift. May

God continue to urge us to share what we have been given."

The awards ceremony took place in Rome. Congregation Leader Sister Ellen Kelly and President of GSIF Sister Elaine Basinger, welcomed guests and awardees.

The evening unfolded with conference talks, a video screening showcasing the works of GSIF, the awards ceremony, a culturally diverse musical program and dinner.

Euphrasia, a play about an audacious woman ahead of her time

Sister Jean Maria Fernandez, Vocations Director and member of the Leadership Team for the Province of Mid-North America, is traveling throughout Singapore the month of May. She took a slight detour and traveled to Malaysia to see the new stage play titled *Euphrasia, The musical*. The Good Shepherd Sisters in Malaysia, The Actors Studio and the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Center presented the musical in Kuala Lumpur to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the feast day of St. Mary Euphrasia. The stage play is now touring cities across Malaysia.

"It was a wonderful performance. The message I heard was the story of this audacious woman beyond her time! The young people who staged this musical inspired hope in my heart. I am committed to bring alive and make visible God's mission in our world and to live a life of committed service," said Sr. Jean Marie.



Sister Jean Marie Fernandez (right) with Good Shepherd Sisters in Malaysia following the premiere stage performance of Euphrasia, The Musical - a new play that is touring throughout Malaysia. See more about the play in the blue sidebar on page 23.

COMMUNITY LIFE



ZEAL



Reconnecting on retreat re-energizes Companions

By Joan Clancy, Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd

We need a faith community of friends to inspire, challenge, tease, and call us to be all we can be without unduly embarrassing us for being where we are now. Insure you have people you can see, visit, call, write, or e-mail who will nourish your spiritual life." ~

Robert Wicks

As the East Coast Companions gathered recently to retreat together in Spring Lake, New Jersey, our hearts overflowed with love and gratitude for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. They provided us with gracious hospitality and have been mentoring us for decades, continuously supporting our consecrated lifestyle.

A time for reconnection and business preceded our days of prayer, shared reflection and personal insights. We used the book *Jesus Today* (Sarah Young) and *He and I* (Gabrielle Bossis) to jumpstart our conversations.

Not wishing to be prisoners in the amber of our past, we discussed our individual and group Good Shepherd history and explored the challenges of living our vows within family and work situations. We also considered our experience as women in the current Church circumstance.

Living and working in secular environments makes us want to maintain a non-judgmental and nourishing camaraderie among ourselves. It is within this safe space that some themes emerged, like loss and forgiveness, glory and gratitude, meaning and relationship. Alice mentioned praise, presence and raised awareness of "the gift of spiritual role models."

Judy felt thankful that we were able to carve out this time together. She said she sensed a "deeper relationship with each other and with Our Lord."

Mary reminded us of the importance of forgiveness. She connected our experiences of loss with parables of a lost sheep, a lost coin, a lost son.

We celebrated the small miracle of one Companion from Georgia finding another (her ride) in a New York airport. We discovered that we all happen to use the same book for morning prayer: *Give Us This Day*.

Our sharing migrated organically to spontaneously giving thanks, and then to forgiveness (of ourselves, of others), and finally to witnessing. One Companion summarized our time together. She said, "It was an open time in a gentle space to just be with spiritually connected women."

We shared, we prayed, we ate, we drank, we laughed. We talked and the question repeatedly came up: what do we want to be?

For me, as a Companion of Jesus the Good Shepherd, it is walking with zeal in my milieu day by day, hoping I am doing the job for which God calls me. I'm grateful that there are like-minded, spiritually bound sister Companions who are doing the same thing. We are praying and supporting each other in ways that can't always be captured, except by God who knows our hearts. And, for me, that is enough!

At our last Missouri gathering, Sister Janice Rushman advised us. She said, "Our Zeal isn't a vow to do some specific thing; it's about putting ourselves at the disposal of

the Reign of God 24/7/365. Mission is what you do; ministry is how you do it. Mission remains, while ministry changes," she told us.

And so, on this Companions retreat, we shared practical ways of how we refocus intention as each day unfolds.

Since 400AD the Church has used bells to summon us to prayer. One Companion puts a modern flair on the tradition with her cellphone chime signaling the time for a quick prayer throughout her workday. Another maintains an active online presence networking across social media platforms.

We noted that a ministry of presence has evolved within our group over time. It currently involves support of folks who are struggling with mental health issues, developmental disabilities, and homelessness. Others of us assist the poor with access to social service systems, family and childcare support, counseling and education.

We shared walks on the beach, enjoyed Easter baskets and meals together, and fondly reminisced about past and present mentors and members as we prayed in the beautiful St. Catharine's Church.

We renewed our commitment of vows with a personal choice of either Zeal or all four vows. As we completed the retreat, we held a drawing for the beautiful calendar that Vista Maria sent to us for donating to their anti-trafficking building effort. Like the disciples enroute to Emmaus, we recognized Jesus' presence among us and returned re-energized from whence we came.

COMMUNITY LIFE



ZEAL

Easter Celebrations

Throughout the Lenten Season Sisters from Beechwood joined our St. Margaret Hall Sisters for adoration and Stations of the Cross, and for the Triduum.

Sisters from Beechwood Community (Dorothy Doyle, Elise Kramer, Dolores Kalina, and Gayle Lwanga) arrived early Easter Sunday morning with treats for the St. Margaret Hall Community (Sisters Noreen Sheedy, Colette Sauers, Connie Thompson, Louise McCoy, Alena Bernert, and Marilyn Kahl).

Each Sister was greeted with the Good News and given a basket filled with dyed eggs and other Easter treats. The love and joy on the Sisters' faces gladdened our hearts. Each Sister had enough candy to share with friends. On Easter Tuesday volunteers and Mission Partners (Phyllis Cable, Linda Guy and her husband Art, Phyllis's sister-in-law Rose and her twin granddaughters Audrey and Clare)



Photo on left: Sisters Connie Thompson and Dolores Kalina. Photo on right: Sister Colette Sauers surrounded by friends at an Easter party in Cincinnati.



gave the Sisters a lovely Easter party with "high tea" table settings, beautiful decorations and delicious desserts.

Every month Phyllis gives the Sisters a party when there is a Sister celebrating a special day. These volunteers and Mission Partners worked with the Sisters for many

years before Pelletier Hall closed at Fort Thomas, Kentucky.

We are grateful for such faithful Good Shepherd friends. We pray for them daily and wish them every good blessing.

Submitted by Gayle Lwanga Crumbley, RGS



Easter Vigil at the Cheltenham Contemplative Community included friends (the O'Brien and Gillis family) and Sister Mary Joy Benson, who played the organ and sang.



The Cheltenham, Pennsylvania, Community at the Silver Jubilee of Sister Martha Cardenas (second from right), Local Leader. Bishop Joseph Martino served as the main Celebrant for Sr. Martha's Jubilee Mass.

PEACE JUSTICE NEWS

ZEAL

Troubling the waters to heal the world

By Claudia Palacio, RGS

“Good Trouble” for the Common Good was the topic of the Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) in Washington, D.C. in April. The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd is a key organizer of EAD.

The Office of Justice and Peace of the Province of Mid-North America had the opportunity to be a part of an EAD panel about the root causes of migration from Central America to the U.S. We invited Sister Marta Iris López, RGS, to serve on the panel.

A sociologist with human rights training, Sr. Marta formerly served as the Good Shepherd NGO Designate to CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean). She now works as the coordinator of the micro-financing program in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Sister Marta illustrated in her presentation how economics, health, public safety, and the environment are negatively impacted by structural adjustment programs that are implemented by international financial institutions like the World Bank. These macroeconomic policies have worked to ensure payment of interest on debts contracted with international creditor institutions; however, they have failed to promote and protect human rights.

Government fails most vulnerable

In addition, governmental corruption prevents the crucial international cooperation needed for help to reach the most vulnerable. Governments do not invest enough in health and education. Honduras’ public hospitals lack the most basic tools, from blood sample tubes to post-operative drainage devices. Patients’ families have to buy everything. It is not possible to perform emergency surgeries due to the lack of available beds, so patients are placed on waiting lists. Since the wait is long, invasive diseases progress and cause many patients to die.

Public insecurity is a serious problem for Honduran families. Gang members demand that small business owners pay a “war tax.” If they don’t pay the tax, gang members will kill a family member or burn down the business. Police mistrust is strong. There are cases of people making police reports and later being killed. Gang members also are known to work on the emergency 911 line and provide information to their gangs.

Like health and safety concerns, the environment also has played a role in migration. Honduras, El Salvador and



Root Causes of Migration panelists included Sister Marta Iris Lopez, RGS, (second from left). Sr. Marta is from the Central America province and represented Sisters of the Good Shepherd on the EAD panel. Sr. Claudia Palacio (left) helped with translation.

Guatemala have been hit by hurricanes, earthquakes and drought in the last decade, leaving the population vulnerable. For example, food insecurity caused by drought has led to the prevalence of chronic malnutrition in children under age 5. In Guatemala chronic malnutrition has reached 59.6% of the rural population and 65.9% of the indigenous population.

Women crucial to family survival

Sr. Marta pointed out during the panel discussion that survival relies more and more on women through the experience of women participating in the micro-financing project. Economic activities such as informal labor, emigration and the return of the so-called “classes of servitude” have become crucial to survival. Whenever the State follows the structural adjustment programs and ceases to assume responsibility for social assistance, women replace the State and take on the tasks linked to health, nutrition and care.

Although the social-economic problems that Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala face are daunting, Sister Marta

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PEACE JUSTICE NEWS

ZEAL

EAD, *Cont'd from p. 10*

gave us hope when she spoke about the seeds that Good Shepherd Sisters are sowing. More than 30 years ago, the Sisters arrived in the village of Germania in Tegucigalpa to provide support to the people there. Now, most of the people served by the Sisters in Germania come from three neighboring villages: Yaguacire, Santa Rosa and Tizatillo. That's progress.



Sisters Marta Iris Lopez (left) and Claudia Palacio participated in Ecumenical Advocacy Days in April in Washington, DC.

Into the arms of God

The Good Shepherd Congregation lost two of its shining stars this spring when Sisters

Marie-Francoise Le Brizaut and Delia Rodriguez passed into the arms of God. Both Sisters left their mark on the Province of Mid-North America.



l-r: Sisters Delia Rodriguez and Marie-Francoise Le Brizaut.

Sister Marie-Francoise came to St. Louis two years ago to facilitate a workshop on St. John Eudes. Sister Mary Catherine Massei said that Sister Marie-Francoise presented enough content in those three days "to spend the rest of my life meditating on the love of God in and through the Heart of Jesus."

A few months ago, in January and February, Sr. Marie-Francoise videotaped her presentations on what she considered the most important messages of the spirituality of St. John Eudes within his historical context. Her insights will live on and be available to the entire congregation.

Sister Delia had been involved in advancing the cause of Sister Aguchita's beatification, a cause that many Sisters in the Province of Mid-North America hold dear to their hearts. Sister Delia and Marie-Francoise were friends and enjoyed a Latin America-French connection.

Announcements and News Tidbits

We had two Jubilees in April: Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth - 25 years
Sr. Eileen Robinson - 60 years

Happy 103rd birthday to Sister Anne Marie Solomon. Her birthday was in March.

Sister Marie Dolores Beck has a new email address:
srmariedbeck@gmail.com

Samantha Wirth writes about her experience as a Good Shepherd Volunteer in Global Sisters Report. <https://bit.ly/2GHZz8Z>

National Catholic Reporter mentions the National Advocacy Center for Sisters of the Good Shepherd in a recent report about citizenship and the census.
<https://bit.ly/2Wc5Ccx>

April 24 was St Mary Euphrasia's Feast (anniversary of her death). Because we were in the Octave of Easter, we could not celebrate her

Feast in the Roman Catholic Rite during the Liturgies. So it was transferred to April 29 in St. Louis. St Ann's Church in Normandy, Missouri, held a Mass of St. Mary Euphrasia on April 29th. Sister Mary Catherine Massei read at Mass and prayed special intercessions. Father Winker spoke of St. Mary Euphrasia at Mass.

Get on Catholic Relief Services text action alerts to stay informed of global issues. <https://bit.ly/2WctAUN>

NAC's 2nd Human Trafficking Conference is on June 26, 2019. Speakers include Sr. Winifred Doherty, RGS, and Taina Bien-Aimé, Executive Director of Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. Register at this URL: www.gsadvocacy.org/human-trafficking-conference.html

GREEN CORNER



ZEAL

Earth Day, *Cont'd from p. 1*

in the biodiversity of our planet. Check out these resources for reflection, prayer, and discussion: *Laudato Si* "Loss of Biodiversity" #32 – 42 and "The Message of Each Creature in the Harmony of Creation" #84 – 86.

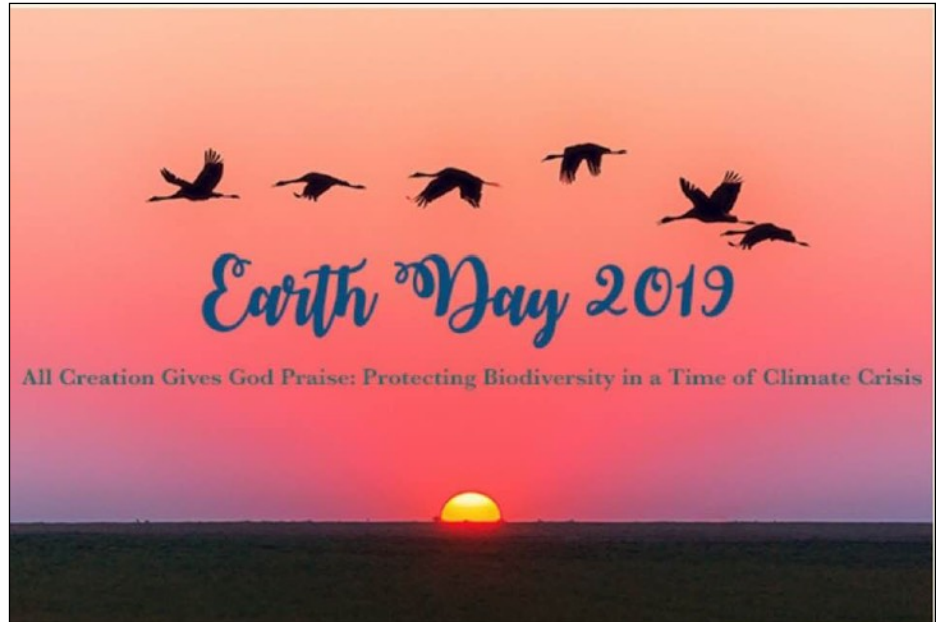
Integral Ecology

The position paper *Integral Ecology* from the Good Shepherd International Justice and Peace Office deepens our sense of relationship with our world's biodiversity.

The position paper states, "We live in a time when science and theology offer reliable global insights about the interconnectedness of life and matter in all forms throughout the universe. This enriches our understanding of the world as a source of deep contemplation and sacred activity, calling us to the heart of what it means to be inclusive and reconciled in all ways with the Whole. It challenges us to re-evaluate prior perceptions, previous understanding, and unquestioned practices" (#1).

The following words from *Integral Ecology* are compelling. They give voice to a call present in *Laudato Si*: "We admit our complicity in perpetuating dualistic and domineering attitudes about the earth. We understand that reconciliation with our earth calls for a new consciousness, a new identity, and new behaviors centered on the kinship of all creation and the implementation of human rights for all." (#5).

This would be a great source for reflection and community discussion. This call for a new consciousness, new identity, and new behaviors goes beyond the usual social responsibility. It is



Catholic Concern for Animals states, "Our Mission is the advancement of Christian respect and responsibility for the animal creation with special reference to Catholic teaching and beliefs." <https://catholic-animals.com/>

about communal and personal transformation.

In the last few years we, as a province, have been discussing, advocating, and praying. I hope we have gained a deeper understanding of what transformation is about. Have we reflected deeply enough and or acted sufficiently so that a real transformation is taking place within ourselves and our communities?

Note: Integral Ecology is one of six position papers available on the Good Shepherd congregational website. The papers come from the International Justice and Peace Office. The title Integral Ecology integrates the paper into the focus of Laudato Si and considers the multiple connections — such as social, economic, cultural and spiritual — that influence the environmental crisis.

Submitted by Sisters Sharon O'Grady and Claudia Palacio

Sisters share their Earth Day activities**Joan Spiering**

I asked my sister to pick some plants that would do well at the coast all summer. Today I potted the geraniums, with lobelias around the edges, and the lupine. I will be eager to see how they thrive.

**Stella Mangona**

Today the Sisters of St. Cyril and Methodius and the rest of us in Danville, Pennsylvania, had a tree

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GREEN CORNER



ZEAL

Earth Day, *Cont'd from p. 12*

planting activity in the garden by Maria Hall. It was a warm 70 degrees outside. Our garden by Maria Hall has daffodils, crocus, weeping cherry tree, dogwood, forsythia, and azaleas. The apple trees have bloomed too. The sisters have been out walking in the beauty.

Beth Garciano

We have some free boarders at Maria Droste Community — a mama robin and her four babies. They are nesting on top of our night light near the front door. The community tries not to use the front door to avoid any disturbances. The community is also praying for the earth.



Sharon O'Grady

Renee Scheich and I planted flowers in the front of the Province Center. I also joined with Interfaith Power and Light to pray for climate healing at noon on Earth Day.



The world of God's wonderful creation.
Humans have the task of shaping it and preserving it.
Concern for Mother Earth is not among the many questions,
but the essential issue to the planet's survival.

Prayer Network
Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Prayer for Compassion



The Compassion Project is a feature length documentary that strives to inspire and encourage those already on a religious or spiritual path to expand their circle of compassion to embrace all life, regardless of species, and make choices in alignment with this value.

The film follows Thomas Jackson on a quest that crisscrosses America and takes him to Morocco for the United Nations Climate Conference and throughout the Indian subcontinent to ask the question, "Can compassion grow to include all beings? Can people who identify as religious or spiritual come to embrace the call to include all human and nonhuman beings in our circle of respect and caring and love?"

The movie has not yet been released to the general public. There is a fundraising project underway to help the filmmakers meet their financial goals for audience release. If you feel inclined to support the project, here's the link: <https://www.gofundme.com/compassionmovie>. Learn more and watch the trailer at <http://aprayerforcompassion.com/>

NAC NEWS

ZEAL

Standing in solidarity with Hondurans

By Larry Couch, Director, National Advocacy Center

For the second year in a row, leaders of various faith traditions went to Honduras to stand in solidarity with the people of Honduras as they struggle with poverty, violence, and a corrupt, illegitimate government. From March 18 to March 25, the 75 faith leaders spread out across Honduras to meet face-to-face with the people of Honduras, local government leaders, military/police officials, and U.S. Embassy representatives.

The dates of the pilgrimage coincided with the first anniversary of the canonization of St. Oscar Romero. For many, he was our unseen, fellow pilgrim. His voice echoed within us to be messengers of peace, to be prophets. A specific aim of the pilgrimage was to bring his spirit of truth and justice to Honduras.

Trampling on human rights

Caught between the violence of gangs who kill with impunity, a military/police who trample on human rights, and a corrupt, inefficient government, the people barely survive from day to day. Small business owners have to pay extortion to gang members and are forced to sell illegal drugs. There is no recourse to the police since the gangs also control the police. With

the absence of a strong, respected civic government, international firms can easily exploit the country's resources, degrade the environment, and further impoverish the people.

The interfaith delegation included Jewish, Buddhist and Christian leaders. Most pilgrims were from the United States, with several joining from South America. I went to Honduras to be in solidarity with the people and to carry the love and compassion of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in North America. I wanted to serve as a witness and to share what I experience with the Sisters and with Members of Congress upon my return.

Meetings with communities

We met with officials and grassroots and religious partners in order to better understand the causes that have moved increasing numbers to flee from Honduras. Some members of the delegation met with women factory workers and with community members who are protesting the opening of new mines.

Some delegates also met with a group in a homeless community where two women talked about earning \$1 per day picking up plastic bottles, 15 percent of which goes to the municipality. In addition, we



met people who are basically joyful, musical and hopeful, and who express nonviolent rituals for peace.

We spoke with an embassy spokeswoman who represents the U.S. administration about the weak institutions in Honduras that make improvements difficult. According to the spokeswoman, the poor people of Honduras — 60% of the population — never see aid from the United States.

I kept a daily blog of reflections while on the pilgrimage. You can read my blog at gsadvocacy.org/blog. Stories can also be found at Global Sisters Report <https://bit.ly/2ZIPPEg>.



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The work of heart and soul in El Salvador

By Jeanette McDermott, Province Communications Coordinator

Larry Couch, Director of Good Shepherd's National Advocacy Center, traveled to Honduras in March as part of a faith-delegation investigating the root causes of migration. You can read his story on page 14.

Before heading into Honduras, Larry visited Good Shepherd Sisters in El Salvador. I accompanied him on the trip. During our week in El Salvador we visited Apostolic and Contemplative Sisters across the country to experience their ministries.

Good Shepherd Schools

The Good Shepherd Catholic schools are particularly valued in El Salvador, where gang violence runs rampant in the public schools. According to teachers in the schools, parents who want their children to be educated in a safe environment call upon the Sisters and plead with them to admit their children into the Good Shepherd schools. Funding for the Catholic schools, however, is next to nil, and the Sisters are not able financially to expand educational opportunities to meet local needs. This weighs heavy on their hearts.

Nonetheless, the Sisters persist against vast limitations and defy the odds of succeeding. They run exemplary schools with extremely limited funds and no support from the government. The teachers are among the most creative instructors I have ever met. They make magic happen in their classrooms with virtually nothing at their disposal. The need for text books, art supplies, writing materials, chalk, computer equipment and other basic requirements to operate a school is staggering. It's miraculous to see how the teachers function, and how the children learn with so few supplies and materials.

A Sister at one of the schools said, "My dream is for the families of our students to have enough food to eat, clean water to drink, and a house to live in that has walls, a floor and a roof. And I dream of our students having parents who believe their children are worth educating."

One of the Good Shepherd schools has 226 students in grades seven, eight and nine. The other Good Shepherd school has nearly 900 pupils who range in grades from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

The Salvadoran government provides two uniforms and one pair of shoes for each child attending school in the country. The government also provides two pencils, one

Continued on next page



Larry and I were made to feel welcome from the moment we arrived in El Salvador.



Children performed cultural dance and music for Larry and me on one of our visits to a Good Shepherd school.



Sisters work hard to help families overcome the limits that deep poverty places on many Salvadorans.

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El Salvador, *Cont'd from p. 15*

packet of crayons and two notebooks annually for each school-aged child. The rest of the supplies and materials needed come from the Sisters, donations, and the generosity and creativity of the teachers.

In addition to providing limited school items, the Salvadoran government gives each family who lives below the poverty line a set quantity of milk, rice and beans every 40 days. The Good Shepherd schools supplement the meager proportions by providing students with free lunches and additional food that families can buy at very nominal cost. For example, the Sisters sell boxes of macaroni and spaghetti for 25 cents each. Families can also spend a quarter to buy eight packs of vegetable seed. El Salvador uses U.S. currency.

Woman's empowerment program

Sister Gema, a Good Shepherd Sister in one of the schools, also runs a woman's empowerment program on campus. The program focuses on building women's skills in business and finance, self-esteem and personal growth.

Larry and I sat in on one of the sessions with women who are in the program. I was blown away by the achievements of these women and impressed with their commitment to rise above hardships. Many of the women have created successful home and street businesses as diverse as sewing, cooking, catering, and selling assorted merchandise like pots and pans, shoes, perfume, jewelry, candy, zippers, snack foods, coffee, blankets, blue jeans, and bottled water. One young woman travels to the border of Honduras and El Salvador weekly to sell attractive yoga pants and fashion wear that she stitches together from discarded and used clothing.

Domestic violence is common among the poor in El Salvador. The Good Shepherd women's empowerment program helps restore the dignity and spirituality of women who are affected by social injustices.

Micro financing program

Two Good Shepherd Sisters have been running a micro financing program for women for four years. Larry and I walked with the Sisters through the Mercado (huge outdoor covered marketplace) and met recipients of the no-interest loan program, some of

Continued on next page



Sisters sell food items to people in the local community to supplement government subsidies, which families receive every 40 days. A Canadian dentist donates the food to the Good Shepherd Sisters who, in turn, sell it at nominal cost to the people who need it. Everybody wins. Families don't go hungry, and the Sisters have a steady source of income to help support their ministries.



The Mercados in El Salvador bustle in every community across the nation. A number of clients in the Good Shepherd micro finance and women's empowerment programs ply their trades at the Mercados each day.

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El Salvador, *Cont'd from p. 16*

whom have been in the program for the full three years that the Sisters allow.

The program involves eight weeks of training in banking, basic accounting, self-esteem and confidence building. Once clients finish the training they can apply for a loan. Most pay off their loan within a year. When they finish paying the loan, they can receive another one. The cycle can continue for three years. Literacy is the largest hurdle facing the Sisters, as many of their clients have only a third grade education.

One of the Sisters who runs the program said, "We want people to succeed and come out of their poor economic situation. We don't operate on entitlement. We push them toward financial stability and self-sufficiency so they can be a part of society in all aspects of their lives."

The Sisters also provide a free lunch every Friday to pre-school children who attend school inside the Mercado where a number of the Sisters' clients work. In a country where poverty gets worse by the day, providing a free lunch once a week is a significant service. The school children range in age from four to six years old. After leaving school each day at noon, most of the children stay with their parents inside the Mercado at the family's vending booth.

Contemplative Sisters

Good Shepherd Contemplative Sisters have been in El Salvador since 1939. Six Sisters currently form the Contemplative Community. A number of specialty projects take place within the Community, foremost of which is uniting with the local people and Apostolic Sisters through prayer.

To support themselves and achieve self-reliance, the Contemplative Sisters provide a laundry service for clients in the local community. They also make candy once a week and sell it in local bodegas (small shops), where they have many repeat customers. The Sisters are accomplished seamstresses and make beautiful vestments for priests and darling dresses for little girls. They also run a thrift shop, selling assorted merchandise that people donate to the Sisters to sell.

"We work and do many things to produce income, but it's not enough" said Local Leader Sister Reyna.

"We are grateful for our benefactors who help support our community and prayer life," she said.

Continued on next page



Children receive a free lunch before leaving school each day. The Salvadoran pupusa (left) is everyone's favorite. Sister Cecelia (right) is the principal at one of the Good Shepherd schools. The students adore her.



Beauty is abundant at the convents in San Salvador.



Teachers are the backbone of the Good Shepherd schools. Their creativity is boundless in overcoming challenges of poverty and lack of government support in providing adequate teaching materials. They all pitch together to make miracles happen each day at the schools where they teach. If ever there were a need for donations, these schools are it.

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El Salvador, *Cont'd from p. 17*

The Contemplative Sisters, like the Apostolic Sisters, are responsible for paying the costs of workers, insurance premiums, transportation, maintenance on their house and chapel, and all other costs associated with keeping the community solvent. They rely solely on their own ingenuity and benefactors and donors to meet their needs and the needs of their ministries. The Sisters receive no support from the Salvadoran government.



Contemplative Sisters sew vestments as a source of income to support the Community.

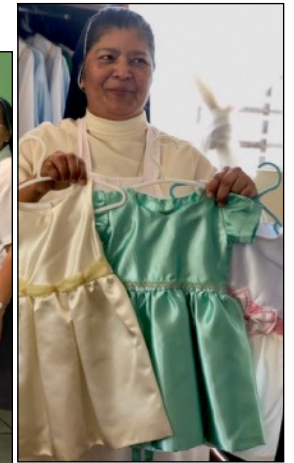
The Apostolic and Contemplative Sisters in El Salvador belong to the Province of Central America.

Disclaimer

Items of Interest is available online. Some of the Sisters in El Salvador did not want their names or images revealed because of violence in parts of the country. The Sisters who are identified in this article granted permission to publish the information and photographs.



Sister Leonore runs the Contemplative Sisters' thrift shop. She also cares for the Community's chickens and wild turkeys, and serves as the Community's messenger of news and announcements.



Meet some of the hard working and dedicated Sisters who are devoted to the Good Shepherd Mission in El Salvador. Clockwise from top left: Apostolic Community Local Leader Sister Emelia; members of the Contemplative Community; Sisters Francisca and Gema; Contemplative Community Local Leader Sister Reyna; and the Apostolic Community.

ACROSS BORDERS



ZEAL



Good Shepherd Sister awarded peace and justice prize

By Jeanette McDermott, Province Communications Coordinator

Sister Micheline Lattouf, RGS, received the *Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize* at a ceremony and lecture on the Maryville University campus in St. Louis on April 23, 2019. She received the award for the humanitarian efforts she directs at the Good Shepherd Social and Community Center. The center is approximately 64 miles northeast of Beirut, in Deir al-Ahmar, a small Christian village in Lebanon's agrarian Bekaa Valley.

Sisters of the Good Shepherd established the center in 2005 to care for women and children following the Lebanese civil war and Syrian occupation — a conflict that lasted from 1975 to 1990 and up to the withdrawal of the Syrians from Lebanon in 2005.

When Syria's civil war broke out six years later on March 15, 2011, the Sisters expanded the center to support Syrian refugees who were crossing the border. It wasn't long before the village of Deir al-Ahmar had received an influx of refugees approaching 10,000 — a number almost as large as the host community's population of 12,000.

As Syrians began pouring into Lebanon by the tens of thousands in 2011, Sr. Micheline told reporters with Aid to the Church in Need (which helped fund the center in Deir al-Ahmar), "You have to realize that this area suffered considerably as a result of the Lebanese civil war and the Syrian occupation. There were tensions both with the Shiites and with the Syrian army of occupation. Many Christians therefore left. Whole Christian villages were abandoned.



Syrian Muslim refugees with Sister Micheline in a camp near the Christian village of Deir al-Ahmar in northeast Lebanon.

To improve life a little, my order decided in 2003 to begin a community to support native Christians here, and especially women and children. Then the Syrian refugees suddenly came. The people had not forgotten the Syrian occupation of Lebanon. This made it very difficult to explain to the people why Good Shepherd was helping the Syrians."

Forgiveness

The people in the village slowly began to give up their reluctance as they listened to Sr. Micheline repeatedly remind them that "We, as Christians, must not live in the spirit of revenge. We have to forgive; it is our mission."

The small nation of Lebanon has received more than 1.5 million refugees since the Syrian civil war began. Syrian refugees now represent one-fourth of the

population in Lebanon. The majority of Syrian refugees are Sunni Muslims. Lebanon has a majority Muslim population, but a strong Christian minority. Its Muslim population is about equally divided between Shiite and Sunni.

Today the Good Shepherd center in Deir al-Ahmar brings structure and a sense of normalcy to the village. Sister Micheline and other Good Shepherd Sisters promote peace and hope, education and community for Christians and Muslims, Shiite and Sunni. They supply refugees with food, water, clothing and other shelter needs.

Muslims and Christians

In addition, the Good Shepherd Sisters provide a safe environment for families to rebuild their lives. Sister Micheline and her staff help adult refugees find employment

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Peace prize, *Cont'd from p. 19*

opportunities in the face of long-term displacement. Most importantly, the center has become a place where Lebanese and Syrians, Muslims and Christians can come together to socialize.

"One day the war will be over, and what then?" asks Sister Micheline. "How can the people live together again after all that's happened in Syria? There's a need for reconciliation, education and prospects. There's nothing worse than watching a lost generation grow up."



Dr. Germaine Murray (left) and Sister Micheline Lattouf discuss the Good Shepherd ministry in Lebanon at a public forum at Maryville University in St. Louis.

Putting stock in education, Good Shepherd Sisters and teachers from Syria and Lebanon conduct primary school classes for Syrian children in the morning. They conduct classes for Lebanese youth in the afternoon.

This is to accommodate different traditions of curricula. Syrian curriculum stresses Arabic, while the Lebanese curriculum, in addition to Arabic, stresses French and some English. About 350 students attend school. Art, technology and folk dancing are among the other subjects taught to all of the students. All students also receive a warm meal each day.

Peace prize nominee

Dr. Germaine F. Murray, PhD, is a Professor of English and Humanities and Director of Medart Lectures (lecture series on global issues) at Maryville University. She became aware of Sr. Micheline's challenging work with Christians and Muslims in 2011 when she read an article about her in *One*, a magazine published by Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

She never stopped watching, researching, and learning about Sr. Micheline after reading the article about her eight years ago. She said, "That's the great thing about technology; we can find people like her," said Dr. Germaine.

"Sister Micheline exemplifies the kind of person Maryville wants to showcase - the selfless person who is doing the impossible while hidden from view. The kind of person who needs publicity to garner funding for ongoing support. The kind of person who sets an example for Maryville students and the public," said Dr. Germaine.

The staff at Maryville University suggests names for the committee of the *Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize* to consider each year. Dr. Germaine nominated Sr. Micheline, and the committee voted unanimously to select her nominee.



Micheline Lattouf, RGS

"Maryville made exactly the right decision by selecting Sr. Micheline. The whole world is living in a refugee moment. Americans are a people and country with means. We have the resources to show our solidarity with refugees and to help Sr. Micheline and the Good Shepherd Sisters around the world," said Dr. Germaine.

Sister Micheline was surprised to have received Maryville University's justice and peace prize and its widespread publicity.

"I do not know how this wonderful university learned about Good Shepherd in our tiny village so far away in Lebanon. When Dr. Germaine presented me to the students, she showed photographs of Good Shepherd Sisters working with Syrian refugees and Lebanese children. I do not know where these pictures came from. It is God's

Continued on next page

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Peace prize, *Cont'd from p. 20*

mystery how they found us," she said with open surprise.

Classroom lecture

Prior to receiving the prize at an evening public forum and reception, Sr. Micheline spoke before a class of Maryville students who have been studying poverty over the course of the school year.

The class is taught by professors representing different perspectives from four disciplines: sociology, political science, literature and health. Several Lebanese Catholic and Muslim students are enrolled in the class.

"Hearing about the program for peace that Good Shepherd has implemented for Muslims and Christians was a perfect way to end our class on poverty with its focus on authentic diversity. Sr. Micheline's presentation was something wonderful that our students and the entire world needs to see," Dr. Germaine said.

The peace prize

Dr. Germaine has been with Maryville for 26 years. She and retired professor Tom Eschen are responsible for managing the peace prize. She said, "Awarding the peace prize is the best thing I have ever done. Maryville gives the prize purely to honor someone who is doing important humanitarian work.

"The award is not political, and it is not intended for public relations. This year's prize honors a Sister and her Good Shepherd order. When you see this kind of work being done you see that the good far outweighs the pain we see in the world. There is no agenda with this prize. We give it because it's the right thing to do," she said.

Sr. Micheline said that she and the Good Shepherd Sisters are eternally grateful for Maryville University's justice and peace prize and its publicity about the Center. The Sisters also thank all of the international humanitarian organizations that have supported their

work over the years, including Aid to the Church in Need, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas Australia, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, and Misión enfance.



About the Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize & Lecture

The Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize & Lecture carries an award and monetary prize provided through Maryville University's Sister Mary Byles Endowed Lecture Series Fund. The Fund honors the legacy of Sister Mary Byles, RSCJ, an esteemed professor of humanities and theology at Maryville. Sister Mary was well-known among religious leaders in the St. Louis area for her significant efforts to further ecumenical and interfaith relations throughout her long career at the university.

The prize and lecture in her name draws attention to the moral and ethical issues existing in modern society, and furthers Maryville University's mission to instill a sense of social consciousness within its graduates. The prize recognizes remarkable women and men whose lives and work focus on issues of peace and justice, and — more broadly — diversity and inclusion. The lecture illuminates the honoree's mission and vocation. Sr. Mary Byles died in 2005 at age 91.

Benefactors Howard and Stephanie Stanley

The Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize & Lecture is made possible through a generous donation by Howard Stanley and his late wife Stephanie. The Stanleys' gift to Maryville in 1997 created the endowment for the Sister Mary Byles Endowed Lecture Series, which grew to become the Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize and Lecture.

The Stanleys were great admirers of Sister Byles, and regularly attended lectures and events at which Sister Byles spoke. Until her death in 2005, Stephanie Stanley served on the Board of the Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis, personally bringing people of different faiths together in conversation. She hoped such dialogue might bring about greater understanding and peace among people of different backgrounds.

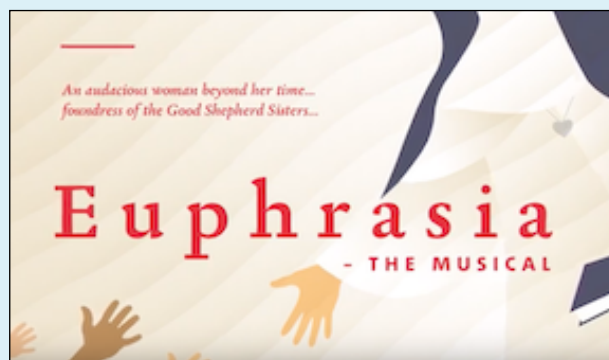
LEADERSHIP TRAVEL

ZEAL

NAME	DATES	LOCATION
Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson	No travel	No travel
Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez	May 1-31	Singapore
Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth	No travel	No travel
Sr. Maureen Johnson	May 21-23	Integration Team meeting/travel to and from, St. Louis
Sr. Dolores Kalina	May 16-30	Leadership Team meeting and more, St. Louis
Sr. Maureen Kunz	May 19-26 May 26-29	Leadership Team meeting, St. Louis Boutwells Landing
Sr. Mary Carolyn McQuaid	May 17 May 20 May 20-25 May 22 May 28-30	Baltimore Financial Advisory Board meeting, St. Louis Leadership Team meeting, St. Louis Integration Team meeting, St. Louis Generalate Investment Advisory Committee mtg, St. Paul
Sr. Madeleine Munday	May 7 May 20 May 20-25 May 22	DeNeuille Learning Center Graduation, Memphis Financial Advisory Board meeting, St. Louis Leadership Team meeting, St. Louis Integration Team meeting, St. Louis

Stage play about Mary Euphrasia now touring across Malaysia

A new sensational play is touring across Malaysia. It's called Euphrasia, The Musical. The play is set in 19th century France, after the French Revolution, and tells the story of how one woman, through her smarts and tenacity, did amazing feats to better the lives of marginalized women and girls. The director of the play said, "We are taking the story from a very social angle. It's about issues like human rights, social justice and how you treat people on the streets. Those who are suffering and marginalized. That's what Mary Euphrasia did." Watch the performance on Youtube <https://bit.ly/2J9HS5b>. Read the back-story at <https://bit.ly/2Vybvnc>.



PROVINCE CONTACT

ZEAL



"Never write any words but words of kindness and cheer. There is enough suffering and hardship without adding to the burden."

St. Mary Euphrasia

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

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