

# ITEMS

## O F I N T E R E S T

### A wonder machine

*Eye gaze machine gives Sr. Mary Carolyn the power to communicate.*

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### Saving a family

*Sister Chris Hock uses skills and instincts to reunite a family.*

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### NAC Transition

*Larry Couch exits and Fran Eskin-Royer enters as NAC Director.*

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### Pray for Vietnam

*As COVID spreads across Vietnam, Sisters put their lives on the line for others.*

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Sharon Rose Authorson  
Contemplative Councilor



Madeleine Munday, Province Leader



Gayle Lwanga Crumbley  
Apostolic Councilor



Barbara Beasley  
Apostolic Councilor



Province Leadership Team  
Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
Province of Mid-North America  
Installation July 3, 2021

Christine My Hanh Truong  
Apostolic Councilor



Mary Carol McClenon, Apostolic Councilor



Elizabeth Garciano  
Contemplative Councilor



Claudia Palacio  
Apostolic Councilor



## Green Corner

Trees are a spiritual cure-all for me. Trees are what I seek when I need counsel. I walk among trees and talk out loud to them when I am discerning something momentous. I bellow out to them when I am outraged, and I lean on them in whispered prayer.

My relationship with trees began a lifetime ago, when I

*Continued on p. 23*

## NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM IN PLACE

Eight Sisters transitioned into leadership positions for the Province of Mid-North America on July 3, 2021. Stay tuned to *Items of Interest* for news about the new leadership team. In the next issue of the newsletter we will hear from each of the Sisters one dream they have for the province.

# PROVINCE NEWS

## ZEAL

## Sister Mary Carolyn engages happily in life

By Jeanette McDermott, PMNA Communications Coordinator

A few short weeks after having knee surgery last summer, Mary Carolyn, RGS, began noticing a marked difference in her coordination and ability to function. As it turned out, the after effects of knee surgery weren't causing her coordination problems. ALS was at fault.

After meeting with her doctor about growing concerns over the symptoms she was having, Sister Mary Carolyn learned that she had the progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord — Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

Lou Gehrig, the great New York Yankees baseball player, brought national and international attention to the disease when he was diagnosed with it in 1939. Ending the career of one of the most beloved baseball players of all time, the disease is still most closely associated with his name, although the disease was first diagnosed in 1869 by French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot.

### Verbal communication and ALS

ALS affects the brain's ability to initiate and control muscle movement. It causes paralysis as the disease progresses into its later stages. Sister Mary Carolyn is in the late stages of the disease, which has made verbal communication impossible for her. Because she can't speak, a state-of-the-art device helps her communicate. The Tobii DynaVox eye gaze machine has given Sr. Mary Carolyn the power to get her thoughts out so people understand what she needs and is thinking and feeling.

This is crucial for communicating with nursing staff at Mason Pointe Care Center about her levels of comfort and physical needs. And the device enriches her life by making

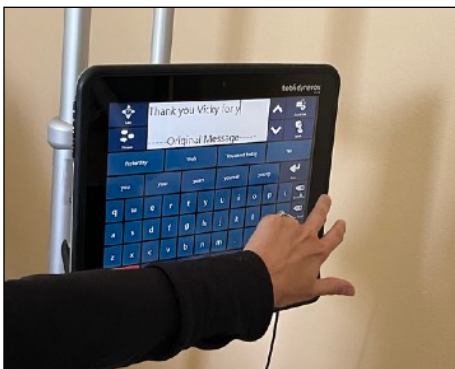


*Leah Meyer (left), Speech Therapist at Mason Pointe, meets with Sr. Mary Carolyn each day for an hour to assist her with emails.*

it possible for her to communicate with friends and members of her biological and Good Shepherd families.

DynaVox uses eye tracking technology that allows computers to know exactly where the user is looking. Sr. Mary Carolyn can spell out words by looking at the device. She has enough eye muscle control to hold her gaze long enough to form sentences. The machine includes a speech generating device that converts what she has written into

*Continued on next page*



*L-R: When Sr. Mary Carolyn's eyes get weak from writing emails, speech therapist Leah Meyer may need to fine-tune the messages manually. Sometimes an alphabet card becomes necessary when the machine doesn't read the eye commands correctly. Sister Mary Carolyn and Leah have become good friends at Mason Pointe. Photos Jeanette McDermott*



# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL



### Mary Carolyn, *Cont'd from p. 2*

spoken communication. Using the machine takes concentrated effort and is tiresome. It also can be frustrating when the artificial intelligence that is programmed into the machine assumes it knows what Sr. Mary Carolyn wants to say and completes sentences on her behalf, not always correctly.

When the machine doesn't get things quite right, Sr. Mary Carolyn defaults to a manual alphabet card to assist in helping her communicate her thoughts. If this method fails, then the speech therapist at Mason Pointe pitches in to complete spelling or sentence structures manually.

"I'm surprised she doesn't get more frustrated. She's got incredible patience," said speech therapist Leah Meyer, who meets with Sr. Mary Carolyn each day to assist her

with emails and her hearing aids. In anticipation of the sessions with Leah, Mary Carolyn prepares punch notes on the DynaVox.

#### Connections with ALS Association in St. Louis

The Sisters learned about the eye gaze machine through the province's Health and Wellness Coordinator Vicky Barshis. One of Vicky's job roles is to find resources for Sisters when health issues arise. Vicky connected with the ALS Association in St. Louis in 2016 when she was assisting Sr. Mary Therese Mott after she had been diagnosed with ALS. When Sr. Mary Carolyn's symptoms from the disease worsened, Vicky knew to contact the ALS Association.

"I called them in January and asked to have someone come to Mason Pointe to meet with me and Sr. Mary Carolyn to identify what equipment might be available to help meet her needs. We also spoke about the need to hire a speech therapist who could assist her," Vicky said.

ALS Association St. Louis Regional Chapter provided the DynaVox machine at no cost. It will be returned when Sr. Mary Carolyn no longer needs it so that someone else may benefit from it.

Gazing into the machine, Sr. Mary Carolyn typed out a quote for this story. She wrote, Thank you, Vicky. I am so very grateful to the ALS Association for the loan of the Tobii DynaVox. It is my window to the world. I can communicate with folks here at Mason Pointe and email my family and friends."

*Continued on next page*



*Sisters Madeleine Munday and Mary Carolyn often share quality time together. Photos Jeanette McDermott*



*Sister Madeleine keeps her friend, colleague, co-worker, and fellow Sister updated of province news regularly.*

# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

## Mary Carolyn, *Cont'd from p. 3*

Life changed quickly for Sr. Mary Carolyn with the rapid progression of the disease, but the things that really matter are still the same. She sits in the sunshine, and she enjoys listening to favorite hymns. She Zooms with her family every other week. Friends drop in to visit. And Sister Madeleine is there without fail to keep her informed of province news and nurture the relationship, as friends are apt to do.

Sister Mary Carolyn is happy to engage in life. The bravery and words from Lou Gehrig's famous 1939 farewell speech to baseball could be her own words:

"I close in saying that I may have had a tough break, but I have an awful lot to live for."

Sister Mary Carolyn would love to hear from you. Her email address is [cmquaid7654@gmail.com](mailto:cmquaid7654@gmail.com)

## Walk to defeat ALS

Sisters of the Good Shepherd and Mission Partners from throughout the Province of Mid-North America participated in the annual ALS Walk on June 16, 2021. The Good Shepherd Team, organized by Vicky Barshis, Health and Wellness Coordinator, was the third highest fundraising team in the ALS Association St. Louis Chapter. We raised more than \$10,000 to support efforts to end ALS (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), more commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease. This year, due to COVID, the ALS Walk was a virtual affair. People walked on their own, rather than collectively as a large community event. Some people donated without walking at all, and that was OK too.



Jeanette McDermott

L-R: Sisters Marta Ceballos, Dolores Kalina, and Madeleine Munday participated in the ALS Walk.

## Collecting archival materials across North America



Jeanette McDermott

PMNA archivist Monte Abbott

Monte Abbott, archivist for the Mid-North America province, has been collecting archival materials from provinces across North America in an effort to protect and preserve important collections that detail Good Shepherd history.

In recent months, Monte has visited New York, Philadelphia, and El Paso to assess records collections and determine which records should be preserved in Good Shepherd archives.

In St. Louis, Monte has purchased large storage drawers to preserve oversized items such as maps, paintings, and hand-crafted collages.

*Items of Interest* will report on Monte's archival finds and the status of collections throughout North America in the next issue of the newsletter.



# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



## LCWR Region X webinar on human trafficking features panelists from Vista Maria

How can we help those we cannot see? How does one empower those who are in chains? These are some of the questions that three panelists explored on the *Exploring Intersections* webinar series in July. They also explored myths, disinformation, and trauma surrounding human trafficking, as well as how to recognize signs that can tip off people to a trafficked situation.

Featured panelists were Angela M. Aufdemberge, President and CEO of Vista Maria; Ann Oestreich, IHM; and Bailey, a survivor of human trafficking and graduate of the Vista Maria WINGS program.

### Bailey

Bailey was one of the first young women in Vista Maria's WINGS program, which helps human trafficking survivors. She then moved to Vista Maria's Shepherd Hall Transitional Living program to learn independent living skills and work on her relationship with her grandparents, who gained custody of Bailey when she was a year old.

Today she is a 22-year-old advocate for young people and recent graduate of Michigan's Women Who Weld program. Bailey is a full-time welder who lives independently in her own home and reports a strong connection with her grandmother and grandfather. She credits Vista Maria for providing her with never-ending support.

"Vista Maria has always been there for me, helping me find my first job and being there emotionally when I found that college wasn't for me," she says.

### Angela Aufdemberge

Angela Aufdemberge is president and CEO of [Vista Maria](#), the oldest, longest standing nonprofit serving vulnerable children and families in Michigan. Under her leadership, Vista Maria has experienced accelerated growth and expansion. She is the driving force behind the successful development of a continuum of care for youth up to age 24. One of the most significant expansions is the addition of trauma informed emergency, stabilization and reintegration programming for adolescent survivors of human trafficking.

### Ann Oestreich, IHM

Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, is a member of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, Michigan. She is board president of [U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#).



[exploringintersections.org](https://exploringintersections.org)



### Tune in and learn more

The Exploring Intersections webinar series is a collaboration between Leadership Conference for Women Religions (LCWR) Region X and the Communicators for St. Louis Catholic Sisters. A different webinar topic is presented online every second Wednesday of the month. The next webinar is on August 11 and explores the topic of gun violence.

- Register for any of the webinars at <https://bit.ly/3zGahXd>.
- Watch the July webinar on human trafficking on YouTube at <https://bit.ly/3kYyVOM>
- Listen to the July webinar by podcast at <https://bit.ly/3kYyVOM>
- Facebook link <https://fb.me/e/1xSwGuDjq>
- Learn more about the year-long webinar series and review the schedule of panel presentations at [www.exploringintersections.org](http://www.exploringintersections.org)
- Find resources and action times that the panelists discussed <https://bit.ly/3kYyVOM>
- Meet Charish Bazinski, host of the Exploring Intersections webinar series <https://bit.ly/3zCgovJ>

# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL

### Honoring Sr. Mary Carol McClenon

The Danville Community celebrated the announcement of Sister Mary Carol McClenon to her newly elected position on the Province Leadership Team. Sisters surprised the Local Leader with a cake decorated with the Chapter Mantra that Sr. Mary Carol created for the Province Chapter. They all sang the mantra and then enjoyed the cake! The Community showered her with gifts including a new set of luggage.



"This is not the goodbye party – that is coming up later. We love to celebrate here," said Sr. Patricia Marie Barnette.

Sister Mary Carol will return to Danville in mid-August before she moves to St. Louis. That's when the real party begins!

### Announcements and News Tidbits

Please note the following email addresses:

- Remove Sister Ellen Dolan from your contacts (may she Rest in Peace)
- [sec.gen@gssweb.org](mailto:sec.gen@gssweb.org)
- Sister Claudia Palacio: [ClaudiaP@gspmna.org](mailto:ClaudiaP@gspmna.org) (do not use her hotmail email)
- Sister LeeAnn Mackeprang: [LMackeprang@Hotmail.com](mailto:LMackeprang@Hotmail.com)

Link to the webinar recording where Sr. Winifred Doherty presented the Congregation's position paper on Integral Ecology. <https://www.sowinghopefortheplanet.org/>

Mark your calendars:

- Phase 1 of the virtual Congregational Chapter of Affairs opens on September 16 and concludes on September 22, 2021.
- Virtual CACS runs from November 1 - 11, 2021
- Phase 2 of the virtual Congregational Chapter is scheduled from November 18 - December 5, 2021

Mary Schmich will retire from the Finance Department on August 6th. Mary has been a part of Good Shepherd for more than 13 years or 4,820 days (but who is counting?). We will miss Mary's friendly and relaxed personality. We certainly wish her all the best as she begins a new chapter in her life. Lisa Fox will assume Mary's job duties. Her email address is [lfox@gspmna.org](mailto:lfox@gspmna.org)

The deadline for the next issue of *Items of Interest* is September 21. Please submit your articles, photos, and leadership travel schedules by that date to Jeanette McDermott at [jmcdermott@gspmna.org](mailto:jmcdermott@gspmna.org)

Has something gone amiss and you're no longer getting *Items of Interest* in your email in-box? Drop Jeanette a line and let her know.

Jeanette McDermott



Want a PMNA photo directory? Contact Jeanette at [jmcdermott@gspmna.org](mailto:jmcdermott@gspmna.org)



# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL

### Small group meets offline

After meeting exclusively on Zoom every other Monday morning for more than a year due to COVID, a small group of Good Shepherds decided to leave monitor screens and gather in person offline. Lizzie Cody, Director of the Office for Mission Development, hosted the offline breakfast meeting at her home in Edwardsville, Illinois on June 28. We were all surprised by the sense of jubilation we felt in seeing one another in-person for the first time in 15 months. The group first organized around Life Seekers when PMNA began planning for the Province Chapter. Monte Abbott, Vicky Barshis, Lizzie Cody, Jeanette McDermott, and Madeleine Munday are in the group. The group began as a source of idea sharing for Chapter input. Over the months it has morphed into a warm circle for discussing issues that group members hold dear. Each person takes turns deciding upon the topic of discussion and then plans and hosts the meeting.

*Written and photographed by Jeanette McDermott*



*Lizzie welcomes us to her home.*



Lizzie Cody organized an online birthday bash for St. Mary Euphrasia on July 27 and invited everyone to bring ice cream, cake, cupcakes, or another dessert as part of the celebration. She created the event for fun to give people an opportunity to break from the humdrum of COVID isolation.

“July 31st marked the 225th birthday of St. Mary Euphrasia. She couldn't have imagined what Good Shepherd would be, or what the world would be like at this point in history. Yet here we are. I just thought it would be nice to get together for an hour with no agenda; just a little silliness, a little fun, some quizzes, and perhaps even some fabulous prizes,” Lizzie said.



*Monte enjoys the lake around Lizzie's house. Right: Madeleine, Lizzie, and Vicky lead a walk around the neighborhood block.*





## MINISTRY NEWS

ZEAL



L-R: Children's summer camp leader Deborah Rice Carter, playwright Karon Majeel, Sister Glynis McManamon, and the performers of *The Ancestor's Cabinet* – youth from Strength and Honor summer camp. Photos Jeanette McDermott

## Original play commemorates Juneteenth

Community members gathered under an outdoor pavilion at the Earth Dance Organic Farm School in Ferguson, Missouri, for a Juneteenth celebration on June 19, 2021. The evening's highlight included a theatrical performance of "The Ancestors Cabinet," a play written by Karon Majeel and performed by youth from the Strength and Honor summer camp. Glynis McManamon, RGS, designed the set for the performance. Karen is the Artist in Residence at Good Shepherd Arts Center and has more than 30 years experience crafting poetry and plays. The play is about a magical cabinet that endows children with the spirit of ancestors when they pass through the cabinet door. The performance represented 12 ancestors who were entrepreneurs in St. Louis. A live band followed the children's performance and played into the night as people from the community celebrated Juneteenth to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the US.

Community participants included Sr. Mary Catherine Massei, top right photo.





## OUTREACH MINISTRY

ZEAL

## Sister's Good Shepherd instincts save a family in Louisville

By Jeanette McDermott, PMNA Communications Coordinator

Chris Hock, RGS, left Portland, Oregon, and the counseling ministries that fed her soul to return to her roots in southern Indiana. When she applied for counseling jobs in the largest neighboring city Louisville, she found her path blocked. The Commonwealth of Kentucky wouldn't accept her licensed credentials from Oregon and Colorado.

Befuddled and miffed, Sister Chris hired an attorney to win the right to counsel people in Kentucky. She lost the case and was forced to accept that she wouldn't be counseling anyone in that state. So, she became a volunteer instead of a paid practitioner.

Drawn by a desire to help adolescents, Sister Chris started teaching girls at Maryhurst how to meditate. Soon she was invited to serve on the Maryhurst Board of Directors.

### CLOUT and CASA

One day at Mass someone suggested that Sr. Chris get involved in an organization called CLOUT (Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together.) A handful of ministers, including a priest, created the organization in 1991 to solve critical community problems by holding systems accountable. They believed that the church ought to be involved in everything that impacts a community's quality of life. The mission was a good fit for Sr. Chris with her Good Shepherd values. She immediately became active in the organization.

At about the same time, peers in her parish church introduced her to the Court Appointed Special Advocacy Agency (CASA). Coming into contact with this agency put her even more squarely in the thick of Good Shepherd values. CASA trains volunteers to be a voice for abused and neglected children. Chris' life was about to take a dramatic turn.

### Becoming an advocate

Sister Chris accepted a CASA case as a volunteer. Her job was to advocate for the removal of two children from their biological mother. When Sr. Chris met the mother and was introduced to her as the "children's advocate," the mother replied, "I need an advocate."

Sister Chris' heart split in two. The woman's statement threw her back in time to when she counseled Good Shepherd girls. In that instant she knew she would become the mother's advocate to keep her children instead of the children's advocate to remove them.

"How could I not become her advocate? The mother — Jenni — was like a Good Shepherd girl who had become



Chris Hock, RGS

an adult without ever having had the chance to grow up. It was clear that she had mental health issues, but I could also clearly see that she loved her children. My heart opened to her," Sr. Chris said.

When Jenni was barely 15, her drug-addicted mother tossed her onto the streets. The girl had nowhere to go. She became pregnant and had her first baby the same year, at age 15. She had a second child at 17, a third soon after, and finally a fourth child by the time she was 22.

Jenni was going to abort the last child, but when she learned the child she was carrying was a boy she decided to keep the baby. Her other children were girls. The boy was in and out of multiple foster homes and a psychiatric treatment facility during the time Sr. Chris engaged with the family through CASA.

*Continued on next page*

Jeanette McDermott

# OUTREACH MINISTRY

**ZEAL**

## Sr. Chris, *Cont'd from p. 9*

### Custody determination

Jenni was diagnosed several years ago with severe PTSD from her traumatized youth. She dealt with fear and anxiety by smoking pot, succumbing to depression, getting clean, succumbing to depression, smoking pot, getting clean ... It was an endless cycle.



The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services removed her two younger children from her for neglect and began testing her earnestly for drugs. She failed the tests. The paternal grandmother already had gained legal custody of the two older girls. Jenni was now without her children.

Although the boy had never been diagnosed with any form of psychosis, former foster parents told judges that they were afraid of the child and felt threatened by him. He was not a good candidate for long-term fostering and ended up getting moved around short-term placements like hospitals, foster care, and other inpatient facilities. He eventually wound up at Our Lady of Peace psychiatric hospital when he was eight years old.

### Renewal

By the time all of this unfolded in the lives of Jenni and her children, Sr. Chris had become active on a sub-committee of the Maryhurst Board. Being on the sub-committee proved pivotal the day she attended a conference meeting with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to determine the fate of Jenni's young son. Nobody knew what to do with the institutionalized boy because he was having so many problems.

As it happened, shortly before the conference meeting, Sr. Chris had attended a Maryhurst board sub-committee meeting, where she learned about a program called Renewal. Renewal helps prevent institutional placement of children. During the Cabinet conference meeting, Sr. Chris recalled the discussion about the program and suggested that the government agency look into it as an option for Jenni and her son.

The Cabinet agreed and made a referral for Renewal to get involved. Renewal reviewed the case, resonated with it, and went for it. The outcome was a success. Jenni's son was eventually discharged from Our Lady of Peace and returned to her. His angry outbursts, terrifying nightmares, and fitful acts of rebellion soon subsided. He calmed down once he knew he wouldn't be removed again from his mother. The boy, now 11 years old, is thriving. In fact, Jenni has all of her kids back.

"Jenni, her daughters and her son are all Good Shepherd kids. Helping this family brought my life as an Apostolic Sister full circle. I was able to use my skills from past Good Shepherd ministries and private counseling to help save and reunite this family," she said.

### Prayers

Three years ago, when Sister Chris first became involved with Jenni

*Continued on next page*



*Our Lady of Peace, Louisville, Kentucky*

Our Lady of Peace



# OUTREACH MINISTRY



## Sr. Chris, *Cont'd from p. 10*

and her children, she asked Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson to pray for the family.

“Jenni is an overgrown child. But despite that, this is the bottom line: she loves her children. She needs to be with her children, and her children need to be with her. The family needed intervention and prayers. I knew Sr. Sharon Rose would be a prayer warrior for Jenni and her kids, and she has been. She has never stopped praying for them,” Sr. Chris said.

Jenni knows about Sr. Sharon Rose’s prayer ministry and will call Sr. Chris asking to have Sr. Sharon Rose continue to pray for her and her family. Sister Sharon Rose, Maryhurst, Renewal, and CASA are intertwined through Sr. Chris and Jenni’s family. A story that started with a lawsuit against Kentucky has ended as a real gift to Sr. Chris.

Sister Chris credits Sr. Sharon Rose and Maryhurst as the conduits that saved this family. She said, “I was able to count on Sr. Sharon Rose to seek the highest power of intervention for the family, and I was able to leverage my role as a board member of Maryhurst to involve Renewal in bringing the family back together,” Sr. Chris said.

### Another referral

Sister Chris made a second referral to Renewal when Jenni’s two older girls struggled with adolescence. Jenni was afraid her daughters would end up on the streets the way she had as a 15-year-old girl.

“Jenni didn’t get a chance to grow up, and I didn’t want to see this cycle repeat itself with her girls. Renewal had come through for the family once. I hoped they would come through again,” Sr. Chris said.

### Stabilization

And it did. Things have settled down with Jenni and her kids. Everybody has been reunited and they are living together as a family. Jenni got married in October 2020 to a man who was raised by his grandmother.

“They love each other and he is good with Jenni’s four kids. He treats them like they are his own. He and Jenni work gig jobs. Little by little they will put their lives in order. They’ll get by,” said Sr. Chris.

As for Sr. Chris, she is tying up loose ends with the CASA cases that started her on this path, and she is taking time to regroup. CLOUT keeps her busy, and so does serving on the Maryhurst Board. Her own somewhat unsettled life has finally begun to simmer down too.

Sister Chris’ beloved aunt who meant everything in the world to her died just before the pandemic struck, leaving her feeling sad and lonely. While grieving her deep loss, she was forced to pack everything and move out of her apartment when her landlord announced unexpectedly that he was renovating her apartment. And then last June she had major surgery and was hospitalized for three weeks. The ordeal set her back. A year later, Sr. Chris still tries to manage symptoms of fatigue and weakness brought on by the hospital experience.

“It feels like I am finally beginning to come out of the fog. My focus is on regaining my strength and health,” she said.

### The Back Story

Sister Chris is glad she moved to Louisville. When Judy Lambeth, long-term Executive Director of Maryhurst, put a call out for a Good Shepherd Sister to come to

Louisville, Sr. Chris responded. She said, “I’m from New Albany, Indiana. My family is here. Answering Judy’s call for a Sister made sense to me. It felt right.”

Maryhurst staff visit the Good Shepherd Sisters in Cincinnati regularly, and Sister Chris wanted to be a part of that too.

“But we’re dwindling like crazy and there are fewer and fewer Sisters left in Cincinnati. I’ll go to the Little Sisters of the Poor when the time comes so Maryhurst staff can visit me right here in Louisville,” she said half jokingly but really meaning it.

Sister Chris’ journey with Good Shepherd began with the Little Sisters of the Poor. Her great-grandmother was a resident at the Little Sisters. And Chris received her calling to be a Good Shepherd religious when she was making a retreat at the Little Sisters of the Poor in Indianapolis as a young adult in her thirties.

Jeanne Jugan is the Foundress of Little Sisters of the Poor, whose charism came out of St. John Eudes. Having felt the need to care for the many impoverished elderly who lined the streets of French towns and cities, Jugan established the congregation to care for the elderly in 1839.

“There are many ways I feel connected to the Little Sisters of the Poor. The Good Shepherd girls who became adults and unable to make it on their own in the world stayed with the Little Sisters whenever Good Shepherd would leave a city and close a ministry.

They took in our girls who were vulnerable and in need of being cared for. They will take me in too,” Sr. Chris said.

# SISTER STORIES



## ZEAL

## Magazine spotlights Sister Lakshmie Napagoda

HORIZON, the magazine for Blount County, Tennessee, recently featured Lakshmie Napagoda, RGS, Executive Director of COMPASSion Counseling in Maryville, Tennessee.

The article tells the story of Sr. Lakshmie's upbringing in Sri Lanka, her attraction to the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, and how she ended up in Maryville, Tennessee, to direct a nonprofit as it was being formed.

Sister Lakshmie started and developed the program at COMPASSion Counseling, which provides educational, psychological, social, and enrichment services to individuals and their families. Lakshmie moved to Maryville in August 2015 when the nonprofit board offered her the first Executive Director position. She served as the Executive Director of DeNeuville Learning Center for women in Memphis for 15 years prior to taking the position at COMPASSion Counseling.

Find the article at <https://bit.ly/3xSPuzb> and scroll to page 8. HORIZON is a quarterly publication of The Daily Times, a newspaper in Maryville, Tennessee.



**PROFILE**  
**Sister Lakshmie Napagoda**

*Faith, hope, perseverance keep her going*

By Linda Bracken Albert

Photo by Tom Shaffer/The Daily Times

Sister Lakshmie Napagoda never expected to end up in a small town in East Tennessee. But here she is, and her work as executive director at the nonprofit COMPASSion Counseling is making a difference in the lives of many.

Napagoda's roundabout way to Maryville began in Sri Lanka. "I was born in Sri Lanka in a small village," she said. "My parents were divorced when I was 3 years old, and I guess that began the journey of how God prepares people for a purpose."

Her mother did not get custody and she left Sri Lanka, moving to California. In 1981, she sponsored Napagoda and her sister to come to California. "That was after I finished high school in Sri Lanka," Napagoda said.

Although Napagoda's father was Buddhist and raised her in that faith, her mother was Catholic. "When I was reunited with my mother, she was encouraging us to go to church, become a Catholic," Napagoda said. "Then I met Sisters of the Good Shepherd, an international Catholic women's organization, that works with women and girls. In California, the Sisters were working with victims of domestic violence. After visiting them on the weekends for about two years, they said, 'Maybe it's time for you to join us,' so that's how my journey began with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd."

After taking her final vows, Napagoda was sent to Memphis. "I had an opportunity to start a program for women who had dropped out of high school, women from other countries, to start a program for them to learn skills they needed to go on with their lives," she said. "After doing that for 15 years, it was time to take a break."

As she was visiting her sister in California and helping her with posting a job on an online forum, Napagoda decided to see what jobs were available. "I was on my sabbatical and trying to narrow down what would be my next step, what would I do. I thought it would be nice to engage in something new, something small, where I can use my clinical license." While in Memphis, she had earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the Christian Brothers University and a master's degree in social work from the University of Tennessee College of Social Work, becoming a licensed clinical social worker.

A small post with a job announcement from Maryville, Tenn., caught her eye. "I had no idea where this place was and I had never been to East Tennessee before," Napagoda said with a laugh. "This little tiny paragraph had all those things I was looking for in there. So I thought, why don't I send in my resume?"

Almost immediately, she was contacted by the Board of Directors of what would become COMPASSion Counseling, asking to do an interview via Skype—which turned into a phone interview when the technology didn't work. "As soon as we started the interview, we really felt connected," Napagoda recalled. "Within two hours, they called back and said, 'We'd like to offer you the job.'"

Although Napagoda accepted the offer, she had second thoughts. "The next morning, I woke up and said, 'Why did I say yes? I don't even know these people, there's no program, they had not even started anything, they were just looking for someone to get it started.' So I asked them, 'Can I come and meet you first?' And that's how I ended up in Maryville on Aug. 1, 2015."

*The purpose of our ministry is to provide counseling and education and instill hope, to build resilience and promote mental health and well-being.*

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## Congratulations to our Province Jubilarians

Photos: Jeannette McDermott



**Sr. Fidelis Lubos**  
Mason Pointe Community  
60 years



**Sr. Agnes Yamamoto**  
Danville Community  
50 years



**Sr. Mary Frances Altavilla**  
Danville Community  
35 years



**Sr. Patricia Marie Barnette**  
Danville Community  
35 years

The journey "Into the Deep" continues! Here's the link to the videos. You will need to log in with your username and password. <https://rgs.gssweb.org/en/chapter2021/videos/117>



## NAC NEWS

ZEAL

# Preparing for retirement and passing the torch

By Larry Couch, Director of the National Advocacy Center of Sisters of the Good Shepherd

I interviewed for the job of lobbyist for the National Advocacy Center (NAC) of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd more than 12 years ago. I remember my joy when Sr. Gayle Crumbley called to say I was selected for the job.

I had had extensive experience as a lobbyist for social justice issues at county and state levels but less experience lobbying at the federal level. My previous position had been with the Archdiocese of Washington as their Legislative Liaison Officer.

I was accustomed to the hustle and bustle of a large organization and was not ready for NAC where, aside from Sr. Gayle, I was the only full-time staff person. However, I learned there were other faith-based and secular organizations with whom I could partner.

Soon I was going to meetings with them to strategize and make visits with legislators and their staff.

## Advocacy issues

At NAC, we advocate at the national level on social justice issues, especially issues that affect women, children, and families. Much of our work is directed toward poverty issues, immigration, and ending human trafficking. We advocate through action alerts, conferences, meetings, sign ons, demonstrations, and prayer vigils. In addition, we have hosted conferences on human trafficking. This year we held a virtual conference with more than 500 registrants.

Over the years, we have always advocated on issues of special concern to the clients served by the Good Shepherd agencies, specifically to people living in



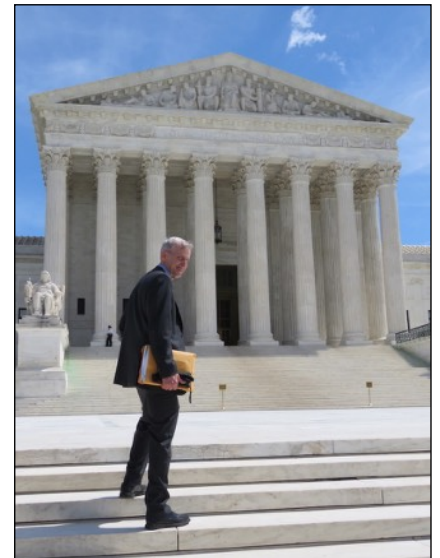
*Larry Couch (right) prepares to meet with Senator Ben Cardin during Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, DC.*

poverty and on the margins of society. Thanks to our Good Shepherd Volunteer, Patricia Kelly, we have advocated during the past year on additional issues relevant to the Good Shepherd agencies. For example, we advocated for benefits for foster children who, after a certain age, would lose the financial support they need to have as they move into the workforce.

## Media attention

During the last several years, we have received extensive coverage in the Catholic media, thanks to our Communications Consultant, Kathy Dempsey. This success is due to her writing ability and her contacts with people in the Catholic media.

*Continued on next page*



*A regular presence in government buildings, Larry advocates on social justice issues on behalf of Sisters of the Good Shepherd.*



## NAC NEWS



ZEAL

Larry, *Cont'd from p 13***Favorite memories**

On a personal note, one of my favorite memories of my time with NAC is being arrested along with Sr. Gayle as we protested in the U. S. Capitol our country's unjust immigration policies. Our offense was praying in the Capitol building.

Not a serious offense but sufficient to get arrested and call attention to the cruelties inflicted upon our immigrant sisters and brothers in search of refuge.

My best memories are those working with my Associate Fran Eskin-Royer, who is now serving as the new Director of NAC. Fran has been a delight to work with. Almost from the beginning, our working relationship has not been a supervisor/employee relationship, but an equal relationship in a collaborative effort.

**Fran named new Director**

I could not imagine a better partnership. I am delighted that Fran has been selected to lead the organization. She not only knows all the issues and many of the principal players, but she is also deeply immersed in the spirit of St. Mary Euphrasia and the works of the Good Shepherd agencies. She has a deep commitment to being in solidarity with those who live in poverty and on the margins of society.

If you are not a member of our legislative network, please reach out to Fran. She will add you to our listserv so you can have the opportunity to advocate directly with your legislators on issues that are important to you.

Fran's email address is  
[NACExecDir@gsadvocacy.org](mailto:NACExecDir@gsadvocacy.org)

**Consulting with NAC**

I will continue with NAC on a consultant basis through September of this year. I will help recruit applicants for the Legislative Coordinator position and participate

in the interviewing process. Until the new person is on board, I will work with Fran to continue our advocacy efforts.

I want to give special thanks to Sr. Brigid Lawlor for being the person who she is. As founder of NAC and Vice Chair of our Advisory Board, she has been extraordinarily helpful to us in achieving our mission. A whirlwind of energy, she is always a step ahead of us.

And thanks to the U.S. Province Leaders for their unfailing support of our mission. For some odd reason, one of my early memories is chatting with Sr. Madeleine Munday about past episodes of *The Twilight Zone*. I realized this was a person I could relate with!

Also, special thanks to Sisters Maureen McGowan and Francisca Aguillon for lending their province

*Continued on next page*





# NAC NEWS



## ZEAL

### Larry, *Cont'd from p 14*


financial and moral support. At an Advisory Board meeting, Sr. Maureen once commented that the Province Leaders not only supported NAC's mission but that NAC's mission was also their mission.

I want to thank all the members of our Advisory Board both past and present. Meeting three or four times a year, they each gave of their time and talent to help us succeed. My personal thanks to Jack Lawlor, Michael

Guignard, and Rochelle Lepor for their dedicated volunteer work.

Finally, I want to thank each and every one of you for your participation in our legislative network and for your prayers. Again, thanks to Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson for her daily prayers on our behalf. Prayers make a difference!

*Photos Jeanette McDermott*



SPRING 2021

>> Instructions <<

**Instructions**

by Lawrence E. Couch

you will arrive right on time  
at a place not of your choosing  
throw away the watch  
you needn't hurry  
the road will carry you  
always the wind is at your back  
someone asks where are you going  
nod in the direction ahead of you  
do not answer idle questions  
when you come to the crossroads  
turn in any direction  
when your lips are parched  
without sleep you stumble forth  
know that you are near  
beyond the windblown sand  
see the golden palace  
they have delayed their feast  
because they know you are near

Photograph by Fernando Paredes Murillo, via Unsplash

## Legislative Coordinator to join NAC

The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd is in the selection phase of hiring a Legislative Coordinator to work with the new Director of NAC Fran Eskin-Royer. Larry Couch, who will retire as Director of NAC in September, will assist in the interview process. The Legislative Coordinator will advocate and develop NAC's issues agenda, lobby Congress, and educate the Good Shepherd community about lobbying efforts and advocacy campaigns that are relevant to the Good Shepherd mission.



## NAC NEWS

ZEAL

## Open letter from Fran Eskin-Royer, new director of NAC

I write to you as the new Executive Director of the National Advocacy Center (NAC). I am so grateful for this opportunity to rise up and act for justice with you and all those whom Good Shepherd serves. I admit that the title feels strange. My colleague and friend Larry Couch wore it beautifully for so many years. I'm more used to working behind the scenes. But my zeal for the mission has pushed me to try this new role. I will certainly look to St. Mary Euphrasia and draw from her wisdom.

I joined NAC seven years ago when Larry assumed the joint role of Director/Lobbyist. I began part time. The work coalesced well with work I did with the Franciscan Friars' Justice and Peace Office.

As the years went by, my hours and responsibilities increased with Good Shepherd. I look forward to building on the strong foundation that Larry laid and which grew from Sr. Brigid Lawlor's vision for the program when she established it in 2001.

**Small but mighty**

NAC is a small but mighty advocacy office grounded in the charism of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. We seek to educate and advocate primarily on poverty, immigration, and human trafficking.

These are the three issues which most impact the people we serve — those on the margins of society. We see these issues as being



*Larry and Fran on Capitol Hill*



*Fran grew up in Silver Spring, Maryland, and went to college at Virginia's James Madison University. After spending time abroad and in California, she returned to Silver Spring, where she lives with her husband, teenage son, and mother.*

inseparable from racism, domestic violence, and environmental degradation. Our challenge will be to keep our work right-sized. There is so much need, so we must call ourselves to keep our eyes on what is ours to do.

With ties to an international congregation, we are concerned with how U.S. policy impacts other countries, particularly those where Good Shepherd has Sisters and programs. In addition, NAC's focus is on the advocacy needs of Good Shepherd agencies across the United States.

**Going deeper into our legislative priorities**

This year, thanks to the generosity of the three U.S. Provinces of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, and the addition of a Good Shepherd Volunteer to our team, we had the opportunity to go deeper into the agencies' particular legislative priorities.

While Patricia Kelly has moved on after her year of volunteer service, she has left us a clear path forward on this part of our work. We will welcome another Good Shepherd Volunteer (GSV) in the fall to support this part of our mission.

While many things may change, our commitment to justice does not. May we each do our part to work for justice, peace, and change.

If you have not already, please join the National Advocacy Center network by visiting <https://bit.ly/nacsignup>. Thank you for all you do to bring change for good.

Jeanette McDermott



## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL

Mary Carol McClenon, RGS



Sisters in the Danville community and their friends watched the online ticketed event *Euphrasia the Musical*, thanks to the Sunshine Fund Hargrove Hudson left for Good Shepherd Sisters years ago. This is what Sisters in the audience said about the performance:

"Breathtaking!" (Caroline D'Angelus, RGS)

"What one person can do!" (Sr. Angela, OCD)

"Very proud to be a Sister of the Good Shepherd" (Pat Connelly, RGS)

"There is a song *One Day At A Time* which I think is really important. We get so hung up on the future, but we only have this moment to act." (Mary Frances Altavilla, RGS)

"This reminded me of the early days of my own formation and brought it to life again." (Stella Mangona, RGS)

"Very professionally done." (Beverly Hedgecoth, RGS)

"They picked a good actress to be St. Mary Euphrasia -- she was short like Euphrasia." (Ann Joseph Dye, RGS)

"They did a good job working in so many of her quotes." (Mary Carol McClenon, RGS)

*Euphrasia the Musical* tells the true life story of Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, from a mischievous girl growing up in the aftermath of the French Revolution to a woman with audacious ideas for improving the lives of countless women and children.

The performance was jointly produced by the Good Shepherd Sisters of Singapore-Malaysia and the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre in 2019. The show has enjoyed great success and positive reviews both from the public and critics. Learn more about the musical, the history behind it, and the awards it has received at <https://euphrasiathemusical.gsif.it/>

## Sisters tour new facilities at Mason Pointe

Mason Pointe Executive Director Drew Redman took Good Shepherd Sisters on a tour of the care center's newly constructed independent living facilities in June. After more than two years of construction, the Sisters were excited to see the new residential wings, which were completed in November 2020. They were surprised to see that the facility had a full host of amenities including three dining rooms, a cinema, game room, swimming pool, art studio, chapel, and gym equipped with weights and

*Continued on next page*





# COMMUNITY NEWS

## ZEAL

### Mason Pointe, *Cont'd from p. 17*

machines, all of which are available for the Sisters to use. The chapel's stained glass window was made by Emil Frei, the same company responsible for the chapel windows at the province center.

At the end of the tour, Sisters enjoyed ice cream, thanks to Sister Therese Hillary who requested an ice cream social during a monthly manager's meeting with Drew. The Sisters also asked for a tour of the facility. Drew granted both requests.

"I enjoyed the tour very much. It was the first time I saw the whole place. But it was a long walk to all of the other areas," said Sr. Rosalinda Sobremisana.

Sister Sharon Rose Authorson said, "I hadn't seen anything at Mason Pointe except my room because I was in lockdown my whole life there from COVID. I was liberated on the tour by a very nice young man who pushed my wheelchair. The ice cream was delicious too."

Mason Pointe Care Center offers three levels of care: independent living, assisted living, and nursing care.

## Gratitude Expressed

Thanks, with all my heart.  
I have no words to thank you for everything you did for me.  
they took their hours to make my dream come true. God Bless you greatly.  
I took care of you in return. I will never forget this message of kindness.  
I am happy, thanks to all the people who decided to help me.  
Thank you so much.  
this is for you with love

"Earlier this summer, the Province Leadership Team asked the Sisters in Danville if we had any extra cars, and we did. We were asked to donate one car to an immigrant mother and son in Silver Spring who have a long connection with Sisters Caridad Tamayo and Brigid Lawlor. Patricia Marie Barnette and I drove the car from Danville to the Sisters in Silver Spring, and Zonia came over to adopt the car and to thank us. Here is her thank-you note."

*Submitted by Mary Carol McClenon, RGS*



Photos: Jeanette McDermott



From top: Sisters tour the art studio at Mason Pointe. Madeleine Munday (left) and Louise Nazaryk play with flotation noodles in the swimming pool area. Sisters Therese Hillary (left) and Pauline Bilbrough enjoy ice cream sundaes following the tour.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL

## Sisters enjoy the splendors of Missouri Botanical Garden



Some members of the Mason Pointe community and staff enjoyed a blissful outing to the Missouri Botanical Garden in July. Sister Pauline Bilbrough shows off the garden umbrella she used to keep the sun off of her head.

*Photos below LeeAnn Mackeprang, RGS*





CELEBRATION OF LIFE **ZEAL**

# Ellen Marie Dolan, RGS

November 27, 1942 – July 13, 2021

Sister Ellen Marie Dolan was born on November 27, 1942, in Helena, Montana. She went to meet her Shepherd God and join her loving parents, Alexine Lois and Edmund C. Dolan, on July 13, 2021. She is survived by her sister Patricia (Lee) Block, niece Connie (Bill) Hoffman, nephew Eddie Block, their children Brian, Miranda, Aaron and Ashley, her godchildren, and friends too numerous to count who she considered extended family.

At the age of 17, Ellen entered the Convent of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. She professed her first Vows on June 13, 1963.

## **Serving the Diocese of Omaha**

Her first ministry was working in the Residential Treatment Center in Denver, Colorado. Following her final Profession of Vows, August 22, 1968, Ellen moved to Omaha, Nebraska, and, with the exception of time for studies, she served in the Diocese of Omaha.

She ministered at Girls Town from 1968 to 1972 and at Eastern Nebraska Mental Health from 1972 to 1976. It was during this time that she became acquainted with Holy Family Church. Ellen had a special calling within her vocation with the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. Her heart and interests were in Religious Education and Liturgy.

She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology and Sociology from Creighton University in 1974 and a Masters degree in Theology and Liturgy from the University of Notre Dame in 1986.

## **Influencer in the lives of many**

Sister Ellen accepted a position at Paul VI High School in 1977, serving as a Counselor, Liturgy Coordinator, and teacher of Religious Education, until 1982. It was around this time that Ellen became a foster Mother of a teenage boy who had remained in touch with her and inquired about her shortly after hearing of her death. Ellen's influence was such that condolences have poured in from students who remembered her, long after her time at Paul VI High School.

In 1982 Ellen began working full time in Pastoral Ministry and as a Liturgist at Holy Family Church. Together with the leadership and support of the pastor, Father Jack McCaslin, she made a profound impact on Social Justice awareness. Holy Family Church became a huge hub for persons who were socially conscious.

Her final ministry was at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Bellevue. Here she delighted in being involved with the



Jeanette McDermott

*Ellen Dolan, RGS*

parish community where she planned liturgies, prepared the young for confirmation and parents for baptism of their children, helped plan weddings, and, in general, shared in the lives of the parishioners. This was pure JOY for Sister Ellen.

## **Devoted to St. Mary's Church**

Although Sister Ellen served as a liturgist for many years, she shared that she never wanted to repeat the same planned service the next liturgical year, rather each celebration needed to be fresh and new. She dearly loved the people of St. Mary's Church, and took their concerns to heart, giving whatever advice or support she could. In all her ministries she made lasting and true friends.

*Continued on next page*



# CELEBRATION OF LIFE **ZEAL**

## Sr. Ellen, *Cont'd from p. 20*

Sister Ellen embraced the state of Nebraska as her home, becoming a part of the Omaha and Bellevue communities and cherished member of her church family. She was a passionate (and vocal) supporter of the College World Series, Creighton athletics, and her beloved Cornhuskers.

We are very grateful for Father Lydell Lape, who prepared Sr. Ellen Dolan for her journey home to God, and who notified us several times when she was in need. This was deeply appreciated as there were no Sisters of the Good Shepherd living in or near Omaha, Nebraska. May she rest in peace and long in the memory of those who loved her.

*Written by Dolores Kalina, RGS*

*Photographs by Jeanette McDermott*

*When Ellen was in the novitiate, she had the name Sister Mary Euphrasia. We affectionately called her "Mother Foundress." She used to make the most delicious desserts for our afternoon "collation" (aka coffee break). Joan Spiering, RGS*



Jeanette McDermott

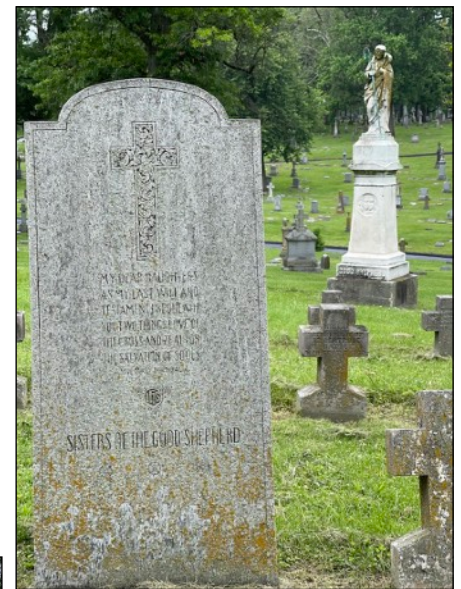
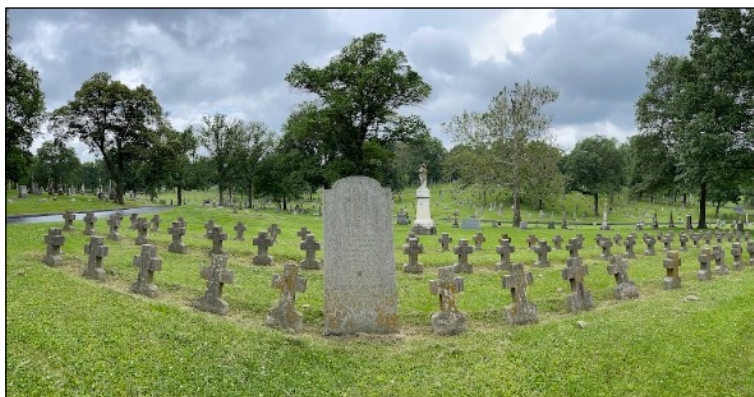
**Sister Ellen Dolan enjoys a relaxed moment at a PMNA Assembly at King's House in Belleville, Illinois.**

## Final resting place for Good Shepherd Sisters in St. Louis

Early this summer I visited our Sisters in the Calvary Cemetery near the Mid-North America province center in Normandy, Missouri. Most of the Sisters are in a plot designated for Good Shepherd. Others lie in perpetuity among the graves of the compassionate Loretto Sisters who sheltered our first band of Sisters when they arrived in America in 1842 to find that Bishop Flaget was not prepared to receive them. The Sisters of Loretto welcomed the Good Shepherd Sisters and nursed them to health after their harrowing journey across the Atlantic Ocean. Calvary Cemetery was established in 1854. It contains the graves of many who are identified with the beginnings of St. Louis. Many of the older burials and memorials were moved here from the original Catholic cemeteries that were previously in the downtown area. Entombed here overlooking the Mississippi River is Anne Lucas Hunt. She donated property in the early 1930s to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd for the construction of the Convent of

Immaculate Heart, a care facility for aging Sisters. The PMNA province center in Normandy stands on that land today.

*Written by  
Jeanette  
McDermott*



Photos Jeanette McDermott

CELEBRATION OF LIFE **ZEAL**

# Bernard Charles Huger, lawyer for PMNA

Bernie was a friend of the Good Shepherd Sisters and lawyer for the Province of Mid-North America. Fortified with the Sacraments of Holy Mother Church, he died on Sunday, July 18, 2021, at age 76, surrounded by family.

Bernie was born in St. Louis and grew up on his family's farm in St. Albans. Life in the country presented a constant series of adventures. He developed skills as a horseman, hunter and fisherman, as well as a deep appreciation for nature and a love of working outdoors, all of which would last his entire life.

After high school, Bernie attended Georgetown University, where he received both his Bachelor's Degree and Juris Doctorate. There he became a member of the sailing team and an avid racer. He was sailing on his catamaran with his grandchildren in Florida the week before he died.

While at Georgetown, he met the love of his life, Elizabeth Huger (Kivlan). He asked her to dance one night, and after a courtship under the cherry blossoms they married in Washington, DC in 1968. They were married for nearly 53 years and loved traveling the world together. Bernie and Lizzy had three children.

After law school, Bernie joined his father's law firm in St. Louis, and then merged his firm into Greensfelder, Hemker & Gale PC. Over his more than 50 year career, Bernie primarily represented Catholic and non-profit organizations throughout the region, across the country and internationally. Bernie had a love of the law and a love of the Church.

He was known by his clients for his excellent advice, creativity and thoughtfulness. He was an expert in his field. For the last 20 years, he took great joy in working alongside his daughter Lucie, also an attorney, who continues his work.

As with all of his passions, Bernie took gardening to a new level. He had an award winning flower garden at home and steadily expanded his garden at the farm to supply at first family, then friends and eventually even local restaurants.

In recent years, Bernie was a loving and devoted grandfather to his grandchildren: Justin, Bernard, George, Edward, John, and Kathryn. Whether it was picking tomatoes in the garden, whisking them away for an early morning doughnut run, or simply sitting by the fire with them at the farm, he savored each and every minute with his grandchildren.



Family photo

**Bernie Huger**

Bernie died days after having just had a magical week at the beach with his entire family. The vacation ended in typical fashion, with him preparing an incredible feast for everyone, where laughter and love were abundant.

Sister Madeleine Munday shared the province's appreciation and respect for Bernie and the countless ways he advised leadership teams and ministry programs during more than 30 years.

She said, "Sr. Jeanne Waddell introduced me to Bernie when I was discerning my vocation. I had recently passed the Missouri Bar and was looking for a job. Bernie invited me to join his firm and I worked there for six months before entering the Good Shepherd community. As the years passed and I became involved in leadership I was happy to be connected with Bernie again in the world of law and religious life."

Services for Bernie were held on Friday, July 23, at the St. Louis Abbey Church. His family has suggested that people who want to remember him plant trees. [Sympathy Store](https://www.sympathy.com).

*See related story on trees in the Green Corner, beginning on page 1.*



# GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



## Trees, *Cont'd from p. 1*

felt the first twinge of muscle development in my arms and legs.

I climbed trees skillfully before I learned to run or ride a tricycle. From the time I took my first steps, trees lured me. They mesmerized and beckoned me like Sirens of the Sea calling out to sailors.

### **Childhood garden of trees**

The backyard of the house where I grew up was a garden of trees. Stately elms, a mighty oak, and sugar maples dotted the 1/2-acre suburban lot. Trees framed every window in the house, and the doors opened up onto their spreading canopy.

I was a sleep-walker as a young girl and teenager. It was not unusual for mom or dad or one of my brothers to find me in the morning curled up under one of the trees in the backyard.

Trees populated the backyard of my youth the way dandelions populate most open fields. They spread their branches in every direction and invited me into their arms. They never failed to embrace me when I felt hurt or betrayed by the sting of family injustice.

I had learned early to climb to the highest branches to avoid detection and retrieval. There I would rest, cradled when life grew too strained by having four brothers and their steady stream of male friends under the same roof.

I remember when the elms succumbed to Dutch elm disease. I was awash with grief when the elm bark beetle took the lives of those dear old and trusted friends. One mighty oak and a maple or two stood stalwart when the elms passed on. In that oak tree I

climbed, and in its arms I clung until I left home and began a new life at age 18.

### **From tree climber to tree hugger**

At some point I stopped climbing trees and began hugging them instead. My relationship with them shifted as I matured and evolved into a tree-hugging activist.

Watching news reports and seeing with my own eyes the havoc wreaked upon trees, I began to mourn their large-scale loss, the way I grieved the death of my elm friends in the backyard where I grew up.

Rainforests were, and still are, being ripped apart. Forested mountaintops were, and still are, being blown up. Groves were, and still are, being deforested. All for the insatiable human demand for coffee and beef, oil and suburban

sprawl. Seeing trees die these violent deaths was killing my soul. I needed to take action.

And so I joined forces with eco champions and eco warriors to save the trees. I began speaking out against ecocide and the mass murder of trees. I began planting trees to mitigate the loss of those mangled by chain saws and uprooted by brute force.

I formed groups to unite other nature lovers in the goal of saving trees. I served on a government tree council and formed a membership society for tree stewardship. I bought 124 acres of land in Kentucky and planted 5,000 trees on it.

Today I plant trees on a vacant urban lot in St. Louis and along sidewalk tree curbs where there are no trees.

*Continued on next page*



*One of the many sentries that stand tall in my beloved neighborhood park.*



# GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



## Trees, *Cont'd from p. 23*

I joined forces with my buddy Monte Abbott, PMNA Archivist, about 10 years ago to plant an urban forest on a naked strip of land along a U.S. Department of Transportation highway right-of-way in our neighborhood. The forest is lush today with more than 500 trees and abundant shrubs and flowers. We planted many of the trees in memory of loved ones. A dogwood along the pathway is in remembrance of my mom.

Arbor Day in April is a special day for me. It is a call to action day. It is a day to plant trees, and it is a day to give money to support other tree-planting efforts. But really, every day is tree day because there is no bad day to hug a tree or whisper a prayer for their survival. Tree People says, "Trees need people; people need trees." I find this to be true. Read what Tree People says about the [22 benefits of trees](#).

I give money to support tree planting efforts across the United States and around the world. The [Trillion Tree Campaign](#) is an especially amazing tree planting effort. The goal of the World Economic Forum's One Trillion Trees Initiative is to regenerate forests and grow and conserve one trillion trees worldwide by the year 2030. This is an effort everybody can join by planting a tree or helping others to plant trees. Take a look at the [global map](#) and see where trees are being planted as a part of this amazing campaign.

Early this summer, St. Louis had a series of rain storms accompanied by devastatingly high winds that sliced through trees, severing and toppling them. Thousands of trees lost their lives in the storms. I keep thinking about the trees I will plant this fall to help make up for some of the losses.

I believe no place can ever have too many trees. They are pure and simply put, divine gifts from God.

*Written and photographed by Jeanette McDermott*

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*Photo on page 1: 1947 oil on canvas by e.e. cummings. For Cummings, the natural world triggered an awakening to Truth. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he was raised a pastor's son in the Unitarian faith, which emphasizes the oneness of God. As an adult he wed this spiritual framework to Emersonian transcendentalism, a philosophical movement that celebrates humanity and nature.*



*Trees that died from windstorms in my St. Louis urban neighborhood early this summer.*





## GREEN CORNER



ZEAL



# Making a difference one block at a time

Feeling overwhelmed by the litter that has accumulated in your area during the pandemic?

The church of St. Mary Magdalen, a *Laudato Si* parish in Portland, has been encouraging its members to get involved with AdoptOneBlock to make a difference.

Sister Liz Schille and I are active members of the parish's *Laudato Si* Circle. We decided this project was something "hands on" that we could do to help clean up our community.

Once a week, Liz and I gather our gear — gloves, grabbers, and garbage bags or bucket — and head out to pick up litter on our adopted blocks near the Northeast Portland apartment where we live.

Started by Portland resident Frank Moscow, AdoptOneBlock has taken off in Portland. Mr. Moscow, noticing accumulated litter in his hometown, observed that yearly or seasonal clean ups were at best a partial solution to the problem. People came out to volunteer. The area looked great for a week, but then litter started to pile up again.

His creative mind went to work. What if people adopted a block they cared about, cleaned it up on their schedule and did not have to join an organization? AdoptOneBlock was the result. To make it even easier, Mr. Moscow had the gloves, bags, and grabbers mailed free of charge to the door of anyone who signed up online.

First time out, Liz and I made quite a haul. Our blocks have become less littered over the weeks. People take notice. Some try to help or say, "Thank you."

AdoptOneBlock is now statewide in Oregon. The program includes a junk removal service for items that are too large to put in a bag.

## Affecting change locally

Creighton University and Catholic Climate Covenant sponsored a virtual conference on *Laudato Si* and the US Catholic Church from July 13-15. Creation care teams in parishes and other locations, teachers, environmental justice advocates, and others engaged in interactive workshops. Sister Joan Spiering attended the conference to see what Best Practices she might be able to implement at the local level in the parish where she and Sr. Liz Schille live in Northeast Portland, Oregon.



Sisters Joan Spiering (left) and Liz Schille take to the streets with tools in hand as volunteers in the local initiative AdoptOneBlock litter cleanup project.

Check out <http://www.adoptoneblock.org> to see how you might get something similar going in your area.

Submitted by Joan Spiering, RGS

## Fighting COVID waste

Researchers in Australia have discovered that COVID waste, and specifically disposable face masks, can be recycled to build paved highways. A study published in the journal *Science of the Total Environment* found that one kilometer (0.62 miles) of a two-lane road could use around 3 million face masks, diverting 98 tons of waste from landfill. The study was inspired by researchers seeing significant numbers of single-use masks discarded in their city streets. [Read more](https://bit.ly/3i2UBHS) and get inspired at <https://bit.ly/3i2UBHS>



## ACROSS BORDERS

ZEAL

## Uniting in prayers for Vietnam as COVID spreads

By Sister Agnes, RGS, Province Leader Northeast Asia

COVID is spreading throughout Vietnam. Since May, people have been forced to self-isolate and travel is restricted. When people and families are not allowed to go out, when companies and factories close, it means that the income of workers is also lost.

Two Good Shepherd Sisters, Rose and Myriam, volunteered to work directly with the local government and are delivering food and basic supplies to the poor and to people who live in quarantine zones. Because of their contact with numerous people in lockdown in Binh Tan and Binh Chanh districts, the Sisters live quarantined by themselves, away from the Good Shepherd community.

Beside that, to respond to the call and invitation from the Archbishop of Saigon, the other two Good Shepherd Sisters, Francesca and Magdalena, also joined together in the group of 430 Sisters and Brothers from different Congregations on July 24. They are providing support to COVID patients in hospitals with the highest

*They would like to bring hope and  
consolation to the patients.*

*The religious set out to serve,  
with the belief that God is at work  
and a Healer.*

concentration of COVID infections.

They would like to bring hope and consolation to the patients. The religious set out to serve, with the belief that God is at work and a Healer.

The rest of the Sisters stay busy in the community, where they work with benefactors and other organizations to receive, sort, and distribute rice and other donated food and supplies to those in need.

Saigon is the economic, political, and cultural center of Vietnam, where millions of workers make a living. The population density of Saigon is high. People are more concentrated here than in other provinces, which is what led to the large outbreak, with nearly 40,000 people infected. Making things worse, provinces throughout Vietnam are also becoming heavily infected from workers returning home to their provinces.

*Continued on next page*





## ACROSS BORDERS

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Vietnam, *Cont'd from p. 26*

Following the government's directive, the people of Saigon are in strict lockdown house to house, district to district, province to province.

Many areas are locked down, and workers' lives have come to a halt. The rapid spread of the disease forced the government to issue a distance directive for 19 southern provinces to avoid further infection.

**Coming together to support Saigon**

All across Vietnam, parishes have come together to support Saigon during this challenging time. People in flood-prone regions of Vietnam, who are normally the recipients of emergency relief efforts, are now benefactors to the people of Saigon. Money raised has allowed the government and nonprofit agencies to buy and ship rice, fish, and other essential food items to Saigon to feed people and help them overcome other difficulties.

The normally crowded bus stations, airports, and wholesale markets in Saigon are deserted, absent of people. The only current activity seen in Saigon are the hospitals. Grief is being felt in every corner of the large city. And food prices are rising.

Still, in the midst of this great challenge, there are many young people and small groups of people who do not mind working long and hard hours in the middle of the night to distribute food to the homeless and the hungry.

There are landlords who are willing to reduce or waive rent for tenants. There are entrepreneurs, friends, and colleagues who donate their time to cook for people in isolated areas, for hospital patients and medical staff.

There are congregations, parishes, generous individuals and groups, and volunteers all acting as a bridge to distribute food to people regardless of religion. It seems



that everyone in the country is watching Saigon with heavy love and humanity. People are not discriminating against one another because of religion.

These things not only bring comfort to Saigon during difficult times, but also shine a light of hope for a bright Saigon ahead.

## Province of Europe elects Sister Marie Luc Bailly as its Province Leader

Sister Marie Luc Bailly is the new leader and coordinator of the team in charge of the Province of Europe. The province includes Belgium, France, Hungary, and the Netherlands.

Sister Marie Luc spent the first 25 years of her life as a religious caring for adolescents with adaptation difficulties.

In 1985, she was appointed as Province Leader of the Union of Our Lady of Charity in France. After reunification in 2016, she received the mission to join the Esperanza community in Marseille, France, which included both apostolic and contemplative Sisters.

As first councillor, she had served as interim coordinator of the Province

of Europe from December 2020 to May 2021. She was elected Province Leader at the June Chapter.

Members of the team in the Province of Europe are Sisters Marie Luc Bailly, Agnes Baron, Magdalena Franciscus, Gloria Huerta, Lucie Kabaze, and Marie Paule Richard.

## LEADERSHIP TRAVEL

ZEAL

NAME	DATES	LOCATION
Team Meetings	Aug 3 Aug 11-13 Aug 12 Aug 16	PLT Zoom call LCWR Assembly, virtual PLTs of North America Zoom call Financial Advisory Board
Sharon Rose Authorson	N/A	No additional travel/meetings
Barbara Beasley	N/A	No additional travel/meetings
Gayle Lwanga Crumbley	Aug 10  Aug 14 Aug 17-24 Aug 25-Sep 8	Board meeting, Deneuille Learning Center, Memphis Drive Sr. Elise to Louisville; continue to St. Louis Retreat Family time
Elizabeth Garciano	N/A	No additional travel/meetings
Mary Carol McClenon	Jul 29-Aug 1  Aug 4-10 Aug 13-16 Aug 26	Drive Sr. Rose Kern, Detroit to St. Louis; return van to Detroit Retreat, Carrollton Danville Move to St. Louis
Madeleine Munday	Aug 10	Board meeting, Deneuille Learning Center, Memphis
Claudia Palacio	Jul 24-Aug 4	Family visit, Los Angeles
Christine Truong	Aug 7 Aug 14 Aug 27-29	Workshop with students in Saigon, virtual Teaching Postulants in Saigon, virtual Teaching DUI course in Atlanta, virtual





## PROVINCE CONTACT

ZEAL



*"God takes pleasure only in places made beautiful by love."*

St. Mary Euphrasia

**Contact us**

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**ITEMS OF INTEREST**

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