

# ITEMS

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L-R; Sisters Madeleine Munday, Marta Ceballos, and Mary Carolyn McQuaid show the energetic zeal for mission that dominated the 2020 province Assembly.

## ASSEMBLY MOVES PROVINCE FORWARD

By Jeanette McDermott, PMNA Communications Coordinator

Sisters in the Province of Mid-North America felt a sense of urgency to move the province forward four years ago when they gathered for Assembly in Belleville, Illinois. They met in November 2016 to plan for the future of

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## Green Corner

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2021 – 2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The initiative aims to increase on a massive scale the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems across the globe. The goal is to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity. Ecosystem restoration is fundamental to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The

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# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL



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

the province. Sister Caridad Tamayo remarked during that Assembly, "What a gift to know the heart of my Sisters, burning with zeal for the mission."

Fast forward to the 2020 Province Assembly that took place online in October, where Sr. Cardidad said, "I believed long ago that something was going to change in our minds and in our hearts; something new was coming, and it is almost here."

Others feel it too. Mission Partners have made comments like this when evaluating the 2020 Assembly:

"We are more ready for whatever may be coming down the pike. We have all the pieces from summer. The tone ... there was such a lovely spirit of Assembly."

"When I reflect on the Assembly, the image of Sr. Jean Marie moving with grace and intention in a room full of light is what I see. Her silent, prayerful presence threading through the torrent of words says it all. Movement forward, clear eyed. No rush. We will all arrive in due time. The current will carry us."

"It's not about finances and all that stuff, but really the deeper core and value is to continue the reign of God in mission. All of us hearing the call together gives us strength to move together in the future."

The Province Chapter Planning Committee and facilitator Maureen Jenkins crafted a dynamic Assembly that energized and inspired participants who gathered online from October 19-22. Sisters and lay assembled — full partners in mission.

Each day began with Mass live-streamed from the chapel of the Good Shepherd convent in San Francisco. The worship services held unique and fulfilling surprises: a petition of prayer to the six Sisters who have passed since last Assembly; Bible readings in multiple languages; sign language interpretation; liturgical dance. Morning ritual followed Mass each day. Afternoon sessions began with



*Larry Couch, Director of the National Advocacy Center for Sisters of the Good Shepherd, lights a candle in Silver Spring, Maryland, during the Assembly ritual.*

Lectio Divina and ended with a closing ritual. The experiences were moving.

The Assembly kicked off with a province review of an impressive past six years. And that was just the beginning. The Assembly was chocked full of quality time that allowed us to reflect upon and discuss the threads of Brother Pinto, *Esther's Gamble*, and province priorities that we worked on this summer, and to review the Inter-Continental Assembly that took place online in September. To think we did all of this in the uncertain time of pandemic and national and global upheaval. It boggles the mind!

The 2020 Assembly also included status reports about Good Shepherd ministries. Members of the management consulting firm Plante Moran presented their analysis of PMNA demographics and some possibilities for collaboration and continued inter-province visioning among the three U.S. provinces.

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*Expressing joy L-R: Fran Eskin-Royer, NAC; Sr. Olga Cristobal, San Francisco; and Sylvia Casaro, NAC Advisory Board.*



# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



## Assembly, *Cont'd from p. 2*

The Writing Committee presented the Province Focus Statement on the second day of Assembly. Mission Partners broke into small groups on the third day to analyze and edit the statement for clarity and meaning. We discussed amendments we could make to the statement to give it more power.

On the final day of Assembly, the Writing Committee presented a revised Province Focus Statement, and then shaped the statement for publication. You can find it at <https://bit.ly/2HN2Rw6>

Assembly ended with a ritual. Everything we did at Assembly — pray, reflect, analyze, discuss, edit, report — helped us determine how we want to move forward as a province and Congregation.

Sisters Barbara Beasley, Gayle Lwanga Crumbley, Liz Schille, Mary Carol McClenon, and Patricia Marie Barnette served on the Province Chapter Planning Committee. Maureen Jenkins facilitated the



Caridad Tamayo, RGS

*I believed long ago that  
something was going to change  
in our minds and in our hearts;  
something new was coming,  
and it is almost here.*

~ Caridad Tamayo, RGS

Assembly, and Sr. Brigid Lawlor served as advisor.

What was said, shared and discovered during the 2020 Assembly and regional ICAs will help shape the essence of the next Congregational Chapter (postponed

indefinitely until something changes with COVID).

Sister Ellen Kelly, Congregational Leader, extended the term of the current Leadership Team for PMNA until we have a Chapter next year. Local leaders also remain in place.

The Congregation's Life Seekers Committee will conduct further virtual meetings and theological reflections over the coming months to continue exploring and reflecting on the way forward for the congregation.

### Assembly videos

I made a short video to celebrate the 2020 Assembly, which you can watch on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/83XKdW1wN9o>

I also made a video to pay tribute to the six Sisters who have passed since the last Assembly in 2019. You can see the Sisters on page 30 of the newsletter. Here's the link to the video: <https://youtu.be/DGGFWyPxjTU>



Joan Clancy zooms into Assembly from Florida.

## Keep a wave upon the sand

By Joan Clancy, Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd

Do you remember that line from 'The Sound of Music' that went "...how do you keep a wave upon the sand"?

That's what processing the ocean of people, data, emotions, ideals and ideas of the ICA experience has been like – at least for me.

Coming from an academic and "start without you" business meeting background and having read, watched, pondered and prayed over the preparatory materials, I felt well prepared for the meetings. Needless to say, being completely unfamiliar with the Good Shepherd process, I was immediately unsettled when I Zoomed in to meetings to find Sisters calling out greetings to various others!

Honestly, as the days progressed and I went from meeting to small group to breakout rooms (rinse and repeat) I wondered if we'd ever get to the point and when we would actually make a decision.

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# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL

### Assembly, *Cont'd from p. 3*

I would reread my notes and see concepts like:

- ❖ Radical Transformation,
- ❖ The New Story
- ❖ Focus is on MISSION not on the Sisters
- ❖ Formation as continuing process

Gradually what all this meant migrated from my head to the heart center. Not that I actually invited it! More like I just tried harder to listen to the other people, each coming from a different place, and a sort of softening occurred all by itself.

Word choice wasn't just about political correctness or the Grammar Police but about "it's not enough that you love them, they must know that you love them." International becoming Global made perfect sense. Things began to feel simultaneously more important and less urgent.

Completely off balance by now, I wasn't sure what (if anything) was happening. The realization slowly

dawned on me that the themes I had jotted down about our future plans had to be first about MY radical transformation, MY place in the New Story, MY focus on Mission, MY ongoing Formation.

As I met other mission partners, I gained a profound appreciation for the many others involved within the extended Good Shepherd family. The fantastic and varied unsung ministries the Good Shepherd Companions engaged in over the decades had a home within this community. We all belong.

It was then that a whole day of data and statistics were presented and that three paradigms of group leadership were offered – each complex but inclusive in its own way. Even when a vote was taken it wasn't a straight Y or N majority rules but rather a third choice of "not thrilled about it but I can live with it" was included. Discerning with both heart and head - what an experience. I'd never seen anything



like it. And it's not over yet, thanks to COVID.

As the weeks progress, I'm still awash in the aftermath of interacting with so many dedicated others and realize the process is as distinctly Good Shepherd as our charism is. As for worry about the wave flowing back to the sea, it appears that some of it has sunk into the sand of my being. Wet sandy beach, wave or ocean ...we belong. Thank you for the experience.



*Families at the DeNeuille Learning Center send holiday greetings.*



## PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

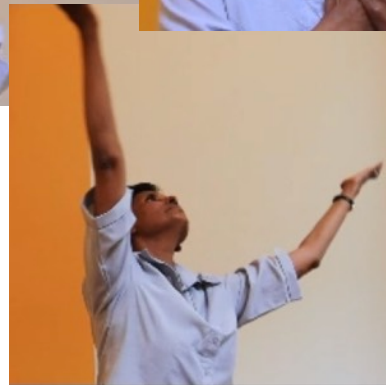


# Spreading the gospel through dance

By Jean Marie Fernandez, RGS



*Jean Marie Fernandez, RGS, prays through sacred dance at the 2020 Province Assembly.*



I began dancing some 25 years ago. This inspiration came to me at a time when I was mourning the sudden death of my mother. It was a period of intense loss.

On hearing this sad news, I immediately flew to Singapore to be with my family navigating through the funeral services and celebrating the life of my mother.

After a month at home, I returned to San Francisco thinking that all was well and that I needed to go on with life. I realized that my journey of grief accelerated. I was deeply impacted by death and I found myself spiraling back to overwhelming emotions. My grief turned into deep sorrow, isolation, and at times confusion.

One day alone in the backyard of the convent, I saw the morning sun rising beyond the horizon. I watched the beauty of the sunrise and mystery of light unfolding before my eyes. Wow! Only God can make a sun rise.

I prayed through my tears and immediately began to lift my sorrows towards the sun taking in the energy of light, love, and warmth. I kept watching the sunrise, seeing the sun's golden rays giving color to the clouds. What a beautiful sight.

At this moment, I was drawn to movement, gazing towards the sunrise, raising my hands, eyes lifted to the heavens and stretching forth with open arms in embrace.

This was an "Aha" moment. I experienced an amazing grace, a deep sense of interconnectedness, inhaling and exhaling the breath of life and not death. My burdens seem to have been lifted; and my body felt lighter. Nothing else mattered except that I was ONE with God, together with mom and my beloved family. I would get up early and wait for the sunrise to awaken the dawn of a new day.

Many days and weeks passed. I felt consoled, at peace and once again found "my home" – close and personal. I wanted more of this experience because healing was happening

through dance, one day at a time.

Engaging in this daily ritual, I noticed that my prayer intention took me beyond to another space – a place where heaven and earth met. This was the beginning, where I found purpose and meaning in liturgical dance.

## **Sacred movement is prayer**

Sacred movement is prayer. When I do not have the words to say, in my powerlessness, I simply dance. My heart expresses the emotions because it feels right in the sight of God. I am grateful and humbled because dance is a natural gift from God. It is a "calling." To respond to this call is to spread the gospel in storytelling gestures of sacred movement. I cannot keep it for myself; it needs to be passed on and

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# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL

## Dance *Cont'd from p. 5*

shared with others. And this gift shared with others keeps me humble because "I must decrease, and God must increase."

### Seeking guidance from Spirit

Before I dance, I spend time in contemplation/meditation. I sit still, seeking guidance from the Spirit. Then I let guidance flow into my rhythm and movement. When I am fully alert in spirit, mind and body, God does more in me that I can ever imagine or accomplish. Liturgical dance is not a performance or competition, it is a prayer expressed from deep within my soul.

For the Inter-Continental Assembly, I chose the song "Sacred Mystery" by Monica Brown. I was inspired by the ICA experience and our chapter theme logo *Drawn by love, passionate for justice.*"

The movements of this dance had a sacred intention, a blessing and healing for our global community. The dance conveyed the multiple crises of the pandemic, together with the social and political unrests in our country and around the world. It was a pivotal moment of transformation. Dancing to Sacred Mystery kept me in solidarity with our suffering world.

### My spiritual disciplines

I do Yoga/Tai Chi daily, and I sit twice a day in meditation. These practices integrate and enhance more deeply the spirit of dance. All three spiritual disciplines promote a healthy and active lifestyle. Health and spirituality go together. I believe in holistic living which integrates mind, body and soul.

### Scripture comes alive in me

The words of scripture come alive in me when I am performing a worship dance. "I live and move and have my being in God." (Acts 17:28)

I am totally free and move gently with love when I dance. It is a breath of fresh air. This is what it means to praise God. Silence is the language of God; it is love without words.

I am often surprised at how God's spirit works in my life. When I can let go and simply be, I become my best self. Dance allows me to be creative, imagine possibilities, and form friendships in new ways.

I embrace lightness and stability grounded on earth, making room in my being to gather the fragrance of the earth and to lift all to God.

I lean into all of this, a symbol of breath prayer in motion. It is as one would say, to have a direct line of communication with God. This sacred moment fills me with mystery before an awesome God.



### Dance reveals the soul

Dance also provides a connection with the heartbeat of the universe which reflects God. It becomes a cosmic experience that cannot be explained. I genuinely believe that dance reveals the soul. I take refuge in the aspirations of St. Mary Euphrasia "May every beat of my heart be a prayer."

Movements are expressions from deep prayer and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Even after many practices, when I dance, the movement, gestures and my whole being evolve into something new – creation spirituality. Dance brings

me to a deeper place within my soul. New personal insights emerge, and I can create a more humane world. My cultural ancestry, my Indian heritage, does contribute to my expressive form of liturgical dance.

### Praise through dance

I have several scripture passages that refer to praising the Lord. In the book of Exodus, we read that Miriam the sister of Moses, took a tambourine and led the women of Israel into a dance after witnessing the parting of the Red Sea.

Other Biblical records of dancing occurred after David slew the giant Goliath and the women sang "to one another in dance" (1 Samuel 29:5). King David also danced before the Lord, as he brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. (2 Samuel 6:14) And in Psalm 150: "Let them praise God's name in the dance: let them sing praises unto God with the timbrel and harp."

My favorite image is that of the encounter of two women, the visitation of Mary and Elizabeth. Mary brings salvation and joy to Elizabeth's house and both women praise God with their whole being. "My whole being proclaims the goodness of the Lord." (Song of the Magnificat)

For me, sacred movement is described as joy-filled, and a graceful prayer meditation. It becomes effortless and fluid when I am present in the moment. It brings me to stillness, to listen with the ear of my heart and to have a heightened sense of interconnectedness to all the cosmos. I am who I am through dance. I am involved in three liturgical dance groups.

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# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL

### Dance *Cont'd from p. 6*

1. Dancers of Universal Peace – we meet monthly in the Bay area. It is now a virtual gathering. I love this ecumenical group because the dance movements speak to the many diverse faiths and spiritual traditions of the earth. The participants come with many gifts, and we share the rich heritage of diversity, cultures, and language.
2. St. Agnes Church Dance team. We dance four times a year according to the Catholic Liturgical season e.g. Pentecost, Holy Thursday, Christ the King, and the feast of the Epiphany.
3. I recently started a dance prayer group with a Felician Sister for women religious and lay. This is an inter-generational/inter-congregational group of women who meet weekly on Sunday mornings. There are 12 of us in this group. We have three dance leaders who take turns leading the dance. We incorporate scripture, prayer and personal/



**St Agnes Church Dance Team**

communal intentions before and after the dance. This group started as a new movement since the pandemic.

We welcome anyone who would like to join us. We try to create a space that is supportive and non-judgmental. No previous experience is necessary. Just bring your

precious self and come as you are. We are united in mission with our global community. Please email me at [jmfrgs@gmail.com](mailto:jmfrgs@gmail.com)

Visit YouTube at <https://bit.ly/3kOdZqo> to watch Sr. Jean Marie and other dancers with the St. Agnes Church Dance Team offer a Pentecost liturgical dance.

## NRVC focuses on hope at 2020 Convocation

The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) holds a convocation every other year to bring members and strategic partners together to support vocation ministry. Sister Jean Marie Fernandez attended the convocation in October as Vocations Director for the Province of Mid-North America.

The convocation was held virtually this year due to COVID19 and carried the theme *2020 Vision - Focus on Hope*. The four-day convocation included opportunities for professional development, advocacy, and education. It featured keynote and feature presentations, communal prayer, and networking

with all those who support vocations. The event also included a business meeting and awards ceremony. The Convocation ran from October 28 through October 31, 2020.

Sister Jean Marie is a newly appointed member of the Board of Directors. She said, "I appreciate NRVC's clear focus and mission to set the world ablaze with the fire of God's love."

"In such a time as this, the theme of hope is becoming more prevalent in all of our communities, particularly those institutes going through major shifts within their congregations. I

was inspired to hear the experiences of newer entrants to Religious Life who's strong message is this: "God is still calling men and women to religious life and I am filled with abundant hope."

Sister Jean Marie said stories of the new entrants keep hope alive in her heart and help point the way of how she can be a strong anchor of hope during these uncertain times. She said, "I believe hope is in God and it is within this crucible that transformation happens."

Sister Gayle Lwanga Crumbley recently completed service of two board terms with NRVC.



# PROVINCE NEWS



## ZEAL

## A Teaching Adventure with Technology

By Virginia Gordon, RGS

In early February, a young Sister in Vietnam wanted to improve her English, especially her pronunciation and writing. She contacted her aunt Sister Monica Duong in St. Louis and asked if she knew anyone who could help her achieve these goals. Sister Monica asked me if I would be willing to take on this task.

When I answered yes, she had her niece Sr. Jacinta get in touch with me. We began our hourly sessions on Facebook Messenger four times a week. We each watched the others' lips carefully to see how to say the words in English. We laughed through our many struggles.

Technology has been a challenge, but we both persevered and Sr. Jacinta has been able to achieve her goals. We began the lessons by connecting with the Congregation and obtaining the materials from Rome that were created for the Inter-Continental Assemblies (ICA).

Sister Jacinta struggled at first to understand my accent and the content of the materials. However, she worked hard and did very well.

When Covid-19 restrictions in Vietnam were lifted she returned to her ministry five days a week. We changed our sessions to Saturdays, with homework assigned on other days during the week.

Sister Jacinta was missioned to a new community in the south of Vietnam (Ca Mau) this summer. Internet connections became more challenging there and caused many new problems. Once again, we persevered and studies continued. She introduced me to Pauline and Maria, the two Sisters in her new



*Sister Virginia Gordon sits at a dining room table at the Province Center with a floral bouquet that Sr. Magdalen Bui arranged while on international exchange as a student of English in St. Louis.*

community. Soon they were also asking me for help with English and began classes with me in August.

All three of the young Sisters wanted help with English to prepare for ICA for the East Asia Pacific Circle. The questions they received were a great challenge for them to understand and answer in English. This became an even greater struggle than I could have anticipated, but their enthusiasm for learning encouraged me to keep going.

We have gained mutual learnings from this adventure. We broadened our understanding of each other's culture. My understanding of the Vietnamese culture has helped me step out of my western way of thinking into a rich Asian way. Their love of the congregation is inspiring,

and their commitment to our Good Shepherd Mission has enriched mine. They are able to articulate this in their own words, and their understandings are richer than words can express in English.

In closing let me give a quote from one of them; "I do not know in my mind, but I understand in my heart."

What more could we wish for from an adventure in learning English with technology?

*See related story on page 23 by Sr. Magdalen Bui on Good Shepherd Sisters in Vietnam.*

## Writers needed for Mission Effectiveness

The Office of Mission Effectiveness Institute for Mission is looking for writers who would like to help nourish our zeal for the mission, learn more about Saint Mary Euphrasia and Saint John Eudes, and maintain a sense of community. The current need is for articles beginning in January 2021.

Topics are related to mission, history, and legacy, written in a way that speaks to partners in mission. Articles usually integrate a quote/words from Saints Mary Euphrasia and John Eudes and questions for reflection.

Interested? Contact Lizzie Cody at [lcody@maryhurst.org](mailto:lcody@maryhurst.org)



# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



## A tale of two cemeteries

By Patricia Marie Barnette, RGS

The Province Leadership Team decided in 2019 to move Sisters' graves from our private Good Shepherd cemetery in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, to a perpetual care cemetery under the Diocese of Scranton. Leadership made the decision because no Sisters had lived in Scranton for at least 10 years, and the private cemetery needed much work.

The actual work of relocating Sisters' graves occurred in the summer of 2019. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, Diocese of Scranton, generously donated the land and greatly reduced the costs of reinterment at St. Catherine's Cemetery in Moscow, Pennsylvania.

Dominic Rinaldi, Director of Catholic Cemeteries in the Diocese of Scranton, donated his expertise and time to coordinate and oversee the project. This also involved the work of Chris Calvey and his son Chris Jr. of Jennings Calvey Funeral Home, along with RLE Enterprises (excavator), and the diocesan attorney. Each of these individuals gave us generous discounts on the price of the work. We had to petition the County Court, as laws govern the handling of human remains to maintain respect and dignity.

The work proceeded with good weather, safe conditions for the workers, and an atmosphere of peace that was noticed by everyone involved. The work was almost finished, when one of the workers went around the edges of the cemetery making sure all the graves had been located. His shovel gave a "clunk" and seven more graves were found. One of the graves was that of the first superior of Clarks Summit, Mother Mary Sacred Heart Malone. It's like she was saying, "You are not leaving us behind!" So it was back to the court for the second petition, and the work was concluded.

Due to harsh winters in Clarks Summit, the headstones were cleaned and stored for the winter. Then Covid-19 hit, so the work at the new cemetery was not completed until October 2020. The headstones were all placed, and the restored Pieta was carefully set down. New grass has been planted.

When first asked to coordinate this project, I said yes, although I was a little reluctant because of the nature of the work. All of the people involved were wonderful. This project became a great blessing in my life.

The 65 deceased Sisters are now in their (second) final resting place, with the mass grave of Good Shepherd



**Top:** The newly restored Pieta overlooks the grave markers of 65 Good Shepherd Sisters at St. Catherine's cemetery in Moscow, Pennsylvania. **Bottom:** First superior of Clarks Summit, Mother Mary Sacred Heart Malone, and six other Sisters are unearthed just in the nick of time as work is about to be completed.

Sisters from Norristown, Pennsylvania, (their third 'final' resting place), with guaranteed perpetual care in a Catholic cemetery. Yes, "missioning" can happen even after death!

I have many new friends in heaven. May they all rest in peace. Thanks be to God that all proceeded exceedingly well with the project.

Please remember to pray for our generous benefactors.

# PROVINCE NEWS



ZEAL



## Card ministry begins

Mason Pointe Care Center in St. Louis is home to 22 Good Shepherd Sisters and two lay women who are elderly. The facility is on renewed lockdown due to an outbreak of positive tests for COVID-19. Sisters must stay in their individual rooms and receive meals there. They are not allowed visitors, other than staff to check their temperatures and administer medications. Father Choccol has not been able to celebrate Mass for the Sisters in weeks. Good Shepherd Sisters and lay women in other elder care facilities are in the same situation.

"While we appreciate necessary precautions, we also realize the strain of isolation and schedule disruption," said Sr. Dolores Kalina.

Sister Dolores listened one day to Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson talk about her experiences in lockdown. The conversation made Sr. Dolores think: if Sr. Sharon Rose — who has many contacts from being on committees and in leadership with the Contemplatives — is feeling the strain of isolation, then surely other Sisters must be feeling the same way, especially those who have few contacts and don't have smart phones and computers.

That's when an idea struck her — a card ministry! She sent an email to everyone in the province, inviting people to correspond with a mission partner who is in lockdown. Sister Dolores kept track of those who signed up to ensure nobody was left without a companion. She said, "There has been a real awakening of the issue and wonderful outpouring of support. Our elderly Sisters and lay women are now receiving a continuous stream of letters and cards. It is delightful." Contact Sr. Dolores at [srdkalina@hotmail.com](mailto:srdkalina@hotmail.com) if you want to participate in the card ministry.

## Announcements and News Tidbits

Three Sisters celebrated their 60th Jubilee on November 21: Dolores Kalina, Noreen Sheedy, and Connie Thompson. Sister Colette Sauers celebrates her 75th Jubilee on December 8. A hearty congratulations to each of you Sisters!

Sister Elizabeth Garciano has a new email address: [elgarcianocgs2021@gmail.com](mailto:elgarcianocgs2021@gmail.com)

Looking for inspirational quotes by Saints Mary Euphrasia and John Eudes? The Mission Effectiveness Facebook page is filled with them at <https://bit.ly/3pKXoHy>

All are welcome to join Good Shepherd Volunteers on December 11 at 7:30pm (EDT) for a virtual evening of community, connection, gratitude and reflection on the coming year. Register for the event *Drawn by Love* at <https://bit.ly/2KoDqly>

Good Shepherd Arts Center turned five years old on November 17 and celebrated the occasion with a virtual birthday party on Zoom.

DeNeuville Learning Center raised more than \$47,500 in its 2020 Fall Fundraising Championship and Online Auction in October.

CORA's 2021 Champions for Children Virtual Celebration is January 28 and kicks off CORA's 50th anniversary year-long festivities. Registration opens December 10. Contact [caring@coraservices.org](mailto:caring@coraservices.org) for information. Items of interest will report on the event in the Jan-Feb 2021 issue.

Sister Maureen McGowan has been appointed to a second term as the Province Leader of the Province of New York/Toronto.

An online discussion December 3rd addresses the Catholic Church's teachings on the death penalty. <https://bit.ly/2V6GYLs>



# MINISTRY NEWS

## Good Shepherd Arts Center needs you

Without community engagement Good Shepherd Arts Center (GSAC) cannot exist. Do you want to see us flourish? Then please join us as a member of our advisory committee, or as a board member. We need planners, organizers, networkers. There are few arts venues in North County St. Louis. Good Shepherd is making a difference, especially with our mission to welcome all.

If you are interested in helping us shape the future of GSAC programming, please contact us at [info@goodshepherdarts.org](mailto:info@goodshepherdarts.org). Love to hear from you!

On another note, we are extremely grateful for the St. Louis County Small Business Relief Award in the amount of \$5,000. It covered the last months of our rent expense. Like so many others, we are in a holding pattern and will move forward to explore a location after the coronavirus pandemic is no longer a threat.

Since the pandemic, we have held all of our art exhibits online. You can view the online exhibits in our archival gallery at <https://goodshepherdarts.org/exhibit-archives>

And as a final word, yes this is a time of uncertainty, but isn't every day uncertain? GSAC is working on an arts festival in Ferguson, Missouri, for Saturday May 8, 2021. Because this would be an outdoor event, masks and social distancing should make it safe and feasible. Watch for details.

*Submitted by Glynis McManamon, RGS*



*Gracenter voter advocates hold informational posters encouraging everybody to vote in the city and county of San Francisco elections, or wherever they reside. L-R: Sr. Anne Kelley, Sr. Marguerite Bartling, and Sandra Munoz.*

## Restoring Voting Rights

Good Shepherd mission partners Marguerite Bartling, RGS, Anne Kelley, RGS, and Sandra Munoz worked with the California Department of Elections to provide information to Gracenter residents about what was on the California ballot on November 3, 2020. We thought it was important to encourage the residents of Gracenter to exercise their right to vote.

The women at Good Shepherd Gracenter learned how to register to vote and cast their ballots safely in this time of COVID. Another key element to our voter advocacy was helping our residents understand who is eligible to vote and whose right to vote is restored, even after involvement in the criminal justice system.

More than 55,000 Californians are on supervised community parole after being released from prison. Gracenter residents form a part of these statistics. They are working, applying for housing and contributing to their communities, and yet they are denied basic participation in our democracy. Through our advocacy efforts, our residents at Gracenter were able to review information on Proposition 17 and prepare for a historic time in history ... restoring an ex-felons right to vote!

Together we continue to increase our residents' motivation for personal and social change, be it advocating for policies, programs and funding for affordable housing or exercising the powerful right to vote.

*Submitted by Marguerite Bartling, RGS*

**Note:** 58.6 percent of California voters cast ballots to support Proposition 17. The state constitutional amendment will now allow people to vote who are on parole for felony convictions. The ballot measure kept imprisonment as a disqualification for voting.

## MINISTRY NEWS

ZEAL

# Gracenter 2020 vision focused on recovery

By Marguerite Bartling, RGS

Good Shepherd Gracenter's first online fundraiser took place throughout the full month of September, in tribute to National Recovery Month. We thank all of our generous supporters who gave sponsorships, bought raffle tickets, bid on silent auction items and made donations to help the brave women of Good Shepherd Gracenter as they break free from drug and alcohol addiction to create a hopeful future for themselves and others.

## Best fundraiser to date

We had a hope that our first online fundraiser would be our best fundraiser yet. That hope became a heart-warming reality, thanks to our generous supporters.

This year, the 2020 VISION-Focusing on Recovery made a profit of \$75,000, an increase of more than \$16,000 from last year's live "in-person" gala luncheon.

Pat Ryan is our Outstanding Volunteer, who in 1961, as a professional carpenter, volunteered to help build Gracenter at the request of the Carpenters' Union Local #22. He has continued to be a



Gracenter's noble pooch Gracie stands guard over the raffle tickets ... and then picks the winner.



much-valued friend, supporter and very outstanding volunteer for nearly 60 years! He celebrated his 100th birthday on October 10, 2020.

Our Outstanding Graduate is Robin Boyer because of her long-standing and whole-hearted commitment to recovery. She is a role model for her daughters, who are also in recovery, and for all women seeking to break free from drug and alcohol addiction to create a hopeful future for themselves and others.

You can view two videos at [www.gsgracenter.org](http://www.gsgracenter.org) featuring our

2020 Outstanding Volunteer and our 2020 Outstanding Graduate.

We are touched that even in the middle of the COVID crisis and other major challenges, many people shared their resources to help others. May the coming months of 2020 and the New Year of 2021 carry God's blessings of good health and peace to you and all!

See the sponsors who supported the 2020 online fundraising event and learn more about Good Shepherd Gracenter at <https://gsgracenter.org/>



Left: Outstanding Graduate Robin Boyer and Center: Outstanding Volunteer Pat Ryan (shown with three of his children) receive certificates of achievement and photograph books showcasing their time at Good Shepherd Gracenter. Right: Pat Maffei and Sr. Anne Kelley ham it up while showing off a certificate they printed for Robin.



# MINISTRY NEWS



## ZEAL



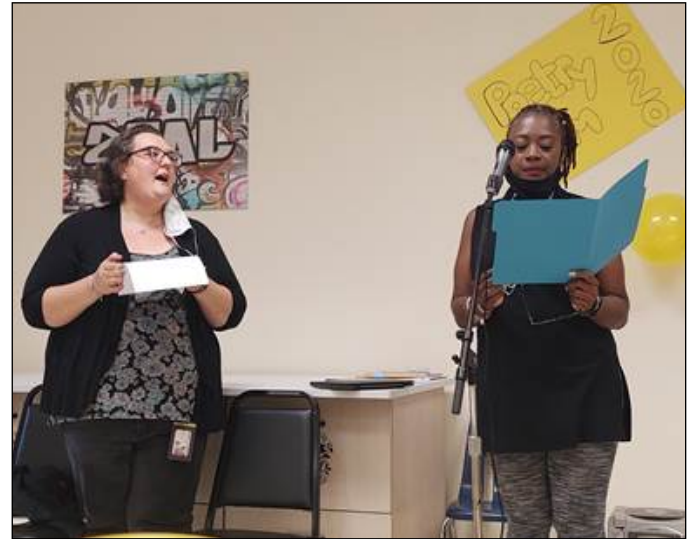
## Poetry in Motion

By Janet Jones, Vista Maria

More than 40 youth residents across the Vista Maria Campus participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Poetry Slam on September 9, 2020. The slam was titled *Poetry in Motion*. Reading, writing and sharing of poetry is part of Vista Maria's Transition to Independence Program and serves as another method for empowering young people.

*Poetry in Motion* was divided into small groups to maintain safe environment and social distance guidelines for COVID19. Residents in each building held their own poetry slam before the main event took place on campus on September 9. Winners from each building advanced to the September 9 slam. Two youth were then chosen from the final event to compete for Vista Maria in the Annual Poetry Slam held by Kids- TALK Advocacy Center on September 20. Youth from the surrounding area competed against one another.

The concept behind the poetry slam is to give the youth a voice and an opportunity to speak real, to share their



L-R: Volunteer staff members Becky Hermann and Lisa Hounshell read their poetry for the youth.

stories and spread awareness about the traumas youth face today. All of the poems the youth shared were about their life experiences and their pain. Poetry is a way for them to express themselves in a safe forum.

Saint Mary Euphrasia once said, "*Example speaks louder than words and often achieves astounding results.*" (Conferences p. 467) With that in mind, a few Vista Maria staff members shared their poetry prior to the residents reading what they had written. This small action demonstrated unity of staff and residents and helped relax residents before they stood at the microphone to read their poetry.

## Vista Maria Dolly Drive a success

Dolly Drive is one of Vista Maria's annual fundraisers that directly benefits the ministry's foster care and adoption programs. COVID caused cancellation of the event this year, but that didn't stop donors from showing their support of the program through their donations of dolls and toys.

More than 12,000 children are in Michigan's foster care system. It takes a community of caring adults to be the difference between a child's heartache and a child's happiness. Vista Maria offers a continuum of assistance with foster care and adoption services that help bring hope and security to children so that they know they are loved.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL

## Pilgrimage of a contemplative

By Elizabeth Garciano, RGS

I began my pilgrim year right after the Maria Droste Contemplative Community closed in January 2020. I took a 30-day retreat in February under the spiritual guidance of Janice Rushman, RGS, in Detroit. I used the Itinerary of St. John Eudes as my material for the retreat.

I continued my journey on March 7 and joined the Good Shepherd community in Danville, Pennsylvania. My stay in Danville was extended due to COVID. On October 10, I went to Carrollton, Ohio, to live temporarily with apostolic Sisters in the Central South province. So far, I am the only contemplative Sister living in a Good Shepherd apostolic community.

God took care of me being a refugee in such a time like this. Moving to Carrollton is just a part of my pilgrim year. I have received thank you cards, well wishes, blessings and prayers — lots of sentiments as I have gone forward.

Sisters Mary Carol McClenon, Stella Mangona, and Carmen Flores accompanied me on the drive from Danville to Carrollton. We all enjoyed the drive, the color of the autumn leaves, and the coolness of the day.

### My missionary work

I began missionary work with apostolic Sisters in the year 2000. I had lots of questions, and there were challenges and adjustments for me as I took on this new reality.

Being a contemplative among apostolic Sisters is a life-giving experience. It expands my horizon



Contemplative Sister Elizabeth Garciano (left inset) opens gifts from the Danville Community (top photo) at a sending-off party as she prepares to move to Carrollton to live with the apostolic Sisters in the Central South province.

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*I lack nothing. Instead, I gain more in knowing that wherever He sends me, His abiding presence is tangible in my life.*

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and broadens my knowledge and understanding. Knowing apostolic Sisters and understanding their ministries allow me to put faces on my life of prayer.

Zeal for mission calls me to respond lovingly with an open heart and mind. All through these 20 years of being a missionary, I have experienced the abundance of God's providence. I lack nothing. Instead, I gain more in knowing that wherever He sends me, His abiding presence is tangible in my life.

I am physically alone as the only contemplative Sister in Carrollton, but spiritually I am surrounded by the love of other Sisters and peace and joy are in my heart — the most essential part of my being.

I am enjoying my new life in the Carrollton community. I believe that the apostolic Sisters in Carrollton deeply appreciate my contemplative presence. Living with the apostolic Sisters does not affect my contemplative identity. We have the same values, charism and spirituality.

By embracing the ministries of the Sisters, I am able to experience their enthusiasm, understanding, support, and respect for the life I share with them. But it is my responsibility to enhance my contemplative life. I thank God for the opportunity He has given me.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL



## Passionate about paper and the art of crafting

Sister Elizabeth Garciano has had a passion for crafting since her pre-Novitiate days in the Philippines. She began by making note cards that she embedded with wildflowers and weeds. Then she took up Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement. These passions eventually fell away as the years rolled by and she made new artistic

discoveries and applied various techniques to create them. Her card-making endeavors became increasingly artistic and elaborate. They grew in popularity and helped provide income to the contemplative communities where she has been a member. Sister Elizabeth is currently living with apostolic Sisters in the Central South Province in Carrollton,

Ohio. She now makes the one-of-a-kind hand embossed and classic parchment cards to send to family and friends on holidays, religious feast days, and other special occasions.

*See related story on p. 14, where Sr. Elizabeth reflects on living in community with apostolic Sisters.*

## Mystery Photos

With Halloween recently behind us, we ended up with a whole lot of mystery photos of Sisters for this issue of *Items of Interest*. Good luck identifying these colorful masked crusaders. Here's a hint: They are all from the same community.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL



*Top: Trees across the street from our house at Boutwells Landing. Left: Our birdbath that looks like a cake on its stand and our flower pots that look like cupcakes.*

## Snow in Oak Park Heights

By Charlotte Kirst, RGS

The first snow of the season is always so pretty. It came early this year. Six to eight inches fell around the Twin Cities on October 20th. The northern part of the state got more.

I'm a Californian and have lived in Minnesota for only about five years. I'm not ready for winter yet. This is way too early. It is still Autumn. Winter can wait and come after Thanksgiving. I really haven't gotten accustomed to living in all of this snow, especially driving in it. Although, it is so very beautiful.

Several winters have been too long here in Minnesota - almost 6 months! Even the locals complained that they were tired of it, which surprised me. It's been quite interesting living up here in the "Far North." We are fortunate that Boutwells takes care of clearing all of our driveways and sidewalks and the city clears the streets. We just have to be careful of ice, especially the black ice from oil build-up. I mostly let Sr. Bernadette do the driving.

As we drive around we see beautiful icicles on houses, but that's not good because it means the gutters are clogged or frozen. Some of the houses get snow drifts on the roofs that look like fabric has been draped over them. We have seen snowmen, too, here and there. Snow has its pluses and minuses.

I also enjoy seeing people out on the lakes ice fishing in their ice houses. There are so many winter sports, activities and festivals, most of them being outside. Many of the winter events have been cancelled this year because of COVID. The pandemic keeps us inside more often, where we are warm and comfortable. Yes, it does get veeeeeeeeery cold here!

## Traveling with nature

What you see me planting here is called "Baptista," but in our family we call it Grandma and Grandpa's bush. When I drove to Minnesota this summer to help mom for a few weeks I came back to Portland with a car full of lilies, hastas, Baptista, snowballs — about 30 plants tightly packed and in flat boxes to keep them from sliding around. While traveling across country, I'd water them at night and park in the shade.

The plants and I had a great trip and now they are all transplanted from mom's garden in Minnesota to my garden in Portland. I planted everything in the week after my return but had to wait for the tomato plant to complete its task this fall before I could plant the Baptista in its space. Working in the garden is healing for me, and healing is my passion. You can read a Q&A interview with me on page 21 about my spiritual healing practice in Portland. I hope you enjoy reading about it.

*Submitted by Cathie Boerboom, RGS*



*Cathie Boerboom, RGS*



## COMMUNITY NEWS

ZEAL



*This radiant beauty at the Province Center surprised everyone when it bloomed in early November. We all thought it was a Christmas cactus, but maybe it's actually a Thanksgiving cactus. And who knew they are tropical plants and not desert plants? Such mysteries.*



*Is the province plant in the photo on the left a Christmas cactus or is it a Thanksgiving cactus? You be the judge. This Youtube video might help. <https://bit.ly/2HDA4u3>*

## A tale of the bummer lamb

Every once in a while, a ewe will give birth to a lamb and reject it. There are many reasons she may do this. If the lamb is returned to the ewe, the mother may even kick the poor animal away. Once a ewe rejects one of her lambs, she will never change her mind.

These little lambs will hang their heads so low that it looks like something is wrong with its neck. Their spirit is broken. These lambs are called "bummer lambs." Unless the shepherd intervenes, that lamb will die, rejected and alone. So, do you know what the shepherd does?

He takes that rejected little one into his home, hand-feeds it and keeps it warm by the fire. He will wrap it up with blankets and hold it to his chest so the bummer can hear his

heartbeat. Once the lamb is strong enough, the shepherd will place the lamb back in the field with the rest of the flock.

But that sheep never forgets how the shepherd cared for him when his mother rejected him. When the shepherd calls for the flock, guess who runs to him first? That is right, the bummer sheep. He knows the shepherd's voice intimately. It is not that the bummer lamb is loved more, it just knows intimately the one who loves it. It's not that it is loved more, it just believes it because it has experienced that love one-on-one.

So many of us are bummer lambs, rejected and broken. But He is the Good Shepherd. He cares for our every need and holds us close to His



heart so we can hear His heartbeat. We may be broken but we are deeply loved by the Shepherd. The Lord is MY shepherd ... I'm a bummer lamb.

*Submitted by Donna Sauer,  
Companion of Jesus the Good Shepherd*

## NAC NEWS



ZEAL



## Panels explore how racism and misogyny impact native women

By Patricia Kelly, NAC Intern and Good Shepherd Volunteer

In October the National Advocacy Center (NAC) attended a four part series of virtual panels held by our partner, the Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. The panels explored how racism and misogyny impact survivors' ability to seek justice.

One session that particularly struck me was called "Honoring Indigenous People's Day and the Unique Needs of Indian Country." We heard from advocates with the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, the National Congress of American Indians, the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Speakers discussed the prevalence of violence against Native women in the United States. I learned that four in five Native women have experienced violence, and that 96 percent of perpetrators are non-Native. These staggering rates of violence are caused by a lack of accountability for harm inflicted on Native women. Currently, the authority of tribal governments to prosecute crimes committed by non-Natives is limited. The U.S. federal government is obligated to prosecute the crimes of its citizens committed on tribal lands. In practice, they fail to do so. As a result, perpetrators act with impunity.

Panelists highlighted that even faced with oppression, indigenous communities are courageously resilient. Community leaders continually work towards healing and justice. For example, some communities are working to end domestic violence by reintroducing traditional tribal ideas about the sacredness of women as life-givers. This traditional wisdom served as a social protection for women before colonialism eroded it. Now, some communities are reclaiming that knowledge in order to end violence against women.

Advocates called on non-Native allies to build a culture that respects indigenous communities. They encouraged participants to learn about and acknowledge the tribal lands we reside on. I used an interactive map tool to learn that NAC's office is located on lands historically belonging to the Nacotchtank and Piscataway Tribes. (Use this link to learn which indigenous territory you live on <https://native-land.ca/>.)

Panelists also expressed the importance of advocating for solutions that indigenous communities craft for themselves. Specifically, they highlighted the need for legislation that expands the authority of tribal



***Savanna's Act became public law on October 10, 2020. It directs the Department of Justice to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing or murdered Native Americans.***

governments to prosecute crimes committed on their lands. Listening to the experiences and solutions proposed by indigenous communities gave NAC an invaluable roadmap for understanding the challenges faced by Native women and for tracking legislation in the upcoming Congressional session that will help bring an end to the violence.

While the road to change is long, we know that consistent advocacy can yield real results. One highlight of the virtual panel series was learning that Savanna's Act, which NAC advocated for at its 2018 human trafficking conference, had been signed into law only a few days prior to the panels being held. The act strengthens the ability of the Department of Justice to respond to cases of missing and murdered Native Americans. By streamlining information and developing regionally appropriate protocols, this act brings us one step closer to safety and justice for Native women.

*Continued on next page*



# NAC NEWS



ZEAL

## Native women, *Cont'd from p. 18*

By continually learning from indigenous communities and lifting up their voices, we can build a culture where each person is respected and free from violence.

Full recordings of the Interfaith Coalition's panels on domestic violence can be found at this link: <https://interfaithagainstdv.org/dvam-2020>.

## Trafficking webinar recorded



The last issue of *Items of Interest*, reported that an October webinar titled *Religious Working In International Advocacy Against Human Trafficking* would feature Winifred Doherty, RGS. Sister Mirjam Beike, RGS, moderated the webinar. You can now watch the recorded event online at

<https://bit.ly/362sUcc>.

Sister Winifred spent 16 years in Ethiopia, empowering girls and women through education, economic activities and community development programs, providing alternatives to prostitution and lessening vulnerability to being trafficked. Since 2008 she has been based in New York City, serving as the main representative for the Good Shepherd Congregation at the United Nations. Here, she engages with other NGOs and UN agencies in addressing policy issues related to poverty, gender inequalities and violence against women and girls, hallmarks of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Sister Mirjam Beike is the Congregation's representative at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to this assignment, she worked 30 years with survivors of trafficking in Germany and Albania. Sister Mirjam is a working board member of the Alliance of NGOs on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and RENATE, an organization that was established in 2009 by a group of religious representing several different Congregations that are working against human trafficking in Europe. RENATE stands for Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/33hvmcO>

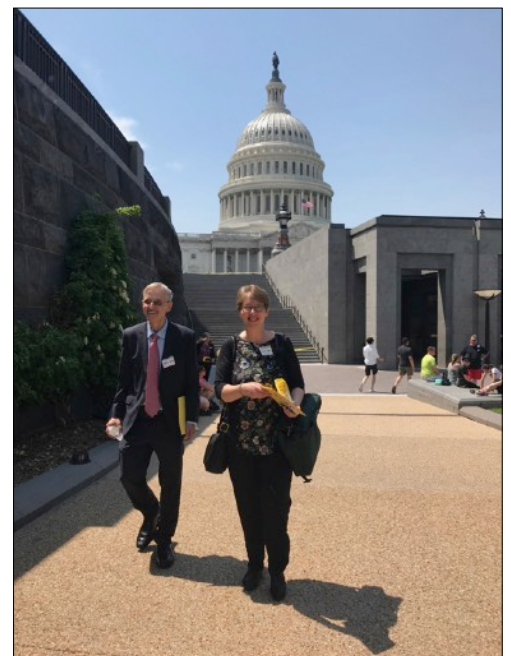
## NAC Conference: root causes of human trafficking

The National Advocacy Center (NAC) of Sisters of the Good Shepherd is planning its third human trafficking conference, scheduled for March 8-9, 2021. The premise of the conference is that trafficking is not an isolated phenomenon, but an inevitable outcome of certain aspects of our culture, such as consumerism, racism, and poverty. NAC believes that, while we need to combat trafficking, we also must examine the context in which it flourishes.

The virtual conference will include a panel of advocates and survivors and an online advocacy day of Congressional visits. *Items of Interest* will report more about the conference in the January-February 2021 issue. NAC will also post updates about the conference on its website at [gsadvocacy.org](https://gsadvocacy.org) and social media platforms.

You can read about the 2018 and 2019 NAC conferences on the website for Province of Mid-North America at <https://bit.ly/3l3oowL> and <https://bit.ly/33gq8OG> respectively. See related stories about human trafficking on pages 27-28 of this issue of *Items of Interest*.

Larry Couch and Fran Eskin-Royer, with Good Shepherd National Advocacy Center, prepare to meet with legislators following the 2018 NAC Conference on Human Trafficking.



# GREEN CORNER



ZEAL

## Green Corner, *Cont'd from p. 1*

decade will accelerate existing global restoration goals such as the Bonn Challenge, which aims to restore 350 million hectares (864 million acres) of degraded ecosystems by 2030 – an area almost the size of India.

The Bonn Challenge commitment in the United States includes reforestation and invasive species removal, wildlife habitat improvements, and treatments to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Read more about the Bonn Challenge at <https://bit.ly/2J6tcWV>

Land restoration could generate 9 trillion US dollars in ecosystem services and take 13-26 gigatons of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. One gigaton equals one billion metric tons. According to José Graziano da Silva,

Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration will help countries race against the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss.

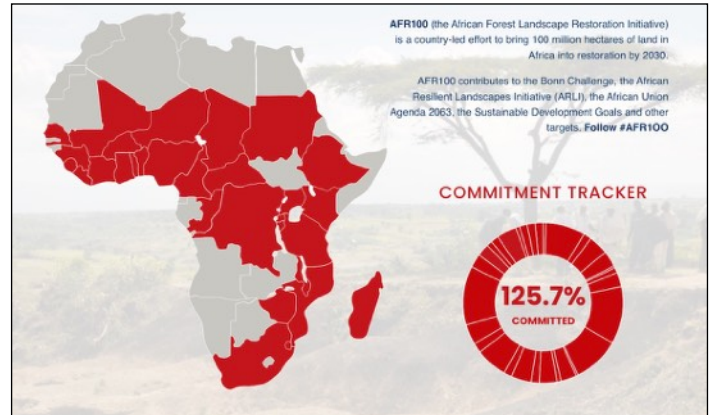
“Our global food systems and the livelihoods of many millions of people depend on all of us working together to restore healthy and sustainable ecosystems



*The restoration project builds on existing global efforts that are currently underway.*



*Women prepare trees for planting in Senegal as part of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.*



***AFR100 is one of many local initiatives that the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration will strengthen.***

for today and the future,” Graziano da Silva said.

Ecosystem restoration is defined as a process of reversing the degradation of ecosystems, such as landscapes, lakes and oceans, to regain ecological functionality and meet the needs of society. This can be done by allowing natural regeneration or by planting trees and other plants.

Currently, about 20 percent of Earth’s vegetated surface shows declining trends in productivity with fertility losses linked to erosion, depletion and pollution in all parts of the world. Research shows that more than two billion hectares (4.9 billion acres) of the world’s deforested and degraded landscapes offer good potential for restoration.

The global call to action draws together political support, scientific research and financial muscle to scale up restoration. It builds on existing efforts that are underway in many parts of the world and currently involves 57 countries, subnational governments and private organizations.

Thousands of influencers, government ministers, indigenous leaders, youth activists and restoration champions are already engaged in the decade-long campaign. UN Environment and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) lead the effort. The agencies believe that land restoration can be the common thread that links the different challenges the world faces in building a sustainable future. Learn more about UN Environment at <https://bit.ly/2JnfkXH> and FAO at <https://bit.ly/36dyKHO>

*Compiled from online reports at UN Environment, Food and Agriculture Organization, and the Bonn Challenge.*



## SISTER STORY



ZEAL

## Q&amp;A

*Sister Cathie Boerboom is a Reiki Master, certified grief recovery specialist, and certified spiritual director. She offers spiritual direction and retreats, grief recovery services, and Reiki in a private practice in Portland, Oregon.*

**When did you open your healing arts practice?**

I began offering Reiki and grief recovery in 2012. I stopped offering grief work when Sr. Carmel Irving and I closed our ministry Shepherds' Pathway in Portland a few years ago. My hope was that I would pick it up again later. I am now doing that.

I actually started offering spiritual direction in 1985 for some people in Minnesota after training at Aquinas Institute in St. Louis. The spiritual direction training was part of the formation program I was in while preparing to become a "Novice Directress." I felt drawn to being available to people in a way that could not only help them in their relationship with God, but also help them with relationships with self, others and creation.

I took up spiritual companioning again in 2016 when I began three years of study and supervision at the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin. I received my certification in 2019.

**Why do you think people tend to seek out the healing services you offer?**

Reiki really helps people to center, relax, heal, and find peace. Some find this helps in opening up to and listening to God and their own

longings. This often leads to spiritual direction. With spiritual direction, there seems to be a longing in people to deepen their faith through prayer and spiritual living.

**How are the services you provide of importance to the well-being of others?**

Grief and loss often block us from moving forward with our lives. Grief can be from the loss of a person, health, job, home, pet, community, faith, anything really. The grief recovery method I have been trained in helps people move through the pain, greatly decreasing the intensity while honoring themselves and what was lost.

Spiritual Direction has many benefits. It helps with growth in centeredness and meaning and deepens one's relationship with self, others, and Creator. It sharpens the awareness of our connection with all of creation. Usually people grow in awareness of goodness and the sacred in their daily life. Best of all, it helps people see and experience more clearly God's love for them and God's presence in their lives. The director can support people in responding to these invitations.

Reiki increases energy and vitality, supports the body's natural ability to heal, often reduces or relieves pain and stress and promotes a state of relaxation, calmness and serenity. Reiki complements other therapies and often deepens a sense of wholeness.

All three ministries are like shepherding. They honor each



**Cathie Boerboom, RGS**

person and help them find strength and healing within. They guide any reconciliation that is needed and help deepen tenderness toward self. Each of these ministries is sacred and is an amazing way to gently be a loving presence, a God presence.

**How do the healing services you provide connect to the mission of Good Shepherd?**

All three modalities call forth the best of my zeal and put my attention on the person I am with, really hearing them and God in them. Often I am aware of living the question Jesus asked the blind man: "What would you have me do for you?" while knowing fully well that the skills and gifts I offer are gifts that I have been given. My compassion and ability to welcome come into full play.

*Continued on next page*

# SISTER STORY



ZEAL

## Q&A *Con't from p. 21*



Cathie Boerboom

Spiritual Direction, Grief Recovery, Retreats, Reiki

### How long have you been involved in healing modalities

Wow, I believe healing has been my entire life's work.

### Why did you choose this line of work?

The call toward each of these ministries came at different times and ways. Sister Carmel Irving told me about grief recovery training and I immediately felt drawn to it. I was attracted to Reiki before I really knew what it was. It was a God call. When I learned that it is prayer, being with people, and it is healing, I knew it was right for me. All of those felt home to my heart.

I have been blessed with quality spiritual direction for more than 50 years. I wanted to be available to people to companion them in their relationship with God if that was a desire they had. I think for each of these it was me wanting to be a channel of God's love in ways that fit who I am with the gifts and heart God gave and gives me.

Because of my love for God and people and our Good Shepherd charism, I want to continue to be with people who, for whatever

reason, are seeking wholeness to become their best selves.

### How has your healing ministry affected you personally, and spiritually as a Good Shepherd Sister?

I think every Good Shepherd mission partner knows there is a fulfillment that comes from knowing we are giving whatever we can, even when the result falls short of our desire. This is true for me. I experience a mutual gifting in the trust shared, the vulnerability of both of us, the desire for Godness, goodness shared. My relationship with God deepens as I experience both the goodness in people and the grace of God working in and through me and among us. These ministries also give me meaning, purpose, aliveness and gratitude for all the blessings, the learnings, the people who have shepherded me so that I can offer these to others.

### What is the joy or benefit you derive from providing healing services to others?

This is so hard to put into words. Sometimes I think it must be a little like it was for Jesus when he would touch a person and that person

would be well. Just knowing the gifts people receive because of what God does through me is a joy that I cannot put into words other than to say I am very grateful.

### To whom do you offer services?

All are welcome to receive all of my services. With a sliding scale, finances are not an issue. A woman who came to me for Reiki and spiritual direction was suffering with cancer. She gave me a large sum of money so I could serve anyone. This beautiful woman died leaving a husband and child who also sought services from me.

### Your website shows a photograph of a woman weaving on a loom. What is the significance of that photo?

The woman in the photograph is my mom. It is my loom, another gift received. For me, weaving is a metaphor: together with God and each other we weave our lives, we heal from grief, we make something beautiful.

Learn more about Sr. Cathie and the services she offers at <https://www.cathieboerboom.com/>



## ACROSS BORDERS



ZEAL

## Typhoon destroys Good Shepherd convent in Philippines



*A survivor clings to a plastic container as massive flooding took homes and lives when tropical storms hammered the Philippines in November.*

The Philippine city of Virac is home to 70,000 people, including Good Shepherd Contemplative Sisters. Virac was the first urban area on Catanduanes Island to be hit by the tropical cyclone Goni (known as Super Typhoon Rolly in the Philippines) on November 1, the day when Catholic Filipinos remember the dead.

Goni was one of six cyclones that hit the Philippines in a span of just four weeks. With 195 mph winds, Goni was the strongest landfalling tropical cyclone in world recorded history. It left 20 people dead and affected nearly every resident, including Good Shepherd partners in mission.

Worst hit was the Bicol region, specifically the locality of Catanduanes where the contemplative community of Good Shepherd Sisters is located. None of the Sisters was injured in the typhoon, although the convent sustained heavy damage.

The Good Shepherd International Foundation has set up an emergency fund to help the contemplative Sisters in the Philippines rebuild the convent, and to help mission partners who were rendered homeless by the storm. Contact Congregation Treasurer Sr. Yolanda Borbon at [yolanda.borbon@gssweb.org](mailto:yolanda.borbon@gssweb.org) if you would like to donate to the emergency fund.

Typhoon Goni and a series of other tropical storms also devastated the middle of Vietnam. Good Shepherd Sisters live in the South and were unaffected.



*Sister Magdalen Bui with homemade products she and the Sisters in Vietnam make to earn money for their ministry programs.*

## Vietnam ministry programs

By Magdalen Bui, RGS

Let me share about my ministry and our convent in Vietnam. It is difficult to introduce the Good Shepherd convent in Vietnam because we don't yet have a place to call our convent home. We are in the process of asking permission of the government to register the name Good Shepherd. It is a political process and will take a long time. Everything will be in God's hands. Good Shepherd Sisters in Vietnam still live underground with the government since re-establishing our presence 20 years ago. Our situation is very different from the US or Europe, or even our Asia Pacific region because we live in a Communist country. In Vietnam we have three communities: Sai Gon (Ho

*Continued on next page*

## ACROSS BORDERS



ZEAL

Vietnam, *Cont'd from p. 23*

Chi Minh City), Vinh Long, and Ca Mau. I belong to the Sai Gon community. The house where I live is one of some small houses of the Sai Gon community. It looks like a normal house surrounded by many houses with people who are Catholic and non-Catholic. There are four members. Three of us are students, and the other Sister is our community leader and delegate for the Vietnam sector.

I am not involved in ministry directly. I mainly spend time on my Master's degree classes in Counseling Psychology. I sometimes help visit the poor on weekends and help prepare refreshments to serve in our program for ethnic people or our school. Also on weekends, we who live in Ho Chi Minh City, gather together for adoration and meetings to share in common learning. We meet in the parish school (the land belongs to the diocese).

We make and sell fruit drinks and other products to support our school nutrition program for children. Mainly we make the drinks from artichoke, chamomile, and chia seeds. We also make jelly products with flowers inside. We sell our peanut and cashew brittle in the parish church to raise funds for our vocational training program. The pandemic affects many poor people in Vietnam, and we have small projects to support some of them in areas where we work. There are many kind of things that we can cook to sell or share with others.

With the support and agreement of the Congregational Leadership Team, we can buy the land from the diocese and build a convent so we have a place to call Good Shepherd in Vietnam.



**Good Shepherd Sisters in Vietnam run an elementary school for poor migrant children whose parents cannot afford to send them to public schools.**

### Operating a school

In Vietnam, Religious cannot operate schools. Most of the schools belong to the government or business men. Because of the huge need in the suburbs, we asked the government for special permission to operate a charitable elementary school. Most of the children we serve are from migrant families that moved from the countryside to the city and cannot afford to send their children to the public school.

Every year, we have around 300 students in grades 1-5. All of our services are free, including lunches for the children who study the whole day. Selling our homemade products supports these efforts. After graduating from our program, the children can continue to study in the public secondary school.

We live in the South of Vietnam. The typhoon floods are attacking the center of Vietnam, so we are not affected. We unite in prayers to support the people whose lives are impacted by the tropical storms.



**Top: Sisters make food products to sell to sustain their ministry programs like the vocation training program below.**



**Homemade gelatin products with flowers inside help Sisters raise money to sustain themselves and their charitable programs.**



## ACROSS BORDERS

ZEAL



*The Akhanani ministry in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, includes preparing meals for children. It also offers empowerment to women who would otherwise be in the streets in search of a livelihood.*

## Partnering in mission in South Africa

From within two simple shipping containers, Good Shepherd Sisters run a ministry designed to strengthen South Africa's poorest province. The name of the ministry, Akhanani, comes from South Africa's indigenous language Xhosa; it means "building up each other."

The ministry is located in Port Elizabeth, the most populous city in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa and the country's poorest region. Most of its 6.5 million residents are unemployed.

The Good Shepherd ministry responds to the needs of the local Xhosa-speaking people, which comprises blacks and colored (mixed race). Sisters hold sessions

aimed at reconciliation between the two races. The State secluded the races from each other during resettlement, resulting in minimal interaction and social and economic inequalities.

With only two Sisters involved in the ministry, programs rely heavily on the support of volunteers, lay associates, and board members. Since Akhanani became a nonprofit organization in April 2017, Good Shepherd has explored ways to network with other organizations and NGOs in the area. Sister Martha Thuranira coordinates the program, which now receives food and other donations from local churches, a school, and several organizations.

Today Akhanani has two main programs. In the morning, volunteers teach women and men new skills in sewing, woodworking, and handicrafts, such as making necklaces and earrings from waste materials. In the afternoon, an after-school program provides children with homework support and a meal. Nearly 100 children ages five to 12 years old attend the sessions five days a week. Sisters say there is much room for progress, but that they are challenged by limited funds because they receive no financial support from the government.

Things have gotten worse with COVID. Sister Martha said, "We

*Continued on next page*

## ACROSS BORDERS



ZEAL

Akhanani, *Cont'd from p. 25*

continue to support the community by providing bread; however, the virus challenges our service delivery because we have the added burden of having to constantly purchase sanitizer and masks.”

Despite the challenges, and through the grace of God, the center has been able to offer opportunities to its mission partners, such as moral formation through awareness about trafficking, gender equality, and parenting. In addition, through sponsorship received from Lions Clubs International, by way of one of the project's board members, three of Akhanani's volunteers were given opportunity to study for an Early Childhood Development certification from the local college.

PMNA Mission Partners Sister Barbara Beasley and Melinda Stricklen visited South Africa as members of the Mission Effectiveness Team when the ministry was forming as a nonprofit. They held sessions to help Sisters develop a way forward in engaging lay staff and volunteers. Sister Barbara and Melinda were inspired by the bonds that developed early on — partnerships that have grown stronger over time.

“From the beginning, there was a clear focus on the fate of the children. Both Sisters and lay served as if they were called to the mission. The ministry has an exquisite family centered and inclusive culture. There is an air of joy and excitement surrounding Akhanani,” Sr. Barbara said.

Melinda Stricklen said, “It was a privilege to see the Good Shepherd mission being lived out in the lives of such dedicated, committed and loving partners.”



**Members of the Unit Leadership Team in South Africa L-R: Sisters Martha Thuranira, elected Unit Councilor and Akhanani program coordinator; Juliet Khasoane, appointed Unit Leader; Zelna Oosthuizen (appointed Congregational Delegate).**

In this region of South Africa, where there is no other Catholic presence, the Good Shepherd partners in mission shine a light of hope onto the Xhosa and colored people. A Christmas party at Akhanani last year began with Holy Mass celebrated by Bishop Zungu.

Theft and armed robbery by organized gangs are routine in Port Elizabeth. Many girls drop out of school due to pregnancy, and incidents of rape, trafficking and drug abuse are high. People despair that they will never escape poverty.

According to Sr. Martha, blacks, coloreds and whites were segregated during Apartheid. When Apartheid ended in 1994, the races began to integrate. She said Akhanani stands out as a symbol of coming together. The program encourages peace in the community and acceptance of each other.

Sr. Martha believes the ministry has deeply affected her spirituality and sense of mission. She said, “In an area where everyone feels threatened and unsafe, I feel secure. I am not afraid. I have such a great sense of belonging that these are my people: my sisters and brothers. This is such a privilege for me.

“I find it very powerful that we Sisters have been able to venture into this area and find our home here. We shall journey forward to achieve what we can, building up each other every day,” she said.

Sister Martha said she is deeply aware that God is using the ministry for His work. This belief strengthens the Sisters' resolve that the program's future is in good hands. They want to buy the land where the center is located so they can construct a permanent structure and expand their services.



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ZEAL

## Linkages made between human trafficking and forced marriage

A new UN report has documented the interlinkages between trafficking in persons and marriage. Published by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the report points out that across the world, girls as young as 12 are being forced or tricked into marrying men who exploit them for sex and domestic work, in what the UNODC has called an “under-reported, global form of human trafficking.”

“This is the first publication that looks at the issue globally and through the lens of the international, legal obligations that States have to address trafficking in persons,” said one of the report’s key authors Silke Albert from UNODC’s Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section.

The study involved research conducted in nine countries over a 12-month period. The countries covered were Canada, Germany, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Serbia, South Africa, Thailand and Vietnam. Most cases of trafficking for the purpose of marriage involve young female victims who come from disadvantaged family backgrounds, according to the report. Experts interviewed some 150 people who come into contact with potential victims of human trafficking, such as lawyers, government officials, members of non-governmental organizations and police officers. Read the full story at <https://bit.ly/32UCWtT>



*Farmer Nurul Haque stands near his 13-year-old daughter in Bangladesh, saying he may have to pull her from school and marry her off to an older man because he has few financial options left. Credit: UNICEF*

## New Human Trafficking Routes in Kenya

A new report published in September has identified additional smuggling routes in Kenya with well established local and international networks. The report comes barely three months after the US Trafficking in Persons Report 2020 placed Kenya in the list of countries with the worst human trafficking trends in the world.

According to the report, Finland and Somaliland are additional countries of origin of victims while Ethiopia, Namibia, Thailand, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Netherlands and Rwanda are additional destinations with Kenya still used as a transit point for the new entrants. The report further shows that trafficking syndicates collude with different law enforcement and immigration departments to transport victims through, from and to Kenya. This is the main reason the country is marked as a source, destination and transit hotspot for human trafficking.

According to the report, corruption at border points is common with officers complicit in preparing and providing fake documents for victims, which allow them to cross. The study identified 17 transit routes used to smuggle victims through Kenya from other countries. As a country of origin, Kenyans are still trafficked to Saudi Arabia, Germany, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and India. Read the full story at <https://bit.ly/3pBfMm9>

**ALL HUMAN  
BEINGS ARE BORN  
FREE AND EQUAL  
IN DIGNITY AND  
RIGHTS**  
—UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

*November 25 was International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It began 16 days of action against gender-based violence, ending on December 10, 2020, International Human Rights Day. This year’s observance focuses on highlighting the proclamations outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, specifically Article 1, which reads, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”*

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

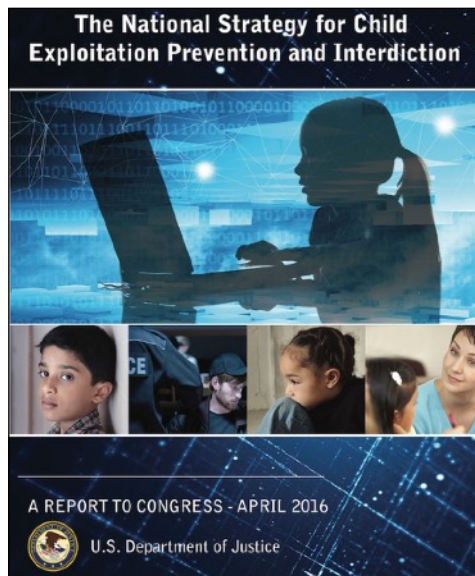
**ZEAL**


## Protect our children

The PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008 requires that the Attorney General develop and implement a National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction (National Strategy). The first National Strategy was published in 2010. The 2016 report — the second National Strategy — builds on that work.

Throughout the report, National Strategy case studies are included as examples of child exploitation prosecutions brought by the Department of Justice. It also includes a review of efforts to combat child exploitation from a number of agencies, including Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and Human Services, FBI, US Marshals Service, Interpol, Bureau of Prisons, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and many more.

The report is comprehensive and sheds great light on the reprehensible and destructive offenses confronting America and the world today. Learn more at the Department of Justice website <https://www.justice.gov/psc/national-strategy-child-exploitation-prevention-and-interdiction> or download the full report at <https://www.justice.gov/psc/file/842411/download>



## Double Pandemic: COVID-19 and human trafficking

UN Women and other organizations have conducted a global survey of survivors of trafficking and frontline stakeholders in order to address emerging human trafficking consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the survey findings and empirical data collected, a set of policy recommendations were developed. The report begins with an Executive Summary that states, “Human trafficking is always invisible. During a pandemic, it is easier to have cases going on that nobody reports.” Learn more at <https://www.osce.org/odihr/human-trafficking-COVID-19-report>

## Stop Trafficking newsletter

The Stop Trafficking Newsletter is produced by US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking. The newsletter is found on the Sisters’ website, which serves as a forum for exchange among religious congregations and collaborating organizations. The website contains a wealth of information about trafficking and includes the Stop Trafficking Newsletter, blogs, current campaigns, resources, and monthly reflections written by Catholic Sisters. The current newsletter focuses on ways the COVID-19 pandemic has increased risks of human trafficking. You can read and download the current newsletter at <https://bit.ly/3IHIKOR>

You can also link from the PMNA website to the newsletter from the US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking website at <https://bit.ly/2IKdlNo>



# REFLECTIONS



## ZEAL

## Twenty twenty

By Mary Joy Benson, RGS

Twenty-twenty - Year of Plenty -  
Great abundance everywhere  
Plenty of  
Meetings held on Zoom  
so comfortably from each other's  
room.

We greet, then wave,  
within our square  
to all the others everywhere!  
Lots of time is spent at home.  
No longer do we fly to Rome-  
or anywhere else, as a matter of  
fact.

Twenty-twenty - Year of Plenty -  
Supply of food exceeds demand  
Yet many go hungry in our land!  
There's a wonderful thing put on  
one street  
by Friends School-what a treat!  
a "Community Refrigerator"...  
Take food out, or put food in—  
The sign says 'take only what you  
need'  
I wish I knew how to spread that  
food around.

Twenty-twenty - Year of Plenty -  
Plentiful words  
So many opinions about what this  
all means –  
about what happens next?  
about how all this will affect us?  
Everyone guesses about everyone's  
stresses  
and there are conjectures about  
effects on our psyches  
and all the experts are constantly  
interviewed  
and asked many questions about  
the future.

Twenty-twenty - Year of Plenty -  
too much pain  
Plenty of loss and the pain of the  
cross  
Deaths, sickness, isolation, hidden  
smiles behind masks, hugs not  
given,  
elbows can't do it.  
We have plenty of suffering.  
We need God's help and graces to  
lift our faces.



We need plenty of zeal to reach  
across borders  
to cross aisles  
to reconcile differences  
to forgive injuries,  
to love.

May this year of Plenty bring  
transformation to every nation!

## Prayers for baby Kit

I have been wanting to thank everyone for the prayers they said about a year and a half ago when my friend Lindsay was about five months pregnant with a little girl. The doctor told her that there was an abnormality and the baby would not survive even if carried full term. She was advised to get an abortion. Of course, this was never an option for Mom, Dad, or any of the family.

Well, little Katharine "Kit" Cecilia (named after Saint Katharine Driscoll) celebrated her first birthday on November 25th. She has been perfectly healthy and normal, as well as being as "bright as a button" as people used to say. She's talking, walking, laughing and loving her older sister who is three. This update is meant to thank everyone for their pro-life prayers, and to let you know how much the family is grateful to each of you. They tell me this every time we are connected. My Goddaughter Sarah is Godmother to Kit. The family now calls me "Grand Godmother."



*Submitted by Sharon Rose Authorson, RGS*

## CELEBRATION OF LIFE ZEAL

# Remembering our Sisters

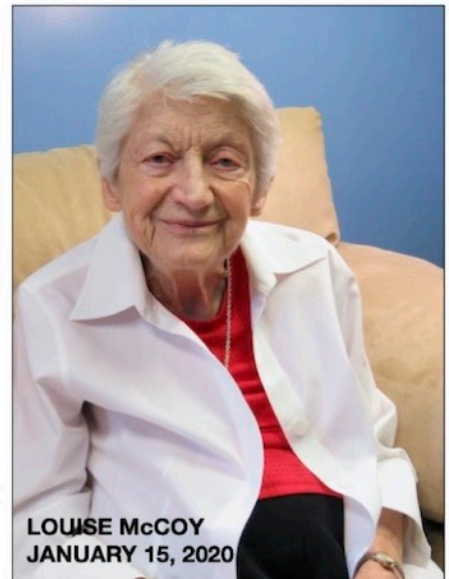
**S**ix Sisters in Mid-North America have passed into the arms of Jesus since the 2019 Assembly. We remembered these Sisters during the 2020 PMNA Assembly in October, and we remember them now in the November-December issue of *Items of Interest* and in tribute to All Souls Month, which was November. In the Christian liturgical calendar, November is dedicated to remembering and praying for the deceased. It is dubbed “Month of the Dead” and commemorates the Church penitent of souls. You can watch a video production honoring our remembered Sisters on the Good Shepherd Mission Effectiveness YouTube Channel at <https://youtu.be/DGGFWyPxjTU>



CHRISTOPHER MULLAN  
OCTOBER 27, 2019



MARY ELIZABETH EPP  
DECEMBER 19, 2019



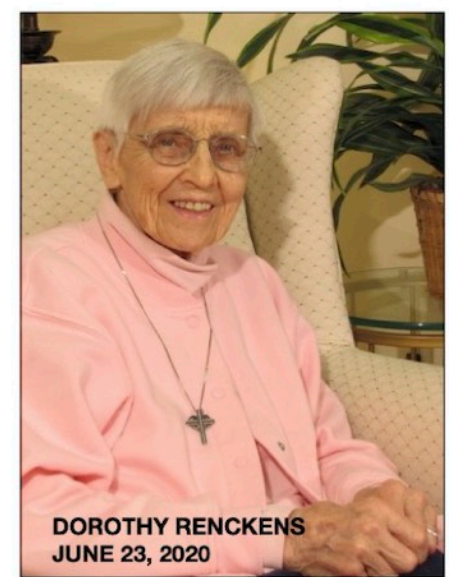
LOUISE MCCOY  
JANUARY 15, 2020



JOAN TUBBS  
FEBRUARY 17, 2020



GERTRUDE SEN  
APRIL 6, 2020



DOROTHY RENCKENS  
JUNE 23, 2020



## LEADERSHIP TRAVEL

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| NAME                     | DATES        | LOCATION  |
|--------------------------|--------------|---|
| Leadership Team          | No travel    | COVID-19 sheltering in place; leadership team meets by Zoom 2-3 times each month. |
| Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez | Dec 1-Mar 24 | Visit with family and GS Sisters, Singapore                                       |



Sharon O'Grady, RGS

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

## PROVINCE CONTACT

ZEAL

**A SEASON OF  
GRATITUDE.  
A SEASON OF  
GIVING THANKS.**

*"May your heart be an altar, from which the bright flame of unending thanksgiving ascends to heaven."*

St. Mary Euphrasia

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**ITEMS OF INTEREST**

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