

# Voices of Charity

Christmas 2010

*Heart of the Matter:*  
2010 Chapter, New Officers  
pages 3-5

*Beyond All Borders:*  
Meet our Hermanas of Peru  
pages 18-21



A publication of the  
SISTERS OF CHARITY  
OF LEAVENWORTH



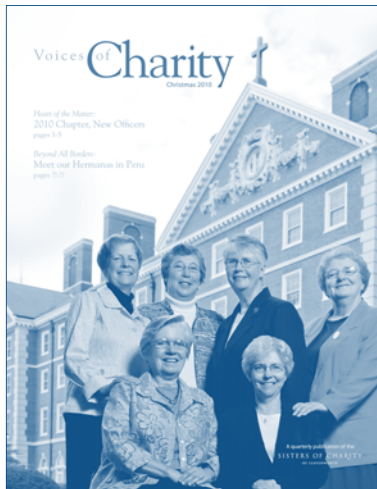
SISTERS OF CHARITY  
OF LEAVENWORTH

**Chapter Acts 2010**

Relying on our loving and provident God,  
trusting in the spirit of our founders  
and the Sisters who have gone before us,  
affirming the Community Vision Statement  
and the Chapter Direction Statement 2004,  
we, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth,  
in fidelity to our *Constitution* and in the spirit of Chapter 2010,  
enact statements and actions relevant to

- Relationships with God and One Another
- Justice, Peace and Global Needs
- Earth
- Vocations
- Church
- SCLAs
- Governance

COVER PHOTO: The new SCL Community Officers  
outside the Mother House: standing, left to right,  
Sisters Maureen Hall, Eileen Haynes, Peg Johnson, Eileen Hurley;  
seated, Sisters Nancy Bauman and Jean Anne Panisko.

**Community Officers:**

Sister Maureen Hall, Community Director  
 Sister Nancy Bauman,  
 Community Councilor  
 Sister Eileen Haynes, Community Councilor  
 Sister Eileen Hurley, Community Councilor  
 Sister Jean Anne Panisko,  
 Community Treasurer  
 Sister Peg Johnson, Community Secretary

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# in this issue



3



9



18

## From the Community Director

Sister Maureen Hall. . . . . 2

## Heart of the Matter

SCL Chapter—June 7-13, 2010 . . . 3

'We are the ones we've  
 been waiting for'—  
 Chapter 2010. . . . . 4

Riding the waves with her  
 sense of humor. . . . . 6

Keeping the Mother House like  
 home an important priority. . . . . 7

Two SCLs share responsibilities . . . 7

Centering prayer helps  
 feed people's hunger for God . . . . 8

Degree probes relationship  
 with earth. . . . . 9

SCL photo gallery . . . . . 10

Of Special Note. . . . . 11  
*Highlighting special honors  
 and 'in the news' items*

## LeavenWords

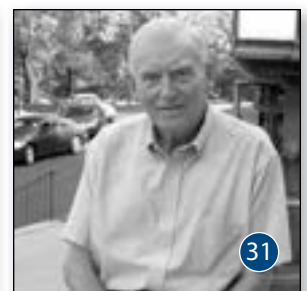
Educator, maverick,  
 innovator, artist . . . . . 16



22



25



31

## Beyond All Borders

Meet our Hermanas of Peru. . . . . 18

Sudan beckons SCL. . . . . 22

SCL presence at  
 nuclear protest. . . . . 22

Saga of poverty  
 continues in Haiti. . . . . 24

'Sharing the sharable'  
 in Uganda. . . . . 25

## Sponsored Ministries

Endowed chair  
 'a double honor'. . . . . 26

New president/CEO  
 named for SCLHS. . . . . 27

Health ministry  
 a graced experience. . . . . 28

Recognizing two SCLHS leaders,  
 good friends of the SCLs. . . . . 30

## SCL Associates

Faith, social justice  
 important to SCLA. . . . . 31

## Book Reviews

Church history a story of hope . . . 32

## Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!

We Are Not Alone . . . . . 33



# Community Director

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Sister Maureen Hall

As we ponder this holy season and the profound mystery that our God became “one of us,” may we reflect again upon the Christmas story. “Once upon a time...” over and over it is told. Let the narration of Jesus’ birth instill in us a rebirth of love and compassion within and around us, as we celebrate this holy time.

I think I would reflect on the past six months as holy time also. Since our June Chapter, we have experienced good news, excitement and tremendous opportunities; transitions and related challenges; and a renewed sense of ministry.

Ministry in the spirit of Vincent, Louise and Xavier is at the heart and soul of our charism. You will read this reflected in the articles that fill this publication. We pray. We believe. We contemplate. We act. We serve. We do this in the name of what is good and life-giving and what brings peace and upholds the dignity of people. From teachers to administrators, from participants to trailblazers, from California to Peru, the charism lives among our SCLs, Associates and those with whom we serve.

Wonderful gifts are flowing from this charism. As we continue to seek new entrants to join our Community, we are also welcoming returning members. We’ve announced new leadership to carry forward the mission of our health ministry. We have a dynamic strategic plan in place to advance the commitments of our Chapter Acts. Sisters have enthusiastically responded to the invitation to participate on committees. Associates are contributing their unique energy to efforts and projects that continue the SCL legacy.

It has been a busy and a holy time of celebrating our ministry as many Sisters and Associates have been recognized for outstanding service. And I know and believe that much good is yet to come.

In a spirit of deep gratitude, I wish you much joy during the Christmas season and a New Year graced with God’s abundant blessings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sister Maureen Hall". The script is fluid and cursive.

Sister Maureen Hall  
*Community Director*

## Introducing a new look

Following Chapter 2010 and with the new SCL Officers, it’s a good time to introduce a new look to *Voices of Charity*. Enjoy!

Let us know your thoughts and keep sending suggestions for features and articles to [thorvat@scls.org](mailto:thorvat@scls.org).

# Heart of the Matter

## SCL Chapter – JUNE 7-13, 2010

- 1 *Chapter 2010 opened*  
in Annunciation Chapel with a  
prayer service. Sister Sue Miller,  
outgoing Community Director,  
and Sister Bernadette Helfert.
- 2 *“We are the ones we’ve  
been waiting for,”*  
SCLs prayed throughout the  
2010 Chapter. Sharing symbolically  
from springs of life-giving water  
were Sisters Dorothy Jean Casey,  
Ann McGuire, Frances Juiliano,  
Annie Loendorf and Kathleen  
Marie Henscheid.



# ‘We are the ones we’ve been waiting for’—

JUNE 7-13, 2010



- 3 Sister Mary Ellen Murphy, SC, was keynote speaker for the Chapter. Her talk was entitled, “In All Things Charity: The Call to Right Relationship.”
- 4 Sisters Mary Rosenda Arkfeld and Agnes Eileen Dunn visited displays provided by SCL sponsored ministries in O’Shea Conference Center during the Chapter.
- 5 Len Bronec, SCLA, Terri Butel, SCLA, and Sister Mary Loretta Beier in deep discussion following the keynote presentation.





- 6 Clockwise from left, Sisters Carol Depner, Marie Paula Hardy, Clara Scherr, Ruth Reischman and Susana Córdova Castillo.



- 7 John Winkels, director of liturgy and music at Holy Family Parish, Kansas City, Mo., gave an engaging and entertaining review of “Liturgical Music through the Ages” during the Chapter.



- 8 SCLs and Associates gathered to bless the peacepole, crafted by Sister Pam Hinkle (in foreground at left) for the Mother House campus.

- 9 *Newly elected members of the SCL Council:*  
Sisters Nancy Bauman, Eileen Hurley, Maureen Hall and Eileen Haynes.



# Riding the waves with her sense of humor

*As a kid, Sister Mary Loretto Lyons said that she wanted to run a taco restaurant. “That could have led to ‘Taco Mary’ instead of ‘Taco Bell’ as a national chain,” she joked.*

Or, with her sense of humor and wit, she could have easily become a stand-up comedienne. Instead and on her second try, she became a Sister of Charity and has devoted the past 28 years to the senior housing ministry in the Denver, Colo., area. She currently serves as director of purchasing for Archdiocesan Housing, affiliated with Catholic Charities and the Archdiocese of Denver.

Sister Mary Loretto first entered the SCLs right out of high school, but home sickness took her home. She next became an “honest horse trader” buying and selling horses, but she couldn’t “shake the call” to become a Sister. In 1978, she re-entered the Community. After working in a couple of SCL hospitals and then as office manager at Hayden High School, Topeka, Kan., Sister Mary Loretto found her niche in senior housing in 1982.

At the time, Sister Mary Lucy Downey and a group of 18 SCLs were developing and serving this ministry in Denver. Sister Mary Loretto was invited to become a food service manager at one of the sites and became known for her 5-pound cream puffs and as the “supreme fire flailer”! She went on to serve as administrator of three different sites. In that role, she said



*While she’s known and appreciated for her sense of humor, Sister Mary Loretto Lyons is on task and serious about saving money through her purchasing job with Archdiocesan Housing in the Denver area.*

that she interacted with tenants and “generally ran out with a big feather to tickle them and make sure that they were in a good mood.”

She took residents shopping and on short trips for recreation, and she managed the facilities. “I could do anything back then,” she recalled, “because if someone didn’t come into work, I did their work.”

Today, in her role in purchasing, she manages 20 accounts that include plumbing, electrical supplies, power

tools and assorted other items.

“I do save money,” she said.

“I’m relentless in trying to get a good deal.”

Of this ministry that she has grown to love, Sister Mary Loretto said, “I’ve known all kinds of folks, and I’ve ridden all kinds of waves.” She appreciates that the housing ministry continues to help people have a really good place to live who might otherwise not be able to afford it.



## Keeping the Mother House like home an important priority



*Sister Rita Smith in the office from which she served as Mother House administrator.*

As she reflected on her 12 years as Mother House administrator, Sister Rita Smith said that seeing the facility undergo major renovations was among the most memorable projects she helped coordinate. Sister Rita retired from her role this fall.

“The Mother House is such an important place in our lives,” she said, “and it’s a beautiful spot to welcome our family and friends. To care for it, to make and keep it a beautiful place and to help the Sisters be comfortable, as it is our home, were all very special opportunities for me.”

Mother House administration oversees a number of departments including housekeeping, maintenance, food service, finance, human resources, transportation and the laundry. There are 101 lay employees who contribute to the smooth operations of the facilities and the grounds and to maintenance of SCL houses in the Leavenworth/Lansing area.

Matters that crossed Sister Rita’s desk as administrator pertained to cleaning the Mother House; painting and repairs; environmental and safety needs; preparing and monitoring the budget; obtaining bids for major purchases or projects; being attentive to the needs of employees; and working with food service staff. “I tried to be present to whatever needs came across my doorstep and desk daily,” she said. Sister Rita added her artistic touch to table decorations for special occasions celebrated

in the Mother House dining room and to other spots of beauty throughout the Mother House.

Sister Rita felt privileged to have been mentored and interned by Sister Mary Kevin Hollow and to have worked with Sister Kathleen Stefani who served as assistant Mother House coordinator. She called these former Community Directors, both now deceased, “two great women who influenced my life.” Likewise, Sister Rita enjoyed working with Sister Sue Miller, the Community Director under whom she served.

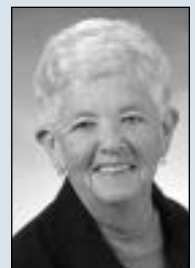
As to what her next mission/ministry will be, Sister Rita has options in mind. “My heart always returns to considering education,” the former high school instructor and administrator said. Or there’s data entry or some other role she could fill. “My intention is to work and to make a contribution to the Community,” Sister Rita said, “and to be in a ministry that’s meaningful.”

### Two SCLs share responsibilities



*Sister Margaret Finch*

Sisters Margaret Finch and Ann McGuire are now sharing responsibilities for Mother House administrative duties. Sister Margaret is working in the Mother House. Sister Ann’s duties include oversight of the grounds and houses in Leavenworth and Lansing.



*Sister Ann McGuire*



Father Thomas Keating, Sister Bernadette Marie Teasdale and Abbot Joseph Boyle during a staff retreat.

## Re-Markings



As she prepares for her retirement in June 2011, Sister Bernadette expressed deep appreciation for the spiritual faith community that has evolved from the centering prayer tradition furthered by Trappist Father Thomas Keating. “We’ve become like a little family,” she said of the Denver-based Contemplative Outreach initiative that is part of an international movement based in 70 cities and 33 countries.

# CENTERING PRAYER helps feed people’s hunger for God

As extroverted and talkative as she is, it’s a quirky coincidence and even a joke among her friends and acquaintances that Sister Bernadette Marie Teasdale’s main ministry has centered on contemplation and centering prayer.

Yet, of her role as coordinator of the Denver Center of Contemplative Outreach of Colorado, she said with deep sincerity, “This has been the love of my life. It’s not been work. I love the people and the hospitality. It’s become a way of life for me.”

Sister Bernadette has witnessed “25 years of growth of the Spirit” in this movement and has had a pivotal role in teaching, hosting and directing activities in support of centering prayer. She received her training from Father Thomas Keating and has trained other people to facilitate centering prayer.

The Denver Center hosts classes, retreats, days of prayer and a very popular annual conference—all related to centering prayer. The Center has an active mailing list of 3,600 names. Under Sister Bernadette’s leadership, the Center has expanded rented space to meet the demands for classes, days of prayer and other programs.

Most importantly in Sister Bernadette’s estimation, as the Holy Spirit has drawn in people of all faiths, she has seen them mature in their faith. “People’s hunger for God has gotten so much stronger,” she believes. “I’ve watched people grow through their commitment to centering prayer. They live the prayer. It’s beautiful to watch the Spirit work.”

Empowering lay persons to continue the centering prayer tradition has remained one of Sister Bernadette’s avocations. The web of influence reflects that this is occurring. There are 26 small groups meeting throughout the Denver area to share the centering prayer experience. The retreat center in Snowmass, Colo., is very busy. And people are very open to the work that Father Thomas has done in support of this movement of the Spirit.

“In the madness of our world,” Sister Bernadette said, “it’s so vital to be in touch with the God within us.”

# Degree probes relationship with earth

*Sister Rejane Cytacki is taking her interest in the earth to new levels as she pursues a master's degree in earth literacy and shares her learning with students in her 5th grade classroom and with SCLs.*

Enrolled in a three-year program through St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, West Terre Haute, Ind., Sister Rejane is in the fourth of six semesters with a cohort of seven other students. Participants take online courses and gather once a semester in West Terre Haute for intensive coursework.

"Overall, this degree is about ecology and sustainable living practices," Sister Rejane explained. The program has a spirituality component that allows deep sharing among the students who come from different faith backgrounds.

Coursework has included study of ecosystems; how the environment plays into the day-to-day lives of different cultures; environmental ethics and economics; and other related topics. Early in the program, students did an assignment related to a place important to them. Sister Rejane focused on Leavenworth, the glacial history of Kansas, the transitional prairie and the woodlands. She traced creeks that started at Fort Leavenworth and meandered in different directions.

"I developed a sense of place from a natural vantage point," she said of the experience.



She shared her findings in a presentation to the Mother House and Ross Hall Sisters. She posed questions that included: What is our relationship to this land? Are we living with the land, on the land or taking from it?

Referring to Native American spirituality in which the land is considered a living organism in a spiritual sense, Sister Rejane said, "If we viewed the land this way, we would all think about it differently." Sister Rejane hopes to incorporate the Mother House campus and land into the focus of her master's thesis.

In the meantime, she introduces her interest in the earth into

*Worms and decaying objects held the attention of 5th graders as they explored the compost bin. Pictured left to right with Sister Rejane Cytacki at Xavier Elementary School, Leavenworth, Kan., were Grant Mullins, Sarah Sittenauer, Robert Bagwell and Jared Thibault.*

hands-on-experiences in her classroom at Xavier Elementary School, Leavenworth, Kan. Her 5th graders continue to cultivate a compost bin that Sister Rejane has had for three years. They share her fascination with worms that thrive on decaying fruits and vegetables. And, thanks to Sister Rejane, they are learning to respect nature as a sacred and fascinating treasure.



## SCL PHOTO GALLERY



**Sister Rejane Cytacki** renewed her vows during a Mass at St. Francis de Sales Parish, Lansing, Kan., Aug. 29.



**Sister Marietta Huppert** (right) received the SCL Constitution from Sister Maureen Hall, Community Director, during a rite of welcome and acceptance on Aug. 15 in Ross Hall Chapel.



**Sister Marietta** with Sister Patricia Connolly, her good friend, during the reception following the rite of welcome and acceptance.



**Basking in the sun and the enjoyment** of their Golden Jubilee Celebration, 2010 honorees included: seated, left to right, Sisters Bonnie Ann Bachle, Eileen Hurley, Charlotte Marie White, Ruth Ann Hehn, Ann Victoria Garcia, Nancy Bauman; standing, Virginia Jakobe, Suzanne Retherford, Frances Juiliano, Irene Skeehan, Mary Jo McDonald, Jane Jackson and Mary Lex Smith.

## OF SPECIAL NOTE

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



*Among friends recognizing Sister Roberta Furey on her 40th anniversary with Mount St. Vincent Home were staff members.*

### Sister Roberta recognized for 40 years of service

Mount St. Vincent Home, Denver, Colo., celebrated 40 years of loving, healing service by **Sister Roberta Furey** with a special observance in her honor on St. Vincent's feast day, Sept. 27. Cumulatively over three different periods, Sister Roberta has worked and been a surrogate mother to thousands of children for 40 years.

Sister Roberta was "roasted" during a staff meeting at Mount St. Vincent Home. She received an autographed football from John Elway, former Denver Broncos quarterback. John's inscription said, "You're on my all star team."

An avid sports fan, Sister Roberta follows local professional teams and also cheers Mount St. Vincent teams at practices and games. She greets all the children every morning as they arrive at the front door for school—dispensing hugs, sports scores and directions to walk, not run, to their classrooms.

Sister Roberta continues to receive many Mother's Day cards every year from the boys she raised at Mount St. Vincent and contemporary cheers from the preschool parents who find her a positive presence in their children's lives.

### Lifelong learner having time of her life

**Sister Mary Hilaria Phipps** is having the time of her life catching up on the history courses she didn't get to take during her years as an educator.

Since 2007, when she returned to the Mother House campus, Sister Mary Hilaria has audited 13 courses for a total

of 39 semester hours at the University of Saint Mary (USM). For her efforts, she received recognition from the university in August as a lifelong learner.

Ken Mulliken, chair of USM's department of history, political science and global studies, and director of the Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute, said, "I believe it is consistent with the mission of USM to dedicate one's self to lifelong learning. Sister Mary Hilaria exemplifies that type of dedication. We recognized her as an individual, but on a larger scale, it was recognition of an attribute that the USM faculty and staff would like to promote and instill in our students."

As a young SCL, Sister Mary Hilaria began taking courses at USM in September 1943. As a lifelong educator at the elementary, secondary and college levels, she taught most subjects except history. She always enjoyed attending summer school and took courses at 13 other universities and colleges over the years.

It was natural for Sister Mary Hilaria to continue to immerse herself in the classroom at USM. She does reading for the courses but doesn't take tests or write papers. She has the best of both worlds—exchanging ideas with students and the professor, and filling a void in her own education as a lifelong learner.

Ken said, "From my perspective, it is good to have her in class because her comments are wise and insightful and make the students think. Sister Mary Hilaria's attendance and participation in my classes have built a bridge between the SCLs and the students.

"She is able to observe a new generation of students, comparing and contrasting this generation with previous students she has taught," Ken continued. "While there are several SCLs who serve as USM staff or faculty members, and students see other Sisters around campus, I think we should make every effort to foster a closer relationship between the students and the SCLs."



*Sister Mary Hilaria Phipps (seated) received a certificate for her lifelong learning accomplishments from Sister Diane Steele, president of the University of Saint Mary.*

*(Photo compliments of the USM marketing department)*

## Special honors go to...

### **Sister Elizabeth Youngs**

assistant superintendent of schools for the Denver Archdiocese, received the Colorado Excellence in Education Award for 2009-2010. The award, presented by the Colorado State Council, is given annually to a person who has demonstrated unparalleled leadership in promoting and advancing excellence in education. Russ Ramsey, director of AdvancED Colorado, presented the award at the John Paul II Center on Sept. 9 during a meeting for principals of Catholic schools.



• • •

Twenty-seven SCLs were among the 1,080 persons gathered for the Catholic Education Foundation *Gaudeamus* event on Oct. 30 at the Overland Park Convention Center. Three religious communities were honored for their service to Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas: the Benedictines from Atchison; the Ursulines (formerly from Paola, now in Kentucky); and the SCLs. The leader of each community received a plaque.

• • •

The Montana Association of Churches Assembly in Great Falls paid special tribute to **Sister Eileen Hurley** during its October meeting. A tree was planted in her honor with a dedication stone in front of the Ursuline Centre. Participants included Bishop Jessica Crist and Dr. Ruth Fletcher, who praised Sister Eileen's participation in the ecumenical body and her help establishing and maintaining the Lay Ministry Institute. Sister Eileen had served as director of lay ministry for the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. She left that position to assume responsibilities as a newly elected SCL Community Councilor.



• • •

Parishioners at Most Pure Heart of Mary Parish, Topeka, Kan., recognized **Sister Audrey Meanor** for 36 years of service to the parish and school. Hundreds gathered after Mass for a heartfelt greeting and to say thank you to Sister Audrey who moved to Leavenworth.



• • •

The Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver from the Kansas City metropolitan area submitted two winning nominations to their National Convention for awards. **Brad Grabs**, SCLA, received the 2010 Soaring High Award for the Learning Club. Brad directs a twice weekly club of learners in an environment "where students imagine, dream and succeed." For more information go to [www.learningclubkck.org](http://www.learningclubkck.org).

**Sister Rejane Cytacki** received the 2010 Educate the Religious Award—a monetary gift toward her education. Sister Rejane belonged to the Ladies of St. Peter Claver when she was a member of Our Lady & St. Rose Parish, Kansas City, Kan.

• • •

For dedicating "her life's work toward empowering and advocating for those marginalized by society, particularly young people and children in distressed situations," **Sister**



**Vickie Perkins** received a Harmony 2010 Humanitarian Award in the Kansas City area this fall. Sister Vickie is president of Cristo Rey High School, Kansas City, Mo. Harmony is a public relations organization with a long history of expertise in developing cultural competence and leveraging diversity.

• • •





### SCL recognized as trailblazer

A bronze sculpture of Sister Mary Balbina Farrell was unveiled Friday, Oct. 15, at Seventh and Main Streets in downtown Grand Junction, Colo. This is the third of five sculptures placed downtown in the Legends of the Grand Valley public art project to honor pioneers and trailblazers in the area's history. Sisters Mary Balbina and Mary Louisa Madden founded and operated the first St. Mary's Hospital in 1896. The SCLs went to Grand Junction at the request of a local pastor. The Sisters collected funds door-to-door to build the first 10-bed hospital. In the sculpture, Sister Mary Balbina gestures north to the location where St. Mary's Hospital now stands.

### SCLs participate in vocation awareness

This is the fourth year that **Sisters J. Vianney Martinez** and **Mary Clarita Sternitzke** represented the SCLs at the two-day Focus 11 (Religious Vocation Awareness Program) for 6th graders of the Denver Archdiocesan Catholic schools.

The event occurred in early October at Holy Trinity Parish, Westminster, Colo. **Sister Sharon Smith**, SCL vocation director, provided Vincentian prayer information cards and colorful bracelets with sayings such as "Jesus Loves Me," "God Made Me Special" and several other expressions, for the elementary students.

The days included Mass, singing, talks, videos and questions asked of the Sisters at the displays. As the Sisters had been involved in the ministry of teaching, they found the experience rewarding. **Sister Renee**

**Washut** participated on the third day of the program for students from Machebeuf and Holy Family High Schools. **Sister Elizabeth Youngs**, assistant superintendent of education for the Archdiocese of Denver, assisted in planning this annual activity sponsored by the Serrans.

"It was evident to the Sisters," Sister Mary Clarita said, "that the SCL Community has made an impact in Catholic education, as well as in other areas of service in our ministry to the people of God."



*Sister J. Vianney Martinez*



*Sister Mary Clarita Sternitzke*



*Sister Renee Washut*

## Attending the ball as pioneer Sisters

When Santa Fe, N.M., celebrated the 400th anniversary of its Cathedral with a period costume ball in August, **Sister Phyllis Stowell** and a Sister co-worker thought it was important to include women religious in the event as a reminder of those who had assisted with the faith formation of the city and the parish. Sister Phyllis and Sister Josephine Macias, CDP, wore historic versions of early habits to the event. **Sister Ann Barton** helped locate the habits, and Sister Josephine contributed her sewing talents.

The Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi is the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Bishop Jean Baptiste Lamy, the first bishop of Santa Fe, had the cathedral built.



Left to right, Sister Phyllis Stowell, director of adult faith formation; Msgr. Jerome Martinez y Alire, rector; and Sister Josephine Macias, CDP, director of religious education for children, all of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Santa Fe., N.M.

## SCLs in the news

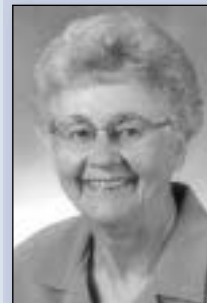
An article in the Oct. 11 *Billings Gazette* celebrated the life and times of **Sister Mary Depner** in Montana, as an SCL and as a teacher and a musician. Sister Mary most recently volunteered in the spiritual care department of St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings. She relocated to the Mother House in late October.



“How did you spend your summer vacation?” **Sister Mary Jo Quinn** asked in an article she authored in the *Missoulian* (Sept. 4, 2010). Sister Mary Jo, who serves Blessed Trinity Catholic Community, Missoula, Mont., shared with readers that she had traveled to Leavenworth for the SCL Chapter and attended the National Association of Pastoral Musicians Convention in Detroit, Mich. In both cases, a river figured into Sister Mary Jo’s journeys and recollections. “A journey, a river, a song, a text for me to move into fall noticing ‘who is there with me,’ celebrating the fruits of this summer,” she wrote.



A Colorado man who had been photographed for a newspaper article in 1956, when he lived at St. Joseph’s Home in Helena, Mont., received help this summer from **Sister Dolores Brinkel**, archivist, Diocese of Helena, in tracking down the photo.



Stephen Richardson of Colorado Springs, Colo., was driving from Glacier National Park in July when he stopped at the chancery to ask about photo records. In particular, he remembered a photo of himself as a young boy in the swimming pool.

Sister Dolores helped him locate the July 1956 article published in *The Register*, the diocesan newspaper. The article with eight photos and the title “A Day with Steve at St. Joseph’s Home” featured the young boy and his brothers. “I had no idea what I looked like,” Steve said. “I had no idea what my brothers looked like. The last time I had seen my brothers was in the late ‘50s.

“Seeing the newspaper pictures was a very nice find,” he said. St. Joseph’s closed in 1965, just over 70 years after its founding by the SCLs.

(Adapted from article in *The Montana Catholic Online*, July 16, 2010).

## Founders Day in Kansas City and Billings



Pointing north toward Leavenworth and with a Lewis and Clark sculpture in the background, SCLs and Associates in the Kansas City area gathered bright and early on Founders Day at Kaw Point, the confluence of the Kaw and Missouri Rivers. Their prayers commemorated the passage of SCLs traveling north to Leavenworth in 1858. Len and Kitty Bronec and Terri Butel coordinated the prayer service.



On Saturday, Nov. 13, in observance of Founders Day, Sisters, Associates and other volunteers provided breakfast for about 100 guests at the Vincent de Paul Store in Billings, Mont. Pictured left to right, Bev Kenny, a potential Associate; Sister Marie Damian Glatt; Bonnie Herminghaus, SCLA; Mary Cook, potential Associate; and Kay Latta, SCLA.

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 Fourth Street, Leavenworth, KS 66048-5054.





## Educator, maverick, innovator, artist

*Sister Rita Marie Anderson  
has been an educator  
practically all her life!  
She has also been somewhat  
of a maverick in the settings  
in which she has taught,  
particularly in the area  
of learning disabilities.*

As a child in the small, one-room school near Stull, Kan., she often taught younger children as the “teacher’s helper,” and on occasion, when the teacher became ill, she took over the school. Her Mother was a teacher who, according to the custom of those days, did not teach if she had a child. She often felt that her daughter’s education was slighted during the school day, so she obtained texts and workbooks from the county superintendent.

Mrs. Anderson knew several Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. In fact, she named her daughter after Sister Rita Marie Heintzelman. Because her parents wanted their daughter to have some religious education in high school, they enrolled Rita Marie at St. Mary’s Academy in Leavenworth, Kan. She entered the SCL Community in 1948. Her early missions involved teaching at the primary grade level in various parochial schools, where it was commonplace for the Sisters to have 50 or more children in their classes—far different than the one-room school with seven or eight children!

## Introduction to a new field

Then Sister Rita Marie was sent as an intern to the Kennedy Child Study Center, Santa Monica, Calif., a treatment center for children with various problems. A psychologist introduced her to the new field of learning disabilities, and Sister Rita Marie began her master's work in this area at the University of Southern California.

However, for personal reasons, she returned to the Midwest and became the in-house teacher at St. Vincent's Home for Children in Topeka, Kan., while continuing work on her master's degree at the University of Kansas. At that time, there were no provisions for special education in the parochial schools, so Sister Rita embarked on a new opportunity to find a job.

A first request to the Topeka district went up the hierarchical ladder, with administration afraid of the concept of a Sister teaching in the public schools. However, the school district needed to start a learning disabilities program a year later and found that Sister Rita Marie was the only one who had the credentials.

Did she have to wear a habit with a veil? No; the Sisters were in transitional dress. Could she be addressed as Miss Anderson? Yes; although both the staff and the parents of the children knew who she was. Sister Rita Marie described it as "a mission of witness." The only parent who ever objected was a conservative Catholic who referred to her as "that renegade nun" and yet was delighted that his daughter was finally happy and learning. "The 25 years I spent in the Topeka public schools were the happiest teaching experience of my life!" Sister Rita Marie said.



*In 2005, Sister Rita Marie received the Professional Literacy Award from the Kansas Reading Association.*

## Innovative approaches

Students with learning disabilities have normal or above normal intelligence, yet are failing to read, write or understand math at the normal level. At a young age, they think of themselves as failures. Sister Rita Marie had to re-introduce them to learning in new and creative ways.

For example, students studied various Native American tribes in their North American geography lesson. They had a totem pole in the classroom and learned about the ocean, forests and mountains. They listened to books read aloud about the native people or put on tape recorders for a "read along."

"We recited Native American poetry and practiced reading and giving plays about their lives," she said.

Even the nuts and bolts of learning to read and write were

taught in innovative ways that were different from the methods the children had tried and failed. It might take a while, but eventually Sister Rita Marie found that the children rediscovered themselves as learners.

## Retired, but not really

When it was time to retire, Sister Rita Marie applied to Our Lady of Guadalupe/Holy Family School, where she was the half-day learning resource and ESL teacher for 11 years. During nearly 40 years of teaching in Topeka, she was recognized as Kansas Learning Disability Teacher of the Year and Kansas Literacy Person of the Year.

When she retired to the Mother House in 2008, still with current learning disability certification, Sister Rita Marie wanted to continue teaching. For two hours daily, she volunteers at Xavier Primary, working with kindergarten children.

What does she do when she is not teaching? Sister Rita Marie reads, sometimes does errands for Mother House Sisters, studies Spanish, is the Mother House "roving reporter," and makes sure each Sister in the Mother House and Ross Hall is greeted with a balloon and a handmade card on the morning of her birthday. She is gradually getting back to her other avocation as artist. Many of her watercolors hang in the rooms of Ross Hall.

What does she like about the Mother House? The balance of community and solitude. Also, between discussion groups and evening activities at the Mother House and concerts, plays and lectures at the University of Saint Mary, Sister Rita Marie's social calendar is never empty!

## Beyond All Borders

# Meet our Hermanas of Peru

*At the suggestion of Sister Ruth Reischman, the eight Hermanas native to Peru who serve in Peru shared their stories with Voices of Charity for this special feature.*

*They were asked to describe their origins, how they met the SCL Community, their ministries and what they do in their free time.*



*Hermana Julia Huiman Ipanaqué visiting with a villager and offering some health education information.*



*Hermana Liduvina Dominguez Córdova with her students in the classroom.*



*A sunny day in Peru as people gather on a hillside.*

### Hermana Deidy Rosario Abad Pulache

I was born in the hospital in Castilla, Piura. Until I was 17 years old, I lived in Santa Julia, part of the parish of Santa Rosa in Piura. I went to grade school and high school in Piura. At the age of 12, I was prepared by the Salesian Sisters for my First Holy Communion. This was a wonderful moment which I had longed for to unite myself with Christ in the Holy Eucharist. I was confirmed in Santa Rosa Church when I was 15 years old.

When my youngest brother, Elvis Angel was born, the situation of our family was very bad. At 7 months of age, he was so malnourished that a nurse from the clinic in Santa Julia suggested that we take him to the Sisters of Charity in Santa Rosa. My Mother and I took him to the convent. Sister Mary Patricia Kielty gave us some medicine and some food for the baby and referred my Mother to the parish where they had a food program. This was the first time I had met the Sisters of Charity.



While my sister Lourdes was a postulant, I went to Negritos to visit her. Later I spent three months in the Formation Center in Chulucanas. One summer, I helped with vacation school for a month in Chalaco where I taught the children dances and assisted with catechetics. This experience was crucial in my decision to join the Community. In 1997, I went to Talara as a postulant and in 1998 to Chalaco where I visited the zones of the parish and worked with the catechists and the liturgy groups. I was in Lopez Albuja for my canonical year and in 2000 made my first vows in Talara where I was working as a teacher's helper in a grade school.

From 2001 to 2003, I was in Chalaco again where I was in charge of the youth group of the parish and family catechetics. In 2004, I went to La Arena where I taught religion in all five grades of high school. From 2005 to 2007, I attended the University of Champagnat in Lima, and since 2008 I have been teaching religion in all five grades of high school in Chuschi. The language of the people there is Quechua. I am learning some words. (The young people do speak Spanish.)



In my spare time, I like to sing, play the guitar, paint, draw, visit families, read spiritual books, visit the Internet, prepare my lessons and do the things that we need to do in the convent.

### Hermana Nery Lourdes Abad Pulache

I was born in the regional hospital in Castilla, a district of Piura. My Mother said that it happened to be Holy Thursday. I am the first daughter of my Mother Santos Anselma Pulache Pulache and Agustín Abad Chuquimarca.

My Mother is a seamstress and comes from a very religious family. She is the one who has taught us the value of perseverance and patience. My Father sold clothing and now is distributing fish to other merchants. There are six of us, four girls and two boys. My youngest brother died of malnutrition when he was 9 months old.

My Mother is the principal leader of the faith in our family. She is an active participant in our parish. Deidy is my younger sister and is also a Sister of Charity. Aury is the third. She is at home helping my Mother with the housework. She also participates in the activities of the parish. Kely has recently given birth to a little girl, and now we have our first niece named Dulce Maria. My two brothers are the last in the family. Harry is working and helping to support the family. Joel is studying in the university in Piura.

I entered the Community when I finished high school at the age of 17. When I was 14 and 15, I helped in a soup kitchen in Santa Rosa Parish, and there I learned more about the financial situation of our neighbors, and I met the Sisters of Charity. On one occasion, they came to visit us. I took part in the parish while I was preparing for Confirmation, and I got to know the Sisters better. One summer I helped with summer school in the zone Nueva Esperanza.

During the novitiate, I lived in Negritos in the house facing the ocean. We no longer have that house. My first mission was in Chalaco, a beautiful place with very welcoming people and a well organized diocesan pastoral plan. I was there for five years and then went to Lopez Albujar in the western part of Piura. I was there a few months when we opened a new mission in La Arena in Baja Piura. In March 2003, I went with Sister Susana Castillo to begin a new mission in Chuschi. Later, I lived there with Sisters Regina Deitchman and Clorinda Timaná. My last year there, my sister Deidy joined us.



The experience in Chuschi has profoundly strengthened my dedication as a Sister of Charity. At present, I am living in Chalaco again.

I like to visit other communities and learn more about the needs of the people, their joys and achievements. This is an enriching experience. It is a joy and a challenge to share the faith as a Sister of Charity in these times, but I believe that the greatest conversion is my own which I have achieved with the grace of God and the help of my Sisters in the Community and the people of God.

### Hermana Susana Córdova Castillo

I was born in Quinchayo, a district of Santo Domingo in the Department of Piura. I have one sister, Margaret, who is a Franciscan Sister and one brother, Marciano, who is married and lives in Santo Domingo with his wife and three children. We grew up in the country and lived in a house economically poor but full of love and attention with loving and welcoming parents. My Mother was the liturgist in our chapel for many years. My parents, who are now in heaven, gave us all that we needed to live a good life.

Before I entered the Community, I worked and studied with the Sisters Canonesses of the Cross for my first three years of high school. The Sisters of Charity helped me finish my last years of high school.

I met the Sisters of Charity in the formation house in Canchaque. Afterwards, I visited with Sisters Elena Mack and Sally Watson in 1981 and entered the Community in 1982. After I entered, I finished my last years of high school and had courses in catechetics, spirituality and later advanced studies at the University of Champagnat in Lima.

I worked in Piura and Chalaco in the pastoral plan and in a school for a short time in Bajo Piura. At the present time, I have the opportunity to work in "Peru Profundo" in the Andes in Chuschi, province of Ayabaca, with special people who have suffered from poverty and violence (especially in the time of the Shining Path terrorists). They are marginalized socially and politically, but they receive life and hope from their closeness with God.

In my spare time, I like to visit the families to talk with the people, to enjoy the countryside, to work in our garden and listen to music, especially the music of Ayacucho and Huancavelica. I like to share my joy in the life which I have, especially where I am at the present time of my life with Sisters Clorinda and Deidy and with



the people of Chuschi. I like to contemplate the presence of God in these people—"Your people will be my people."

I always remember and thank God for his goodness to me, especially for his love and tenderness. I thank God who called me and accompanied me and directed my life by means of other Sisters. I give thanks for my family and the Community of Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

### Hermana Liduvina Dominguez Córdova

I was born in Trigopampa, a district of Chalaco. My Mother's name is Julia Córdova, and my Father's name Cristobal Dominguez. I am the youngest of three girls. My sisters Petronila and Luisa are both married. Our father died 19 years ago, and it is thanks to our Mother that we were able to finish grade school and high school. She is the one who taught us the Catholic faith in our home and took us to participate with her in the liturgy in the chapel and in the prayer groups—Base Christian Communities.



To go to high school, I had to walk an hour and a half to the village of Santiago. In March, it rains a lot. The roads become very muddy, and it is difficult to go anywhere. When the Sisters returned to Chalaco in the spring, they had to go by mule, and they went through Santiago. One day, I met them on the road, and I was very impressed at their joyful spirit and the generous service they were giving in such isolated places. I thought to myself, "Why can't I serve like those Sisters?" Later, I went with my uncle to talk to them at their convent in Chalaco. They received me happily and invited me to take part in a time of experience on the coast. This is how I first met the Sisters. The following year, I stayed with them in Chalaco for six months, and the next year, I was received as a postulant.

I began my journey as a Sister of Charity with the Sisters in Chalaco and feel so much happiness and satisfaction serving the people of God and at the same time learning from these simple people. Since last year, I have had the privilege of teaching religion in the high school in Chalaco. I also help in the parish with the youth group, Confirmation groups and in union with the other religion teachers of the diocese.

Thanks to the Community, I have been able to receive courses in higher education. Four years ago, I finished my licentiate in elementary education. At the present time, I am studying toward a second major in religious education at the University of Marcelino Champagnat.

### Hermana Julia Huiman Ipanaqué

I was born in the city of Talara in the north of Peru. I grew up in the same city with my parents and my two brothers and six sisters. I am the eighth child in the family. My parents were from a very religious town, and they taught us and helped us to grow in the faith and love of God.



I feel that my vocation was born from my experience of prayer and retreats in high school where I was taught by the Dominican Sisters of the Rosary. When I finished my high school studies in Talara, I went to Lima to study practical nursing. On my return to Talara, I worked in Santa Maria Clinic, but I continued to be unsettled because something was missing in my life.

While working in the clinic, I came to know the Sisters of Charity who served in the parish of Santa Rosa; the clinic is in this parish. I began to visit the Community and get to know the Sisters and their welcoming way and simplicity. I decided to make the decision that up till then I hadn't dared to make.

In 1990, the Sisters invited me to participate in an experience of six months in the Center of Formation in Chulucanas. It was a very good experience with 17 young women from different parishes of the Diocese of Chulucanas. On March 31, 1991, I entered the Community in the Santa Rosa convent, and Sister Donna Jean Henson was my formation person.

Today, I am living happily and serving in the parish of San Fernando in Chalaco in the health area. In this experience, I believe that the Lord gives me the grace to live our Vincentian charism in relationships with our brothers and sisters who have many needs and to recognize God's presence in each of them.

### Hermana Laura Rumiche Morales

I was born in a fishing village called San Pedro 10 minutes from Talara, Peru. I have four brothers and three sisters. My Father and brothers are all fishermen. My Mother is very active in the parish and belongs to a group devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. I have 23 nieces and nephews and another one on the way. It is a joyful occasion when we all meet together.



I met the Sisters when I studied to be a practical nurse. My specialty was working for healthy infants and

mothers. In San Pedro, Sisters Mary Anselma (Josephine) Bustos and Joan Kilker had a clinic where I spent many hours helping them with the expectant mothers. The Sisters let me use their typewriter for my studies. Later, I did my practice hours in the City Hall in Talara, and for one year I received a salary, which I left when I entered the Community. The Sisters gave me a scholarship in order to finish my studies. I am an executive secretary besides having my degree as an LPN.

In the Community, I have worked in Chalaco, Piura, Trujillo and now at the St. Vincent Center in Piura.

In my free time, I like to go to the beach and watch the sun go down over the ocean. One thing I would like to share is that in grade school I had a teacher who had a sister who was a missionary in Africa. She used to tell us about her, and I remember thinking that I would like to go to far off lands and bring the people to Jesus.

### Hermana Clorinda Timin Martinez

I was born in Negritos, a province of Talara. I have nine brothers and nine sisters. We are really three families. My Father married and was left a widower three times. The first family has the name Ayala; the second, Martinez; and the third, Sandoval. One of the characteristics of our family is that we treat each other as one single family. I am from the second family. I owe so much to my sisters Jacinta and Pauline who are the ones who took care of our family, almost as if they were our own Mother.



Before I entered the Community, I lived in Talara. When my Father retired from Petro-Peru, we lived with Jacinta, my sister, in her house in San Pedro in Talara and later moved to my Father's house in Piura-Castilla. I helped teach catechetics for First Communion and Confirmation at Santa Rosa in Talara and then at San Martin in Castilla. I also worked in a pharmacy and a bookstore in Talara.

The Sisters of Charity came to Talara in 1963. The St. James Fathers were in charge of Santa Rosa Parish, and at Mass they told us that some Sisters were coming to help in Santa Rosa School. When they came to the 7:00 p.m. Mass, a group of us girls went to look at them in their black habits. They were very friendly and greeted us. I knew Sisters Rosalie Mahoney and Irene Skeehan. Sister Rosalie visited my sister Jacinta's house because she has two deaf sons.

As a Sister of Charity, I have worked in Talara, Negritos, Santa Rosa, Cristo Rey and Lopez Albuja in Piura, and later in Chalaco and in La Arena, Bajo Piura. Now, I am in Chuschi in the province of Ayabaca. Next year, I will celebrate 25 years in the Community.

In my spare time, I like to clean, cook and listen to music. One final word. When I am in Talara, I visit Sra. Victoria Sanchez who has continued the "well baby" program started by Sisters Mary Anselma (Josephine) Bustos and Joan Kilker. Many mothers still bring their babies there on Tuesdays.

### Hermana Esther Vilela Gutirrez

I was born in Piura, Peru, and I have five brothers and three sisters. I am the fifth in the family and the oldest of the girls. Our Mother died when I was 7 years old, and we were raised by our Grandmother. My Father died six years ago. Only one brother is not married. All the others have children. I believe that my family is a family of hard workers because we have had many obstacles to overcome and move forward.



When I finished high school, I took part in different groups in the parish and in the archdiocese. I was in a youth group. We had groups of young people in Los Algarrobos in Piura, and this is where I first met the Sisters of Charity. I was impressed with their dedication and service to the poor there. Later, I met other Sisters like Sister Elena Mack and Sister Janet Cashman.

After grade school and high school, I studied to be an executive secretary. Later in Trujillo, I finished my teacher's training with a specialty in history and religion. I received my bachelor's degree at the University of Marcelino Champagnat in Lima and my licentiate from the University of Caesar Vallejo in Piura.

As a Sister of Charity, I have worked in Chalaco and in Trujillo where I helped with catechetics while I was studying there. I taught in Talara in a high school called Ignacio Merino, and now in Piura, I am teaching religion in a high school called Enrique Lopez Albuja.

In my free time, I like to listen to music, clean and visit other places. I am grateful to the Community for the charism which they share with us here in Peru and for all that they do for us.



## Sudan beckons SCL



Congratulations and Godspeed to **Sister Patricia Marie Johannsen** who has been accepted for a new mission assignment in Southern Sudan.

Her ministry will be in response to the Solidarity with Southern Sudan initiative that has sought gifts of time, talent and treasure to serve the people of this war-torn country. The SCLs had made a major financial gift to the initiative during the Community's 150th Jubilee Year.

Sister Pat will attend the Institute of Cross Cultural Ministry in San Antonio from Feb. 8-March 9. She will then join other religious men and women from around the world in Southern Sudan. There will also be a program in the Sudan to prepare Sister Pat for the challenges of living and working there. Her ministry will include "teaching the teachers" as the country struggles to rebuild.

## SCL presence at

*It was a bright, sunny day in a soybean field in southeast Kansas City, Mo., as a group of peaceful resisters protested the ground breaking for the new plant that will manufacture parts for nuclear weapons.*

Protesters gathered on Sept. 8, on a hillside at the entrance to the property with signs and chants for peace and "No nukes!" During the resisters' program (prior to and at a distance from the ground breaking site), Sister Therese Bangert, SCL social justice coordinator, read the SCL 2010 Chapter Statement about Earth and the Community's commitment to advocate for nuclear disarmament. Sisters Therese and Marie de Paul Combo carried signs of Mary the Hibakusha, depicting the burnt remnant of the wooden statue of Mary Immaculate from the Nagasaki cathedral, which was totally destroyed in the atomic blast of Aug. 9, 1945. ("Hibakusha" is the Japanese term for survivors of the atomic blasts.) Sister Cele Breen and Associates Therese Horvat and Ed Simons also participated.

Sister Marie de Paul had discovered the burnt image of Mary and tracked it to Bob Reers, a New York photographer, who granted the SCLs permission to use the photo on the signs and prayer cards. Sister Marie de Paul described the image as "striking and almost haunting, and a wonderful icon" for the resistance efforts. A Japanese nun, Sister Filo Hirota, had told the resisters that "Mary's image has become a symbol of commitment to a nuclear-free world and an invitation to work for peace."



*Sister Therese Bangert addressed the group of resisters gathered at the site of the new plant in southeast Kansas City where parts will be manufactured for nuclear weapons.*



The burnt image of Mary of Nagasaki has become a symbol of commitment to a nuclear-free world.

(Photo by Bob Reers 5/10©)

### Prayer for peace

*God of Love, help us to be masters of the weapons that threaten to master us. Grant light, grant strength and patience to all who work for peace. And bless our earnest will to help all races and people to travel, in friendship with us, along the road to justice, liberty and lasting peace.*

(Excerpts from Thomas Merton's prayer)

# nuclear protest

## Letter to the editor

Sister Therese Bangert and Sister Jeanne Christensen, a Sister of Mercy, wrote a letter to the editor published in *The Kansas City Star* in August that compared Kansas City's response to the building of a law firm office on the Country Club Plaza and the construction of the plant for manufacturing parts for nuclear weapons and an earlier protest.

They wrote, "Nearly 7,000 persons responded to *The KC Star* survey about the proposed Plaza building and *The Star* reported the building having 2,000 Facebook fans. Earlier this month, a group of approximately 75 resisters protested the building of the plant where parts of nuclear weapons would be manufactured, and 14 of them were arrested for their efforts.

"While many appreciate the unique architecture of the Plaza, how can anyone ignore the potential destruction caused by even one nuclear bomb?...So we ask, where is the concern that Kansas City is becoming one of the three hubs to aid in the production of weapons that could accidentally or intentionally destroy Earth?

"Pope Benedict XVI declares, 'In a nuclear war there would be no victors, only victims. The truth of peace requires that all...agree to change their course by clear and firm decisions, and strive for a progressive and concerted nuclear disarmament.'"

## Chapter 2010: increased advocacy for nuclear disarmament

SCLs and Associates have been encouraged to keep contacting their current U.S. Senators, urging them to support ratification of the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) signed by President Obama and Russian President Medvedev on April 8, 2010. This treaty with its verifiable provisions would reduce the number of deployed nuclear weapons in both countries, making the world safer. Many respected national political and military leaders, present as well as past, have endorsed this treaty. If the Senate has not ratified New START before the end of 2010, the next Congress will have to begin the ratification process all over again. START 1 will expire in December.

# Saga of poverty continues in Haiti



PLAGUED BY NATURAL DISASTERS AND THE LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, THE PEOPLE OF HAITI LIVE IN INDESCRIBABLE POVERTY. SO MUCH SO, EXPLAINED SISTER MARIE MADELEINE SHONKA, WHO TRAVELED TO HAITI FOR A MISSION TRIP THIS FALL, THAT PORT-AU-PRINCE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA LOOK MUCH AS THEY DID RIGHT AFTER THE JAN. 12 DESTRUCTIVE EARTHQUAKE.



Sister Marie Madeleine was in Haiti from Sept. 25 to Oct. 10 as part of a Heart to Heart International team. The team worked out of a clinic in a Nazarene church.

“The people looked at you as if you were Mother Teresa,” Sister Marie Madeleine said. “Knowing that there was someone who wanted to care for them was more than they could handle.”

Sister Marie Madeleine found the older people defeated with no spark in their eyes and the younger people entrepreneurial, trying to eke out a living and making \$3.50 a day. She experienced caring and sharing demonstrated by people like the Heart to Heart driver who extended his goodness letting others partake in his breakfast. Sister was impressed with the fervor of the Nazarenes and Pentecostals among her mission team. She met some of the dedicated Sisters of St. Anthony of Fondwa, whom the SCLs have supported in their efforts to operate a school and orphanage.

Sharing her story with SCLs at the Mother House on Nov. 18, Sister Marie Madeleine kept returning to what she perceived as “the saga of true, devastating poverty in Haiti. The people live by the good grace of God,” she said.





# ‘Sharing the sharable’ in Uganda

*Sister Paula Rose Jauernig has made mission trips in the past, but she had never been so directly involved in raising funds to help support a critical need as part of the journey.*



Thanks to the generosity of the Leavenworth Rotary Club, that donated \$3,500 and of SCLs, Associates, family, benefactors and friends, Sister raised in excess of \$9,000 to purchase insecticide-treated nets to ward off mosquitoes and to curb the incidence of malaria in the Mawuuki and Bukalagi regions of Uganda, Africa.

Sister Paula Rose traveled in Uganda Oct. 27 to Nov. 8 with two good friends, Michael and Joyce Feder, who had introduced her to the work of Father Simon Peter Kyambadde in the remote village of Mawuuki. The group distributed 650 nets and blankets to the children and staff at St. Joan of Arc School, and to pregnant women and mothers with children seen in the Bukalagi clinic. Excellent pricing on the nets (that have a five-year life) resulted from a partnership that involved the Rotary International, the Mubende Rotary in Uganda and the Leavenworth Rotary.

The team also provided donated educational materials, medications

and four hand-washing stations to the school, and uniforms, medical equipment, medications, and labor and delivery instruments to the clinic. Sister Paula Rose said Sister Sumtra, clinic director, responded as if it were Christmas when she received the donated items.

At the clinic, Sister Paula Rose put her nursing skills to use doing immunizations for infants, providing treatment for worms and malnutrition, and teaching staff how to use some of the donated medicines. She said that workers in the clinic considered Tylenol and Ibuprofen strong medications and stored them away for use during deliveries.

Sister Paula Rose had worked with the Feders and their family in recent years to raise funds to send to Father Simon Peter for his efforts. The family hosts an annual neighborhood garage sale and an ongoing aluminum can recycling program to benefit the school and clinic.

Recently, the Feders have formed Gotta Have HOPE, Inc., a non-profit

corporation through which funding can now be coordinated. The acronym HOPE stands for **H**ealthcare, **O**ppportunity, **P**otential, **E**ducation.

During their time in Uganda, Sister Paula Rose and the Feders also assessed other needs of the school, the clinic and the region. Inadequate water supply is a problem at the school. The clinic’s physical plant is in bad shape. The rural economy is poor with most people working as sustenance farmers with no products, businesses or markets in their villages. The U.S. citizens visited other programs that have had success including an educational program in crop and dairy farming and the use of solar power to pipe water into cisterns and then into buildings.

“Our visit was charged with the overwhelming spirit of hope present in these people to do what they can to ‘make it,’” Sister Paula Rose said. “I am reminded of a wonderful sign in the school yard—‘Share the sharable’—and, indeed, they do.”

# Endowed chair 'a double honor'



*Sister Susan Rieke was the center of attention as Sister Diane Steele, president, and Dr. Bryan Le Beau, vice president and dean of academic affairs, congratulated her on her installation to the new endowed chair of the University of Saint Mary.*



“With the endowed chair, I hope to help make USM better known as an institution with fine liberal arts academics.”

Installed in September to the first fully endowed chair of the University of Saint Mary (USM), Sister Susan Rieke reflected on what this special designation means to her and for the liberal arts college.

The endowed chair is recognition of a distinguished professorship. “In a way,” Sister Susan said, “it’s the fulfillment of an academic career.”

It’s a double honor for her because the endowed chair is named for Sister Mary Janet McGilley, USM president for 25 years and Sister Susan’s dear friend and colleague. Sister Susan deeply appreciates this connection with Sister Mary Janet.

The endowed chair also makes resources available to Sister Susan to pursue and promote projects important to her. She anticipates this will entail more time to devote to her own poetry, writing and teaching. She envisions doing poetry readings and giving talks on Emily Dickinson, the subject of her doctoral dissertation at the University of Iowa, or on other beloved authors of American literature, Sister Susan’s area of specialization and expertise. These

efforts would be in support of her goal to use the endowed chair to promote liberal arts on the Leavenworth campus and in a wider arena.

“It’s a national phenomenon that the humanities are in trouble on college campuses,” she said. “With the endowed chair, I hope to help make USM better known as an institution with fine liberal arts academics.”

Sister Susan is a 1966 alumna who has been affiliated with USM as faculty since 1980 when she joined the college as director of admissions. However, her Saint Mary ties run much deeper and are rooted in a family tradition with her Mother and her five siblings and Sister Susan and her four sisters all having attended the college.

“I knew USM prenatally!” she said. “The influence of this place has been formidable in my life.”

Over the next three years of the endowed chair, which is renewable, Sister Susan will have the opportunity to spread that influence and her love and respect for USM and the liberal arts.

## New president/CEO named for SCLHS

*Michael A. Slubowski, FACHE, FACMPE, will join the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System (SCLHS) in January as its new president and chief executive officer. Mike will replace William M. Murray who is retiring after 12 years in this SCLHS leadership position.*

**M**ike currently serves as president, Health Networks, for Trinity Health, a \$7 billion Catholic health care system based in Novi, Mich., that serves patients and communities in eight states. He has led or supported the development of community-based Accountable Health Networks in each market served by a Trinity Health ministry organization and is accountable for strategy, operations, contracting and alignment across a full continuum of care within Trinity's enterprise.

Mike has been with Trinity for 10 years in a number of senior leadership roles. From 2005 to 2009, he was president, Hospital and Health Networks for the organization, expanding programs for the poor and underserved by more than \$35 million annually, while strengthening financial performance and improving quality and safety scores. As executive vice president of Trinity's Eastern Division from 2001 to 2005, Mike improved operating results for long-term care/senior housing and increased customer satisfaction scores to the top decile nationally. Prior to that, he held executive leadership positions with Mercy Health Services in Farmington Hills, Mich., which merged with Holy Cross Health System to become Trinity Health in 2000.

His 35-year career began at Henry Ford Health System as vice president of ambulatory satellites and prepayment programs. Subsequent roles included leadership positions at St. Joseph's Healthcare in Clinton Township, Mich.; Samaritan Health Services, Phoenix, Ariz.; and Providence Hospital, Southfield, Mich.





# Health ministry

## A GRACED EXPERIENCE

*Of her 32 years with the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System (SCLHS), Sister Judith Jackson believes that it is the relationships she treasures most—relationships with individuals and with different groups of people—patients and families, staff and Board members. As she retires on Dec. 31 from her position as SCLHS vice president sponsorship/mission, Sister Judith leaves a legacy of service and an infrastructure to keep the mission front and center.*

**A**s an SCLHS vice president, Sister Judith has cultivated the role of hospital mission leaders as strategic thought partners in the health ministry and advanced the recognition that mission is the collective responsibility of all leaders and, indeed, of all staff. She is very proud of the mission leaders currently serving in SCLHS hospitals.

“The individuals in place now add such tremendous value to their organizations and to our ministry,” she said.

In terms of furthering a sense of mission among senior leaders, Sister Judith was instrumental in the development of the California-based Ministry Leadership Formation Center. She has served on the board of the center for the past seven years. This collaborative of six Catholic health systems is directed toward instilling the spirit of Catholic health care within senior leaders.

At the national level, Sister Judith has also represented SCLHS on the Supportive Care of the Dying

Coalition Board that has advanced palliative care and end-of-life services in Catholic hospitals. She continues to serve on the editorial advisory council of *Health Progress*, the magazine of the Catholic Health Association.

### Advancing the ministry

Bill Murray, SCLHS president/CEO, acknowledged Sister Judith’s contributions at the health system’s Fall Leadership Conference. He said, “Sister Judith has exuded warmth and compassion in her leadership role and has been a friend to all. She has helped to put a human face on everything we do at the system and has served as a moral rudder, making sure that our actions align with the mission and values of this health ministry.”

Across SCLHS, Sister Judith has overseen the evolution of



**Front, left to right,** Tracy Neary, St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings, Mont.; Sister Melissa Camardo, Exempla Saint Joseph Hospital, Denver, Colo.; Sister Judith Jackson, SCLHS; Sister Charlotte White, SCLHS; Dorothy Zabrocki, Holy Rosary Healthcare, Miles City, Mont.; Sister Jennifer Gordon, Providence Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan., and Saint John Hospital, Leavenworth, Kan.; and George Noonan, Providence, Saint John and St. Francis Health Center, Topeka, Kan. **Middle,** Ken Homan, SCLHS; Mary Luthy, Saint John’s Health Center, Santa Monica, Calif.; Mary Homan, St. Francis Health Center, Topeka, Kan.; Sister Catrina Bones, St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings; and LaTisha Starbuck, Saint John’s Health Center, Santa Monica. **Top,** Sister Barbara Aldrich and Gretchen Gore, St. Mary’s Hospital & Regional Medical Center, Grand Junction, Colo.

community benefit, the introduction of a system-level ethicist and the fostering of a sense of spirituality in the workplace. She sees the latter thriving among staff who demonstrate compassion and share sacred stories about their experiences in patient care.

For over a decade, Sister Judith served as the system liaison to the four SCLHS clinics for the uninsured. She was an advocate in the development of the clinics to serve the poor and vulnerable by providing access to health services.

Sister Judith's introduction to the health ministry began when she was completing her master's in spirituality at Creighton University, Omaha, Neb. Her degree required a clinical rotation, so she pursued clinical pastoral education. In this process, she recognized her calling to minister to the sick and the dying.

Over the years, she worked as a chaplain at St. Francis Health Center, Topeka, Kan.; St. James Healthcare, Butte, Mont.; and Providence Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan. Sister Judith joined the system office staff in 1993. During her administrative internship with SCLHS, she spent part of her time at Saint John's Health Center, Santa Monica, Calif. She was there when the Northridge earthquake struck in 1994—an uninvited but excellent learning lab for ministry in action.

A secondary teacher and school administrator before she joined SCLHS, Sister Judith believes that she has been graced to have shared in Jesus' teaching and healing ministries. Whatever her next ministry will be, she will bring compassion, organizational skills and wisdom to a new opportunity to serve.

## Mission leaders acknowledge Sister Judith's contributions

"Sister Judith has kept us abreast of various avenues of mission development and built a spirit of collaboration among mission leaders. Under her leadership, the periodic MIRROR assessments were good opportunities for the whole organization to engage in and assess how effectively mission is integrated into all aspects of the site. SCLHS has made considerable progress in community benefit maturation during Sister Judith's leadership."

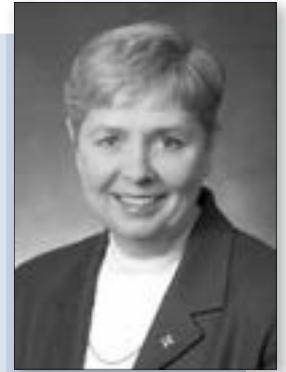
— Sister Barbara Aldrich, vice president mission integration,  
St. Mary's Hospital & Regional Medical Center, Grand Junction, Colo.

"Sister Judith has an unwavering commitment to the core of our mission—the people we serve. She identifies individual strengths in people, and lifts up and affirms those particular strengths, enabling each person to contribute to the whole. Her spirituality is inspiring and faith-filled. She also has a comprehensive understanding of Catholic health care and is well connected to resources and sources of wisdom and has made them accessible to all of us."

— LaTisha Starbuck, SCLA, vice president mission and ethics,  
Saint John's Health Center, Santa Monica, Calif.

"Sister Judith has helped to shape well-functioning community benefit structures; developed and overseen standards for spiritual care departments; brought an ethicist on board; created and overseen grant programs for efforts that further the mission; met with bishops concerning new services and configurations; served in various national capacities; and, in uncountable other ways, structured an effective mission role."

— Sister Charlotte White, mission integration specialist,  
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System



Sister Judith Jackson

## Recognizing two SCLHS leaders, good friends of the SCLs

*As Bill Murray and Jim Paquette make plans to retire from their respective SCLHS leadership positions, Sister Maureen Hall, SCL Community Director, acknowledged both for their tremendous contributions to Catholic health care. “These men—both Associates and both exemplary leaders—have continued our health ministry in the spirit of our founders and strengthened the ministry for future sustainability,” she said.*

### Bill’s association with SCLHS

began in 1978 when he joined St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings, Mont., where he served as COO and president/CEO. He has had senior executive management positions with Tenet Healthcare Corporation, OrNda Health Corporation and St. Luke’s Health System in Phoenix, Ariz. Bill joined the SCLHS board of directors in 1994 and served until 2002.

He was named CEO of the health system in 1998.

A sense of calling and commitment to the common good have characterized Bill’s health ministry experience and his entire life of service. He said that his parents modeled public service and giving back to the community. Because of this, he found being drawn to hospital work was very consistent with continuing a legacy of public service. Being in a faith-based health care organization added a spiritual dimension and a concern for the common good, especially the poor or the vulnerable. Bill said, “It has been a blessing to have a sense of calling in the profession you are pursuing.”

The heritage of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and their stories have remained a strong source of inspiration and motivation for Bill and, he believes, for the health ministry. “The Sisters’ work centered on responding to need, partnering with community leaders of all faith traditions and looking forward with an abiding faith in God’s Providence,” he said. “I have always looked for guidance in these fundamental characteristics.”

Bill’s retirement is effective May 31, 2011. As Mike Slubowski assumes leadership responsibilities on Jan. 3, Bill will remain on staff as a special advisor to Exempla and SCLHS. He and Doreen, his wife and an SCLA, plan to spend time with their family during retirement. Bill said that he is open to possibilities that unfold for service and fulfillment.



Bill Murray

### Jim has served in leadership roles

in SCLHS Hospitals for the past 30 years. He began his SCLHS career at St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings, Mont., as chief financial officer (CFO) reporting to Bill Murray. In 1988, Jim became CEO of St. Vincent; 10 years later, he assumed executive leadership responsibilities for the SCLHS Montana Region. From 2000 to 2006, he was CEO of Providence Health (Providence Medical Center and Saint John Hospital) in the Kansas City Region. Jim returned to Billings in late 2006 as president/CEO of St. Vincent.

Of his SCL and SCLHS experience, Jim said, “Over 30 years, I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from a group of remarkable SCLs. Sister Mary Julie Casey took me under her wing (and occasionally by the ear!) as a young CFO and taught me life lessons about trust, ethics and finance. I have been fortunate to work with the various Community Directors, who gradually turned over the reins of their health ministry to a growing group of dedicated lay people. Likewise, I appreciated the leadership of Sisters Macrina Ryan and Marie Damian Glatt, who led our health system and truly set the foundation for what we are today. These were all courageous women, and there were many others who ministered to us and demonstrated what it means to serve selflessly.”

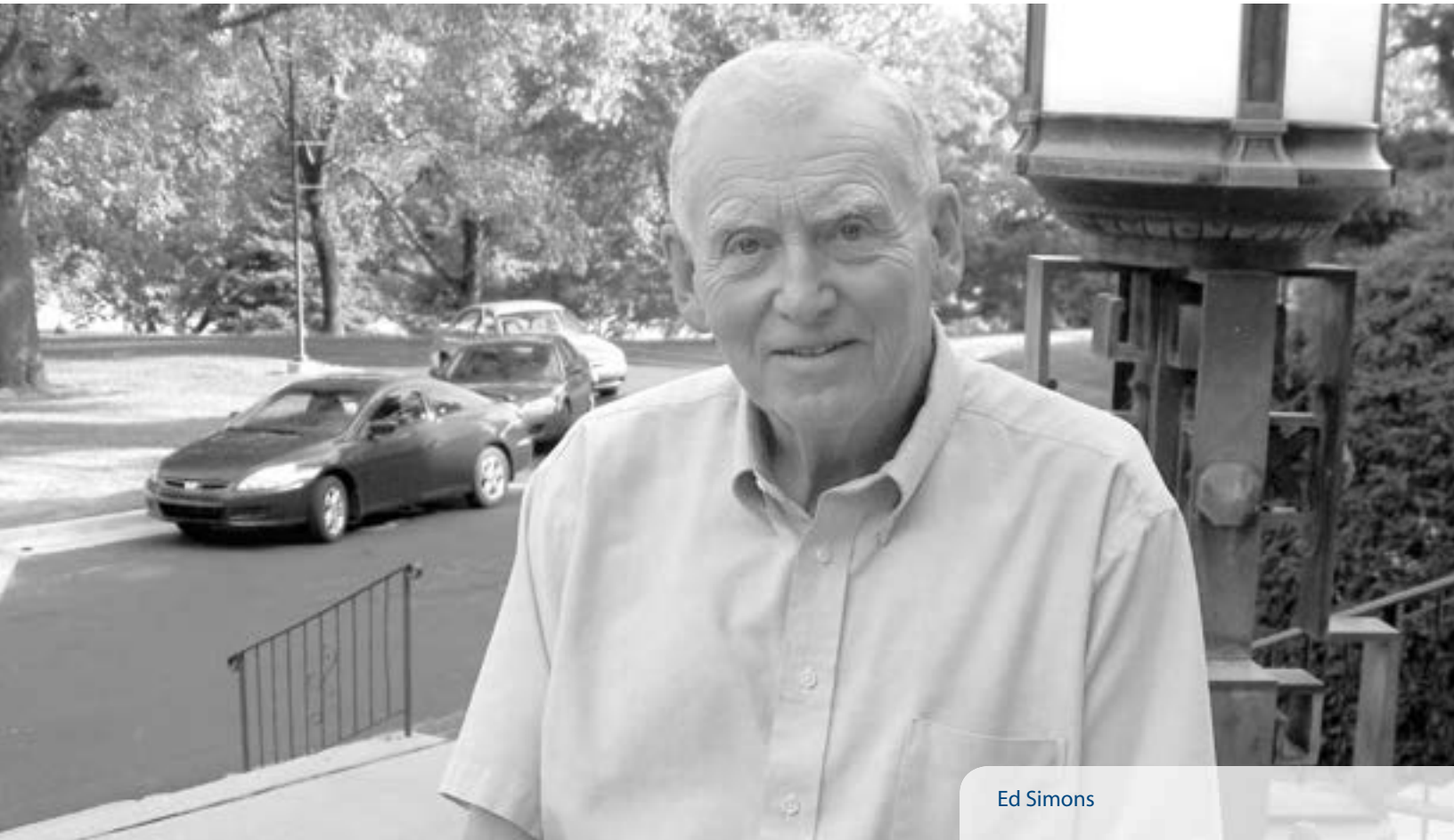
In terms of a valued life lesson from the health ministry, Jim said that his own faith has deepened and that he has learned the importance of mission and values as touchstones to keep himself grounded. “During the most difficult of times, we always have these to keep life in perspective,” he observed.

Jason L. Barker will succeed Jim as president/CEO of St. Vincent Healthcare, effective Jan. 3, 2010. Jim will be working over the next year on various projects for SCLHS. He and Patte, his wife and an SCLA, also plan to spend time enjoying and spoiling new grandchildren in their lives.



Jim Paquette





Ed Simons

### Faith, social justice important to SCLA

It was only natural for Ed Simons to become an SCL Associate. He had been associated with the Sisters since his birth at Saint John Hospital, Leavenworth, Kan., through his education as a young person, and during his ministry to persons who were imprisoned.

Because of his support of women in the Church, it was also only natural and fitting that Ed should receive the Mary Magdalene Award from the Call to Action renewal group in the Greater Kansas City Area this year. The award was a surprise to him, and Ed is only the second man to receive this recognition traditionally presented to women.

Supporting people in their faith and working for social justice are both important to Ed who is a member of the SCL Social Justice Committee. "This has been a great experience for me," he said of the committee.

Ed appreciates the opportunity to work for peace, justice and environmental issues. He said that the committee connects members with great resources. For example, during the first meeting he attended, the group teleconferenced with a Sister in Peru who shared the country's plight with issues concerning water and mining.

"What a great opportunity this has been to put me in contact with and to allow me to work with SCLs who are trying to do something to change the world for the better," Ed said.

## Book Review

# Church history a story of hope

by Sister Mary Pat Lenahan



I would recommend this book to the reader who would appreciate an historical, yet personal, context in which to review the history of the Catholic Church as well as gain insights into the Church of today. Even in the midst of injustices, inequities, ignorance and human brokenness, hope springs up in the gentle wisdom of Julian of Norwich as she reminds us, "And all shall be well and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well" (p. 154).

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McBride, Alfred (2009). *The story of the Church*. (Revised and expanded.) Cincinnati, Ohio: St. Anthony Messenger Press.

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We are affected by current events, and we are also participants in the shaping of today's happenings. As these moments will soon become the makings of tomorrow's history, we often neglect to consider the broader context of how and why particular change is taking place and thus fail to examine the causes of such shifts. In this book, Father Alfred McBride, O.Praem., reminds the reader that "there is never an exact recurrence of any event. But there are, nonetheless, startling parallels" (McBride, 2009, p. vii).

History is always retold from a human perspective, so Father McBride, in order to present a more readable and engaging account, has "chosen to present thirty key events of the church's history largely in fictional form: short stories, mini-dramas, interviews, diaries, letters, and dialogues" (McBride, 2009, vii). In his review of Church history, Father McBride says that he has selected this mode in order to retain the human and personal impact. Through the use of timelines, sidebars and pertinent questions for personal reflection and discussion, the author is able to connect the secular events of the day to the religious occurrences and implications that sow seeds for future choices and consequences for today.

Certainly, throughout the text, in recounting the history of the western Church, there are political intrigues as well as personal and

family tragedies. Through it all, many of the Catholic bishops and members of religious communities brought their diplomatic, leadership and administrative skills from their families and backgrounds. Permeating the events is their responding to the needs of the Church as well as to the basic human needs of society. This spirit of service continues to reflect the people of God today.

In light of some current Church trends, like fewer vocations to religious life, Father McBride reminds the reader, "Times of radical cultural change in the past also witnessed a temporary decline of religious life followed by a remarkable resurgence. The arrival of print technology with Gutenberg, coupled with global expansion triggered by Columbus' discovery of America, at first shook the monasteries and convents to their foundations, only to see new orders founded and a second spring of religious life" (p. 94).

Throughout the text recounting many of the events of the Church's growth and expansion, the Church is depicted as having persevered through persecution, greed, treachery, the Crusades and devastation. However, in reviewing the context of some of the individuals and human choices, the book retells a deep and intimate relationship of strong faith, outrageous joy and tenacious love between God and God's covenant with the Church.

# Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!

## **We Are Not Alone**

*by Sheila Karpan*

Annunciation.  
The word itself heralds change.  
Why then does resistance palpitate so loudly?  
Change is coming,  
welcomed and feared  
perhaps not unlike the first Annunciation.  
It is not only life-changing  
with departures and arrivals.  
It is the end of an era,  
demanding of those who stay  
a resounding faith-filled “yes.”  
  
120 years ago  
young habited women  
took residence on Humboldt Street  
located in a poor, blended neighborhood in Denver  
to teach immigrant children from  
Croatia, Slovenia, Germany, Poland, Ireland, Mexico.  
These women came with little  
but they and their followers  
motivated by love of the poor  
saw the school grow  
eventually spawning a secondary building.  
  
Annunciation stood as beacon of hope  
through waves of change.  
As families moved up  
more moved in.  
Often change was unwelcome  
with violence and gang activity.  
Paradoxically it did not keep kids away.  
They came for safety and for messages of hope.  
And those who taught,  
ever mindful of all they learned,  
kept coming.  
  
Today the school is filled with  
immigrants from Mexico and Sudan,  
Hispanics painfully aware this land once belonged to them,  
and African-Americans, descendants of this nation’s  
enslaved immigrants.  
  
Annunciation elementary is a bee-hive of activity.  
Liaisons with Universities, Neighborhood Associations,  
Social Service Agencies, Parent Resources, Social Worker,  
Counselor, Teacher Aides, Volunteers, Music, Art, PE,  
Special Services for Special Needs.  
It is fueled by grants and donations and hard work.  
  
Through the years the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth  
have come and gone  
and now simply gone.  
But the light still burns,  
tasking us to keep the mission of Vincent and Xavier  
alive and well.  
The halls are hallowed with the presence of Holy Women.  
Blessed are we among Women.  
We are not alone.

Sheila Karpan, a social worker, has worked at Annunciation School, Denver, Colo., for 20 years. She wrote this poem last summer as she reflected on the historical impact of the SCLs who would no longer be serving at the school.



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