

V O I C E S

A quarterly publication of the
SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF LEAVENWORTH

of Charity

JUNE 2006



Celebration of Charity: *Golden Jubilarians*

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Centro San Vicente de Paul DEDICATION IN PERU PAGE 23

SISTERS OF CHARITY OF LEAVENWORTH
2004 - 2010 DIRECTION STATEMENT

We, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth,
who love the poor,
hear a cry and feel an urgency in these times
to unite our voices and to speak out,
to live and move as women of hope.

Charged by the spirit born in us of Vincent, Louise and Xavier,
and strengthened by our life together in community,
we step into our future with a renewed sense of mission.

As women called to risk for the reign of God,
we choose to nurture relationships of hope:

with one another

by creating authentic communities that welcome,
support and challenge
by strengthening our South-North connections
by clarifying and enriching the SCLA-SCL relationship

between leadership and membership

by developing community structures that lead to more
participation, collaboration and accountability
by learning about our community's sponsoring role
and works

with the Church

by sustaining dialogue with and by caring for the Church
by engaging in theological reflection and study among
ourselves and with our neighbors

with the global community

by responding to human and environmental issues
through personal choices and communal actions
by joining our voice with justice-centered organizations

with the earth

by embracing our need for full communion with all creation.

As a community of believers, we open ourselves
to the presence of the Sacred in each of these relationships.

As Sisters of Charity, rooted in Christ and united in our convictions,
we claim our responsibility as gospel-centered women
and stand with all who suffer, who grieve, who hope.



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Sister Linda Roth, *Community Councilor*
Sister Nancy Bauman, *Community Councilor*
Sister Marianna Bauder, *Community Councilor*
Sister Katherine Franchett, *Community Treasurer*
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SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF LEAVENWORTH

COVER PHOTO: Three of this year's Golden Jubilarians at the fountain with a friend. Seated, Sister Delia Lawless; standing Sister Marjorie Cushing and Sister Genitha Regan with Mother Xavier Ross.

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from the Community Director



Sister Joan Sue Miller

I was heartened and privileged to travel to Rome in late May to hear Pope Benedict XVI address major religious superiors. He expressed affection for vowed religious and, at the same time, the Pope challenged us “to be witnesses of the transfiguring presence of God in an even more disoriented and confused world, a world in which shades have replaced exceedingly clear and striking colors.”

It is God’s transfiguring presence that we celebrate as we mark Jubilee this year with seven of us observing our 50th anniversaries as SCLs. As you read our stories in the special section of this *Voices of Charity*, you will see recurring themes of gratitude for the call to religious life and for the opportunity to serve.

As people of faith, we believe that God’s transfiguring presence transcends boundaries of time and space. We experienced this presence as we dedicated the new St. Vincent Center in Piura, Peru. We sense it in our continuity with Mother Xavier Ross.

This presence permeates the lives of our sisters and Associates engaged in ministries across the United States and in Peru – from Mississippi to Montana, from points east to west and north to south. It is there in classrooms and on reservations; in hospitals and in parishes; in small villages and large cities. We are present as advocates, mentors, teachers, listeners, leaders, family, friends, as witnesses to God’s presence that Pope Benedict has asked of us.

We are witnesses on the frontiers of an evolving Church and world as we collaborate with one another and with others to create a future filled with hope – especially for those people for whom hope seems to be in short supply. As witnesses, we strive to turn the shades of gray into colors that are vibrant and clear. We carve a path, even as we participate in the journey.

This time of year, we pause to celebrate that witness, to celebrate the journey that has brought us to this time and place, and to express gratitude for God’s transfiguring presence that transforms all into holy time and space.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sister Joan Sue Miller". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Sister Joan Sue Miller

Re-markings

Blessings from the Hill

by Sister Marie Carmel Dunning

There was only joy in the cemetery
Praise made manifest!
From those stark headstones
Muteness became music.
The stone markers of silence
Gave voice to almost audible
Hymns of Praise.

From the earth on which we erected
An art piece "Magnificat" – earthy metal
Shaped by human hands –
Rises the once stilled voices
Of the living dead.
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
He who is mighty has done
Great things for me."

Holy are the fruits of those
Who bore him in the Spirit womb
Of bodies long succumbed by
Labor pains of Love.
From this hillside "generations
To come" will recognize
"He who is mighty has done great things."

These women said,
Lived and died a "Yes"
To God's plan for those times
In those places, past, present and to come,
To bear Christ to be His presence,
To let Him work His miracles of Love.

Fiat

March 2006

New bronze statue 'graces' SCL cemetery expansion

*A beautiful bronze statue titled
"The Magnificat" and a marble
resting bench were focal points
in blessing the expansion
of the cemetery of the Sisters
of Charity of Leavenworth
on Saturday, March 25.*

Sister Joan Sue Miller, community director, presided at the ceremony in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Leavenworth, Kan. Mary Weisert, sculptor, Lawrence, Kan., who crafted the bronze statue, attended with her family and friends.

Sister Sue said that the wood sculpture by Sister Bernadine Hon, deceased member of the religious community, inspired the statue. "Sister Bernadine's statue is in the chapel of Marillac Center," Sister Sue said. "Both the wood and bronze statues commemorate Mary, the mother of Jesus. Since the founding of our community in 1858, we have considered Mary our model, our protector and our guide."

Proud as she was to see the statue in place and admired by the many sisters gathered for the ceremony, Mary Weisert said she was sorry to say the process was completed.



▲ Sister Sue Miller, community director, (right) and Mary Weisert, sculptor who crafted the Magnificat statue for Mount Olivet Cemetery.

"It was a joy and a pleasure to work with all the sisters," she said. "I don't think I've experienced such emotion with another project."

Mary was also instrumental in securing the marble for the resting bench where the casket rests during the prayer service and before burial. Engraved on the bench are the words "My spirit finds joy in God, my Savior" on one side and, on the other side "and all ages to come shall call me blessed" – words from the Magnificat.

The cemetery expansion adds space for 125 new graves. Mount Olivet was originally blessed in 1884.

Meeting in Rome beckons

Sister Joan Sue Miller, SCL community director, traveled to Rome in late May for an audience and meeting with Pope Benedict XVI. Sister Sue joined other major superiors of pontifical institutes called to the meeting by the Sacred Congregation.

She said the purpose of the half-day session was to introduce the Pope as he is beginning his pontificate and to provide the opportunity for congregational leadership to express their support of the Church through their presence. There were approximately 1,000 persons in attendance whom the Pope addressed in Italian.

The Pope said that “courageous choices are needed, at the personal and community level, to rediscover and to show the beauty of following Christ in a consecrated life.”

He analyzed some of the key challenges facing vowed religious and expressed affection for consecrated persons. He called upon consecrated persons to be “witnesses of the transfiguring presence

of God” and counseled daily prayer and participation in the Eucharist.

Pope Benedict clarified that “to belong to the Lord” is “the mission of the men and women who have opted to follow the chaste, poor and obedient Christ, so that the world will believe and be saved.”

While in Rome, Sister Sue stayed in the generalate of the Sisters of Precious Blood.

She appreciated the opportunity to “live” in religious community with a number of young sisters in formation from different congregations who reside at this house. She also enjoyed the introduction to the Italian and other international cultures



In memoriam:

Sister Mary Kevin Hollow



Sister Mary Kevin Hollow, SCL community director from 1974-1986, died at Ross Hall on Saturday, April 29. Sister Mary Kevin had been a Sister of Charity for 64 years.

“Although wise and learned, Sister Mary Kevin opened herself in simplicity to God’s revelation,” said Sister Judith Jackson who offered the reflection at the funeral liturgy. “She loved and treasured her family. As a lifelong learner, she loved beauty and truth in all forms – as a master teacher, an avid reader, a political analyst, a sports enthusiast, a lover of the poor, a truth-seeker, a faithful friend, a disciple of the Lord.”

Sister Mary Kevin taught in elementary schools before she earned her Ph.D. from Fordham University, New York. She was chair of the education department at Saint Mary College from 1955 to 1968. Starting in 1968, she served one term on the Community Council after which she served two terms as community director.

“Sister Mary Kevin was always a woman on a mission – a mission to serve, to serve God and God’s people,” Sister Judith continued. “She viewed herself as an academic, yet surrendered that call to lead the community through years of difficult change. She accepted the yoke of leadership.”

'Ministry of mail' brought many smiles

They laughed over mail addressed to "Mr. Ross Hall." Or the time they had to search high and low for the "Aunt Mary" intended to receive a letter addressed only to that name at the University.

But the smiles run deep to the soul when Sisters Maureen Kehoe, Mary Monica Peterson and Mary Eleanor Schram talk about the joy of students who received care packages from home or lingered to talk at the window of the U.S. Post Office at the University of Saint Mary, Leavenworth, Kan. Sister Maureen has been manager of the post office for 14 years; Sister Mary Monica, a postal clerk for four years. Sister Mary Eleanor worked in the post office for 18 years until last November. Sister Anita Marie Westhues also worked there briefly during the past year.

This "ministry of mail" has existed continuously since 1942 when Sister Ignatius Loyola Ryan officially opened the Xavier Post Office. Through the years, the name transitioned to the Saint Mary College Postal Station and more recently the University of Saint Mary Postal Station. Under arrangements with the U.S. Postal Service, the religious community employed the sisters; the college rented space for the operation. Transitions are pending as the Postal Service, the Mother House and the University discuss future plans.

There is no doubt that the mail will continue to come through rain or shine, sleet or snow.



Labyrinth on Mother House campus

Starting this summer, sisters and guests at the Mother House, Marillac Center and the University of Saint Mary will have an additional source of inspiration and meditation – a labyrinth on South Campus. The Labyrinth Committee will continue to provide information to aid in incorporating the labyrinth into personal prayer styles. Watch for more information and the labyrinth newsletter via email and on the SCL website at www.scls.org.

Officers attend Charity Federation

SCL Community Officers attended the conference of the Federation of the Sisters of Charity meeting in New Jersey, May 18-22. Nearly 70 leaders from 13 women religious congregations across North America met for the annual meeting.

Participants heard members recount times of crisis in their recent community histories and tell how they coped with the situations. Prayer, group discussions and decisions focused on the need for heightened advocacy in addressing structures that keep people poor around the world, including lack of access to water. This led to the expressed intent to have greater prophetic and advocacy roles as a federation.

The Federation's NGO representative at the United Nations reported on actions and was asked to continue to track initiatives related to water and other issues of the oppressed. The gathering initiated two common actions of support. The Federation will send letters to President Bush, the U.S. Catholic bishops and Congress urging support for action to complete repair of the levees in New Orleans in light of the upcoming hurricane season. The group also agreed to pray in solidarity with the Louisiana bishops on June 2.

▲▲▲ TOP: Sisters Mary Monica and Maureen at their work station in the USM Post Office.

▲▲ MIDDLE: Sister Mary Eleanor on the delivery route.

► BOTTOM: Sister Anita Marie Westhues.

Welcoming ministry, prayer connections

Father Joe Oblinger is the sacramental minister to the communities of Big Sky and West Yellowstone, Mont. But Sister Patricia Toeckes, pastoral administrator, said that he calls her “the boss” in that she handles most everything else that requires attention!

Sister Pat spends three days a week working out of Big Sky and three days in West Yellowstone. Her role includes visiting the sick and dying; teaching religious education and doing sacramental preparation; and assisting with liturgies. She added that she has also done maintenance and janitorial work on occasion!

The year-round faith communities are small in this southwestern corner of Montana. Their numbers swell considerably during the tourist season. “Our mission,” Sister Pat said, “is to be

welcoming to Catholics and to provide weekend liturgies for them.”

Sister Pat enjoys her ministry and interaction with people – from the children in her religious education and sacramental preparation classes to the tourists who flock to Yellowstone National Park. Over the years, she has been a pioneer in both pastoral ministry and rural ministry, and she feels blessed to continue to apply the invaluable skills she has learned.

Even though she is isolated from other members of the SCL religious community, she stays connected



▲ An eager group of students in sacramental preparation with Heather Pfeifer and Sister Pat (right, back row).

through the sisters at the Mother House who pray regularly for her. She acknowledges them with seasonal gifts to express her gratitude. She appreciates their prayers and welcomes their continued support.

Marillac Center to feature Saturday retreat days

In an effort to provide spiritual formation opportunities for lay people, sisters and priests, Marillac Center will be featuring “Saturday Retreat Days” starting in September and continuing through next year.

Rev. Thomas Keating, OSCO, will open the season with “The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel.” Father Keating’s session will start at 7 p.m., Friday, Sept. 15, and conclude at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 16. Father Keating is world renowned for the centering prayer method.

Other Saturday retreat days are one-day sessions that will go from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with lunch included. Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth will lead the retreat days.

- ▶ **Oct. 14, 2006** – *Ways of praying, a triptik for the journey of life*, by Sister Noreen Walter.
- ▶ **Nov. 18, 2006** – *Biblical prayer – praying the Psalms*, by Sister Patricia Sullivan.
- ▶ **Dec. 2, 2006** – *Mary, model of service*, by Sister Irene Skeehan.
- ▶ **Jan. 13, 2007** – *Discipleship: how many loaves do you have?* by Sister Kevin Marie Flynn.
- ▶ **Feb. 10, 2007** – *Love: it takes no small heart*, by Sister Maureen Hall.
- ▶ **March 3, 2007** – *Lenten journey*, by Sister Mary Pat Johnson.
- ▶ **April 14, 2007** – *How does your garden grow?* by Sister Karen Guth.

For registration fees and other information, visit www.MarillacCenter.org; email retreats@scls.org; or call 913-758-6552.

OF SPECIAL NOTE

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

SCLs host formation personnel

Sister Sharon Smith, SCL vocation director, and Sister Nancy Bauman, community councilor and formation director, hosted the Company of Charity formation personnel at the Mother House, March 8-12. "Heart of charity: transforming divided lands" was the theme as the group of 37 participants discussed ministry formation and integration of new candidates into religious communities. Sister Noreen Walter, director of Marillac Center, gave a spirited presentation as Mother Xavier Ross to introduce the SCL charism and story.

Legendary principal retires



Sister Mary Corita, one more time, directing the choral group.

After serving 38 years as principal of Assumption Grade School, Topeka, Kan., **Sister Mary Corita Conlan** retired with words and songs of praise from former students, parents and the Topeka community. Friends recognized her service and impact on their lives with a celebratory dinner on April 27 and a citywide Mass and reception on April 30. They sported t-shirts with

Sister Mary Corita's photograph and many of her favorite sayings.

Articles in the *Topeka Daily Capitol* and *The Leaven* extolled Sister Mary Corita's talents as a principal. In *The Leaven*, Dr. Kathy O'Hara, superintendent of archdiocesan schools, said that students blossomed under Sister Mary Corita's guidance. Former students remarked that her influence has had a lasting effect on them.

In recent months, Sister Mary Corita has been instrumental in the implementation plan to consolidate Topeka's Catholic schools. She is serving as transition coordinator for the process.

USM honors Sister Mary Lenore

The University of Saint Mary (USM) recognized **Sister Mary Lenore Martin** – an alumna, former professor, chair of the history department, historian and dear friend – as the 2006 Scholarship Friends President's Board Perpetual Scholarship honoree. USM announced the establishment of this perpetual scholarship in Sister Mary Lenore's name during a presentation on April 2.

Sister Mary Lenore, an SCL for almost 60 years, joined the USM history department in 1969. She taught for 27 years, 16 of them as chair of the



history/political science department. She served as college historian from 1996 to 2005. As "Martin of Tours," she led Saint Mary study tours in the United States and abroad.

Legacy lives on at Mount Saint Vincent

After 14 years of service at Mount Saint Vincent Home, Denver, Colo., **Sister LaVonne Guidoni** has moved on to a new assignment as a children's advocate with the Mile High United Way.

While at Mount Saint Vincent, Sister Lavonne started the Guild and the biennial Silver Bell Ball. Her work in development and community relations was invaluable and included organization of the first development council and several fund-raising events. She helped raise millions of dollars for new buildings on the campus and in support of the children at the home.



SCL named to '40 Under Forty'

Ingram's, a Kansas City business magazine, named **Sister Jennifer Gordon** one of its "40 Under Forty" class of 2006 this spring. This annual recognition highlights young leaders in the



Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area and surrounding communities.

Sister Jennifer is manager of Saint Vincent Clinic, Leavenworth, Kan. She previously worked at El Centro in public policy and advocacy for immigration. She assists with a prison ministry group and serves as president of the Leavenworth County Human Services Council.

Hospital president resigns; almost 15 years at St. Francis

Sister Loretto Marie Colwell, president and chief executive officer of St. Francis Health Center, Topeka, Kan., resigned her position recently after almost 15 years of service. Under Sister Loretto Marie's leadership, St. Francis underwent major renovations and expansion and remained highly focused on mission and ministry. In recent years, the hospital received international recognition for the spirituality in the workplace initiative that Sister Loretto Marie championed.



In a letter addressed to St. Francis employees, she wrote, "It seems to be the right time for me to move from St. Francis to the next calling that God has planned for me."

Sister Loretto Marie came to St. Francis in 1981. Prior to that, she had been president of St. James Community Hospital (now St. James Healthcare) in Butte, Mont. She held other positions at

Saint John's Health Center, Santa Monica, Calif., and St. Joseph Hospital (now Exempla St. Joseph), Denver, Colo. Sister Loretto Marie joined the Sisters of Charity in 1958.

Immaculata 'Hall of Fame' inducts two



Sister Ann Barton and J. H. "Johnny" Johnston, SCLA, were recently inducted into the Immaculata High School Hall of Fame in Leavenworth, Kan. Recognition occurred following Mass and dinner on May 20 at the University of Saint Mary.

The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the high school and to the Leavenworth community. Sister Ann was principal of Immaculata from 1979 to 1982 and development director until 1986. Under her leadership, the school started a foundation, and the Greenway Auction began to grow

in popularity. Sister Mary Kathleen Stefani, former SCL community director, and Mike Connelly, director of the Leavenworth Regional Catholic School System, paid tribute to Sister Ann.

Bill Elliott, an Immaculata alumnus, surprised Johnny by coming to Leavenworth to honor his long-time acquaintance whom he had nominated for the award. Johnny's wife of 48 years, Annie, also spoke of her husband's accomplishments. A former publisher of the *Leavenworth Times*, Johnny has written several books on Leavenworth and its history.

"Over the years, Annie and I have tried to be loyal supporters of Leavenworth's Catholic education system," Johnny said. "I have always had a very warm spot in my heart for the SCLs to whom I credit my primary and secondary education."

EDITOR'S NOTE

Due to an abundance of news and features and space constraints in this edition of *Voices of Charity*, it was necessary to hold reviews of books by Sister Rose Dolores Hoffelmeyer and by Margaret Malone Faciszewski and several other feature articles.

Watch for these in coming editions of the magazine.

If we've overlooked an item of importance, please email (thorvat@scls.org) or mail information to Communications, Cantwell Hall, 4200 South Fourth Street, Leavenworth, Kan. 66048-5054.

Sponsored Ministries

Sponsorship discussion draws widespread interest

SCLs and SCLAs gathered in spring 2006 to learn about and discuss sponsorship and to lay the groundwork for continuing evolution of the relationships of the religious community to its sponsored ministries.

Participants at the Spring Regional Wisdom Gatherings also viewed a DVD-update from the four SCL-sponsored ministries: Cristo Rey Kansas City High School; Mount Saint Vincent Home; the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System; and the University of Saint Mary.

Members of the SCL Community Council discussed dimensions of sponsorship including its history and evolution, its theology and rootedness in the Gospel and different sponsorship models that exist today. Participants agreed that sponsorship is a complex issue and one that will require ongoing study, particularly in light of the diminishing number of sisters and demands and dynamics of their respective ministries.

In small group discussion, SCL/As raised several questions that will be addressed

over the next year with a possible follow-up regional gathering on the topic of sponsorship. Sisters also expressed concerns that lay ministry formation be highlighted as a key component to ensure continuation of the charism and mission in sponsored institutions..



◀ At the opening ritual at the Mother House, left to right: Sister Maureen Hall, Sister Mary Rosaleen Driscoll, Annabel Willcott, Sister Nancy Bauman, Sister Charles Marie Beeby, Sister Linda Roth, Sister Madonna Fink and Sister Sue Miller.

Cristo Rey update

Plans are proceeding on schedule with Cristo Rey Kansas City, the newest sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. Summer months will include work study training for incoming students.

These sessions will prepare the freshman class for their workplace activities, e.g., filing, working with business machines, use of proper grammar, making a good impression). Other sessions will offer remedial math courses.

"We appreciate all of the volunteers who have agreed to help with this training," said Sister Vickie Perkins, Cristo Rey president.

Sister Vickie added that the high school has 107 students enrolled to begin classes as freshmen in August 2006 and a total of 18 business partners. Response to the new high school continues to be supportive and outstanding. Many people – including prospective partners and donors – have attended the "Meet & Greet" sessions to learn about the new ministry; these will resume in September.

Sister Vicki Lichtenauer is joining the Cristo Rey team in campus ministry; Sister Mary Pat Johnson, in mission; and Maureen Greig, SCLA, as school nurse. In other good news, Cristo Rey nominated benefactors Dick and Bernadette Miller as philanthropists of the year in the Kansas City area, and they were selected. Dick brought the idea of Cristo Rey to Kansas City and invited the SCLs to sponsor the high school.

To assist with any aspect of Cristo Rey, call 816-457-6044.

Lay leaders participating in ministry formation

At the spring 2006 Regional Wisdom Gatherings focused on sponsorship, the need for lay ministry formation was a recurring discussion topic. Sisters, in particular, wanted assurance that persons with a commitment to the spirit of the SCL charism and Catholic tradition will continue to lead the sponsored ministries.

To help ensure this, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System (SCLHS) is actively engaged in the Ministry Leadership Formation Program with four other Catholic health systems with hospitals on the west coast. SCLHS currently has 23 senior leaders enrolled in this program.

Larry O'Connell, former director of the Park Ridge Spirituality Center, is executive director of the Ministry Leadership Center. Jack Shea, internationally known writer and former professor of systematic theology, is program director.

Sister Judith Jackson, SCLHS vice president of sponsorship, said that what distinguishes this program is its emphasis on "appropriation – getting the information, the 'head knowledge' and connecting it to the heart, making it your own and applying it to the work that you do."

Jerry Spicer, vice president of patient services at St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center, Grand Junction, Colo., and program participant, agreed. "As a nurse, I was somewhat familiar with the concept of vocation and a sense of 'calling.' However, it was not until this program that I had thought about my

responsibility to promote and enhance a vocational attitude toward the work that we do; in other words, the responsibility to make sure that I and those I lead always remember why we are here and for what purpose we serve."

As program director, Jack Shea developed the three-year curriculum to focus on the identity of Catholic health care leaders during the first year and on the work of these individuals during years two and three. "Our approach is formation rather than just information-sharing," he said, "as we strive to pass on the tradition, transform people and provide them with processes to deepen their consciousness and understanding of 12 areas of Catholic health care leadership."

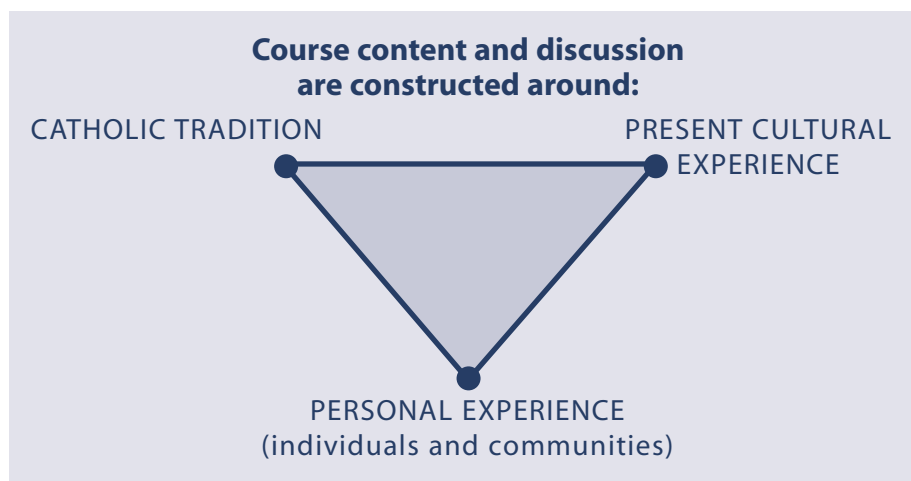
Those areas include vocation, heritage, spirituality, suffering, value integration, value communication, justice and dignity, medical moral issues, organizational moral concerns, advocacy for the poor, whole person care and cooperation with the Church. Senior leaders meet with their cohort for four two-day modules annually for three years.

There are complementary off-site program expectations, Sister Judith explained. First, that the executives model, teach and communicate what they have learned to the people with whom they work. Secondly, that they meet or teleconference monthly with "dialogue partners" to share what they are learning about a particular leadership dimension. Several SCLs and lay persons are serving as mentors in this capacity. Finally, that the participants use the monthly reflections provided by Jack for continuing formation.

"I believe that this approach is a preferred lay leadership formation model that will endure over time," Sister Judith said, "because it is practical, engaging and integrated with the business dimension of the health care ministry."



Sister Judith Jackson



LeavenWords

They like the scenery, the company and the journey. And don't forget the stop for ice cream on the way home! This winning combination is available in good weather to the sisters of the Mother House and Ross Hall, compliments of the SCL transportation department. Two years ago, the community purchased the mini-bus with 12 seats and room for two wheelchairs and the driver.

Bus blazes happy trail



▲ Foreground, Sisters Susanna Kennedy, Frances Cecilia Domme; background, Sister Ann Cecile DeDonder, Sister Mary Lillian Landauer.



▲ Joe Bauder with Sister Mary Lillian Landauer and Sister Ann Cecile DeDonder.

When she experienced the joy of the Ross Hall sisters who traveled to nearby Kelly Farm for an outing and lunch in May, Sister Linda Roth, community councilor, called the bus “one of the best purchases our community has ever made.”

Joe Bauder, assistant director of transportation, explained that on alternate Thursdays, either Mother House or Ross Hall sisters are guests on the bus. The Mother House sisters sign up for trips that have included places like a recently renovated church, historic sites and local attractions. The Ross Hall sisters have seen the antique carousel in Leavenworth, the Christmas lights and autumn leaves. Sister Lucy Walter, Mother House and Ross Hall coordinator, and Joe plan the bus trips for spring, summer and fall months.

Del Watkins is director of transportation and oversees the operation that transports sisters to and from appointments and the airport, picks up prescriptions and runs other needed errands. In addition to the 15-passenger bus, SCL transportation has two wheelchair vans and two regular vans. The department also is responsible for maintenance and repair of 38 vehicles that sisters drive.



Congratulations to the seven Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth marking their 50th anniversaries this year, their Golden Jubilees. Fifty years of service. Fifty years of blessings. Lives as educators, health care administrators, pastoral ministers, servants and leaders of God's people. May their days and their years continue to be blessed with goodness, kindness, grace and peace!

Celebration of Charity

Sister Lynn Casey

I entered into the world in Havre, Mont., the second child of my loving parents, Loretta and Francis Casey. Soon after, my parents moved to Helena where Dad attended Carroll College and worked at ASARCO. Later our family moved to East Helena where I would live out my growing up years. I enjoyed a carefree childhood in this small community. Pat, a year older than I, knew the ropes of walking to St. Ann's Grade School, and it was there that I met my first SCLs. We had a two classroom school with four grades in each room. We often stayed after school and helped the sisters. I liked school and often found myself in contests competing with my sister Pat, an excellent student.



My mother became a convert to Catholicism, and I remember gathering for the family rosary during our childhood. Dad was a great believer in Father Peyton's slogan, "The family that prays together, stays together." As our high school years approached, part of our prayer was that we would be finished with the rosary before our dates arrived to pick us up for the evening. During high school, I met the wonderful drama and music teachers, Sisters Mary Dolorita Flynn and Dorothy Hanley. After

graduation from high school, it was Sister Mary Dolorita who influenced my attending Saint Mary College in Leavenworth. There I met Sisters Mary Paul and Ann Patrice and Mother Ancilla, and my call to become a sister began to emerge more definitively.

During my second year at Saint Mary's, I couldn't afford to return home for Christmas and spent those days with Sister Mary Mark's niece, Evelyn, on the campus. We enjoyed an easy relationship and some invitations to the Mother House. That March, I began the preparatory process to enter the community. The following August on my birthday, I arrived on the doorsteps of the Mother House. While I was en route to Kansas, my youngest brother Tom was born; I would wait two years to meet him. I made the journey to Leavenworth by train with two other Montanans also bound for the Sisters of Charity novitiate.

At the time I became a professed sister, I could qualify for Kansas certification. My first mission was in Kansas City, Mo., for a year and subsequently to Topeka for numerous years. It took many moons to finish my college degree, and later I obtained a master's in education. I was a teacher in Missouri, Oklahoma, Montana and Kansas and for nine years the principal of Most Pure Heart of Mary School in Topeka. Later, I became a student again, observing my shuttle from New York to New Haven,

Courage and trust have helped paint the canvas of my life with many colors and allowed me to live out my call as a Sister of Charity.

—Sister Lynn Casey

aply named Pilgrim Airlines. I attended Yale University for a master's in public health, and for 26 years poured out my energy and passion in the healing ministry. My years of study at Yale were wonderful and timely, as the university had acquired the grants which developed the DRG system. My professors predicted this would take the health care world by storm, and the impact continues today.

Leaving the university, I was privileged to spend six months at three of our hospitals for an internship prior to taking the role of chief operating officer at St. Vincent Hospital, Billings, Mont. I held health care leadership roles in California, Montana, Colorado, Washington and Ohio. Two significant shifts in my ministry occurred while I was president and CEO at St. Mary's Hospital, Grand Junction. I agreed to stay as president and CEO through completion of the 100-year anniversary and to assist in the transition to lay leadership. Through the transition I became acutely aware that while we sisters were available to be leaders, we had assumed many of the mission integration aspects of leadership. However, we had not attended to embedding these in the structures of strategic planning and budgeting in a way that would create sustainable systems of enduring values and a palpable Catholic identity. When I left the CEO role, I discerned the call to serve as a mission executive at Providence Health System (PHS) and to focus on mission integration, charity care, ethics, leadership development and culture in a systemic way.

My sister Pat died suddenly the summer of 2000, and I moved from Seattle and PHS after only three years, to take a sabbatical year in 2002. Upon completion, I served as interim administrative officer at Holy Rosary Healthcare in Miles City, Mont., while the hospital recruited a leader. During that time, I was contacted by Mercy Health Partners and invited to join their senior leadership team and assist with the integration of the Community Hospital

and Mercy Hospital merger in Springfield, Ohio, into a single, mission-focused culture and to prepare for the new combined facility to be built. My 26 years in health care drew forth my passion for excellence and striving to provide a healing environment where patient and family could experience the "holy" during their encounters with staff and an ethos that was among the best in holistic health care.

In summer 2005, I accepted the role of chancellor of the Diocese of Great Falls/Billings. The great needs of the Catholic Church at this time in history and the possibility of returning to Montana were great pulls upon my heart strings. Presently my sister, Sister Jean Casey and Sister Bernadette Helfert, all of us from East Helena, Mont., are back on our native soil and see one another frequently. I am rediscovering the beauties of the land and people, the vastness and isolation of rural Montana as I work with parish pastoral councils and diocesan planning for the future of the Church in eastern Montana.

My favorite ways to spend time relaxing are music, especially singing, trail hiking which has been my antidote to stress, and in more recent years I have been exploring the joys of watercolor painting. Each of these activities and life in general have brought me great joy and challenge. Mountains have been a good metaphor for life. In 1979, I went hut-hopping in the Austrian Alps with Sister Susanna Kennedy, and in 1999 Sister Michel Pantenburg prompted me to hike Mount Sneffels in Colorado. Both were arduous experiences that took me to the heights in seeing spectacular beauty and trusting that God would lead me back safely. My life has been too eventful to capture in a few words, but courage and trust have helped paint the canvas of my life with many colors and allowed me to live out my call as a Sister of Charity.

Sister Marjorie Cushing

Lights in the Cushing home on Roanoke Road in Kansas City, Mo., were on early the morning of Jan. 15, 1938. It was nearing 3 a.m., and there was much running about as a wonderful event was about to take place. Kathryn Cushing, daughter of John and Theresa Sims, was about to give birth. The family physician, Dr. Hogan, had arrived and was preparing to deliver the baby. Soon, a cry came forth from the bedroom. Dr. Hogan appeared at the door and called for Theresa Sims and said, "Here, take this one; there's another on the way."



Until then, no one knew my mother was having twins. Martha had arrived at 3 a.m., and it would be a half hour before I would arrive. I guess my motto for life should have been "Better late than never." Waiting to catch a glance of the two new members of the family were my father, Patrick Cushing, my grandparents John and Theresa Sims, and two siblings, Jack and Mary Jane.

In 1942, when I was 4, we moved from Roanoke Road to a smaller white bungalow near 57th and Swope Parkway. My brother and older sister entered St. Louis Grade School, which was two blocks from our house. One day Mother decided to walk over to the school and meet them as they were dismissed. On that day, I would encounter my first Sister of Charity of Leavenworth. We were standing out front of the school when this big black figure came toward us. I was so frightened by the sight that I hid behind my mother. Martha just stood by Mother and didn't seem to be as afraid. Well, it turned out that this figure of a person was Sister Ethna, the principal.

Later, when we entered school, I would discover more SCLs and come to love and respect them tremendously. Sister Mary Serena would be our first grade teacher, and I fell in love with her. In fact, she was the first one that sparked my desire to become an SCL. I expressed this desire to my grandmother, and she encouraged me up until the day I entered. "Mom" – Theresa Sims, my grandmother – played a huge part in my vocation.

In 1945 my father was no longer with us. Mother had four children to raise by herself, so we moved in with

my grandparents. My grandmother would continue to nourish my vocation. She had a great love and respect for the priests and sisters. We had many conversations on the front porch in the evenings. "Mom," as we called her, was my rock in life.

After graduating from St. Louis we entered Bishop Hogan High School. Once again, I would meet up with the Sisters of Charity. Sister Mary Lenore Martin was the one that had the greatest influence on my life and vocation. At the end of my senior year, Sister Mary Lenore made arrangements for me to meet with Mother Ancilla in early June. Mother Ancilla decided it would be better for me to go to college for a year to get used to being away from my twin sister. I did so and loved every minute of my college experience. The following year I reapplied to the community and was accepted.

On Aug. 19, 1956 I entered the community along with 21 other young women. The next two years would be very challenging for all of us. Sister Mary Clarence was to be our postulant mistress, and Sister Laurentia would later become our novice mistress. During the next two years we learned to pray, work, study and play together. The discipline we learned in the novitiate was to serve us well in the years to come.

In 1958, I made my first vows. Later in the week, we received our first assignments, and I was missioned to St. Patrick's School in Butte, Mont. This was the beginning of what would become 48 years in the field of elementary education. Some of my assignments in Montana were: St. Patrick's, Butte; St. Mary's, Livingston; St. Lawrence, Walkerville; St. Joseph's, Anaconda; and then on to St. Charles, Kansas City, Mo.; St. Daniel the Prophet, Chicago, Ill.; and Assumption, Topeka, Kan.

In April 1983, I would experience a major challenge in my life. I was informed that I had cancer and would subsequently undergo massive chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Sister Mary Corita Conlan, my principal, never doubted that I could continue teaching nor did my physician. Both decided that I should stay among the living. I did and with the encouragement of the sisters, my family, the students and parishioners, I experienced a painful but grace filled year.

In spring 1987, I received a very special honor at the National Catholic Education Association meeting in New Orleans. I received the Miriam Joseph Farrell Award in recognition of distinguished teaching in the Catholic elementary school system for region nine. This was one of the highlights of my teaching career. In 1990, I received the WIBW-TV award as teacher of the month. In 1992, I was included in Who's Who in American Education.

After 40 years of teaching, I retired from the classroom only to be recycled into teaching computer to K-3 and a sixth-grade religion class at Assumption School. The Lord has a sense of humor.

My favorite hobby in life is fishing with my friends Jane and John Palubinski. I also like to oil paint and dabble in watercolor painting.

Fifty years in the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth have now passed, and I am extremely grateful for the spiritual opportunities, challenges and dear friends I have met along the way.

Sister Mary Clare Gappa

My life has been lived with a certain degree of ordinariness graced with the extraordinary embrace of God. As I celebrate this Jubilee, I do so with gratitude.

I was born Mary Clare Gappa on Dec. 8, 1938 in Moorhead, Minn. My parents, Hildegard Lorsung Gappa and William Gappa, were both born and raised in Minnesota. My mother is a twin and one of six children. When my mother was only 6 years old, my grandmother died, a victim of the 1918 flu, leaving the family to be raised by their father and my great-grandmother. I attribute my mother's strength of spirit and sensitive caring to the absence she experienced in losing her own mother so early in life. My father was number 15 of 16 children. His parents were farmers, and the family worked hard from an early age.

I have one younger brother, Bob. He and his wife, Pam, and my nephew, Andy, live in Houston, Tex. They will relocate their home and business to Tuscon, Ariz., after Andy graduates from high school next year. My nephew, Jim, his wife, Krissy, and their son, Van, live in Phoenix, Ariz.



When I was about 2 years old, we moved from Minnesota to Montana. My father had to live in a drier climate for health reasons. Dad had a brother in Circle, Mont., so that's where we moved, and Dad began his many years working for the Midland Coal and Lumber Company. From Circle, we moved to Baker, then Miles City, Harlowton, and finally, Billings.

There were religious vocations among my relatives: an uncle, a monsignor; a cousin, a Benedictine nun; and many priests and sisters who were friends of the family. We had fun social times of which religious were a part, and the seeds of my vocation were planted then.

My primary grades were in the Catholic school in Miles City. The Ursulines were happy and my teacher lots of fun. Again, I was attracted to religious life and very aware of my desire to be a teacher. From first-grade on, I would gather the neighborhood kids together at the end of my school day and "teach" them. I was a great storyteller!

When we moved to Harlowton, I went to public school from fourth-grade to mid-semester of my freshman year of high school. We had catechism classes on Sundays after Mass. Every Saturday night, my parents would listen to the memorized answers of the catechism in preparation for Sunday class. Family prayer, the rosary and the Perpetual Help novena were parts of our family life.

An injury caused Dad to give up management of the lumber company, and we moved to Billings. It was a difficult transition for all of us. At great personal sacrifice, my parents enrolled my brother and me in Catholic schools.

Billings Central was my first acquaintance with the Sisters of Charity. I came to admire them and found myself thinking now and then about joining them. I would try to push the thought of a religious vocation away because of the parallel desire for marriage and a family. Sisters Mary Kathleen Stefani, Marie Brinkman and Dominique Long were significant persons on my journey.

Music is one of my gifts and great loves. From first-grade on, I loved music, rhythm, dance and singing. My piano lessons from Sister Dominique frequently ended with her sharing hints about the joys of being an SCL. As I struggled with the issue and prayed about it, I knew I had to listen to the call and "come and see" if religious life was where I belonged. And, as in any walk of life, I have

had to recommit as I have lived the life. Knowing this is where I am called to serve has been the source of much happiness.

My SCL life has two great segments: educating the young and uplifting the adults. I have been present to people from birth to death.

For 24 years, my gift of teaching was focused on children. I have a great ability to “motivate” and that was used well in teaching. I taught primary grades; organized and coordinated the “ungraded primary” in the Helena diocese; taught music at all levels; gave workshops in Orff-Schulwerk methods; coordinated schools of religion in three of my missions; directed choirs; worked with both children’s and adult liturgies; and mentored many student teachers. I *loved* teaching!

My teaching assignments were at St. Daniel the Prophet, Chicago, Ill.; St. Charles, Kansas City, Mo.; East Helena, Helena and Billings, Mont.; and Lawrence, Kan. It was a difficult decision to leave the classroom, but it was a definite “call.” Post Vatican II theology presented opportunity for study, questioning and renewal. When sacramental preparation changed and gave parents a more active role in the process, parents who had been away from the Church for years would come to me and express a desire to “come back.” I saw a need to work more with adults.

After much discernment, I was grateful when the community afforded me the opportunity to go to the Jesuit and Franciscan Schools of Theology in Berkeley to obtain my master’s in theology. In 1984, I began my ministry as pastoral associate at Coronation of Our Lady in

Grandview, Mo. I continue to minister there still! Through the terms of four pastors, my responsibilities have varied. My primary responsibilities at present include RCIA, adult formation, outreach ministries, parish mission and sacramental preparation. The community of faith has indeed been family.

My religious vocation has been a walk of trust, providing access to people’s challenges and vulnerabilities. That trust has afforded me the opportunity to be a bridge between void and fulfillment as people come to me with wounds and needs. It was a first-grade student who gave me my personal ministry goal. At the time I taught Mark, my religious name was Sister Clare Marie. Mark was a belligerent child and tried my patience. He went home one afternoon early in the school year and told his mother something about Sister “Care” Marie. She corrected him. He said to her, “I know her real name, but that’s how she treats me.” I have tried to live up to that ideal ever since!

My life has been gifted by the SCLs who enabled the fidelity of my Gospel walk. I am grateful to those who formed me, mentored me, lived with me, befriended me and who continue to inspire me. The SCL community has been a place of “care” and blessing for me through these 50 years. The spiritual and educational opportunities, relationships with faith-filled women, good SCL friends, affirmation and challenge are among the blessings. I appreciate being a part of such a dynamic group of women who are involved in outreach to the poor and who are a vital force in the future of our Church. I experience pride and joy in knowing that I share in all the good

I appreciate being a part of such a dynamic group of women who are involved in outreach to the poor and who are a vital force in the future of our Church. I experience pride and joy in knowing that I share in all the good done by each SCL no matter where she ministers.

Where one of us is, we are all there!

—Sister Mary Clare Gappa

done by each SCL no matter where she ministers. Where one of us is, we are all there!

To the larger Church, I am grateful for its 50 years of invitation to personal and communal renewal in the spirit of Vatican II in which I am privileged to participate. The challenges and struggles of the Church and our community during these years have indeed borne fruit. It is a gift to live and minister during this time in history.

A theme throughout my 50 years as an SCL is faithfulness – to God, to family, to relationships, to community, to ministry, to self. This Jubilee time is truly a time for looking back on the journey, giving thanks, and looking forward to all the good that is yet to be! Thanks to each of you who have shared that journey!

Sister Marguerite Grogman

God finally granted the wish of the family of Aloysius Henry and Rosalie Elizabeth Grogman. A daughter, Marguerite, was born on Sept. 12, 1937. Francis Edward (Frank) was 14 and Kenneth George was 11 years old.



I was born in St. Joseph Hospital in Kansas City, Mo. My parents lived for 57 years in the same house they had built, so I was baptized, made my First Holy Communion, and was confirmed in St. Francis Xavier Church. I attended kindergarten through seventh-grade at St. Francis Xavier. Then from 1950 to 1954, I attended and graduated from Bishop Hogan High School where I first met the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

After graduation, I worked as a typist for the FHA reporter at the Kansas City Credit Bureau. In the fall, I enrolled at Rockhurst College for night courses. In October of that year, I received a call wanting to know if I would be interested in working as a draftsman for the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. Since it offered more pay, I resigned from my old job and began my new one.

From the time I had attended Hogan High School and went to talks on religious life, it was always in the back of my mind to become a religious, but I could always think of reasons why I didn't have a vocation. (I found out later,

that Sister Mary Teresa Rhodes, whom I first met on the yearbook committee, had been praying that I would someday enter the SCLs.) When I finally realized that I couldn't deny it any longer, I told my mother and father that I had decided to be a nun.

One Sunday, my cousin, Rev. George Spiegelhalter, OSB, came to our house for a visit. When we were alone, he said to me, "I heard that you are going to be nun."

I asked him who told him because at that time I didn't want anyone to know. He just said a little bird had told him. I went into the kitchen and asked my mother if she had told him. She said she had said nothing to him just in case I might change my mind. As it turned out, my mother later told me that she had met Father George at a funeral, and he asked her if I was really serious about becoming a nun. She told him that I was and asked him how he found out. Father said he always made the same statement to all teenage boys and girls he met just to plant a seed for vocations and to see their reactions.

When he came to visit the next time, Father George asked me what order I was planning on entering. When I told him the SCLs, he was pleased and asked if I had written a letter of intent. When I said, "No," he asked if he were to invite all of us to dinner at the Mother House, since he was the chaplain there at the time, and set up a meeting with Mother Mary Ancilla Spoor, would we be willing to come and talk to her. We all agreed.

Later, when I met her, I told Mother Mary Ancilla that I was really interested in working in an orphanage. She just nodded and replied that "she would see."

Finally, a month before I was 18, on Sunday, Aug. 19, 1956, I entered the SCL novitiate. I have since spent the last 48 years teaching in elementary schools. So much for working in an orphanage! The places where I have taught since leaving the novitiate include Billings, Mont.; Westchester, Calif.; Sheridan, Wyo.; Lakewood, Colo.; Leavenworth and Kansas City, Kan.; and finally, I am now retiring from St. Therese in Aurora, Colo.

In 1969, I spent five months in St. Joseph Hospital recovering from an automobile accident. I was paralyzed from the neck down after breaking my neck in three places. From that experience, I came to realize that through the faith and prayers of my parents and the

SCLs, God had provided me with a miracle, so that I could continue to be a teacher.

After teaching in Lakewood, so I could be near my doctor, I returned that summer to Leavenworth to complete my bachelor's degree in elementary education at Saint Mary College.

I have enjoyed playing in guitar Mass groups, watercolor painting and, in the summers, oil painting murals in window wells and on walls at the former St. Joseph Nursing Home in Kansas City, Kan.

Sister Delia Ann Lawless **(formerly Sister Nicholas Marie)**

On July 31, 1938, I "decided" to come into this world. Being two weeks early, and with the doctor on the golf course, plus it was Sunday morning, I caught people off guard. Nonetheless, everyone concerned seemed happy with my arrival!



After I arrived home and was around for awhile, it was another story. My brother Nicky, 10, and my sister Mary Genelle, 7, didn't seem to care for my being around or my crying – a lot! They wanted my parents to return me to the hospital. As I got a little older, they told me I was adopted, and I believed them. Fortunately, we actually grew to be great friends.

Obviously, Mom and Dad did not feel the same way – they kept me. As I got older, I became my dad's "shadow," a nickname acquired when Sister Mary Christina asked him who was behind him. I did many things with him, like grocery shopping, or walking downtown to the *Kansan* newspaper with articles he'd written regarding the Knights of Columbus, Holy Name Society, March of Dimes and other topics. We would walk together to my piano lessons, which were near where he worked as a switch-board operator for the Water & Light Company. Dad's hobby was taking pictures. By the time I was a teenager, it became a hobby of mine, too. It still is.

My mom was a somewhat more serious person. Keeping the house clean was a first priority. My job was to dust the legs of tables and chairs; eventually I graduated to the *whole* chairs and tables. Then came ironing, etc. She

tried to teach me to cook, but that failed. Before entering school, we went over to Kansas City, Mo., for shopping with her friend and the friend's daughter, who was my age. It was *too* much walking. Sometimes we would go to Swope Park for a picnic, which was much more fun. After I entered grade school, Mom became a Grey Lady Volunteer at Providence Hospital, which cut back on our shopping and picnics. However, when my missions brought me closer to home, we did a lot of shopping together, which surprised her. We also took some trips together. That's something else I inherited, a love of travel.

Mom and Dad were my examples for my "prayer life" as I grew older. We attended Mass as often as possible. They took me to novenas, missions at church, seasonal services, Corpus Christi devotions, etc. They were very kind and caring to whoever needed their assistance. I knew they did these things, not for show, but because they loved their Lord.

How could it not rub off in some way? Daily Mass in grade school at St. Peter's became more meaningful in the upper grades. Three SCLs came into my life, each playing her own role in God's plans for me. Sister Martin de Porres, my sixth-grade teacher, planted the seed of my vocation. She didn't know it, but she was always special to me. Sister Marie Dominic had 7 a.m. Mass-choir and Saturday sacristy. Sister Mary Rosine also had choir. She encouraged me to learn to play the organ. I believe playing the organ for Mass and devotions (simple music only!), singing in the choir and working in the sacristy helped that little seed grow. Thanks to Sister Marie Dominic and Sister Mary Vincent who thought my playing was "better than nothing" and never discouraged me or put me down!

For awhile in high school, I wasn't so sure about "nuns." In spite of everything, the seed continued to grow. I ran around with several girls who wanted to be sisters. You know the saying, "Birds of a feather, flock together." In the summers, we could visit our favorite sisters. Eventually, we entered the sisterhood together on Aug. 19, 1956. God's ways are not our ways, and I am the only one still here from that group of friends.

I don't know why God left me here, but his ways are a mystery; I can only thank him for allowing me to continue

I know with certainty that Sisters of Charity are called to absolute, final love of God that shuns what is safe or self-absorbed. Every day, I am awakened, revived and nourished by living out together our call to communion and mission in Christ and in his Church.

—Sister Sue Miller

to serve him through this way of life. He has gifted me through *many* people during my life – family, sisters, friends. No matter what has happened, whether good or bad, there were always people to help and guide me, along with his Word and the giving of himself to me at Mass. I haven't always been a "quick learner," but I *know* he hasn't given up on me!

To the community, my family, friends, and especially my God, my deepest gratitude and love for all that you have given me during these 50 years.

Sister Joan Sue Miller

On the feast of All Souls, this "little soul" was born at Providence Hospital in Kansas City, Kan. The first arms that embraced me were those of the Sister of Charity who attended my birth. From that moment forward, the warm string of love and care by SCLs, my family and friends has marked my life.



At the time of my birth, my family lived in Leavenworth in Immaculate Conception Cathedral Parish, and I was baptized there: Joan Sue Miller. Two of my early memories were of my dad reading me the life of Joan of Arc; and in turn, of my reading my first books to Sister Stanislaus Marie Smith, as she lay dying at Providence. She and my mother had been chemistry students in Saint Mary College's first four-year graduating class. I have loved reading ever since, learning the life lesson of how stories and charity open the heart.

Soon I had three brothers – Lee, Dave and Nick. I fit in birth order between Lee and Dave. When we were school

age, my dad transferred to the Railway Mail Service so we could have a stable schooling experience in Kansas City, Mo. Little Flower Parish was the center of school and after-school activities from kindergarten to seventh-grade. The BVM sisters were exceptional teachers. In the sixth-grade, I was very ill and hospitalized with pneumonia before penicillin was readily available. Sister Mary Ermentrude, my teacher, kept in close touch and tutored me in long division during six weeks of illness.

I attended St. Teresa's Academy on scholarship after seventh-grade graduation. However, tragedy struck our family in August 1951. My dad was buried the first day of my high school classes. He had been killed in a car accident in New Mexico while we were on a family vacation, returning home from visiting my grandfather in California. At the foot of the cross, as a young teen, reality came into focus, and grief helped focus me on life's big questions.

After freshman year in high school, my mom felt I needed the care of the Sisters of Charity, and I transferred to Hogan High. There, I met sisters who later became my sisters in community and who were friends from the moment I crossed the school threshold. Senior year, because of Sisters Mary Lenore, Francetta, Agnes Virginia and Agnes Eugenia, I received a scholarship to attend Saint Mary College, Leavenworth. I had visited with Sister Zita Marie about studying nursing at Providence Hospital, but I was too young, and she encouraged me to enroll in liberal arts at Saint Mary.

I loved Saint Mary. Studying with Sisters Mary Ernestine, Mary Edwin, Andrea, Frances Therese and others opened a whole new world of arts and humanities for me. I uncovered hidden interests within and outside of myself. And

the sisters' presence on our dorm floors and in classes provided an environment for me to "come and see" what it was like to be a Sister of Charity. By October, I had fallen in love with the community, the campus and the Lord. And that has decided everything since! With the help of Sisters Mary Lenore and Edward Mary, I entered the SCLs in August after my freshman year in college. I never did become a nurse, but "nothing is more practical than finding God." (Pedro Arrupe, SJ)

After first vows, I lived with wonderful SCLs in Oklahoma City, Laramie and Helena and taught grades four, five and six. Then I was missioned to Saint Mary to complete my degree. I made perpetual vows in 1964 and was sent to study for a master's degree and a Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin with Sisters Marie and Adelaide. My four years in Madison, Wisc., were at the height of Vatican II and the Vietnam War. The extracurricular scene was filled with good theologians and political activists as well as with a community of men and women who were graduate students and friends.

Despite all predictions, my Catholic faith and religious commitments were strengthened at the university – where I made lifetime friends – lay and religious – and where my horizons were expanded by diversity, service and close contact with poverty and suffering. I thank Mother Leo Frances and Sister Rose Dominic for believing I could survive and thrive there when the bishop warned them "my vocation was in their hands."

In January 1968, I returned to teach at Saint Mary. Again, I was blessed to live in community with the college sisters. There were 50 of us at the time! By the following year, I was residing with students in the dorms as resident faculty, teaching and loving it. One summer I studied in Japan, and later, in Mexico. I was also privileged to travel to China with Father Stitz and a group of Kansas farmers in the late 1970s. Study and service abroad early and again in these later years to Peru and Haiti, enriched my desire to spend my religious life letting God's love flow through me to others in need.

After seven years on the faculty, I was asked to be academic dean when Sister Mary Louise retired. For 12 years,

I "deaned" with Sister Mary Janet, college president, and Sisters Mary Beth, Xavier and Mary Vincentia – the other administrators. It was a time of growth at Saint Mary with expansion to Donnelly College (2 Plus Two program) and also into the local prisons, both federal and state. And it was a time of change in curriculum and student life that kept us all young and hopping. I was so blessed to be mentored and befriended by Sister Mary Janet and all the college sisters.

In those same years, I was allowed to partner with government programs, and we offered job training to low-income women on campus; started Outfront – a center for adult basic education, English as a second language and GED; and began Ancilla Center daycare and preschool in Maria Hall. A common theme of all our outreach programs was to love and serve those most in need. What better gift to give than an education!

When I was elected to serve on the Community Council in 1986, I was so deeply involved at Saint Mary that the move from Maria Hall to the Mother House seemed a thousand miles' walk. But again, all was gift and grace. A Japanese haiku says: "My house burned down, better view of the rising moon." The election to community leadership was another invitation to harness for God "all the energies of love." (Chardin)

The breadth of SCL leadership service allowed me to help found Apoyo, a parenting education program for young immigrant mothers; to be trained as a "buddy" for persons living with AIDS in Sister Kevin Marie's Good Samaritan project; to be a "support mom" in Mother to Mother Ministry with Sister Mary Arthel; to help Sister Ann Paula's dream of Menuha House take shape; to see Marillac Center built and serving so many so well with Sister Noreen Walter's direction. And now, Cristo Rey Kansas City High School will open this summer – another invitation turned into an amazing reality – thanks to Sister Vickie Perkins and her team. In May, we blessed the new St. Vincent Center in Piura, Peru, that offers health and social services under Hermana Laura Rumiche's leadership. Together we are best!

Twenty years after being elected to leadership, I know with certainty that Sisters of Charity are called to absolute,

final love of God that shuns what is safe or self-absorbed. Every day, I am awakened, revived and nourished by living out together our call to communion and mission in Christ and in his Church.

I am so grateful for God's gift of my family, friends and sisters in community – companions in faith, united by blood and by love – whose hope is so certain! Thank you for supporting my "falling in love in an absolute, final way." I pray that, in turn, my life has been a gift to you and to everyone whose path has crossed my own.

Sister Genitha Helen Regan **(formerly Sister James Therese)**

God blessed me with very dear parents of faith and goodness, James Patrick and Theresa Marie (Mechsner) Regan. I was born June 30, 1931, in Frankfort, Kan., and was the youngest of the family. My five older siblings were Aloysius, Cecilia, Rozella, Geraldine and Leo. My sister-in-law, Pearl (Johnson) Regan, and my brother-in-law, James W. "Jake" Kennedy, joined my family when I was 3 years old and are dear to me, too. Members of my immediate family, except my sister, Rozella Regan, have now made the journey into eternal life.



My 13 nephews and nieces and their respective spouses and now generations of family members are special to me, also.

I was baptized at Annunciation Church and named "Genitha" after a lovely lady from our parish, Genitha (Adams) Horigan. I am indebted to the Benedictine Sisters from Atchison, Kan., who taught me in those early years at Annunciation Grade School. Graduation from Frankfort High School followed in May 1949.

Perhaps my interest in sports began in my youth when I admired my brother, Leo, as he played football and basketball. For me, playing on the girls' basketball team in high school was a special time. I am most grateful for those faith-filled years of education and fun, classmates, teachers, friends and ever-supporting parents and family.

On Jan. 2, 1950, I started accounting/secretarial office work with the Kansas Power and Light Company in Frankfort. In October 1953, I transferred to the company's office in Topeka.

In time, Our Lord really "came calling" for me to make a decision about my life. In my youth, I had desired to be a sister. Then those thoughts were put aside until later years. Because of my interest and background in business work and hearing my friends (the Kennedys and the Glynns) glory about Saint Mary College, I pursued entrance into the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth.

Reflecting on the past 50 years of blessings evokes my sincere gratitude to my community for opportunities provided me. This included education in business and financial administration at the University of Saint Mary and the University of Kansas. One of my happiest days was graduation from the University of Notre Dame.

I was privileged to serve several years in financial management in our health care ministry and witnessed the introduction of computers in hospital finance. Later, I served in finance and human resources ministry at the Mother House. In Leavenworth, I also enjoyed the years I volunteered as a member of the Board of Directors of Mother to Mother Ministry.

Blessings in my life include many wonderful friends and sisters I have met or worked with in my missions at St. James Hospital, Butte, and St. Ann's, Anaconda, Mont.; Saint John's Health Center, Santa Monica, Calif.; St. Francis Health Center, Topeka; Providence Medical Center, Kansas City; Saint John Hospital, Leavenworth; DePaul Hospital, Cheyenne, Wyo.; and our SCL Mother House. During these missions, I have experienced Our Lord's graces through the goodness of his people and the majestic beauty of his mountains, seashores and sunsets. For these blessings, I am grateful.

The faith-in-action that I experienced with my parents and family has greatly influenced my life. The faith-in-action that I have learned from the foundation of Mother Xavier Ross to our current community of sisters sustains me. For these blessings of 50 years as a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth, I "give thanks" to Our Lord and to you.

Beyond All Borders

Report from SJEC

The SCL Social Justice Executive Committee (SJEC) met April 20 to 22 at Marillac Center, Leavenworth, Kan. The 12 members of this committee form three subcommittees. These three smaller groups allow committee members to accomplish their mission of working for peace by promoting a culture of nonviolence and building a sustainable global community founded on interdependence and the principles of human rights.

Subcommittees and some of their work include the following:

Subcommittee on Environment:

- Continue to distribute monthly earth-friendly suggestions through the SCL e-news.
- Explore the community's purchasing two hybrid cars.

Subcommittee on Peace:

- Invite SCL/As to participate in the Aug. 11 Witness Against War Action in Colorado Springs, Colo.
- Send daily inspirational quotes on peace through SCL e-news during designated time periods.

Subcommittee on Poverty:

- Use SCL website and e-news to remind SCL/As of activities during the annual Cover the Uninsured Week. Forty-six million persons in the United States are uninsured.
- Monitor minimum wage policy and ask for advocacy when Congress is working this issue.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to an editorial oversight, the following article about Sister Janet did not appear in the last edition of Voices of Charity that featured SCLs who work in Church offices.)

Sister Janet coordinates health ministry in Peru

In Peru there are not a lot of "church offices," and as for a chancery, there is not a nice building where all the different ministries have offices. The archdiocese does provide Pastoral de Salud with space for an office in a building it owns.



Sister Janet Cashman

Sister Janet Cashman created and established the position of archdiocesan coordinator of the health care ministry (pastoral de salud) in 1989 and served in that capacity until 1995. Until she returned to the same position in October 2003, two other Sisters of Charity had this role – Hermanas Maria Orozco and Laura Rumiche.

In this ministry, Sister Janet has many duties and responsibilities that include ongoing spiritual formation; formation in health issues and overall support of the volunteer parish health care ministers; promotion of Christian values and treatment of patients in the government run health care institutions; representing the archdiocese at regional and national meetings of the health care ministry and other meetings; preparation of economic and descriptive program reports for funding organizations as well as for the National Office of Health Care Ministry; and preparation and submission of projects for continued funding.

"The bishop and his auxiliary have been very supportive of everything I have done," Sister Janet said.

She explained that each parish group is helped to analyze their health situation, identify the most urgent health problem, and then prepare an objective and plan of action around that problem. Thirty-five of 52 parishes have an established group of health care ministers, and each parish has its own plan and strategy to be carried out by the 300+ ministers.

Parish activities include such services as a small pharmacy; a reflexology clinic; visiting and caring for the sick in their homes; assisting AIDS patients; food kitchens for children and the elderly; formation on health issues for neighborhoods; clean-neighborhood campaigns; and searching out resources for those who have no funds for medical care.

"This works enables me to walk in solidarity with many faith-filled and economically poor people and together create hope where the situation seems hopeless," Sister Janet said. "It also enables me to build bridges between the rich and the poor as St. Vincent did, identifying resources for the parish groups that can help them meet certain needs."

Chance encounter leads to advocacy

It was a chance encounter with a brochure that introduced Sister Rosella Mary Hehn, Denver, Colo., to the Water for People organization and to a deep level of conviction to advocate for the availability of this natural resource for all people.



Sister Rosella Mary Hehn

A resident at the independent living facility where Sister Rosella Mary works shared a brochure that displayed his daughter's photography. Sister was not only taken with the photos, but the worthiness of the cause caught and held her attention. At the time, Water for People had 60 projects to improve water and sanitation in Central and South America. Instead of taking a Golden Jubilee trip, Sister Rosella Mary donated money she had received from her celebration to the organization.

The trip she didn't take and her generosity subsequently led to the trip of a lifetime. In 2003, Nancy Haws, the photographer, invited Sister Rosella Mary to travel to Peru and Bolivia to observe the completion of some of the water projects. Sister Rosella Mary was asked to bless one of the projects following music and dancing as the villagers celebrated the occasion. She found the people welcoming, grateful and willing to do whatever was necessary to keep their water supply flowing and clean.

Sister Rosella Mary has remained involved with Water for People, which has headquarters in Denver. Because people know that she is keenly interested in water conservation, she receives helpful and informative materials from around the country. People also send her donations for Water for People which she is pleased to pass along to the organization for its good work.

From her childhood, Sister Rosella Mary has recollections of her father irrigating fields with water from wells. She knows that water blessed her family and many others. "Yet," she reflected, "in a way, having so much [water] was a detriment to valuing it. That's what seems to have happened to everyone in America today."

Sister Rosella Mary encouraged visiting the Water for People website (www.water4people.org) and also www.wateractivists.org.

Water, water – not safe everywhere

In 2002, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognized that water was an independent right of people around the world. The Committee stated, "the right to water clearly falls within the category of guarantees essential for securing an adequate standard of living, particularly since it is one of the most fundamental conditions for survival."

Yet, too many people continue to miss out on this precious resource. The facts:

- Of the world's population of 6 billion people, at least 1.1 billion do not have available sources of clean drinking water, such as protected springs and wells.
- Contaminated water is responsible for an estimated 7 percent of all deaths and diseases.
- Three to 4 million people die each year from water-borne diseases.
- Poor health constrains development and poverty alleviation.
- Women and children in developing countries are particularly affected by a lack of access to safe water, as the task of hauling water, often over long distances in rural areas, normally falls to them.

What can we do?

- Advocate for sustainable solutions to practice water resources management and to fund safe water.
- Respect this natural resource.
- Safeguard water quality by advocating for pollution controls.
- Keep informed by visiting websites: of the World Health Organization (www.who.int); the United Nations (www.un.org); and Water for People (www.water4people.org).

(Sources: *The Right to Water*, World Health Organization, 2003; "Water-The Source of Life," United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development)

St. Vincent Center dedicated in Piura

May 4 was a grand day in Piura, Peru, as villagers, hermanas and friends gathered for the dedication and blessing of the new Centro San Vicente de Paul. An estimated 350 people attended the festivities that included Mass, renewal of vows by the Hermanas de Caridad, lunch, music and dancing. The hermanas will use the center for classes and for health services.



▲ The new St. Vincent de Paul Center.



◀ Dancers added to the festive celebration.



▲ Bishop Daniel Turley of Chulucanas, Peru, at right.

SCL Associates

SCLAs attend national meeting

Six SCLAs and Sister Sharon Smith, SCLA director, attended the North American Conference of Associates and Religious meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 2-4. Joining Sister Sharon were Kitty and Len Bronec, Therese Horvat, Terri Mauton, Mary Carol Rachac and Joyce Rauth-Fears.

Approximately 500 religious and associates from communities in the United States and Canada celebrated NACAR's 10th anniversary at the biennial conference. Keynote speaker was Rev. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI, author, lecturer and president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Tex.



Father Rolheiser stressed the importance of "naming our faith in an ecclesial moment," adding that believers may not be able to fix or cure situations, but they can name them.

Applying these "diagnostics" to current times, he identified eight "moments" where people of faith are challenged to be prophets and experience the language of God in spite of the challenges.

- ▶ People have great freedom while lacking maturity for freedom.
- ▶ Society's everyday consciousness is either agnostic or atheistic; "society has killed God in ordinary places."
- ▶ Western culture is a powerful narcotic.
- ▶ Excessive individuality has led to the demise of public life and of the sense of community.
- ▶ There is an ever-increasing moral loneliness.
- ▶ Multiple generations exist within the same generation. "There are multiple churches in the same Church."
- ▶ This is a time of bewildering pluralism.
- ▶ People are called to "keep mellow hearts in bitter times."

Father Rolheiser offered four of what he described as Jesus' invitations to adult discipleship:

- ▶ Jesus on the borders of Samaria signifying both the tension and the breadth of Christ as a Jewish God and a universal God.
- ▶ Jesus on the road to Emmaus representing that the cross was and remains the path to glory.
- ▶ Jesus and the rich young man and the invitation to move from good to greatness in life.
- ▶ Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane as Christ the lover – alone and going the distance for humanity by way of the cross that leads to glory.

The conference also offered breakout sessions, time for networking and rituals and liturgy. Xavier University was the site of the meeting.

A likable pair with a great routine



▲ ABOVE: Sister Jean Winkler and Kitty Bronec.



◀ LEFT: Sister Frances Cecilia Domme with Pauli.

Kitty Bronec and Pauli – a female Bichon Frise (i.e., a fluffy, well-mannered dog!) – are regulars at the Mother House in Leavenworth, Kan., every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Kitty, a former SCL and now an SCLA, gives manicures to Mother House and Ross Hall sisters, while Pauli provides entertainment and begs for treats.

Kitty is marking the 10th anniversary of her visits. She retired in 1996 from Saint Mary College where she ran Outfront, a basic education program sponsored by the university. Her friend, Sister Charles Marie Beeby, then Ross Hall administrator, didn't want Kitty to lose contact or lack something to do! Pauli, now 7 years old, has been visiting the sisters since she was 6 weeks old.

The one-on-ones with the sisters are what appeal to Kitty. "I do this because we are friends," she said. She catches up on news, does nails and hand massages, and has lunch with the sisters.

Kitty and Len, her husband, were among the early SCLAs and served many years on the Associate Advisory Board. They recently joined the Social Justice Executive Committee.

As for Pauli, she has her paws full just being Pauli and finding the sister(s) who will sneak her treats under the table – a routine she has down pat!

Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!

Front Lane

by Sister Mary Janet McGilley

*This poem is printed
with special blessings
for the Golden Jubilarians
and all SCL/As who have
traveled the brick road.
Thank you, Sister Mary Janet.*

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 blocksworth of that.
And along the long approach
remembering their southern homes,
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 paths
that brought us here.

V O I C E S

of Charity



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