

# VOICES

## OF CHARITY

Summer 2018

A publication of the SISTERS OF CHARITY  
OF LEAVENWORTH



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**50 Years as SCLs**  
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SISTERS OF CHARITY  
OF LEAVENWORTH

## Chapter 2016 Directional Statement

*“...we are called  
ever to renew and recreate  
our works and our witness  
uniting justice and charity in our lives  
as servants of the poor.”*

*SCL Constitution, Norm 6*

We, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, affirm our call to communion and mission as women of the Church. In the spirit of our heritage, we continue to seek the path of charity and justice in our day.

Impelled by our baptismal commitment, we claim as our own the prophetic mission of Jesus and our call to discipleship.

In collaboration with those who also embrace Gospel values, we affirm our evolving charism and re-envision our ministry and sponsored works to sustain our mission.

Mindful of the fragility of the earth and of the suffering of God's people, especially the exploited and marginalized, we commit ourselves to address these critical needs and their systemic causes.

### ON THE COVER

Sister Joy Duff (seated) and Sister Margaret Quirk are celebrating their Golden Jubilees as Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth this year.



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## *From the* Community Director



Sister Constance  
Phelps

This year we are filled with deep gratitude and delight with opportunities to celebrate. 2018 marks the 160th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. We acknowledge the past and the present by telling stories honoring our history. A well-told story reveals the heart of the matter. This issue of *Voices* gives a brief look into the essence of the SCL story.

Our stories begin with the 50 years' celebration of our two Golden Jubilarians. As we read stories in their own words, we witness their lives of vowed dedication and commitment. We honor, thank and congratulate each Sister as she recalls her ministry to people in need of her skills, and her life in the Community.

The brief glimpses of the lives of the foundresses awaken the past. Perusing their letters, journals and photos reminds us that our history is not comprised of just dates and facts, but of stories. Stories of women religious who possessed the grit, wit and faith in God to travel to the Kansas territory. Stories that reveal significant characteristics of our history and charism.

The photos, written words, music compositions, past and current, are all elements that capture the essence of who we are. They create a masterpiece that continues to reveal its depth to us. We SCLs continue to color this work of art with courage, perseverance, commitment and faith in Divine Providence. We are inspired and continue, in our own way, the intimate conversation with those who preceded us.

The stories of other SCLs and SCL Associates included in this issue affirm that they were caught in the current established by the foundresses and carried downstream. Therefore, they continue the charism in our day, in their unique way. We are, indeed, thankful and blessed.

*"We are progressing into the past ...  
The world though made is yet being made."*

— John Muir

Sister Constance Phelps  
SCL Community Director



# CELEBRATION OF *Charity*

**Sister Joy Duff** and **Sister Margaret Quirk**, this year's Golden Jubilarians, share the distinction of working as nurses before they entered the SCL Community. Their stories reflect blessings experienced over 50 years as Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and gratitude for those who have encouraged and supported their journeys of commitment to religious life.

Congratulations, Sister Joy and Sister Margaret.

## ***Sister Joy Duff***

### **Her name describes her life as an SCL**



I was born in 1932 in a suburb of Los Angeles called Highland Park. I was second oldest and had three brothers. Two brothers have died. My youngest brother lives in a suburb of LA called Eagle Rock.

I attended St. Ignatius Elementary School grades one through eight. After that, I attended Luther Burbank Junior High and then Franklin High School.

Soon after I graduated, I enrolled in the nursing program at Queen of Angels Hospital in Los Angeles. During my time in nurses' training, I became good friends with Mary, a student who was very spiritual and had an extraordinary love of God. This drew me to an awareness of God's love and a desire to become a Sister.

When we graduated from nurses' training, Mary, two other friends and I moved to an apartment in Santa Monica to work at Saint

John's Hospital. My first position was in surgery, but I soon learned that wasn't "my bag," so I transferred to pediatrics, which I just loved. Later, I was transferred to the medical/surgical floor. While I was working at Saint John's, I took care of a number of people in the entertainment profession including Lawrence Welk, James Garner, Loretta Young and Walt Disney.

During the time I worked at the hospital, I enjoyed getting to know the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and gradually developed a desire to become one of them. When I let my mom know what I wanted to do, she became very upset, so I decided to wait to enter religious life.

Years passed by, and finally I told my parents I was going to join the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

An interesting aside occurred on the day I mailed my application to the Community. For several days, it had been raining heavily, but on the day I mailed in my application, the sun was out, so I decided to drive up the coast highway. In order to have a better view, I drove up to a lookout point. The view was breathtaking. When I drove back down to the coast highway, they were redirecting traffic. A whole section of the hill had come tumbling



*There is a saying that I have always loved,  
“Joy is the echo of God’s life within us.” I really liked that!*

— Sister Joy Duff

down over the highway. I feel my scenic detour was a sure sign from God. Otherwise, I would have been right under that mudslide.

When I entered the novitiate, Sister Anne Callahan was our postulant and novice director. She graciously got us started on our 50-year SCL journey. Both of my parents died while I was in the novitiate.

When we were in the novitiate, we were asked to change from our given names to religious names. My given name was Diana Joy, but I chose Sister Joy for my religious name. There is a saying that I have always loved, “Joy is the echo of God’s life within us.” I really liked that!

My first assignment was Helena, Mont., where I worked in the extended care unit of St. John’s Hospital. After a time there, I could see that competition with the other hospital was bringing us to a decision whereby we

would need to close. When we were leaving on that last day, I remember closing the door for the final time. A few years later, I worked in home health in Cheyenne, Wyo. – one of my favorite missions.

After many years of nursing, I felt called to work with patients in a more spiritual way. I took the Clinical Pastoral Education course and became a chaplain. At the time, there was a need for a chaplain at St. James Healthcare in Butte, Mont. I ministered there for 15 years. I found my nursing background and experience very helpful as I ministered to the sick and dying.

I am now retired and enjoying all the spiritual and social events at the Mother House.

I take great delight in seeing my oil paintings hanging in Ross Hall. I love to paint, especially in oils, and I hope to get back to this in the near future.

**Sister Margaret Quirk**

**Years full, rich and blessed**



On Jan. 10, 1942, I was born in St. Mary’s Hospital, in Kansas City, Mo. It was in the middle of a cold, wintry night, and since then I have not liked being cold. I was number six of nine children: Tom, Pat,

Mary Frances, John, Katie, Margaret, Nancy, Bob and Maureen. When mother was having the last one, the girls were hoping for a girl, and the boys wanted a boy. The girls won!

We had a three-story house and a good-sized yard. We spent many hours

outside in the evenings and on weekends playing games. Since there were nine of us, we always had enough for a team. All of us went to St. Peter’s School in Kansas City, Mo., for grade school, and then I attended St. Teresa’s Academy for high school and graduated in 1959.

My sister Nancy was an SCL, and we used to come to the Mother House to see her. I worked at various jobs to earn money. Then, I came to Saint Mary College, Leavenworth, and took general courses. It was during this time that I decided I wanted to be a nurse. I entered the nursing program and graduated in 1966. Following graduation, I worked at Providence Hospital for two years. In nurses’ training and while I worked at Providence, periodically, I thought about becoming a Sister, but I kept talking myself out of it. One evening, I was visiting with patients, and an

SCL asked me if I had considered being a Sister. I responded to that call as I entered the SCL Community within the year. I am sure that the idea of a vocation to religious life had been planted and nurtured within my family.

On Sept. 8, 1968, I entered the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. Not everyone in our group of four could come because of personal and family illness. So on that day, I entered with a young woman who 10 days later went to bed with phlebitis. About this time, I was told that I was going to St. Anthony's Hospital in Las Vegas. I was really excited when I heard that I would be going to Las Vegas, thinking it was in Nevada. However, my time in Las Vegas, New Mexico, proved to be full of wonderful people, rich experiences and lots of learning. Sister Anne Callahan accompanied me on the train. On weekends, I went with Sister Zita Marie Cotter who visited people in their homes. I enjoyed learning about the Hispanic culture and meeting the people. I drove Sister Ann Raymond Downey on her trips to Albuquerque for administrators' meetings and was happy to see many parts of the Southwest.

In December 1968, I returned to the Mother House, so the four of us could start the novitiate. After a year and a half, we were assigned to various ministries for nine months. I was sent to Leadville, Colo., and enjoyed my ministry and day trips to see the beautiful landscape.

After first vows, my early assignments were Topeka, Kan.; Helena, Mont.; and Grand Junction, Colo. While we were in Helena, we had to close the nurses' residence and the hospital, which was both physically exhausting and emotionally draining. I was then sent to Grand Junction, and later I was asked to return to Leavenworth and continue my

education. In the summertime, I worked in Ross Hall.

During that time, I was invited to join school Sisters who were sent to Spencer, Colo., to teach religious vacation school for two weeks. I agreed to teach art. When we started class, the first-graders surrounded me, and I was paralyzed. I was not used to little children moving all around me. Most of the children with whom I had worked were too sick to move and were in their hospital beds. One of the school Sisters asked the first-graders to move back to their seats, and the situation was resolved. Only then was I able to relax and continue my lesson. It was an entirely new experience for me, and I really enjoyed the change of pace, the Sisters, the beauty of the countryside, and the children.

Currently, my mission is in Ross Hall where I reside, and my ministry is prayer. I have been called to serve in many different locations and diverse ministries. I have been a nurse in different capacities, served in a clinic, at the Mother House, the business office in a hospital, in home care, and on a sabbatical at the Sangre De Cristo Center in Santa Fe. My living experiences have included living in the hospital setting, in convents with school Sisters, and with those in many different ministries. I continue to be graced with wonderful people surrounding me – my family, friends, Sisters and staff. In Ross Hall, the staff care deeply and attend to my needs.

I am deeply grateful for the relationships, opportunities and ministries that I have been privileged to experience and celebrate. I thank God for calling me to religious life and to this Community of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. These last 50 years have been full and rich. I join with our foundress Mother Xavier Ross in her reflection as I, too, "look forward to the good that is yet to be."

*I thank God for calling me to religious life and  
to this Community of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.*

— Sister Margaret Quirk



# 160th Anniversary



◀ The 160th Anniversary logo designed by Sister Pam Hinkle portrays three sturdy trees planted near running water and bearing abundant and vibrant foliage. Their roots go deep; their branches reach high. Symbolically, the three trees depict free-spirited figures dancing with leafy banners over their heads. The leaves can also represent the flames or fire of love; the color purple, passion for the mission. The stability and durability of the trees and the joy-filled responsiveness of persons in motion reflect the jubilee theme “Grace has its moments” and the 160 years of the SCL Community.

## Sisters, Associates to gather for anniversary observance



The 160th Anniversary Committee includes (seated, left to right) Sisters Pam Hinkle, Bernadette Helfert, Jean Anne Panisko; (standing) Marcia and Steve Nicely, SCL Associates; and Sisters Anita Sullivan, Constance Phelps and Rita McGinnis.

With this year marking the 160th Anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, SCLs and Associates will gather for a day of celebration at the Mother House on Wednesday, Aug. 1.

“Grace has its moments. La gracia tiene su momentos.” – a quote of St. Vincent de Paul – is the theme of the observance. Sister Pam Hinkle designed the commemorative logo. The committee planning the

anniversary invited Sisters and Associates to write and submit poems based on this theme. The poem selected as most reflective of the charism and the spirit of 160 years will be announced during the Aug. 1 gathering.

“The 160th Anniversary Committee has planned events of the day to be celebrative, entertaining and inclusive of our characteristic virtues of humility, simplicity and charity,” explains Sister Constance Phelps, SCL Community Director.

The day will begin with Founders’ Day morning prayer and Mass in Annunciation Chapel. Sister Constance will welcome guests. Father Dennis Schaab, CPPS, chaplain, will be the celebrant with the reflection given by Sister Melissa Camardo. A celebratory dinner will follow the Mass.

During the afternoon, Sisters and Associates will have the opportunity to view exhibits and historic videos, and visit with friends and acquaintances. A highlight of the afternoon will feature 160 years celebrated through music and song in a program by John Winkels, liturgy and music director, Holy Family Parish, Kansas City, Mo.



John Winkels

# The founders

humble, courageous pioneers;  
foundational to Community spirit



“The Landing” by Ernst Ulmer commemorates the arrival of the first group of Sisters of Charity in Leavenworth on Nov. 11, 1858. Mutual Savings Association commissioned the Bonner Springs, Kan., artist, to create the painting for its new office located on a site purchased from the SCLs in 1966. The land was part of the property acquired by the early Sisters in 1870. St. Vincent’s Orphanage stood on this site until it closed in 1947. Mutual Savings unveiled “The Landing” painting on Feb. 28, 1988.

Based on her visionary leadership role, Mother Xavier Ross holds a special place of honor as the foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. In broader terms, history points to an original founding SCL Community that included up to 16 women. They traveled in three different groups from Nashville, Tenn., to stake their roots in the territory that eventually became the state of Kansas.

In *We Came North*, Sister Julia Gilmore writes, “These were a group of displaced persons, without friends, money, or home, entering upon a new enterprise in new territory. Adventure had been thrust

upon them and was not of their seeking.” Yet, it appears they had great faith and allegiance to Mother Xavier and the decisions she made.

Sister Mary Seraphine Sheehan, at one time the SCL archivist, describes these pioneer SCLs as humble, courageous, strongly independent, determined to maintain independence as a Community. She calls them “women of loving hearts, prayerful and generous.” They might do without themselves, but they would provide services for persons who were poor.

In a document developed during the SCL centennial in 1958, historian Sister Mary Paul Fitzgerald notes,

## Recap of founding history

- ▶ **1812** – The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth begin in Bardstown, Ky.

- ▶ **Aug. 22, 1832** – Ann Ross joins this community and takes the name Sister Xavier.

- ▶ **1842** – The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth establish an academy and begin working in a hospital and caring for orphans in Nashville, Tenn.

- ▶ **1851** – Bishop Miles of Nashville seeks to establish a community to serve his diocese.

A small group of Sisters, including Sister Xavier, withdraws from the Nazareth community to form the Sisters of Charity of Nashville. Within a year, they elect Sister Xavier as their Mother Superior.

- ▶ **1858** – A misunderstanding between Bishop Miles and the priest spiritual director of the religious community leaves the Sisters facing debt and circumstances not of their own doing. In consultation with the Sisters, Mother Xavier decides to find a new home for the community.

- ▶ **September 1858** – Mother Xavier travels to a meeting in St. Louis where she receives an invitation from Bishop Miege to come north to the Indian Territory.

- ▶ **Nov. 11, 1858** – The first Sisters of Charity arrive by riverboat in Leavenworth.

# The founders

“The SCLs are in existence through a very wonderful working of Divine Providence, the deep faith and courage of Mother Xavier and her companions, and the wisdom and vision of John Baptist Miege.”

Here are glimpses into the lives and times of those 16 founders. Documentation is sparse for several; more abundant for others. The combined efforts of these Sisters are foundational to the spirit of the SCL Community.



Mother Xavier Ross

**Editor’s note:** The content that follows comes from various resources of the SCL Archives. In some cases, records and books contain conflicting dates or different lists of names, for example, documentation of the SCL founders. While striving for historical accuracy, the intent of this overview is to convey the challenges and opportunities faced by the founders and their pioneer spirit, resilience and great faith.

## The first group – arrived in Leavenworth on Nov. 11, 1858

### Professed Sisters

#### Sister Josephine Cantwell



Sister Josephine was from Ireland. While serving as sister servant-superior at St. John’s Hospital, Helena, Mont., she received word on July 21, 1877, of her election as leader of the fledgling SCL Community to follow Mother Xavier’s second tenure in office. Sister Josephine asked the young boy who delivered the message to read it. He did and said, “Sister, you are promoted.” Overwhelmed by the thought of the debt for the new Mother House and the scarcity of funds, Sister Josephine reportedly went into the hospital chapel and wept.

However, her business acumen pulled her and the Community through. She liquidated the debt during her nine years of administration. Following three, three-year terms in office, Mother Josephine remained involved in healthcare and care of orphans. The homilist at her funeral described her as “great of heart and mind, and soul, and frame; the light that ruled the night of doubt, darkness, and storm.” Formerly a building of the University of Saint Mary and named in Mother Josephine’s memory, Cantwell Hall houses offices of leadership of the SCL Community and staff.

#### Sister Mary Vincent Kearney

Also Irish-born, Sister Mary Vincent had a grand and cultured



mind, knowledge of history and conversational powers. She was one of three founding SCLs who held the position of Mother Superior of the Community. Upon completion of Mother Xavier's first tenure in office, Sister Mary Vincent succeeded her, serving from 1862 to 1865. Devotion to children in parochial schools was her great passion.

She served in leadership during the difficult years of the Civil War, made more challenging by Mother's pro-Southern sympathies. Otherwise, she had a gentle amiability. Mother Mary Vincent was highly regarded as a teacher of music, history, English and math; she also wrote verse. Following her term as Mother Superior, she went with other Sisters to establish an academy in Lawrence, Kan. The mission was fraught with extreme hardships and anti-Catholic sentiments. In 1878, the SCLs returned to Leavenworth.

### **Sister Regina McGrain**

Another native of Ireland, Sister Regina had experienced a stroke of paralysis before the Sisters left Nashville. In spite of her disability, she was not idle. Among duties, she substituted in the classroom for Sisters when they took their meals. Sister Regina had several spells of serious illness and was the first of the founding SCLs to die on Nov. 2, 1861.

### **Sister Aloysia O'Brien**

Ireland was the homeland of Sister Aloysia O'Brien who made her first vows in 1857. She was the second superior of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Leavenworth. Originally, the Sisters used their own cottage to house the orphans. Bishop Miege arranged the construction of a



Sister Aloysia O'Brien

two-story brick building across from the academy that served as the orphanage, the first in the territory. In later years, Sister Aloysia assumed responsibilities as procuratrix of the Community. In this role, she managed household materials and purchased supplies.

### **Sister Mary Joseph Taylor**

Of Irish descent, Sister Mary Joseph had a green thumb. She was among the group of Sisters who planted trees to beautify the new combined campus of St. Mary's Academy and the SCL Mother House. Mother Xavier sent Sister Mary Joseph and two other Sisters to clear hazel-brush at the "country" site and then to plant a variety of trees. She had a sister among the SCLs, Sister Mary Catherine.

## **Women in formation**

### **Sister Placida Cassidy**

A novice who made the journey from Nashville, Tenn., to Leavenworth, Sister Placida professed her vows on Aug. 1, 1859. She was among the group of SCLs

sent to Deer Lodge to open the Community's second hospital in Montana. The first site of the hospital was a log cabin that had served as the county courthouse. She and another SCL rode horseback on the trails to beg funds to support their ministry.

### **Ann Carney (Sister Louisa)**

A postulant from Nashville, Ann received the habit on March 25, 1859, and professed first vows a year later. She took the religious name Sister Louisa. She taught and nursed. By 1875, Sister Louisa was the superior of two other Sisters staffing St. Mary's Hospital, Virginia City, Mont. – a town whose population had swelled due to the discovery of gold. The Sisters boiled laundry outdoors and cooked meals on the same range they used to sterilize equipment and heat flatirons for ironing. "They took as a matter of course these trials and others consequent upon the lawless days of gold rushing" (Sister Julia Gilmore).

Sister Louisa had a role in establishing St. Mary's Academy, Leavenworth, as a first-class institution. Students revered her. She was at the school at the time the cyclone destroyed the tower, resulting in the deaths of four students. She also served at St. James Hospital, Butte, Mont., as sister superior. Her older sister, Sister Mary Baptist joined the novitiate in 1860.

### **Ellen McCormick (Sister Ignatia)**

Ellen was also a postulant on her arrival in Leavenworth. She took her habit on March 25, 1859, and a year later made first vows. Her religious name was Sister Ignatia.

## The second group – arrived during the Christmas holidays 1858

### Sister Bridget Byrne

From Ireland, Sister Bridget entered the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth at age 20. As an SCL, she was among the group who opened St. Joseph Hospital in Deer Lodge, Mont. As superior at the hospital in Leadville, Colo., she received a threatening letter stating that “lot-jumpers” planned to fire upon the facility. Local parishioners guarded the hospital and fended off two men who approached late at night. Sister Bridget died in July 1883 in St. Louis where she had gone for treatment and where she is buried.

### Sister Rosalia Chagnon

Sister Rosalia’s name was among those on the incorporation papers for St. Mary’s Female Academy. In 1872, she withdrew from the Community.

### Sister Ann Davis

Sister Ann professed her vows as a Sister of Charity on March 25, 1858, and later that year travelled with the pioneer SCLs to Leavenworth. She was artistic and created exquisite needlework; she also served as the beekeeper. Sister Ann was equal to whatever was asked of her. She was in the group who opened St. Stephen’s Mission for Native Americans on Sept. 27, 1888, in Wind River, Wyo.

### Sister Vincentia Kelly

Sister Vincentia has the distinction of being the founding SCL with the longest tenure in religious life: 77 years. During a cholera epidemic in Nashville, she was orphaned and placed in the academy where the Sisters taught. She entered the community at age 14. As a young religious, she taught music. She spent 31 years at St. Vincent’s Home, Denver. Sister



Sister Vincentia Kelly

Vincentia was at the home in 1902 when a fire almost destroyed the facility that housed 247 children. On the occasion of Sister Vincentia’s 70th anniversary as an SCL, Mother Mary Berchmans Cannan said, “Your life is so closely identified with the existence of the community that this anniversary seems almost an epoch in history ... for you are a precious link with the past.”

### Sister Gertrude Ryan

Among the several natives of Ireland, Sister Gertrude was procuratrix of St. John’s Hospital, Leavenworth. Because the hospital was constantly in need of supplies, she turned to fervent prayer asking St. Joseph for aid. When a local priest told the Sisters they couldn’t accept money from a raffle to benefit the hospital, they declined the funds. Providentially, a few days later, a lavish supply of groceries arrived. Sister Gertrude pioneered the opening of the hospital in Deer Lodge, Mont., with other SCLs. Sister served the Community in whatever capacity needed. Her favorite hobby was sewing. She was known for her goodness to the poor.



Sister Gertrude Ryan

### Sister Julia Voorvoart

Originally from Holland, Sister Julia was the first female Tennessean on record to enter a religious community. In Nashville, she worked in the orphanage. As an SCL, this was her ministry as well. She was the superior of the first two houses of the Community in Helena, Mont.: St. Vincent’s Academy and St. John the Baptist Hospital. After several years in the West, she became procuratrix at the Mother House. She also was a constant



Sister Julia Voorvoart

attendant to Sister Joanna Bruner during her nine-year confinement to a wheelchair. Both SCLs were easy to approach and drew younger members around them.

Sister Julia had relatives who

joined the Community: a niece, Sister Mary Stephanie Elberg, and a grandniece, Sister Julia Gilmore, author of one of the SCL histories. Mother Mary Berchmans Cannan thought Sister Julia Voorvoart was

worthy of canonization for her observance of silence and love of the rule. Others remembered her for her small acts of kindness. In her declining years, Sister Julia was sacristan at the Mother House.

## The final group – arrived in Leavenworth in February 1859

### Sister Joanna Bruner



Trained as a nurse at the hospitals of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Sister Joanna was a healthcare professional through and through. She was a nurse or administrator for most of her life. She said, “The love of my life was the sick.” She was the first superior of St. John’s Hospital, Leavenworth; she held a similar position at St. Joseph Hospital, Denver, where she convinced the bishop to settle on a more realistic plan than what he had developed for the facility. Sister Joanna opened another hospital in Laramie, Wyo.

When the group of SCLs including Sister Joanna were en route to establish their first mission to Native Americans in Wyoming, the driver of the covered wagon described her as “the biggest woman ever seen in these parts.” However, impressed by her character and nature, he concluded she was “all good.” The Arapahoes gathered

200 strong to celebrate the golden jubilee of the “big chief squaw” a few months later on Jan. 1, 1889.

Blessed with a sense of humor, Sister Joanna was very sociable. Loved and respected by the Sisters, she was a woman of prayer and faith with devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

### Mother Xavier Ross



A convert to Catholicism and disowned by her father once she joined the convent, Mother Xavier was a woman of indomitable will, vibrant faith and clear vision. She joined the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth in 1832. In 1851, she was among the small group that left that community to become the Sisters of Charity of Nashville. Within a year, she became the Mother Superior; ministries evolved.

A few years later, the Sisters found themselves affected by a misunderstanding between the bishop and a priest. The resulting financial hardship from debt not of their own doing pressed the

Sisters to find a new home. Sister Julia Gilmore writes that amidst the darkness, one consolation remained for Mother Xavier: “the Sisters were in agreement that whatever Mother Xavier undertook they would stand by her.” They trusted her leadership; she, in turn, entrusted the foundation to the Incomparable Virgin.

Once Bishop Miege invited members of the Nashville Sisters of Charity to “come north” and west to the Indian Territory, Mother Xavier made an advance trip to the frontier land that would become home for the new Community. Toward the end of 1858, two groups journeyed to Leavenworth. Mother Xavier and Sister Joanna remained in Nashville to settle the debt before traveling to their new home.

Mother Xavier served two different tenures as leader of the SCL Community: from 1858 to 1862 and from 1865 to 1877. From 1858 on, her deafness required use of an ear trumpet. This in no way diminished her industriousness. She gave instructions to novices and postulants; conducted retreats for Sisters; opened St. Vincent’s Home, Denver; served as superior of two academies. She loved to care for orphans; she shared St. Vincent’s spirit of charity; and she withstood trials with faith and perseverance.

One of the Sisters said of Mother Xavier, “She impressed us all as no one has ever done. I have never heard anyone excel her; you would think she was inspired.” Mother Xavier died on April 2, 1895.

## Lineage of service connected to SCL leader

Rebecca Padgett's volunteer experience at the House of Charity, New Orleans, led to the accompanying story.

A spring break service trip to New Orleans earlier this year surfaced historic ties with the SCL Community that date to the late 1800s.

Rebecca Padgett, freshman at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Winona, volunteered at the House of Charity, New Orleans, where she met Sisters Peg Johnson and Vicki Lichtenauer, SCLs on staff of this Charity Federation initiative. Rebecca explained that her parents and family were friends with Sister Edna Hunthausen, who served many years in Browning, Mont., the college student's hometown. Sisters Peg and Vicki called Sister Edna, now living at the SCL Mother House, to reconnect her with Rebecca.

While sharing news of this telephone conversation with her mother Mary DesRosier, the 19-year-old learned of another relationship with the SCL Community. The DesRosiers are descendants of the family of Mother Mary Olive Mead, Mother Superior from 1907 to 1913 and 1928 to 1934. Born in 1861 in Indiana, Catherine (Kitty) Mead entered the SCL Community in 1880.

Mary DesRosier says that her father Fred DesRosier spoke affectionately of his great aunt whom he called

"Aunt Kitty." He recalled visiting her on trips to Leavenworth with his grandfather Fred Choteau Campbell who married Ellen (Ella) Mead, Mother Mary Olive's sister. Fred DesRosier remembered attending Mother Mary Olive's golden jubilee celebration at a young age. It wasn't until he experienced the very large gathering at the SCL Community leader's funeral a few



Fred DesRosier with a Japanese orphan in Saipan following World War II.

years later in 1935 that Fred realized what an important person his Aunt Kitty was. Fred DesRosier died in 2016 at age 91.

### Lineage of service

Tracing the lineage reveals a thread of service among the Mead family descendants and their relatives. Mother Mary Olive's family moved from Indiana to Olathe, Kan., where it is likely her sister Ellen met Fred Choteau Campbell. Fred was an educator and an athlete. He became superintendent of a Native American boarding school in Ft. Shaw, Mont., at the time when basketball was a new sport. When the boys lacked enthusiasm for the sport, Fred introduced the game to the girls who loved it and excelled.

Fred and Ellen Campbell's daughter Mary Freda married Peter DesRosier. This couple had one child, Fred DesRosier. Fred was in the 2nd Marine Division during World War II. After the war, his company was assigned to peacekeeping forces and to helping Japan start to rebuild. He and a friend "adopted" an orphanage in Japan operated by Catholic women religious. The two Marines bought and sold goods on the black market to buy food for the orphans.

Fred DesRosier married Ramona Croff of Blackfeet and Gros Ventres Native American descent. They settled in Browning, Mont., where Sister Edna Hunthausen was their neighbor for some 25 or more years. The DesRosiers had six children, one of whom is Mary, who retained her maiden name upon marrying John Padgett. Mary and John have nine children, including Rebecca Padgett, the 19-year-old college student who traveled to the House of Charity this spring.



Mother Mary Olive Mead

Mary DesRosier is a family medicine physician living out her long-time desire to work in Indian Health Services among the Blackfeet in Browning. The multi-service program offers clinics, a hospital, dentistry and optometry services. Mary says that the Browning emergency room is one of the busiest in the state of Montana. She is also on the board of De La Salle Blackfeet School.

The offspring of Mary and John continue the spirit of service. The young people have been active in the Catholic Youth Conference and community outreach. A daughter who just graduated from high school completed over 1,500 service hours – far exceeding the 20 hours required.

Known for her executive ability, charm, foresight and kindness, Mother Mary Olive would likely smile on this family tree – much as she did when SCLs received recognition for their service, good works and accomplishments, many of which she facilitated and supported in her leadership roles.



Mary DesRosier (right) and Rebecca Padgett.

# Descendants of family of SCL foundress visit Mother House

It wasn't until her sister dug deeper into their family's genealogy that Charlotte Tennant and her siblings realized they shared a special connection with the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCLs).



Charlotte Tennant could hardly wait to take a seat next to the statue of Mother Xavier Ross, her distant relative and foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCLs).

Charlotte is the great, great grandniece of Mother Xavier Ross, foundress of the SCL Community. In fact, Charlotte's middle name is Ross. She was in Kansas City in mid-May and travelled to Leavenworth with her son Ralph Tennant for her second visit to the SCL Mother House campus in recent years.

Over lunch with SCL leaders and Sisters well versed in the Community's history, Charlotte learned more about Mother Xavier and the SCLs. She also had the opportunity to meet other Sisters during an informal gathering. On

her must-see list, Charlotte revisited the Heritage Room to touch the desk and chair of the foundress; sat next to the beloved statue of Mother Xavier outdoors near the fountain in the front circle drive; and visited her grave in Mount Olivet Cemetery – all on the Leavenworth campus.

In 2002, the Tampa, Fla., resident made the trip to Kansas with her sisters Dolores Rench and Marjorie Bovard, both now deceased. Charlotte explained that Dolores was the only Roman Catholic in the family and the one who discovered the link to Mother Xavier.

Charlotte's family traces its roots to Philip Ross, the brother of Ann Ross who over time became Mother Xavier. Under her leadership, the SCLs expanded their ministries in Kansas and established hospitals, schools and orphanages in Montana and Colorado. Her legacy includes her charity, wisdom and courageous spirit.

"It wasn't until Dolores started searching that we learned about this person you've known for years," Charlotte told the Sisters. "We wished we had grown up knowing about Mother Xavier. It's very thrilling for us to know that Mother Xavier was here [on the Leavenworth campus] and that there's a bloodline that connects us."



At Mother Xavier's grave in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Ralph Tennant notes the simple inscription.



Sister Lin Sayatovic

# Ballad commemorates Mother Xavier

Sister Lin Sayatovic was pleased and honored to learn that students from Xavier Catholic School, Leavenworth, performed her “Ballad of Mother Xavier Ross” during a surprise visit to the SCL Mother House earlier this year.

The students sang the ballad accompanied on guitar by their music teacher Andrea Sladtky during lunch in the Mother House and Ross Hall Dining Rooms. The Sisters enjoyed the lively tune and joined the primary grade students for the refrain: “She is Mother Xavier Ross.” They also expressed curiosity about the origin of the music.

Sister Lin wrote the ballad in 1979. She had entered the Community the year before and spent time reading about Mother Xavier, foundress. “Her life resonated with me,” Sister Lin remembers. “I’m not a sit-behind-the-scenes person. Like Mother Xavier, I tend to do things out-of-the-ordinary. I gleaned from her story to write the lyrics and music.

“I was in a productive song-writing time in my life, and the ballad just came,” she remembers. (*See lyrics, next page.*)

Sister Ursula Messano, an SCL in Sister Lin’s novitiate class, transcribed the music, inserting timing and rhythm. While Sister Lin knew how to read music, she relied on Sister Ursula, a music teacher, for technical skills. The two wrote liturgical music together. The ballad and additional songs by Sister Lin and other SCL composers appear in a booklet titled “Prayersong” published in 1984 at the request of Community Director Sister Mary Kevin Hollow.

Music has always been part of Sister Lin’s life. She was in the choir and performed in bands. She took six years of classical piano. When she began

playing the guitar in 1963, it became her instrument of choice. As a counselor at Annunciation Grade School, Denver, Sister wrote songs that were easy for kids to sing. She continues to use music in her ministry as spiritual coordinator at Community Counseling and Correctional Services, Anaconda, Mont., which offers programs to re-integrate men into the community.

Lately, Sister Lin has been composing prayer mantras and poetry that she might one day put to music. She writes when she gets inspired. Akin to Mother Xavier Ross, Sister Lin let’s the Holy Spirit lead the way.



Students from Xavier Catholic School, Leavenworth, paid a surprise visit to the Mother House and Ross Hall during National Catholic Sisters Week. Even more of a surprise for the Sisters was the students’ performance of the “Ballad of Mother Xavier Ross.”

# Ballad of Mother Xavier Ross

by Sister Lin Sayatovic

## Spoken

She walked in the Spirit, her zeal was afire,  
a valiant pioneer, God as her desire.  
This is the story of a woman who devoted her life to God,  
Ann Ross by birth, Sister Xavier Ross in life.  
Pioneer, foundress, a sister dedicated to serving God.

## Sung

She is Mother Xavier Ross.

## Verse 1

She was born a joy to her family,  
curious in seeking her desire, God's wisdom.

## Chorus

She walked in the Spirit, her zeal was afire,  
a valiant pioneer, God as her desire.  
She is Mother Xavier Ross.

## Verse 2

A call to conversion, a new lifestyle,  
suffering and pain for God's loved child.  
She leaves her home no more to return,  
to follow God's call, his path so hard to learn. *Chorus*

## Verse 3

Onward she strove to become a sister,  
to work for the Lord, what gifts he gives her.  
Again she leaves home to move on North,  
suffering and pain but still she goes forth. *Chorus*

## Verse 4

To this little city, Leavenworth by name,  
she came with her band, her trust in God the same.  
The band was called the SCLs,  
devotion and love they knew well. *Chorus*

## Verse 5

They settled the North, they settled the West,  
this little group full of life's zest.  
The SCLs still carry her dreams  
to serve God's people, her eyes still gleam. *Chorus*

## Verse 6

Today her dream still lives on  
in the hearts of women who follow her song.  
We came forth to give our all.  
Mother Xavier Ross, your life is still our call. *Chorus*





## Re-Markings

# Responding to need and doing good

*“... we are called ever to renew and recreate our works and our witness uniting justice and charity in our lives as servants of the poor.”*

— SCL Constitution

These words resonate with **Sister Mary Jo Anzik**. An SCL for 53 years, she says, “I’m here to serve the poor in any way I can.”

Sister does this by volunteering, and more and more by being involved in advocacy efforts. She also makes pillows and knits hats for persons who are homeless. As someone prone to use safety pins instead of replacing buttons on a skirt or blouse, Sister Mary Jo quips, “I never dreamed I would be sewing, but one thing leads to another.”

And needs elicit responses that require helping hands and willing hearts. For Sister Mary Jo, this includes making sandwiches and bagging lunches for the disabled, low-income and elderly through the Sunday Lunch Program of Most Precious Blood Catholic Community, Denver, where she is a member.

After 9 a.m. Mass each Sunday, she gathers with other volunteers who prepare 40 lunches for the disabled and low-income, and 160 for senior adults. The hearty lunches consist of two ham and cheese sandwiches, fruit, pudding and a cookie. Sister values this as a good way to meet other parishioners and “do good” at the same time.

In the past, Sister Mary Jo sewed stockings to hold Christmas gifts collected for the parish’s Family to Family Program. She invited friends, including Sister Mary Loretto Lyons, to help decorate the stockings.

While she watches the Colorado Rockies or the Denver Broncos, Sister Mary Jo knits hats and sews pillows that she donates to shelters



It takes a team! Bagging sandwiches at Most Precious Blood Catholic Community, Denver, left to right, Sophia Frei, Sister Mary Jo Anzik and Sophia Grammatke.

for the homeless. She has inherited fabric and craft materials from friends who are downsizing. For her plans to make pillows for 20 to 30 kindergartners at Annunciation Grade School, Sister purchased fabric with designs the youth would enjoy.

Sister Mary Jo has also volunteered at a food bank where she answered the phone two days a week. Seasonally, the job could be very busy. Last year, for example, the Feed a Family Program delivered over 6,000 Thanksgiving baskets.

With a background in management of hospital business

offices and supervision of case managers and programs related to housing for low-income families, Sister Mary Jo finds herself becoming more active in writing letters and contacting elected officials about policy issues. She is knowledgeable about healthcare and housing, and committed to advocating for the poor.

Whether connecting with a social service agency, making lunches, signing a petition or taking Communion to a homebound parishioner, Sister Mary Jo is on the go to assist people in need. She emphasizes, “I enjoy every bit of what I am doing.”

# Teaching remains fun and rewarding

“It is wisdom to pause, to look back and see by what straight or twisting ways we have arrived at the place we find ourselves.”

— Mother Xavier Ross

**Sister Kathy Atkins** is a rare kind of an SCL today. She teaches full-time as an employee of a Catholic elementary school. While engaged in this active ministry, she is the youngest SCL living at the Mother House with retired Sisters, some of whom she taught with many years ago.

Born in Kentucky (from which the SCLs originally hailed), Sister Kathy considers herself predestined to encounter the Community. She traces her personal journey with the Sisters to the 1960s in Leavenworth.

## A few twists and turns

While she describes herself as an “Army brat” during her youth, Sister

Kathy says she was generally a good kid who listened and obeyed. That is, until she completed junior high on post at Fort Leavenworth and set her sights on attending Immaculata High School.

Her career military dad couldn’t see any sense in this. Fort Leavenworth didn’t have a high school, but Leavenworth High was tuition-free and where he expected her to go. The day before classes began and not yet registered for high school, teenaged Kathy held her ground. Her mom came to her rescue and convinced Lt. Col. Atkins on the choice of Immaculata.

Today, Sister Kathy believes God was pointing her in the direction

that eventually drew her into religious life as an SCL. “Going to Immaculata was the best thing that ever happened to me,” she reflects.

## Vocation evolves

She grew into her own as an individual at the Catholic high school. She got to know the SCLs. She had only met women religious once before as a fourth-grader in Wisconsin. Sister Kathy liked them but found their lifestyle strange. Teaching religious education classes with the SCLs at Fort Leavenworth, working alongside and visiting with them, she recognized the Sisters were normal people. She even thought, “I could be an SCL.”

That thought persisted at Saint Mary College where Sister Kathy vacillated between a degree in nursing or mathematics. When the college discontinued its nursing program, she considered transferring to another campus. However, by the end of her sophomore year, the young woman knew she wanted to stay at Saint Mary’s and with the SCLs. At that time, she discussed plans to enter the Community with Sister Mary Clarence (Madelon) Burns who advised that she finish college. After graduating from Saint Mary College with a math degree, Sister Kathy entered the SCL Community in 1972.



Sister Kathy Atkins appreciates being part of a great team. At Resurrection Catholic School, Kansas City, Kan., Sister Kathy (left) visits with Lynda Higgins, principal (center), and Laura Vanice, Title I math teacher.

# for Sister Kathy



Alex Porras reviews his work with Sister Kathy.

She had the opportunity to teach math during her first year as a postulant and loved it. “It was too much fun,” she recalls.

## Love of Jesus, love of math

Forty-six years later, Sister Kathy retains that enthusiasm and zest in the classroom at Resurrection Catholic School, Kansas City, Kan., where she teaches math to sixth- and eighth-graders and sixth-grade religion. English is a second language for a majority of the students. “It’s a wonderful mix of kids,” Sister Kathy says.

Her prior teaching experience was in high schools staffed by SCLs in Topeka, Kan.; Billings and Butte, Mont.; and Kansas City, Kan. When she left Bishop Ward High School, Kansas City, after 25 years, Sister Kathy had no idea what was next for her.

“In my dreams, I was going to teach at all high schools associated with the SCLs,” Sister Kathy says, “but Immaculata didn’t have an opening at the time.”

A few years earlier, parishes in eastern Kansas City, Kan., had consolidated grade schools to form Resurrection. Sister Kathy learned of a possible opening at the school, but she lacked a certificate in elementary education. When she heard the words, “We have a job if you want it,” she seized the opportunity.

The junior high environment came with a learning curve, but she adapted and continues to find teaching great fun and very rewarding. “It’s all about the joy of working with the kids,” Sister Kathy explains.

“I can share my love of math and my love of Jesus with them,” she adds. “After scowling at me in the math classroom, students often send me thank you notes upon their graduation. It’s great to be able to make a difference in their lives.”

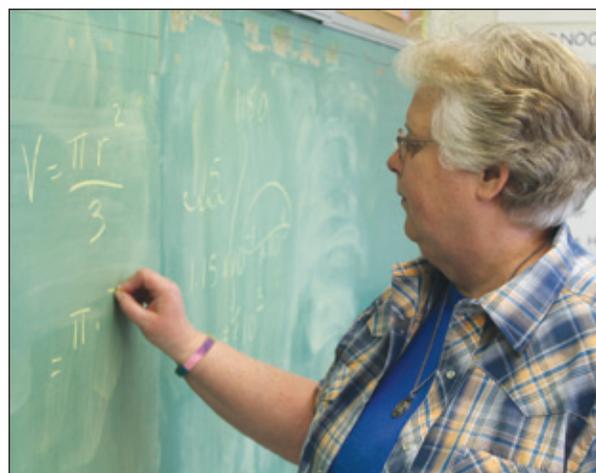
## Living at the Mother House

Four years ago, as her parents’ health failed, Sister Kathy requested a room at the Mother House to be closer to help her family living in Leavenworth. Sister found the SCL Community with whom she lived incredibly supportive. With the eventual deaths of her mother and father, Sister returned to her previous SCL house in Kansas City, Kan. After a while, however, she requested permanent relocation to the Mother House where she continues to experience a strong sense of community.

During summer months, she transports retired Sisters to doctors’ appointments. Sister Kathy says that so many of them have given so much to her over the years, now it’s time for her to be of service to these SCLs.

With time at a premium during the school year, Sister Kathy makes time for her SCL Community and for her family. One of eight children, Sister has 43 nieces, nephews and greats. She attends sports and other activities of those in the area. She also enjoys KU Jayhawks basketball and Notre Dame and KC Chiefs football.

Sister Kathy plans to retire from teaching when it’s not fun anymore. For now, she says, “I love what I’m doing. I love where I live. I love my family.”



Looks more complicated than simple math.

## Walking leads to **SPIRITUAL** and **ANGELIC** encounters



Protected from the elements, Sister Janice Steiger enjoys her walk on the Mother House campus.

Walking has its perks – especially on the beautiful campus of the SCL Mother House with its paved paths, abundant trees and sloping terrain. In spite of the unpredictability of Kansas weather, walking offers time to commune with nature, exercise for health, and converse with God.

**Sister Elizabeth Skalicky** calls her early morning time outdoors her “Jesus walk.” She centers her thoughts on praise, gratitude and petitions. “Sometimes, I even lift my voice in song,” she adds.

Growing up on a farm, **Sister Janice Steiger** spent a lot of time outside. Today, she continues to enjoy nature and values the experience of God in her daily walks. She has planted a small flower

garden along her route that she is watching mature from seedlings to blooms this year. On occasion, she memorializes observations from her walks in poems.

While she runs instead of walks, **Sister Paula Rose Jauernig** starts her day very early and logs five or six miles before breakfast. The minute she’s out the door, she senses God’s presence. “I give God the day,” she says, explaining that she has

incorporated her habit of running into her spiritual life.

She prays the rosary and talks with God. “Running prayer is also listening to God,” she adds. “Sometimes I gain a whole new perspective on things.”

**Father Dennis Schaab, CPPS**, chaplain, prefers to walk in the evening. When he leaves the Mother House campus, he’s made a hobby of collecting errant golf balls from a nearby course. Other times, he walks in Annunciation Chapel and now knows the exact number of angels in the interior artwork.

Speaking of angels, Sister Paula Rose has a pair that accompanies her while she runs. She credits these guardians with helping her find loose change and cash that she contributes to a worthy cause.

As she reflects on her walks on the holy ground of the SCL Mother House, Sister Elizabeth summarizes, “I love and appreciate the clear morning air, the changing colors of the sky as the sun rises, the sounds of the birds singing, and all the beauty of our campus.”

*Special thanks to **Sister Frances Russell** who suggested this article based on seeing these walkers from her window at the Mother House. This led Sister Frances to think about walking as a spiritual practice.*



# Re-Markings

OF SPECIAL NOTE

In this section, *Voices of Charity* highlights Sisters, Associates and friends who have earned special honors or been in the news.

## July meetings to engage Sisters, Associates

Between celebrations of SCL Golden Jubilarians and the 160th Anniversary of the founding of the Community, Sisters and Associates will meet on the Mother House campus for reflective and engaging sessions on July 30 and 31.

Sisters will convene for the 2018 Leaven Assembly, an integral part of their collaborative governance process. Theme of the gathering is "Affirming our evolving charism . . . in our day." **Sister Nancy Schreck, OSF**, will be featured speaker on the topic "All the Light We Need."



Sister Nancy Schreck, OSF



Jeanne Connolly

Sister Nancy is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque, Iowa. She currently is a program director for Excel, a community services organization in Okolona, Miss. Sister Nancy has served in leadership roles in her community, with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and with the Union of International Superiors General. Her background is in Biblical studies with advanced degrees from Boston College and the Pacific School of Religion.

SCL Associates will meet concurrently and join the Sisters for dialogue, liturgy, meals and socializing. The keynote speaker and facilitator for the SCL Associate session will be **Jeanne Connolly**, on the theme "Our journey together for the sake of the world." Jeanne is the director of charism and mission with the Wheaton Franciscans. She has been a Covenant Companion (Associate) with the Wheaton Franciscans for more than 23 years and has served as director since 2007. She is also the new president of the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR).

## Dental clinic recognizes Sister Mary Denise



As Kristy Schmidt, Marillac Clinic director of community relations and development, reads the dedication in Grand Junction, Colo., Sister Barbara Aldrich, board member, FaceTimes with Sister Mary Denise Sternitzke (above) who "participates" in the program from the SCL Mother House in Leavenworth.



In 2017, Marillac Clinic, Grand Junction, Colo., received a grant from the SCLs that went toward replacement of dental equipment and dental general operating services for uninsured patients.

Clinic leadership chose to recognize the SCL Community for the funding and **Sister Mary Denise Sternitzke** for her 17 years of service at Marillac. This occurred during a board meeting earlier this year with attention called to a plaque mounted outside the dental exam room that reads:

**With Heartfelt Recognition  
This Dental Room was funded by the  
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth in 2017  
and is dedicated to  
Sister Mary Denise Sternitzke  
Marillac Employee and Volunteer  
1998-2014**

Following 56 years in education, Sister Mary Denise became part of the mission to serve the poor receiving care at Marillac, a multi-service healthcare clinic. She worked for 11 years in the finance department. She next transitioned to a volunteer position, and from April 2008 to 2014 spent one morning a week in finance. She retired in December 2014 and returned to Kansas. Sister has been an SCL for almost 78 years.

## Follow the SCLs on

**Facebook** [www.facebook.com/sistersofcharity](http://www.facebook.com/sistersofcharity)

**Twitter** [www.twitter.com/scleavenworth](http://www.twitter.com/scleavenworth)

**YouTube** [www.youtube.com/sistersofcharityks](http://www.youtube.com/sistersofcharityks)

**Pinterest** [www.pinterest.com/scleavenworth](http://www.pinterest.com/scleavenworth)

**Instagram** [www.instagram.com/scleavenworth](http://www.instagram.com/scleavenworth)

## Sisters Week busy this year

From Kansas to Montana, friends and co-workers expressed gratitude to SCLs during this year's observance of National Catholic Sisters Week, March 8 to 14. In some cases, they linked the celebration with St. Patrick's Day. SCL Associates across the country submitted expressions of gratitude about the Sisters, captured on video and recorded in a journal.



Employees wrote words on small banners to describe characteristic traits of the Sisters. These served as centerpieces on tables at the Mother House.



Choices, choices and more choices abound in the Mother House Dining Room with pastries and other items brought in by SCL employees as a Sisters Week surprise.



Students from the University of Saint Mary join SCLs for the launch of Sisters Week. Sister Paula Rose Jauernig (second from left), popcorn master, has the group laughing with her story telling; this includes Sisters Mary Geraldine Yelich, Mary Laura Huddleston and Mary Pat Lenahan.

## NEWS FROM PERU

### Hermana Rosa renews her temporary vows

**Hermana Rosa Yesenia Juarez Amaya** renewed her temporary vows as a Hermana de la Caridad (HCL) in Piura, Peru, April 2. Following Mass and lunch at the convent, Hermana Rosa returned to her mission assignment at St. Vincent Pastoral Center. In the photo, Hermana Rosa (right) renews her vows in the presence of **Hermana Clorinda Timaná Martínez**, Director of Latin American Missions.



### Hermana Clorinda elected to national leadership group

During the early April meeting of CONFER in Piura, Peru, **Hermana Clorinda Timaná Martínez** was elected vice president. CONFER is a group of religious in leadership in Peru. Hermana is Director of Latin American Missions for the SCL Community.



## A time of jubilee

Sisters marking milestone anniversaries as SCLs renew their vows and celebrate their ministries during the year of their jubilees. With a concentration of Sisters living at the Mother House and Ross Hall in Leavenworth, a combined Jubilee Day observance occurred on April 28. Kansas City area jubilarians were guests of honor during a prayer service and reception on May 6. SCLs in Grand Junction celebrated Sister Marjorie Feuerborn's 60th anniversary on May 20. Yet to come are local celebrations for Sisters Mary Clarita Sternitzke (Aug. 26) and Patricia Toeckes (Aug. 24) and Hermana Lourdes Abad Pulache.

### Mother House and Ross Hall jubilarians



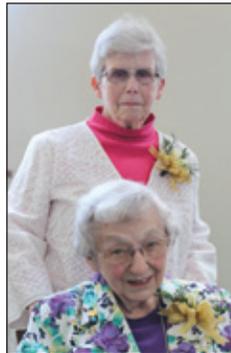
**75 years** – Sister Mary Vincent Fritton



**70 years** – Left to right, seated, Sisters Marie de Paul Combo, Marie Brinkman, Edna Hunthausen; standing, Dolores Erman, Marie Noel Bruch, Rose Dolores Hoffelmeyer and Anne Callahan.



**60 years** – Sister Rita Smith



**50 years** – Sisters Joy Duff (seated) and Margaret Quirk

**Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth**  
*Jubilarians 2018*

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<p><b>75</b> Sister Mary Vincent Fritton</p> <p><b>60</b> Sister Loretto Marie Colwell Sister Marjorie Feuerborn Sister Rita Smith Sister Patricia Toeckes</p> <p><b>25</b> Hermana Nery Lourdes Abad Pulache</p>	<p><b>70</b> Sister Marie Brinkman Sister Marie Noel Bruch Sister Anne Callahan Sister Marie de Paul Combo Sister Dolores Erman Sister Rose Dolores Hoffelmeyer Sister Edna Hunthausen Sister Marie Madeleine Shonka Sister Mary Clarita Sternitzke</p> <p><b>50</b> Sister Joy Duff Sister Margaret Quirk</p>
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**50 years** – Father Dennis Schaab, CPPS, chaplain for the Mother House and Ross Hall, is observing his golden anniversary.

### Jubilee celebrations continue at other locations



Kansas City area SCLs and Associates gathered to celebrate the anniversaries of Sisters Marie de Paul Combo (70th), Loretto Marie Colwell (60th) and Marie Madeleine Shonka (70th). Honorees with hosts, clockwise from left, Sisters Peter Parry, Marie Madeleine, Loretto Marie, Mary Jo Downey and Marie de Paul.



The five SCLs in Grand Junction, Colo., gathered on Pentecost Sunday, May 20, to celebrate Sister Marjorie Feuerborn's 60th anniversary. The guest of honor is seated; behind her, left to right, Sisters Barbara Aldrich, Eileen Sheehy and Bonnie Bachle. Sister Susan Newland was the photographer.

If we've overlooked an item of importance, please email ([thorvat@scls.org](mailto:thorvat@scls.org)) or mail information to Communications, Cantwell Hall, 4200 South 4th Street, Leavenworth, KS 66048-5054.



## SCL Associates



Amanda Noll Singer

# Living out the Vincentian charism and loving the SCL connection

Just as she experiences renewal attending Sunday Mass, Amanda Noll Singer feels a sense of renewal when she is in the company of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

The SCL Associate elaborates, “I am always amazed by what these women accomplish. The SCLs strive to make the world a better place. They are on the front line of making things happen by loving others and giving of themselves. The good they do begets more good.”

An alumna of the University of Saint Mary, Amanda has been an SCL Associate since 2014. Early on, it bothered her that she couldn’t be more of a “doer” through outreach and active involvement with Sisters and other SCL Associates. She came to accept that her call is to live out the Vincentian charism wherever she is.

Today, Amanda lives in her hometown of Nortonville, Kan., where she is a wife, mother of an 8-year-old with another child on the way, parishioner, daughter and one of nine siblings. She is the reading specialist at the elementary school for kindergartners through third-graders. She also coaches middle school track, working mostly with the jumpers (long jump and triple jump). She is a Eucharistic minister and lector at her parish.

When she can, Amanda participates in SCL and Associate programs and activities. She still feels a strong connection with the SCL Community.

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“I feel very blessed to have the influence of the Sisters in my life.”

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That connection dates to her years growing up and belonging to Corpus Christi Parish, Mooney Creek, Kan., where Father John Stitz, a long-time friend of the SCLs, was pastor. Amanda remembers him talking about the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

### Learning, living the charism

She attended the University of Saint Mary (USM), an SCL-sponsored ministry, and graduated in 2002 with a degree in elementary education. Amanda recalls an assignment in a class taught by Sister Kathleen Wood that involved interviewing an SCL living at the Mother House. Through that project, Amanda struck up a friendship with Sister Mary Julitta Doerhoff. Sister Susan Rieke, her English professor, introduced the college student to a job opportunity, cleaning house for a group of busy SCLs, including Sisters Sue Miller and Mary Janet McGilley. Amanda also participated in an alternative spring break trip to Appalachia with Sister Vicki Lichtenauer.

Following graduation from USM, she volunteered with the Christian Appalachian Project for a year. Next, she taught a few years, then volunteered again – this time with Operation Teach, a program of Notre Dame of Maryland University, Baltimore, that places teachers in Catholic schools in the city. After a teaching stint in Iowa, Amanda returned to Nortonville. As luck would have it, the reading specialist in the school district was retiring after 30 years on the job. Amanda, who had earned her master's degree in educational leadership as a reading specialist, landed the position.

Amanda first learned of the SCL Associate program from her friend Misty Prater, another USM alumna. Amanda enjoyed hearing Misty talk about being an SCL Associate and staying involved with the Sisters. She contacted Sister Susan Rieke with questions about the program, applied for and began the Come & See process. Sister Susan was Amanda's sponsor. Her commitment ceremony took place in the Social Room in St. Mary's Hall at USM – a room that had previously been a chapel for the pioneer SCLs.

Amanda continues to find fascination in religion and theology. Her faith remains important to her as does her SCL connection. She says, “I feel very blessed to have the influence of the Sisters in my life.”



Sandra Miley, SCL Associate

## SCL Associate recognized with Vincent de Paul Award

by Vie Thorgren, SCLA

Sandra Miley, SCL Associate, received the Vincent de Paul Award 2018 presented by the Center for Spirituality at Work, Denver, on May 7. This award recognizes the individual or organization that honors the dignity of persons, values the power of relationships in effecting social change, responds to problems as possibilities, and recognizes the capacity of persons who are disadvantaged to effect change.

Sandra is the animator of the new Denver Regional Associate Leadership team, and “animator” she is for everyone who meets her. She is a spark of energy, a ready smile, a person who makes people feel welcome the minute they are within the warmth of her gaze. The path she walks reflects her beliefs; her genuine compassion for anyone who suffers for any reason is evidence of her Vincentian heart.

Sandra has experience with the healthcare system, Catholic schools, the Conflict Center and the Hispanic Ministry Office of the Catholic archdiocese. She works as a scheduling assistant to the archbishop of Denver and coordinator of Holy Trinity Center. In every setting, Sandra strives to ensure that people in poverty and those living in fear feel welcomed. She also possesses the skills to organize and to challenge systems.



## Religious life means everything to SCL

When she was a fourth-grade student in Denver, Sister Marie Benedict Young knew that she wanted to be a Sister. By sixth-grade, she shared this life plan with her parents and the pastor of their parish. The priest responded, “I don’t think so.”

Influenced by the Sisters of Loretto and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the young girl neither changed her mind nor altered the course of her vocation because of the priest’s words. Today, Sister Marie Benedict considers her 68 years as an SCL the answer to her childhood dream. “Religious life means everything to me,” she reflects.



At the neat and orderly front desk of the Mother House library, Sister Marie Benedict Young greets visitors.

### Learning opportunities

Sister was an only child in a household where her mom was a homemaker; her father, an artist, taxidermist, museum preparator and inventor. From an early age, Sister enjoyed the Colorado Rockies, camping, exploring and reveling in God’s beauty. Winter months found her exploring the inner recesses of the Colorado Museum of Natural History in City Park where her father worked for 20 years.

With employment interrupted by World War II, the family later ventured to Lawrence, Kan., where Mr. Young was employed for another 20 years as preparator at the Museum of Natural History of Kansas University.

One of Sister’s classmates at Lawrence Memorial High School was planning to attend Saint Mary College, Leavenworth. After

checking it out, Sister Marie Benedict enrolled. During the first semester, she met with Mother Mary Francesca O’Shea to express interest in the SCLs. At Christmas, she informed her family that she was joining the Community, which she did on Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14, 1950. She eventually earned her degree from Saint Mary College and a master’s degree in administration and elementary administration from Emporia State University.

### Giving her all

Sister Marie Benedict’s ministry in elementary education spanned over 43 years. It included being a primary level reading specialist; teaching government-sponsored programs of Head Start and junior

high remedial reading; teaching students in grades one through five; and serving in administration. She received recognition as “Teacher of the Year” in various schools during her career.

At age 65, Sister was ready for new horizons, but the options she explored lacked appeal. At the time, Sister Mary Corita Conlan, principal of Assumption Grade School, Topeka, Kan., informed Sister Marie Benedict of an opening in the parish for a minister to the sick and elderly.

“I didn’t have a clue what this was all about,” Sister Marie Benedict recalls, “but I thought I would try it for a year. I stayed 20!”

Sister created her own job description that included visiting 13 care facilities, four hospitals, high-rise apartments and individual



## Vocations

homes around the city. She took older adults to doctors' appointments and shopping; brought them Communion; did laundry and sewing; and helped dismantle apartments for those without family. She assisted parishioners and their families through prayer, guidance and support during life's most challenging transitions. As needs changed, Sister pared back this list of duties and locations, but maintained a very active ministry, especially at St. Francis Health Center and Midland Hospice House.

### SCL Community her family

After experiencing a major stroke in January 2013, Sister Marie Benedict returned to work a couple of months following what seemed like a miraculous recovery. In spring 2014, she continued to do her job as a volunteer while the parish formed a team to assume her responsibilities. She chose to retire and moved to the SCL Mother House at the end of October 2015.

Sister Marie Benedict was in Leavenworth only a short time when Sister Elizabeth Skalicky invited her to assist with renovating and updating the SCL library. Having helped Sister Elizabeth open the new Butte Central Elementary School in Montana, Sister Marie Benedict quickly volunteered.

Sister appreciates life at the Mother House with many opportunities for Mass, retreats, programs and time with other SCLs. Her room overlooks the front circle drive and fountain, and she can watch the changing seasons unfold.

In the midst of these transitions, Sister Marie Benedict continues to value life as a woman religious and as an SCL. She affirms, "The Community has been my family for many years."

# Volunteer role allows for voice against trafficking

Several factors influenced Sister Vicki Lichtenauer's decision to volunteer with Eden House, New Orleans, a non-profit organization that offers long-term housing and comprehensive recovery services to survivors of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.



Sister Vicki Lichtenauer

Sister Vicki, the SCL vocation director, is currently a full-time member of the House of Charity initiative sponsored by the Charity Federation. In addition to these combined roles, like other members of the core team she sought opportunities to volunteer with programs or causes aligned with her interests and those of the SCL Community.

While living in the Kansas City metropolitan area, Sister Vicki served as a volunteer consultant with Veronica's Voice. This organization seeks to empower women to exit from, to prevent entry into, and to end demand for prostitution-sex trafficking in the U.S. Four years ago during a service trip to the House of Charity, Sister Vicki met with staff of Eden House to review policies and procedures on behalf of Veronica's Voice. Sister Vicki kept in contact with Susanne Dietzel, Eden House executive director.

In the meantime, the SCL Community identified human trafficking as an area of interest for education, advocacy and other efforts to counter this human rights concern. Sister Vicki joined this interest group to further her own understanding of the dynamics of trafficking. She volunteers at Eden House where she contributes in different ways to education, prevention and recovery.

"What do you need today?" Sister Vicki asks when it's her time to volunteer. Her duties vary from transporting women in the residential program to appointments to addressing thank you notes. She has assessed the yard at the house for its gardening potential. She tries to be a voice for Eden House and supports Especially Eden, the organization's socially conscious gift basket enterprise that gives women job skills and work experience. Sister Vicki also shares the Eden House story with service groups who come to the House of Charity to assist with rebuild efforts following Hurricane Katrina and other more recent natural disasters.

Eden House is the first recovery home for adult female victims of human trafficking and commercial exploitation in the Greater New Orleans area. The organization relies on donations and volunteers – like Sister Vicki – for support.



This sign greets guests who arrive at the House of Eden, New Orleans.



## Book Review

# Pause to reflect essential in today's rapid-paced world

Friedman, Thomas L. (2016). *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.



by Sister Mary Pat Lenahan  
SCL Candidate/  
Novitiate Director

In the beginning of his book, Thomas L. Friedman states his purpose: "It's no surprise so many people feel fearful or unmoored these days. In this book, I will argue that we are living through one of the greatest inflection points in history – perhaps unequaled since Johannes Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg, a German blacksmith and printer, launched the printing revolution in Europe, paving the way for the Reformation. The three largest forces on the planet – technology, globalization, and climate change – are all accelerating at once" (p. 3). Friedman purports that, due to this state of tremendous acceleration and rapid-paced change, there is even a greater need to pause, reflect and continually reconnect with one's beliefs and values.

### Slowing down

The author believes that individuals need to give themselves and one another time and opportunity to slow down and not rush around so much. These moments of pause provide an opportunity to recognize as "the ancients believed that there was wisdom in patience and that wisdom comes from patience ... Patience wasn't the absence of speed. It was space for reflection and thought." We are generating more information and knowledge than ever today, "but knowledge is only good if you can reflect on it" (p. 6). These pauses provide opportunities to broaden and deepen connections with one another in relationships of hope, trust and caring communities.

Throughout the book, the three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter carefully illuminates many different innovations as well as implications of them that have emerged these last several years. Because the ability to adapt to these rapid changes moves more slowly than the seismic shifts, it is almost impossible to keep pace with the change. This continues to cause a sense of disorientation and disequilibrium. The challenge continues to be emphasizing lifelong learning to assist people through the maze of rapid change as well as to increase connections. "Lives are changed when people connect. Life is changed when everything is connected," motto of Qualcomm, a mobile technology company (p. 38).

### Truth in information

The author continues by saying that in the past globalization was driven first by countries and then companies. Now, he says that globalization is driven more by anyone and everyone (p. 141). More than ever before, information is available to the wide world public. The challenge is to discern what is actual truth in the information that flows freely and what is misinformation. This also takes pause and reflection to decipher what knowledge could lead to wisdom and appropriate action. A key thread woven throughout the book speaks of systems enabling Mother Nature to continue to serve as our common home and the many serious threats assaulting her health and future in light of climate change, decrease in biodiversity, deforestation, the biochemicals flowing, ocean acidification, fresh water use, pollution in the atmosphere, and other changes (p. 183-186). In addition to these crises, population explosion presents a turning point for the world.

Throughout the book, Friedman also weaves the need for all to have basic workplace skills that can be adapted in this changing society and world. Because education is critical, technology continues to provide endless opportunities for learning through many various venues. The new and ever-changing workplace demands many new and flexible social skills as well as specialized requirements. Knowledge continues to be power that enables resiliency and adaptability.

As the author ends his book, he suggests ways Mother Nature might advance if she had an opportunity to act politically, which is an interesting and provocative observation. Penned by a journalist drawing on his extensive experience and expertise, this book has the potential to resonate with all who seek reflection within this busy, rapid-changing world. I would encourage those in search of a better understanding of societal changes from this journalist's perspectives to read this book and engage in thoughtful reflection and provocative listening and dialogue.



## Beyond All Borders

# SCL on panel at UN about trafficking

Sister Melissa Camardo had the incredible opportunity to speak on a panel with world leaders in the movement to eradicate human trafficking during a meeting at the United Nations on May 22. Co-sponsored by the Holy See and the Santa Marta group, the event highlighted results from the fruitful relationship between faith-based groups and law enforcement.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) invited LifeWay Network, where Sister Melissa serves, to share the perspective of women religious “on the ground” working to empower and heal survivors of human trafficking. Sister Melissa is LifeWay Network’s director of development and a member of the community in one of the organization’s safe houses. Her top priority is to help the women she serves regain their sense of self-worth and build happy and healthy lives amidst the feelings of fear and betrayal so commonly held by trafficking survivors. Lifeway Network provides true



Pictured at the Path to Peace Gala on May 23, left to right, Archbishop Bernardito Auza, permanent observer of the Holy See to the UN; Sister Melissa Camardo, director of development, LifeWay Network; Commissioner Kevin Hyland, UK independent anti-slavery commissioner; Cardinal Vincent Nichols, archbishop of Westminster, London, and president of the Santa Marta Group; and Sister Joan Dawber, SC, executive director and founder, LifeWay Network.

accompaniment, especially for those who find the courage to share their stories with law enforcement to prevent others from suffering at the hands of their former traffickers.

The panel featured the global work of the Santa Marta Group. The Santa Marta Group takes its name from Pope Francis’ residence in the Vatican where police chiefs and senior law enforcement from around the world stayed in April 2014 for a two-day conference on eradicating human trafficking that culminated in a joint declaration, called the “Santa Marta Commitment.” From this conference arose the Santa Marta Group, a network of religious groups and law enforcement committed to working with one another to eradicate the criminal activity of trafficking and to care for its victims.

Other panelists included Archbishop Bernardito Auza,

permanent observer of the Holy See to the UN; Cardinal Vincent Nichols, archbishop of Westminster, London, and president of the Santa Marta Group; Commissioner Kevin Hyland, United Kingdom independent anti-slavery commissioner; General Commissioner Nestor Roncaglia, chief, Argentine Federal Police; and Dr. Hilary Chester, associate director of anti-trafficking, USCCB.

The next day, Sister Joan Dawber, SC, LifeWay Network executive director and founder, and Sister Melissa were among guests at the 2018 Path to Peace Gala. Cardinal Nichols and Commissioner Hyland jointly received the Path to Peace Award on behalf of the Santa Marta Group. Archbishop Auza welcomed the 560 guests of the gala hosted by the Path to Peace Foundation. The Foundation is independent of but collaborates with the office of the Holy See mission to the UN.

Sister Melissa Camardo represents LifeWay Network during a panel presentation at the United Nations on May 22.

**Source:** Newsletter of the permanent observer of the Holy See to the UN



# Welcoming the stranger

A STORY OF BAPTISM AND TRUE HOSPITALITY

by Sister Janet Cashman

**Editor's note:** Sister Janet Cashman is ministering to migrants in Ramacca, Sicily, Italy. The CARA migrant center she discusses in the article is located between Ramacca and Caltagirone. It is the largest migrant center in Europe.

This is a story of a baptism on Sunday, May 13. This story actually begins in October 2017. There was a change in administration at the large migrant center CARA (2,000 to 3,000 migrants), and our bishop deemed it okay to enter and begin ministry. Bishop Calogero Peri, OFM Cap, came for the first Mass offered at CARA. There is no church, so Mass and all other activities take place in a prefabricated building.

Since that date, Father Franco comes every Sunday to celebrate Mass. The migrants speak English or French; Father Franco speaks Italian; and so Mass is celebrated

with translations happening at each moment.

## Adults interested in baptism

The people soon were asking to baptize their babies. The bishop came in early January and baptized 11 infants. Then some adults began asking how they could be baptized. They had never had the opportunity for this although some were raised in the Catholic faith. Sister Jaya and I are the only ones who speak English and Sister Barbara the only one who speaks French. Of the three of us, no one has had any pastoral formation/training in preparing adults for Baptism. But we said “yes.”

Classes began every Wednesday afternoon (we have permission to enter CARA only on Sunday for Mass and Wednesday for catechism). Classes occur in the same prefabricated building as Mass. In this one large space and at the same time, someone is also teaching Italian to 30 migrants. There are no books to guide us in the instruction we provide, but there is a lot of information on the Internet. I have searched the USCCB website and found some good information. I started consulting with Sister Maria Orozco Olaya who answered some

theological points and helped with correct wording for presenting the candidates to the bishop.

During the first class, I asked everyone why he wanted to be baptized. One answered, “Because Jesus is my savior.” I asked him what he meant by that. He replied that when he was in the rubber raft traveling from Libya to Italy, and it was carrying 100 instead of the 30 it should, some fell off and drowned in the sea. There was no food nor water for the three days. This man prayed to Jesus to save him. And Jesus did save him, as the migrant is now alive in Italy.

## Bishop flexible, helpful

Since this is a very mobile population, and since the diocesan [RCIA] program takes two years, and since the migrants were very much wanting to be baptized, the bishop understood and agreed to the baptism of these adults after five months of preparation.

The bishop could have appointed Father Franco to perform the baptisms, or he could have come to CARA. Instead, he invited the whole congregation to the cathedral in Caltagirone and provided a bus. Bishop Peri has said on previous occasions, and I believe he was again saying, the migrants are now part of the Church in Italy and this diocese. The migrants' coming to



Sister Janet Cashman with one of the men whom she instructed who recently received the sacraments.



Bishop Calogero Peri, OFM Cap, was very instrumental in welcoming the candidates into the Catholic Church.

Italy is not a passing phenomenon. We must welcome them with open hearts and minds.

On Sunday, May 13, the bishop, five priests, three deacons – all in their golden vestments – numerous seminarians in their white albs, and the cathedral choir welcomed the migrants into the church with its grand, marble altar and golden candelabra. There were three infants baptized, one woman confirmed and seven men (ages 35-45) baptized and confirmed and recipients of their First Holy Communion. And I was the one who prepared them for the ceremony and presented them to the bishop. Bishop Peri asked questions in Italian about their beliefs, and they responded in English or French. It was tricky to coordinate the question with the correct answer. However, God knows the answers in their hearts. After Mass, the bishop joined the congregation for dinner at CARA that was a simple meal like all meals. He helped serve the cake, which was a special addition.

## Hermana Esther expands artistic skills

To the delight of recipients of her handcrafted gifts, Hermana Esther Vilela Gutiérrez added new learnings to her artistic talents earlier this year. She is planning to share these creations with SCL leadership and for personal gift giving.

During her break from teaching high school in Piura, Peru, Hermana enrolled in a program in Lima where she learned to emboss metal. This was a time of renewal and discovery for her.

While the new craft proved challenging and required strength in her hands, Hermana Esther found it satisfying and rewarding. She likes working with her hands to express her innate creative talents. She says, “During the year when I teach religious education, I use my head more. Participating in this class allowed me to do something different from what I usually do.”

As the first step in this newly learned process, Hermana Esther drew a picture of a person or object. She next traced each image to a piece of flat metal. Embossing involves using a stylus to create a relief in the surface of the metal art that gives the image elevation and dimension. This comes from applying different levels of pressure with the stylus to the back of the image and then burnishing the front side.

Depending on the desired look of the finished piece, the artist applies paint or leaves the metal unfinished.

Hermana Esther left most of her works unpainted. The exceptions were the Virgin of Guadalupe art and candleholder. Overall, her art reveals a great amount of detail.

While she says embossing metal was more complex than using other media, Hermana calls it a great experience. She considers this art form yet another way to manifest her God-given talents, and she is grateful for this opportunity. She has also learned to make cloth flowers, to embroider in ribbon and to do other types of paintings in high relief.



Hermana Esther Vilela Gutiérrez



# Noon meal provides nutrition, hospitality

Hermana Susana Córdova Castillo takes seriously words from Jesus’ parable as told in the Gospel of Matthew:

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,  
a stranger and you welcomed me ...  
whatever you did for one of these least brothers  
of mine, you did for me.”*

— Matt. 25:35, 40

Since May 2011, Hermana Susana has coordinated efforts in Chuschi, Peru, to provide a mid-day meal for older adults, particularly those living in extreme poverty, and for other persons with physical limitations. Forty persons receive lunch every day; sometimes there are more. The guests not only have a nutritious meal, they can escape loneliness and share the company of others.

The hospitality and welcoming spirit have remained steady since the program began. What has changed dramatically is the setting in which the guests enjoy their meals. The first site was a humble structure; the second, from 2012 to 2013, an open-air garage on loan from the family of Rosa Quinto Mendoza and Silvestre Huaytalla Gómez. Then, in 2014, the new San Vicente de Paul Dining Room opened.

Hermana Susana explains that the men and women of Chuschi collaborated to construct the new facility. A donation from the SCL Community went toward building materials. The Jesuit priests provide funds monthly to purchase food; they also provide food occasionally as do residents of the area during harvest time. Funds from the SCL Community help cover major expenses.

The dining room serves meals Monday through Friday. On Mondays, each guest who is able pays a small fee for the week, and the people who can bring firewood every day. Family members or neighbors take food home to those unable to come to the dining room. Afternoons and evenings, the dining room space sometimes hosts meetings.

Hermana Susana summarizes, “The importance of serving these meals is to help meet the basic need of these people for food. Many live in solitude and cannot prepare their own meals due to physical limitations. They are vulnerable, and we want to help them.”



Guests await lunch in the dining room. Some bring pots/buckets to carry meals home to family members or neighbors.



La Señora Lucía Cabana Carhuapoma is responsible for the kitchen at the San Vicente de Paul Dining Room.



The San Vicente de Paul Dining Room has evolved from its humble beginnings to an open-air garage to the new building constructed by the people of Chuschi.



Carlett Wise (right) and Colleen Waite (second from right), volunteers with Leavenworth Interfaith Community of Hope, display the loom and discuss the process for making mats for the homeless from recycled plastic bags. At left in the photo, Sisters Mary Monica Peterson, Genitha Regan and Sue Retherford learn about the mats.

## From falcons to peanut butter birdfeeders, Earth Fest draws great interest

It was a first and fun and met its goal of calling attention to Mother Earth. An estimated 190 to 200 people participated in Earth Fest on Sunday, April 22, hosted by the SCL Care of Creation Committee. The event at the SCL Mother House engaged persons of all ages in learning how to make pinecone birdfeeders using peanut butter and seeds; weave mats from plastic bags; and design attractive craft items from recycled materials.

Students from Xavier Catholic School performed songs with themes related to Earth Day; Jeremiah

Nichol, JF Productions, provided music throughout the afternoon. There was a scavenger hunt based on historic trees on the front lawn of the Mother House and a sustainability quiz for which participants received jars of honey as prizes. Operation Wildlife brought a hawk and falcons and discussed the organization's rescue and rehabilitation of animals and birds. Another booth by True Blue Women shared information advocating for the protection of water. Eating ice cream cones and creating sidewalk chalk art were other attractions of the event.



Sister Mary Jane Schmitz explains the scavenger hunt based on historic trees to a young attendee at Earth Fest at the SCL Mother House on Sunday, April 22.



Much to the fascination of the crowd, Roseanne Agderion discusses the stories of falcons rescued and rehabilitated by Operation Wildlife, the organization for which she volunteers.



The group gathers to blow out the celebratory candles for the 12th anniversary.

## St. Vincent Pastoral Center marks 12th anniversary

St. Vincent de Paul Pastoral Center, a health and multi-service facility sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth in Piura, Peru, observed its 12th anniversary with a three-day celebration May 4-6. Hermana Laura Rumiche Morales, executive director, reports that the first day began with special prayer. Throughout the day, staff and patients enjoyed refreshments and watched a video tracing the history of the center. They also participated in a contest with winning articles posted on the bulletin board. A group of six volunteers and Hermana Rosa Yesenia Juarez Amaya spent time visiting two families in their homes.

Saturday, May 5, there was a Mass of Thanksgiving in the chapel of Santa Julia followed by a program at St. Vincent Center featuring services with artistic presentations by staff. Dinner, cake, music and dancing ended the day. On Sunday, staff gathered for sports activities.



Enjoying the festivities, left to right, Janella Yasmil Pulache, secretary; Hermana Laura Rumiche Morales, executive director; and Ana Sulma Calle Garcia, administrator.



# Ministries



Michael Padow

## New principal named for Cristo Rey

Cristo Rey Kansas City has appointed Michael Padow as principal effective July 2018. Michael succeeds Mary Kallman, the school's founding principal. Mary, an SCL Associate, says, "Working together with the founding team of teachers and staff, we have made a difference in the Kansas City educational climate, and I'm honored to have been part of it."

"Michael is deeply committed to urban education," says Cristo Rey President John O'Connor. "He is thoughtful, articulate and experienced in developing and implementing educational and operational policies. Michael is committed to academic excellence, strong pastoral care, and continual improvement in the performance of staff and students."

The new principal's early schooling was in Alexandria, Va., followed by Jesuit secondary and post-secondary education in Kansas City. He has served as assistant principal of Cristo Rey over the past eight years. He holds a bachelor's degree in history and political science and a master's in education from Rockhurst University. Currently, he is working toward completion of his dissertation and doctorate in educational leadership and policy studies at the University of Kansas.

"I'm thrilled at the opportunity to continue the journey to strive toward academic excellence at Cristo Rey Kansas City," Michael says. Michael, his wife and son live in Overland Park, Kan., and are parishioners at Holy Spirit.

## Staff return to foundation of health ministry

Staff from all Colorado SCL Health hospitals and the system office were in Leavenworth May 21 to 24 becoming immersed in the history and heritage of the SCL Community. They focused on mission, values and virtue in action; had tours of the campus; heard presentations; and shared group activities. Thirty-four persons made the trip led by Deb Roybal, vice president, ministry formation, SCL Health, and Sister Jennifer Gordon, vice president, mission integration, Saint Joseph Hospital, Denver.



During the commissioning ceremony in Annunciation Chapel, staff of SCL Health had the opportunity to make personal commitments to the health ministry. Left to right, Deb Roybal and Sisters Charlotte White and Maureen Kehoe offer candles to staff symbolic of carrying the light and spirit forward. Deb is vice president, ministry formation, SCL Health; Sister Charlotte, a member of Leaven Ministries, sponsor of SCL Health; and Sister Maureen, sacristan at Saint Joseph Hospital.

# USM enhances programs, facilities



With her leadership team available for questions, Sister Diane Steele, president, discusses programs, enrollment and opportunities facing the University of Saint Mary. Pictured clockwise from left, Michelle Metzinger, provost and vice president for academic affairs; Nancy Bramlett, vice president for finance and administrative services, controller; John Shultz, vice president for admissions and marketing; and Sister Diane.

Sister Diane Steele, president, provided an update on the University of Saint Mary (USM) in Ross Chapel at the SCL Mother House on Monday, April 30. USM is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

Sister used USM's strategic plan as the framework for her presentation. She outlined the large number of academic programs developed over the past six years including an enhanced accounting degree, athletic training, family nurse practitioner concentration and physical therapy doctorate. In addition, she discussed a new communications degree with an emphasis on digital media and partnership degree completion programs (engineering and pre-med) with universities in the Greater Kansas City area. She also shared plans underway to introduce a doctorate in occupational therapy.

To enrich and encourage appreciation of the Vincentian heritage, USM has had a leadership role in

development of the Charity Heritage Formation Program with other universities sponsored by members of the Charity Federation (a group of religious communities tracing their roots to St. Vincent de Paul). Sister Diane also discussed faith formation and service opportunities for students.

With respect to facility enhancements, she highlighted Berkel Stadium, the new biology lab, new cafeteria and refurbished dining room, and a new entry sign to the campus. A capital campaign is underway to transition the USM library to a learning center, named in honor of Archbishop James P. Keleher. Other fund-raising is targeted to student scholarships.



# Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!

## Front lane

by Sister Mary Janet McGilley

Up from Tennessee  
before the Civil War  
the Sisters laid this road,  
not the straightest line  
between two points,  
but a slow curve  
to gentle the hill.  
The bricks, without benefit of mortar,  
set liberally,  
a wide and rosy swath  
up the green hillside.  
A curb of fieldstone,  
cut flat into rectangles  
and planted in the dark Kansas earth,  
to grow up side by each –  
no mean feat,  
two or three long blocks worth.  
And along the long approach,  
remembering their southern home,  
the Sisters planted –  
measuring distance against time –  
Scotch pines  
with an occasional maple.  
Now for any summer,  
a cool canopy  
against the Kansas sun;  
for any autumn  
melody in color;  
for any moment  
we clear for remembering,  
testament to all the paths  
that brought us here.

Poet, professor, administrator – Sister Mary Janet McGilley  
was president of Saint Mary College from 1964 to 1989.



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