



Voices of Charity

Spring 2011

Heart of the Matter:
Topeka Sandwich Ministry
pages 4-5

Re-Markings:
The Two Halves of Life
pages 10-13

A publication of the
SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF LEAVENWORTH



SISTERS OF CHARITY OF LEAVENWORTH

Mission Statement

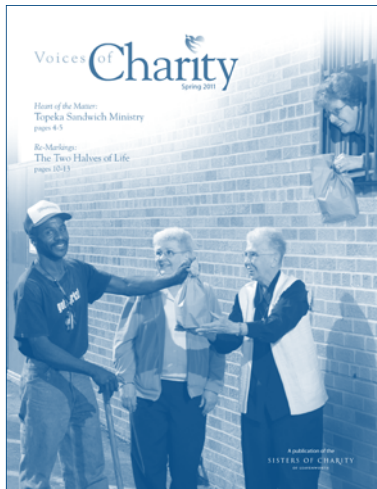
Impelled by the love of Christ,
we, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth,
offer every loving service in our power
to meet the critical needs
of God's people.

Vision Statement

As Sisters of Charity we commit ourselves here and now
to embrace anew the charism given us by Vincent, Louise,
Mother Xavier:

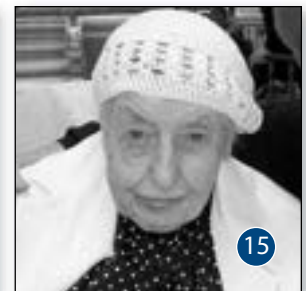
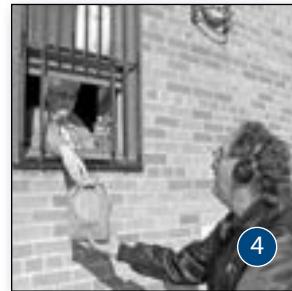
to love the poor,
to love one another,
to live simply,
and to unite the whole of our lives
in the poor and loving Christ.

COVER PHOTO: Billy is a regular who greatly appreciates the generosity and kindness he experiences at the Sandwich Ministry in Topeka. Pictured with Billy are (left to right) Sister Marjorie Cushing, Sister Mary Corita Conlan and Jean Smith (at the window).



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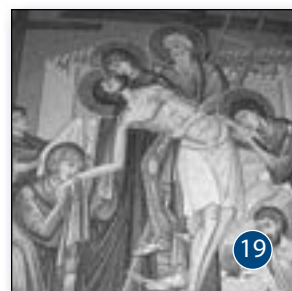
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Community Director



Sister Maureen Hall

Impelled by the love of Christ,
we, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth,
offer every loving service in our power
to meet the critical needs
of God's people.

—SCL Mission Statement

As you read the stories in this spring edition of *Voices of Charity*, you will see our SCL Mission in action. From Topeka to the Sudan, from Montana to Peru, our SCLs and Associates are meeting the many and different critical needs of God's people. Impelled by our love of Christ, we are serving with love.

Ask Sister Mary Corita what is special about serving food to persons in need in Topeka, and she will share stories that will warm your heart. Sister and the volunteers and staff with whom she serves see Christ at the window through which they pass sack lunches.

Listen to Sister Pat as she discusses her discernment to volunteer for the mission in Southern Sudan. From her early childhood on the farm in Montana, she learned responsibility to care for the world. Now, she is venturing on a pioneer journey to a new part of the world to train teachers to meet the critical need of education in this war-torn land.

Read what a difference Sister Vickie and Cristo Rey have made in the lives of high school students in Kansas City's urban core. What a joy to acknowledge that 100 percent of the school's first graduating class went on to college. Hope abounds for the future of these young people.

You will find accounts of this incredible witness to our Mission resounding through the pages of this magazine and through the lives of our Sisters and Associates and the many people with whom we serve.

The wonder of our Mission in action is that the spirit is contagious and catching! Through our sponsored ministries and our many individual ministries, we share our Mission with laymen and laywomen who are kindred spirits. Through blessings and commissioning rituals early this year, we have passed the baton to new leaders and sent others forth in support of our Mission.

It has been and remains a season of blessings. As we move through these holy times, the spirit rings through and true: our God is a gracious God whose goodness knows no bounds. Our task, our Mission is to spread that goodness and enfold it as Jesus did through his life and death, and be good and faithful servants, impelled by the love of the risen Christ.

Blessings of the season.

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

Sister Maureen Hall
Community Director

Heart of the Matter

This edition of *Voices of Charity* features representative ministries of SCLs in Topeka, Kan. We acknowledge the good works of all of the Sisters who serve in this region as we highlight the following to demonstrate how our Mission is being actualized day in and day out to serve different people with different critical needs.

Ministry mutually transforming

When asked about the difference Sister Lucille Harrington has made in her life, one word summed it up for Maria Lopez: “Muchas.” Maria is grateful for everything Sister has ever done for her, her husband and their four children, ages 1 to 14.

From helping Maria learn more about God to instilling respect of family members for one another, Sister Lucille’s ministry of presence and availability has had a transformative effect. Maria’s husband, Sergio, is now a leader in the Spanish Cursillo. Maria is active in one of Topeka’s basic Church communities whose members meet weekly to pray, read Scripture and discuss how the word of God influences their lives. As a spiritual director of the groups, Sister Lucille is present, prays and listens.

Sister Lucille approaches her ministry with the same flexibility and willing spirit that characterized her 35 years in the South American missions. “On the missions, you wake up with every morning like a blank sheet,” she said. “You never know what is going to happen.”

She describes her ministry in Topeka as a mini-version of that same approach. When distributing Communion to patients at St. Francis Health Center, Sister Lucille finds



Sister Lucille Harrington enjoyed a visit with Maria Lopez and her daughter Catalina.

that people want to talk and share their stories with her. She was translating at Marian Clinic where Sister Lucille first met Maria and struck up a friendship that includes visits and telephone conversations. Sister Lucille’s phone rings, or people come to the door, like the man who wanted to talk about his marriage that was falling apart. Sister Lucille has also had a role in lay leader formation among Topeka’s Spanish-speaking population and has been instrumental in encouraging the expansion of the archdiocesan Hispanic ministry to Topeka.

Sister Lucille is a member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. She served there for five years as director of RCIA for English-speaking

persons, but chose to dedicate more time to the archdiocesan Spanish evangelization program based at Guadalupe. That program serves Hispanics throughout Topeka.

While there’s daily prayer, Mass attendance at St. Francis and a weekly Holy Hour, there’s not much else programmed or scheduled about Sister Lucille’s ministry. Whereas some people might think this amounts to not doing anything and might have a hard time adjusting, Sister Lucille is comfortable with this approach.

“It’s whatever, whenever and however,” she said. “Jesus had a touch and go ministry being present and available. As long as this goes on in my life, I’m happy to keep on going!”

Sandwich Ministry

After jokingly placing his order for breakfast with eggs, Terry cheerfully received a sack lunch from Sister Marjorie Cushing.

Greg Meier, a faithful supporter of the Sandwich Ministry, brought loaves of bread that Jean Smith (left) and Sister Marjorie Cushing helped unload.



Nan Cookus, Joe Fritton and Eldon Martin are the “Thursday crew” that volunteers to make sandwiches and can account for every piece of cheese, bread and bologna! Joe is Sister Mary Vincent Fritton’s cousin.

While he jokes that his wife volunteered him for the Sandwich Ministry that operates out of the former Assumption Elementary School in Topeka, Kan., Joe Fritton is serious and certain about why he returns every Thursday to put bologna and cheese between slices of bread.

“This is where Jesus comes to the window,” he said.

Joe is referring to the window through which men and women of all ages and colors receive cheerful greetings and sack lunches with sandwiches, cookies and bags of chips. They may be down on their luck, unemployed, homeless, or living with a disability or other challenges, but they know they are welcome to return.

“Every time we go to that window, Sister Marjorie Cushing agreed, “we are looking at the face of Christ.”

• • •

Sister Mary Corita Conlan, who coordinates donations, volunteers, staff and supplies, said the Sandwich

Ministry dates to the early 1950s when it began operating on a smaller scale through a window in the Assumption Parish rectory. Today, the Sandwich Ministry serves 2,000 sack lunches on average each month. Last summer with kids out of school, the number jumped to 3,000.

“Our numbers really started to mushroom with the economic downturn,” Sister Mary Corita said.

In addition to the Sandwich Ministry, Sister Mary Corita has a charity fund from which she provides grocery vouchers, bus tickets or miscellaneous support for patients of Marian Clinic and others. Managing this fund is a carryover from her 38 years as principal of Assumption. During that time, Sister received financial contributions to assist families in need (not just school families). This was the inception of the grocery vouchers and providing assistance in other areas of need, e.g., prescriptions, shoes for youngsters, etc.

• • •

Support for the Sandwich Ministry comes from several sources. Mater Dei Parish pays for the meat, cheese and some of the cookies. Donations come from parishioners, other benefactors and the SCL Charity Fund. When Father John Rossiter, former Assumption Parish pastor died in 2010, a memorial fund honoring him benefited the Sandwich Ministry. The priests of the Topeka Region share the cost of the grocery vouchers through a monthly contribution.

The local Frito-Lay plant donates bags of assorted chips. And then there are friends like Greg Meier who drops by frequently with loaves of bread, or Elaine and Ron Broxterman who recently provided bottled water. Greg helps “because everybody needs to be helped along the way. ‘Why not help?’ would be my question,” he said.

• • •

As a parish employee, Jean Smith has worked with the Sandwich Ministry for 28 years. Jean has seen

Bologna, blessings and a lot of love

Record-keeping is important to the ministry as Jean Smith keeps a daily tally of meals served. In March 2011, 2,794 sack lunches were distributed.



Monday at the Sandwich Ministry, members of the Werth family—seven children and Kathy, their Mom—volunteer to make sandwiches. They are pictured above with Sister Marjorie Cushing (left) and Sister Mary Corita Conlan (right).

the evolution of the ministry from just sandwiches to the addition of chips and cookies. She calls herself a “Jeanie of all trades” in that she distributes sack lunches; keeps records and sends reports to Topeka priests, the archbishop and the SCL Community Director; and orders the meat, cheese and needed supplies.

After 50 years in education, Sister Marjorie was ready for a change. “I always wanted to work with the Sandwich Ministry,” she said. Sister Marjorie has volunteered since August 2010, and, like Jean, she does what’s needed to keep things running smoothly—sacks lunches, distributes them, keeps records and prepares for the next day’s outreach.

• • •

The Sandwich Ministry at Assumption operates Monday through Friday. Grace Cathedral, an Anglican church, assumed responsibilities for Saturday distribution at its location.

Each day of the week, a different group of volunteers comes to the

former Assumption School building to help with the Sandwich Ministry. They know you can make 13 sandwiches from one loaf of bread. They can account for every piece of bread, cheese and bologna. They work in an assembly line and individually wrap each sandwich.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to do this,” said Nan Cookus. “I think this is something that Christ would do himself.”

Eldon Martin takes satisfaction in helping persons who are poor. He said, “We are in the house of the Lord, and we’re doing what we can to help.”

Kathy (Mrs. George) Werth brings her seven children, whom she home schools, for Monday sandwich-making. This is literally a hands-on lesson in charity, and Kathy and her family are happy to serve.

“We’re doing the ministry of St. Vincent de Paul,” Sister Marjorie said.

PERSPECTIVES OF THE GUESTS

“God knows how you all help others in need each day of the week. But you all must remember the reward for your long labor will forever be in the minds of others who know they could always have a place to go in time of need.”

— Peter

“Good help. Good people.”

— Grover

“They take good care of me here—a lot of prayers, a lot of patience.”

— Terry

“These people are wonderful. They are truly God-sent.”

— Billy

Ministry to sick, aging a 'spiritually rewarding' experience



On a recent home visit, Sister Ann Moylan presented Loretta Doll with a prayer blanket made by parishioners.



In person or on the phone, Sister Ann ministers to the persons with whom she visits.

Sister Ann Moylan has a job description for her position as minister to the sick and aging at Most Pure Heart of Mary Parish, Topeka, Kan. But the words don't come close to communicating the love, devotion and energy that characterize her outreach to the sick, homebound and elderly.

"If anybody's going to get wings, this one is," said Loretta Doll, during Sister Ann's visit to the home of the 97-year-old parishioner. "I love Sister!"

The feeling is mutual. "I love the people. I love the ministry. I love to pray with them and be a helper," Sister Ann said.

Since 1995, Sister Ann has developed and expanded the ministry to reach more people in a variety of creative and traditional ways. Her reach encompasses parishioners and other Catholics in nursing homes and hospitals served by the parish. Her list has anywhere from 175 to 195 persons who receive Communion or visits. She also coordinates a

number of Masses at nursing homes each month.

Sister Ann trains volunteer extraordinary ministers of Communion for the homebound. On Sundays, they take Communion to approximately 90 people. Other days of the week, volunteers distribute Communion and lead the rosary at nursing homes.

Through the Prayer Pager Ministry, 40 people who are sick have pagers that beep when any one of 80 parish volunteers dials a telephone number to let the persons know someone is praying for them. When the sick person returns to renewed health, the individual or family member returns the pager for use by another parishioner.

Loretta Doll was the recipient of a colorful prayer blanket made by Most Pure Heart parishioners in their homes or in a sewing group. Sister Ann gives blankets to persons who are hospitalized, homebound or in nursing facilities. She lets them

know that parishioners who pray the rosary daily at 8 a.m. at Most Pure Heart are thinking of them.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Sister Ann visits patients and residents in hospitals and nursing facilities and individuals in their homes. She coordinates extraordinary ministers of Communion from across Topeka parishes for Stormont-Vail Hospital.

Sister Ann is faithful about attending wakes and funerals. She helps counsel parishioners about options as they consider transitioning from their own homes to assisted living or nursing facilities. She attends milestone birthday celebrations for which 80, 90 or 100 year olds enjoy balloons from the parish.

What makes Sister Ann happiest is helping the elders and bringing people back into the Church.

"This is one of the most spiritually rewarding ministries I have ever experienced," she said.

Multiple ministries; *rich, full life as an SCL*

Sister Donna Jean Henson is grateful for each of the ministries she has had in her 52 years as an SCL. From teaching to serving in the missions, from work in a parish to her current job as director of purchasing for the Community, she believes that each of these roles has contributed to and enriched her personal, spiritual life.

Since she was 5, Sister Donna Jean had thought about being a Sister like her SCL aunt, Sister Rose Bernard Renyer. In grade school, stories of the Maryknoll missionaries appealed to Sister Donna Jean. She entered the SCLs in 1959, but it wasn't until 1963 that the Community began to serve foreign missions in response to Pope John XXIII's request.

Sister Donna Jean spent her first 20 years as an SCL in elementary education. It was Sister Janet Cashman who sparked her recurring interest in the missions with the suggestion that Sister Donna Jean come to Peru. The latent missionary recalled thinking, "God is still bringing this up to me!"

This time, she followed through with a letter to Sister Mary Kevin Hollow, Community Director, in which Sister Donna Jean offered to go to Peru. A year later in 1982, she received the call. She had always sung the song "Faraway Places," and the words rang true during her 15 years in Peru.

In Talara, Sister Donna Jean taught religion and helped teachers. She worked in the family catechetical program there and in Negritos.



Following a year at the John XXIII School of Theology in Lima, she became director of novices for the Hermanas de la Caridad in Peru—a role she has especially treasured.

Sister Donna Jean returned to the United States in 1998 and for three years served the Spanish-speaking population of Our Lady of Peace Parish, Kansas City, Mo. There, she taught baptismal preparation classes in Spanish, coordinated RCIA in both English and Spanish, and preached homilies because the pastor did not have sufficient grasp of Spanish for that purpose.

Next, Sister Donna Jean assumed the SCL director of purchasing assignment. Her mother's health had begun to fail, and Sister Donna Jean was able to live in her family home in Nortonville, Kan., care for her Mom and commute to Leavenworth. She did this until her Mother required nursing facility care in 2005.

In June, Sister Donna Jean will mark her 10th anniversary as purchasing director. She enjoys the

variety of the job—the bookkeeping, the shopping, getting out of her office to deliver supplies that include paper towels, lots of light bulbs, toiletry items, laundry detergent, printer cartridges and more. Sister Donna Jean tracks inventory and submits reports. She said that she has the fun part of making needed purchases, and someone else gets to pay the bills!

When called upon, Sister Donna Jean does translating and interpreting. She is a member of the Mother House choir and a team leader who convenes one of the small groups of SCLs for study and discussion. She receives donations to the Community for the Peruvian missions and coordinates with the Hermanas who thank benefactors. Drawing, painting, bridge and crossword puzzles are other pastimes that keep Sister Donna Jean busy.

Teacher, missionary, pastoral assistant, purchasing director, she's had a rich and full life as an SCL and a Sister—what she always wanted to be.



Doing good comes naturally to Associate

Sandy Hick and her feline friend savored a peaceful moment at her home in Lawrence, Kan.

Sandy Hick has a rich and long history with the SCLs dating to 1970 when she arrived in Lawrence, Kan. Since that time, she has embraced the SCL Mission and been a good friend of the Community and many Sisters. She was among the first group of individuals to become SCL Associates in 1987.

“I like being in this group of people who all have the same spiritual desire,” she said, “and in the same breath, they share the ability to organize and do good things for people.”

Doing things for people comes naturally for Sandy.

In 2000, after she retired, Sandy traveled to Haiti with four SCLs for an immersion experience. A few years later, she volunteered to organize and develop a program to attract other individuals and groups to Haiti for similar experiences. Political unrest in the island nation and last year’s devastating earthquake have prevented this program from going forward.

For the second time since becoming an Associate, Sandy is serving on the SCLA Advisory Board. Most recently, with three other SCLAs, she wrote and compiled a reflection and prayer booklet to mark the 150th celebration of the spirit of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac. She has also been involved in leading

small groups of Sisters and Associates in discussion of these booklets.

Sandy’s embarking on a new adventure in her life as caretaker for a 1½-year-old toddler. Jacob’s maternal grandmother was a good friend of Sandy’s who died three years ago. Sandy has remained close to the family and has become Jacob’s surrogate grandmother.

She has two cats—Esperanza and José, the latter a stray adopted from the Mother House. Sandy is a good neighbor, watching dogs and houses when her friends travel. She is also an avid birdwatcher, observing red hawks and other flying creatures. She meditates often and especially on her tractor mower as she cuts the two prayer circles she has shaped on the acreage behind her house.

Sandy’s varied career—physical education teacher; U.S. exchange college teacher to England; specialist in movement education; college professor; basketball coach; pipeline installation trainer; program manager for conferences on gas and oil; and distance learning coordinator—is another story in itself. It’s a story filled with accounts and anecdotes of people, places and interesting adventures—all of which Sandy treasures as she does her experience of being an SCL Associate.

Book Review

Book traces provocative, exciting Church history

by Sister Mary Pat Lenahan



“I recommend this text because it provides an insightful reminder of the faithfulness of God.”

O'Malley, John W., SJ (2010). *A history of the popes: from Peter to the present*. Lanham, Maryland: A Sheed & Ward Book-Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

For those who enjoy reading history as well as insights into the lives of the many popes who have led the Church through these two millennia, this book will whet their appetites for more. These snapshots of the papacy remind us that “The popes were players in virtually all the great dramas of the Western world in the last two thousand years, and in those dramas they were often major protagonists.... The popes are only part of that history (O'Malley, 2010, p. xii).

The author divides the history into four major moments: the martyrdom of Peter and Paul; the reign of Constantine who favored Christianity in the fourth century; formation of the Papal States in the eighth and ninth centuries when the pope became their temporal leader; and when the States came to an end from 1860 to 1870 and Rome became the capital of Italy. From Peter, the first bishop of Rome and the first pope, Father O'Malley highlights such men as Gregory the Great who is described as “an embodiment of the old Roman virtues, which he combined with Christian humility and charity” (p. 44).

When the author describes John VIII, in the ninth century, he mentions that John authorized Methodius “to translate the Bible into Slavonic and, more astounding, to sing mass in that language...for the first and the last time until Vatican Council II, a pope ratified a liturgy not in Latin” (p. 79).

Interspersed with shifting political alliances, personal greed, selling and providing positions through nepotism, bribes, threats, violence, selling indulgences, scheming plots and counterplots, there also emerged great and humble leaders. Some were patrons of the arts, and others caused great confusion and controversy.

The exciting and provocative history of the Church is influenced and shaped by the human choices and actions as well as inactions of its leaders and members. The Church, as a global microcosm, is impacted by the societal, political, cultural and religious shifts of the times. It is not an island, and the Church, the people of God, does not act in a vacuum, set apart from the influences of the broader world and its context.

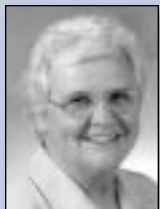
I recommend this text because it provides an insightful reminder of the faithfulness of God. From this love relationship springs hope that in our humanness and brokenness as leaders and members, our choices, commitments and faith give us the courage to be and do all we can to bring about the Kingdom of God and to serve all of God's people. This impetus urges us on to pray for the pope who is the “Servant of the servants of God” (p. xvi) and to pray for all of those among us who are willing to serve in the ministry of leadership and service.

Exploring and understanding the 'two halves of life'

At different stages in their own life journeys, 12 SCLs participated in a program titled "Loving the Two Halves of Life: The Further Journey," hosted in Albuquerque, N.M., in late January.

Presenters at the intense three-day program, attended by 1,200 people, included Edwina Gateley, Father Richard Rohr, OFM, and Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI.

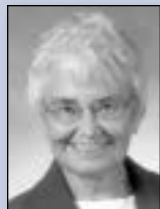
ATTENDING SCLs



*Sister Helen
Bristow*



*Sister Arthel
Cline*



*Sister Rosalie
Curtin*



*Sister Kevin
Marie Flynn*



*Sister Mary
Rachel Flynn*



*Sister Eileen
Haynes*



*Sister Mary
Agnes Hogan*



*Sister Annie
Loendorf*



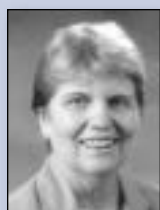
*Sister Mary Jane
Schmitz*



*Sister Irene
Skeeahan*



*Sister Anita
Sullivan*



*Sister Barbara
Wieseler*

The sessions were designed to clarify what the speakers described as the two halves of life. The speakers explained the tasks and pitfalls of the first half of life; identified the crossover points between the first half and second half of life; and discussed the "further journey" of the second half of life.

SCLs attending included Sisters Helen Bristow, Arthel Cline, Rosalie Curtin, Kevin Marie Flynn, Mary Rachel Flynn, Eileen Haynes, Mary Agnes Hogan, Annie Loendorf, Mary Jane Schmitz, Irene Skeeahan, Anita Sullivan and Barbara Wieseler. Several of the Sisters offered their reflections about the experience in response to a series of questions.

What did the presenters mean by the first and second halves of life?

Sister Mary Rachel: The **first half of life** we think of as our primary task. It's about why I matter, knowing what's right and wrong, asking how I should get my life together to secure the future. It's a **Survival Dance**. There is one world; mine's the best; where it's broken, it shouldn't be. I can fix it! We can observe ourselves, also our country and our Church, in that first stage. Not bad people, but people who don't know that there's a further journey.

In the **second half of life** we reluctantly embark on a journey that looks like going down! God has the true, the good, the wonderful at the bottom; it's counter-intuitive. We learn that our wonderful salvation project must fail. There's no Up without Downs! To balance life, first the fall, then the recovery from the

We live in a society of many aged people, but we have few elders. Not because they are bad people but because they haven't had the experience, the modeling, the instruction.

— Sister Mary Rachel Flynn

Father Rolheiser raised the question, “Why is it just when we’re strongest inside, our body starts falling apart?” His insight was that the soul has to be mellowed! Can we let go of the first half of life? Some options: Become an apathetic old fool trying to be young again; become a bitter old fool; become a holy old fool. **Whichever we choose, we’re still an old fool!!!**

— Sister Rosalie Curtin

fall. It’s a **Sacred Dance**. Persons, (also, countries and institutions) who think they’ve never fallen are off balance, without the humility and honesty to move to the second half of life! There is resistance to the second half, running back to certitude, regressing, rebuilding the old persona.

Sister Mary Agnes: The three presenters talked about the various stages of life, in one way or another, and for me the insight (or perspective) was all about living in union with our God, who is bigger and more expansive than we can imagine, who offers us ever new places and spaces to create, move and grow within the awesome mystery of life.

Sister Helen: The theme on the brochure said two stages, but Father Rolheiser gave three stages: First, the struggle to get our lives together (essential discipleship); second, the struggle to give our lives away (generative discipleship); and third, the struggle to give our deaths away (radical discipleship). This is a simplistic overview, but all speakers used this as the theme. In addition to the presenters, the conference provided audiovisual meditations, silent prayer, Scripture reading, community prayer, table conversation, personal reflection, poetry sharing, reading materials from the authors present, life map work, individual quiet walking, prayerful dance and ritual. I appreciated these multiple approaches. It made the sessions much more like a retreat rather than a convention or conference.

Sister Barbara: The program consisted essentially in looking at life in two parts—the first half—at which time we form our “container” and fill it with external stuff, thus building our own ego; and the second half—at which time we examine and build on the past and then purify it and give it away. As Carl Jung would say, the first half is about getting educated, raising children, following

rules and traditions, authority, survival, safety, security, achieving, looking good, my importance—in short, ego quests which are all about “me.” The second half of life is about having a generous heart for the reign of God—becoming truly poor and giving all away and following Jesus—the task of the Beatitudes.

Sister Kevin Marie: I heard the speakers use the simile of considering the first half of life as if it’s an empty bowl which we fill by using different energies and gifts. When the bowl’s full, we might ask, “Where do I go from here?” We spend the second half of life examining and questioning all the contents of the bowl—our gifts, and whether we have used them for a more prolonged life or just the moment. The second half is more reflective and purifying. We ask ourselves the question, “How do we continue to give ourselves away as compassionately as we did in the first half of life?” The ultimate question for me in the second part of life is “How can I give my life away in compassion and love to prepare for the final and total giving away by a joyful gift of dying, and be embraced totally by my God?”

Sister Mary Jane: Father Rohr says, “We try to remain in the first half [of life] because we do not have elders.” I guess that means we need to become “elders.” The soul asks different questions of us in the second half of life. We need to be better listeners—listening to that “still, small voice within.” This half is about being (not doing). Most or all problems of life are never resolved, just outgrown.

Discuss the opportunity to hear three such noteworthy speakers as Father Rolheiser, Father Rohr and Ms. Gatley.

Sister Mary Arthel: These three presenters were together in their sense of Church, yet uniquely creative

continued on page 12

‘Two Halves of Life’ *continued from page 11*

in the way they presented their material. Their varied approaches kept me connected, wanting more (even though it was an intense three days) and hopeful for the Church.

Sister Mary Jane: I heard noted people speak to my heart, reflecting back to me that which in my heart of hearts, I think I already knew but was not able to articulate.

Sister Helen: In addition to the three presenters, I would have to mention the power of being in the group of participants as well as hearing the other two presenters at the pre-conference. I was very impressed with the huge group of participants (1,200 + and mostly lay men and women). They were from all over the U.S. and many foreign countries. It was very moving to sit in contemplative silence and be with others searching for God as we age and to live fully the Gospel message. I experienced deep hope when I sat with other Christians desiring more than just following the commandments. In addition, their lives proclaimed that the Beatitudes are being lived, and many people are moving out of their comfort zones and generously giving their lives in loving service to others. The Spirit is **visibly** renewing the face of the earth, and I felt so privileged to have witnessed this in new ways.

What was the most powerful message of the conference to you?

Sister Rosalie: The main thing that stands out for me is the image that in the **first half of life**, we spend time building the container, e.g., finding self, career, school, discovering who we are, making impressions, i.e., gaining knowledge. The **second half**, we begin to fill the container, making sense out of the knowledge, connecting the pieces which leads to wisdom.

Sister Annie: My questions, ponderings, awakenings continue to be food for my reflection. Here are some thoughts! We are not here to save the world. We are here to love it deeply! Some questions to ponder: What is God doing because I am here? What does my unique presence say to our world? Thus, we are called to be who we are as authentically and fully as possible in this moment. This calls for a deep “letting go” as we take our lived experience with us into each season of our lives...learning from the experience and moving forward...thus we are spacious persons...leaving room for the change continually needed as we embrace and live through pain that is most often

thrust upon us. God is always at the heart of our pain and woundedness. We are never there alone. This is the God who has room for all of us, embraces us and holds us in deep compassion. This is the God of I AM, where I know all others as my kin.

Sister Kevin Marie: I learned a lot from the participants—many of whom were questioning where they were in their own lives. There were several men and women of retirement age who attended; most had given away their careers to take on new lives and to do something that holds more meaning for them.

What difference has the conference made in your life?

Sister Barbara: I continue to reflect and break open the words of this weekend as it provided so much wisdom expressed in new ways and with different emphasis. Since the conference, I trust more that the Spirit is alive and active in all that is and especially in darkness. “God is an opportunist” and invites me/us/institutions, especially at times of crisis, to the second half of life issues.

Sister Mary Jane: I found the conference very reassuring, affirming, and freeing—that makes a difference!

Sister Irene: It has given me a more understanding and compassionate attitude toward younger people. When I see them embracing values and demonstrating behaviors that I don’t admire, I can excuse rather than judge them. They have to live through that first half, and hopefully their experience will draw them toward wisdom in the second half.

Sister Mary Agnes: I’m making a greater effort to be aware, to reflect more deeply and to ask more questions concerning the institutions/organizations in which I live: Church, SCL Community, my ministry and the smaller communities, which circle my life. I believe we have an opportunity for some wonderful soul-searching conversations.

How do you plan to share the insights from the conference with SCLs, other groups or individuals?

Sister Mary Arthel: Sister Rosalie and I plan to present some of the concepts to the Friendly Visitors, volunteers who visit homebound persons. The volunteers include SCLs and others.

Sister Irene: Several of us bought books and CDs which we hope to share eventually in some small discussion groups or some other appropriate format.

Sister Mary Agnes: At this time, I'm sharing the experience through conversations with Sisters and lay people. The main sharing may be through the efforts of the Ongoing Formation Committee, since formation is "ongoing" in every phase of life.

Sister Helen: I sent my simple notes to about 10 Sisters. I've shared materials with many and sent Edwina's book to an SCL. I've shared some high points with SCLs and others. I've also used some of the material for prayer in my local house and at Duchesne Clinic where I work.

Sister Mary Rachel: Individual attendees will deliberately try to model and share much of what they learned. As we develop our thoughts, we'll notice more

opportunities to introduce conversations and prayerful reflection on these topics. My hope is that, in the greater Community (SCL and SCLA), we'll become more open, more familiar with one another, and with our personal questions, insights and experiences. And all of this on a deeper level.

Sister Kevin Marie: It's important for us as individuals to be conscious about listening to one another and to encourage those who come into the second half of their lives not having resolved some hurts or difficulties from the first half. We need to share the message that everything we had in the first part of life should become a blessing and keep it because the fruit of it is a blessing.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

The power rests in insightful questions, not answers. To follow through on this weekend, I wonder what good questions we could ask regarding meanings and actions. Might some questions be:

1. Given that times of crises hold potential graces, what invitations or calls do I see in the "deaths" within my own life and/or in institutions?
2. Do I take the opportunity to share my fears, losses, deaths with a trusted individual?
3. Edwina Gateley talked about how as a child her Church was the great big gray cathedral in England, and now her Church has expanded to be the great big green cosmos. How can I expand my image of God and Church?

— Sister Barbara Wieseler

New director of missions in Peru

Sister Elena Mack was installed on March 19 in Piura, Peru, to serve as the new SCL director of Latin American missions for a three-year term. Sisters Nancy Bauman and Jean Anne Panisko, councilors, represented the U.S. SCL Community at the ritual to celebrate the transfer of leadership.

Hermana Susana Córdova Castillo has served as director of missions for the past six years. Sister Maureen Hall, SCL Community Director, said, "If I ever thought that the ministry of leadership involved travel, it does not compare with the miles that a leader must traverse to go from the south to the north of Peru. Hermana Susana brought energy and insight to her role as leader."



Sister Elena Mack (right) is the new director of Latin American missions in Peru replacing Hermana Susana Córdova Castillo, who held this position for six years.

The holy man of Platteville

by Sister Marie Michael Mollis

Melvin Camp



*On Jan. 18, 2011,
Melvin Camp, age 102,
got up and into his big chair
saying his prayers aloud
and adding, "Jesus, take me,
please take me," over and over.
About five minutes later,
he bowed his head and died.*

His daughter Joan, not a Catholic, called me and insisted that I come to Platteville, Colo., to do the wake and rosary for Mel and be at the funeral because he requested it. This was a real privilege since Mel and I had been friends since 1994. I had been the minister in Platteville for 10 years and had a Communion service every weekday, one which Mel never missed. We also prayed the rosary daily. Mel was always at every Mass, picnic, dinner, fundraiser and event of the church. He also was present whenever there was work to be done: building the new church in 1942; tearing the old one down; building the parish hall in the 1990s and the garage and storage hall 10 years later.

Mel was a dairy farmer, cattle and sheep rancher, and farmer on his large ranch outside Platteville all his life. Once, when he was about 8, a big bull attacked him and threw him into the air. Mel was seriously injured, but his mother's prayers pulled him through. Mel always felt this was a miracle; my suspicion is that he was saved because of all the good he was destined to do for others the rest of his life.

Each day after morning service at the church, he collected his mail at the post office and went home to spend the morning reading every word. He made three piles of the letters (of which there were many): one for the wastebasket; one called, "Maybe"; and one pile called "For Sure." Then he got out his checkbook and wrote checks to help all the "For Sures" and saved the "Maybes" for the next day. No one knows how much money he gave to the orphans, religious communities, the missions, the poor, Africa, hospitals, Water for the World, Habitat, and every other need. Indeed, thousands of people around the world were all saved in some way by the generosity of this one man.

As Father said in his funeral homily, "God is surely saying to Mel, 'Come, you blessed of my Father, for I was hungry and...'"

Mel also was very devoted to the Eucharist, never missing Mass on any Sunday, even after age 98 when he didn't drive any more, and his daughter brought him to church. He was always at Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and all the missions and prayer services.

He was a member of the Lions Club for 60 years and never missed one single meeting or event the organization had. He had been the fire chief for 18 years and a volunteer firefighter all of his life. At his funeral, there were 20 firefighters in dress uniform forming an honor guard into and out of the church and at the cemetery. They also brought the oldest fire truck from the 1940s that led the funeral procession to the cemetery. Mel's stature as the oldest Knight of Columbus in Colorado brought the Fourth Degree Knights to serve as a special guard in the church.

The church was very full, and everyone had glowing tributes about Mel and how he had touched their lives. I believe that he is a saint and began to pray to him right away. Mel has already interceded for a small miracle for my niece.

Indeed, it was a true privilege to know Melvin Camp.



Sister Marie
Michael Mollis

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.

Sister Veronica Marie turns 106

Sister Veronica Marie Brost was bright-eyed at her birthday celebration as she received congratulations from SCLs including Community Director Sister Maureen Hall.



The difference of 100 years between them didn't stop the Xavier Elementary School kindergartners from extending birthday greetings and singing a song for Sister Veronica Marie Brost on her landmark 106th birthday.

Marillac Center

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Living in Full Swing, Saturday, April 27, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Facilitators of this personal enrichment program: Cathy Newton, PRT Consulting, and Sister Noreen Walter, Marillac Center. Open to all interested persons; bring a friend. Approved for five contact hour credits applicable for nursing relicensure. Registration fee of \$50 includes lunch and a copy of *Living in Full Swing* by Cathy Newton.
- **Journey to Inner Freedom Retreat: Writing from the Quiet Center, May 22-27**, facilitated by Faye Schwelitz, Ph.D., Psy.D. Deposit due by May 1. Visit www.marillaccenter.org for more details, fees and registration information.

Scholarships are available based on financial need. Call 913-758-6552, email retreats@scsls.org or visit www.MarillacCenter.org to learn more about these programs and to register.

Summer means Leadership Camp time!

The annual Leadership Camp for 6th through 8th grade girls is scheduled June 20-22 on the campus of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Leavenworth, Kan. The camp is co-hosted by the SCLs and the Benedictine Sisters, Mount St. Scholastica.

The purpose of the camp is to enhance leadership skills of the participants; enrich their spiritual life; and give them the opportunity to learn more about their faith and how Catholic Christian values and leadership go together. Early registration is suggested due to the fact that the camp fills up quickly. Registration deadline is May 25.

Registration fee is \$145 and includes room and board, meals and camp activities. For registration materials, email Sister Sharon Smith at ssmith@scsls.org or call 913-758-6522.

Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Jubilarians 2011

Congratulations to the following
SCLs who are celebrating
landmark anniversaries in their
ministries as Sisters of Charity
of Leavenworth. Blessings and
thanksgiving in abundance!

75 years

Sister Regina Marie Allgaier
Sister Agnes Virginia Hamm

70 years

Sister Mary Lillian Landauer
Sister Kathryn O'Neill
Sister Michael Blossom
Sister Mary Patricia Walsh

60 years

Sister Ann Barton
Sister Patricia Connolly
Sister Marie Carmel Dunning
Sister Jane Ellen Furey
Sister Marie Helen Grieshaber
Sister Dorothy Henscheid
Sister Ruth Reischman
Sister Anita Sullivan
Sister Mary Marcella Winninghoff

50 years

Sister Marianna Bauder
Sister Helen Bristow
Sister Susan Chase
Sister Carol Depner
Sister Maureen Hall
Sister Paula Rose Jauernig
Sister Barbara Kushan
Sister Roberta O'Leary
Sister Jean Anne Panisko

25 years

Sister María de los M. Orozco Olaya
Sister Clorinda Timaná Martinez

Hermanas celebrate anniversaries

Hermanas Clorinda Timaná Martinez and **María Orozco** celebrated their 25th Jubilees in Piura, Peru, on March 19, and **Sister Ruth Reischman**, her 60th.

Hermanas Clorinda and María observed their silver jubilees with a Mass of Thanksgiving followed by a reception with hermanas, family and friends.

Family members and friends were grateful to be a part of this community celebration at Santa Julia Church in Piura. Hermanas from the Peruvian missions and many volunteers from the St. Vincent de Paul Pastoral Center decorated for the reception and served delicious tamales, chifles and cake. Everyone entered into the toast led by Sister Elena Mack with rejoicing and good wishes for another 25 years!

Sisters Nancy Bauman and Jean Anne Panisko traveled to Peru for the celebration.



Prior to the Mass of
Thanksgiving where
they renewed their vows,
Hermanas María (left) and
Clorinda awaited the
procession into
the church.



In the U.S., Sister María marked her silver jubilee on March 5 at Church of the Holy Cross, Overland Park, Kan., with a Mass, renewal of vows and dinner/reception following in the parish hall. Sister María renewed her vows in the presence of Sister Maureen Hall, Community Director; a large group of SCLs; and the Spanish-speaking members of the congregation to whom Sister María ministers.



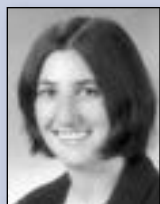
Community Director featured

Congratulations to **Sister Maureen Hall**, who was featured as one of "50 Kansans You Should Know" in the January 2011 issue of *Ingram's* and in the "Black Book Profile" of the magazine's February edition.

SCLs network with peers



Sister Melissa
Camardo



Sister Réjane
Cytacki



Sister Jennifer
Gordon

In January, **Sisters Melissa Camardo, Réjane Cytacki** and **Jennifer Gordon** participated in an annual gathering of Sisters in their 20s and 30s, sponsored by Giving Voice. Fifteen Sisters representing 11 congregations from throughout the United States gathered at Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery, Phoenix, Ariz., to pray, play, reflect, share and dream about their experiences as young women religious in the 21st century.

"We didn't really talk about the future of religious life, per se," said Sister Jennifer. "The focus was more on the present reality of religious life and our role as younger members in journeying with our Sisters into our common future. There was a resounding sense that religious life does have a future, a future filled with hope. It's God's work in the end. It reminded me of a quote that I heard at another workshop in Baltimore several years ago: 'The only thing I know about tomorrow is that God is already there.'"

This was the second time that the three SCLs had attended this retreat. "It was part of our commitment to each other as the three SCLs in our 30s to spend quality time together, and it is a great opportunity to meet other young religious," Sister Melissa said. "Although the gathering is for women from many different communities, we have a great deal in common, especially the fact that we love our communities and feel called by God to be religious women with our particular congregations."

Sister Réjane explained that the weekend facilitation revolved around the book, *The Circle Way: A Leader in Every Chair*. "It really allowed us to share about religious life from our own personal experiences and allowed a deep listening space for everyone," she said.

These conversations—combined with shared prayer, liturgy on Sunday morning at the monastery, and s'mores around a campfire—provided the opportunity for the SCLs to get to know peers in other communities and to support one another on the journey.

"I am grateful to the Community for the opportunity to participate in this gathering," Sister Jennifer summarized. "Religious life in the future will look different than it does now, but I know that we are in good company. The sisters we met in Phoenix are passionate, faithful women, in love with God and with their communities."



Sister Mary Laura
Huddleston made
special remarks at
the celebration of
Catholic education
in Billings, Mont.

Birth of Catholic secondary ed celebrated in Billings

Predating Central High School in Billings, Mont., St. Patrick's High School had a short life—1943-1947—but a mighty one, remembered and celebrated last fall as the birthplace of Catholic secondary education in the city. Several SCLs and members of St. Patrick's original graduating class of 1947 attended an all-system Thanksgiving Mass on November 23.

Sister Mary Laura Huddleston spoke to the crowd of over 900 students and 400 alumni, staff, friends and family members of the Billings Catholic schools. Sister Mary Laura graduated from Billings Central Catholic High School in 1948, and later taught at the school. She reminisced about the "old days," the challenges and sacrifices made to keep secondary education alive in Billings. *The Harvest* publication of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings noted, "But her most resounding message to the students... was not about the past, but rather about the future. She told the students it was their turn now, it was time for current students and recent alumni to carry forward the message and mission of Billings Catholic schools."

Sister Mary Laura then introduced alumni from St. Patrick's who received a standing ovation.

Copy adapted from The Harvest, January 2011.

Poets in the news

Congratulations to **Sister Mary Joan Eble**, whose poem was published in the Winter 2011 *Occasional Papers* of the Leadership Council of Women Religious (LCWR). Her poem reads as follows:

*High in winter
branches nests—
Imagine bird's eyes
and having
an inkling
this warm circle is only
a launching pad.*



Sister Mary
Joan Eble



Sister Susan
Rieke

Sister Susan Rieke gave a reading of her poetry—"Arias of Spring"—on March 20 at the Carnegie Arts Center in Leavenworth.

SCL PHOTO GALLERY



Sister Charlotte White encouraged young children to help themselves to the SCL coloring books and pens during an observance of the World Day for Consecrated Life. SCLs and Benedictine Sisters, Mount St. Scholastica, hosted coffee, donuts and displays on Sunday, Feb. 6, at Christ the King Parish, Kansas City, Kan. The observance acknowledges vowed men and women religious and promotes religious vocations.



Valentine's Day was hopping and so were **Sisters Peg Johnson** (left) and **Georgeanne Desch** in the Ross Family Room where SCLs enjoyed the music of Marlin Cooper, saxophonist.



The newly appointed SCL Finance Committee met for the first time at Cantwell Hall in February. Pictured (left to right) **Sisters Jean Marian Rilinger, Charlotte White, Jean Anne Panisko, Jennifer Gordon and Elizabeth Youngs**. **Sister Jean Anne** is Community treasurer; **Sister Jean Marian** serves as secretary to the committee.



Attending the Company of Charity Formation Personnel meeting in Nazareth, Ky., in early March were members of the new and "old" SCL Vocation/Formation Team. Left to right, **Sisters Sharon Smith**, current vocation and Associate director; **Victoria Ann Lichtenauer**, incoming vocation director; **Mary Pat Lenahan**, new candidate director; **Sheila Taylor**, incoming director of Sisters under temporary vows; and **Mary Lou Mendel**, current director of temporary professed. **Sister Nancy Bauman**, current director of initial formation, and **Sister Rosalie Curtin**, an auxiliary member of the team, were unable to attend the meeting. The session was an opportunity for those serving in vocation and initial formation ministry and associate directors to gather with others from the Charity Federation for ongoing formation, to exchange ideas and to plan common events in the coming year.

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, KS 66048-5054.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: *a transformative experience*

Editor's note: Therese Horvat, SCL communications director, wrote the following reflection on her January 2011 pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Mass at the Holy Sepulcher, a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee and a teaching in the ruins of a synagogue were among my favorite experiences during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land earlier this year. Most impressive of all was the realization of walking and being where Jesus lived, taught, visited his friends, performed miracles, suffered, died and rose to new life.

When we started this journey, one of our priest companions explained that a pilgrimage has three purposes:

- Purgative – causing a pilgrim to let go and leave behind the “stuff” of life.
- Illuminative – enlightening.
- Unitive – making a person different and whole.

Being immersed in the holy places and mysteries of our faith, it was easy to displace worries with wonder and awe. We dipped hands into the waters of the River Jordan where John baptized Jesus, proclaimed as God's beloved Son. We walked the steps that Jesus walked on the night of his betrayal by Judas from the Garden of Gethsemane to Caiaphas' house. We followed the “Via Dolorosa” and prayed the Stations of the Cross through the old city of Jerusalem.



A large mosaic at the entry to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem commemorates Christ's crucifixion.



Mike Scherschligt, executive director of the Benedictine College School of Faith, was theologian for the pilgrimage. He did a teaching in ruins of a synagogue in Capernaum where Jesus likely taught.

There were many enlightening moments. From atop the Mount of Beatitudes, I could imagine Jesus teaching the multitudes. On lofty Mount Tabor, I marveled at the powerful significance of the Transfiguration where Jesus appeared with Moses and Elijah, prefiguring his rising from the dead. While it was difficult to imagine how Jesus traveled distances through rocky, hilly countryside, it was inspiring to think that he attracted people, fed them and gave them (and us) living water and the bread of life.

When I returned from the pilgrimage, my pastor remarked, “You will never be the same again.” And he’s right. A pilgrimage to the Holy Land is a transformative experience. The miracle at Cana; the friendship with Lazarus, Martha and Mary; the feeding of the crowds; the walking on water; the agony in the garden; Peter’s denial; the crucifixion and resurrection—all have new meaning from my having been to these holy places.

There’s a zeal to want to share the story and the realization that the story continues to unfold as people continue to flock to Jesus, touch the hem of his garment and let him touch their lives.

SCL leaves for mission in Southern Sudan



Sister Pat Johannsen with a book about Southern Sudan where she will be on mission for three years.

When the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth announced a financial contribution in 2008 to help the people of Southern Sudan, Sister Patricia Johannsen heard the accompanying call to commit to service in this war-torn land in northeast Africa. This call recurred intermittently as Sister Pat listened, learned and prayed over a decision to respond to the plea of Church leaders for resources—financial and human.

As Southern Sudan transitions to national independence this summer, Sister Pat will be among men and women religious from around the world walking with the Sudanese people and empowering them to carve out a better future through education. Sister Pat left for the Sudan in mid-April and will be directly involved in teacher training sponsored by Solidarity for Southern Sudan, an initiative of religious institutes of men and women that are members of the Unions of Superiors General (USG and UISG) and the Church in Southern Sudan.

On Sunday, March 20, Sister Pat received blessings from the SCL Community, family and friends during a sending ceremony at the Mother House, Leavenworth, Kan. During the ceremony, she received the Community's mission cross.

Sister Pat had earlier completed an intense orientation to cultural diversity during a month-long program in San Antonio, Texas, sponsored by International Cross-cultural Services. This cross-cultural training also included discernment, interviews and a retreat to ensure that candidates are up to the challenge of their missionary commitment.

Civil war, tribal differences and political oppression have racked Southern Sudan for decades and taken a toll on the people. In January, a referendum vote overwhelmingly supported independence for Southern Sudan. Nationhood becomes effective in July 2011.



Sister Pat and other missionaries, who have committed to the Solidarity for Southern Sudan initiative, will be part of this historic transition. “There are a lot of unknowns,” Sister Pat said, “but I’m excited about this opportunity to serve.”

World responsibility beckons

In a year of study leading up to the SCL Chapter in June 2010, Sister Pat said she kept hearing the message that “more than the U.S., we’re children of the world. We need to be more united with the people of our planet—especially those in need.” The message was similar to one she had heard as a 12-year-old on her family’s farm in Montana where Sister Pat’s Dad had communicated the responsibility to feed the world.

It resonated with the Mission Statement of the SCL Community to “offer every loving service in our power to meet the critical needs of God’s people.” And it coincided with Sister Pat’s belief that the time was right for her to put herself where her head and heart were directing her.

Over the years, Sister Pat has ministered through a number of social service agencies and for important causes. Most recently, she helped redirect troubled youth during her eight years with court services and community corrections in Wyandotte County. In the past, she did case management with persons who were homeless; served at Mount St. Vincent Home, Denver;



Receiving the mission cross was part of the sending ritual at the SCL Mother House to bless Sister Pat Johannsen and her new ministry in Southern Sudan. Sister Eileen Hurley presented her with the SCL mission cross.

and worked with women in crisis pregnancies. After joining the SCLs in 1966, Sister Pat was an elementary school teacher for 13 years.

With her varied experience, Sister Pat believes that she’s equipped to train teachers. She is pleased to be part of the Church community of men and women religious called to serve and to build on the strengths of the people of Southern Sudan.

As these religious unite in service, Sister Pat also believes they will model a sense of community in a country where tribal differences have created strife.

“Everything that we talked about at last year’s Chapter,” Sister Pat said, “confirmed that this was a good thing to do and what I should be doing at this time in my life and ministry.”

THEOLOGY OF MISSION

by Sister Patricia Johannsen

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our heart that we may know what is the hope that belongs to His call. Eph. 1:17-18

Mission

God nurtured me to life in a family rooted in the land.

God gifted me with talent to teach, strength to persevere in adversity, creativity and a spirit of hopefulness.

God softened my heart to have a passion for the poor.

God opened the eyes of my heart to see his suffering people in all corners of the world.

God speaks his love and compassion. God asks me to unite with his Son in speaking his goodness and love. I am infused with the Spirit who gives me wisdom and understanding.

God leads, I will follow.

Catholic bishops call for COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

*Reprinted from Justice for the Immigrants,
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops,
www.justiceforimmigrants.org.*

In a landmark pastoral letter issued by the Catholic bishops of Mexico and the United States in January 2003, “Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope,” the bishops acknowledge that the current immigration system is badly in need of reform and that a comprehensive approach to fixing it is required. The bishops offer a comprehensive set of recommendations for changing U.S. laws and policies to reflect the principles contained in Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching and to bring about a more humane and just immigration system in the United States.

The bishops’ call for reforms includes the following elements:

Global anti-poverty efforts

Many migrants are compelled to leave their homes out of economic necessity in order to provide even the most basic of needs for themselves and their families. The bishops call for international efforts designed to create conditions in which people do not have to leave their homes out of necessity. Trade, international economic aid, debt relief, and other types of economic policies should be pursued that result in people not having to migrate in desperation in order to survive.

Expanded opportunities to reunify families

U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents must endure many years of separation from close family members who they want to join them in

the United States. The backlogs of available visas for family members results in waits of five, ten, fifteen, and more years of waiting for a visa to become available. The bishops call for a reduction of the pending backlog and more visas available for family reunification purposes.

Temporary worker program

The U.S. economy depends upon the labor provided by migrants. Therefore, many migrants come to the United States to fill jobs. The bishops acknowledge this reality and call for a more rational and humane system by which laborers from other countries can enter the country legally to fill positions in the labor force, including on a temporary basis. Because the U.S. experience with temporary workers’ programs has been fraught with abuses, the bishops call for a temporary worker program that includes:

- Path to permanent residency which is achievable/verifiable.
- Family unity which allows immediate family members to join [the] worker.
- Job portability which allows workers to change employers.
- Labor protections which apply to U.S. workers.
- Enforcement mechanisms and resources to enforce worker’s rights.
- Wages and benefits which do not undercut domestic workers.
- Mobility between [the] U.S. and homeland and within [the] U.S.
- Labor-market test to ensure U.S. workers are not harmed.

Broad-based legalization

For those in this country without proper immigration documentation, opportunities should be provided for them to obtain legalization if they can demonstrate good moral character and have built up equities in this country. Such an “earned” legalization should be achievable and independently verifiable.

Restoration of due process

In recent years, immigrants have been subject to laws and policies that debase our country’s fundamental commitment to individual liberties and due process. These laws and policies, including detention for months without charges, secret hearings, and ethnic profiling, signal a sea of change in our government’s policies and attitudes towards immigrants. We are a nation with a long, rich tradition of welcoming newcomers. Government policies that unfairly and inappropriately confuse immigration with terrorism do not make us safer, tarnish our heritage, and damage our standing abroad. The bishops urge our government to revisit these laws and to make the appropriate changes consistent with due process rights.

Also in this context, the bishops call for reforming our system for responding to asylum seekers and considering their claims. Today, asylum seekers must meet a very high bar for demonstrating their claim for asylum and are incarcerated in the meantime. The bishops believe that our nation can both protect its citizens from terrorists and remain a safe haven for legitimate asylum seekers fleeing persecution.



Reflecting on immigration from their different perspectives were panelists at the March 5 SCL regional meeting, (left to right) Sister Mary Lex Smith, Andrea Pardo, Jessica Cabral, Maria Cabral and Sister Janet Cashman with Sister Therese Bangert at the microphone.

SCLs move toward Community stance on immigration

As the nation and individual states debate the issue of immigration, SCLs and SCLAs have focused on continuing education and discussion directed to the development of a Community Stance on this human rights concern.

As part of the continuing education effort, Sisters and Associates have received twice weekly emails that have included Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching and current teaching of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The spring regional meetings of the Community feature a segment dedicated to the issue of immigration.

At the March 5 spring regional at the Mother House, participants heard powerful testimony of how the current immigration system is not working

and how it is negatively impacting people's lives. Andrea Pardo shared the story that as a 13-year old she remained in Mexico for a year and a half until her parents were able to bring her and her brother to the U.S. She said the Kansas legislature changed her life when it passed the in-state tuition policy in 2004. Due to her diligence and applying for private scholarships, Andrea went on to earn a master of architecture degree.

While she will eventually be a legal resident, Andrea said, "The feeling of being an undocumented person in this country is incredible. I don't steal. I'm not a criminal. I just had a dream."

Similarly, Maria Cabral spoke of coming to this country "trying to live a normal life with opportunities that sadly were not available in Mexico." The Cabrals and their two children came to the U.S. unable to speak English.

Today, the laws don't accept them as citizens even though they work to earn a living and pay taxes. Jessica Cabral was an infant when the family came to the U.S. She said, "I don't know Mexico; violence is high there; and earning power is higher in this country."



Maria Cabral (left) and her daughter Jessica discussed the challenges facing immigrants in this country.

Sister Janet Cashman, who works in New Mexico to help persons obtain their green cards, said that the process can take from two to 20 years. Another challenge is the expense involved in getting a green card, upwards of \$5,000 in legal fees. Sister Mary Lex Smith, who encounters families through her work in victims' assistance, shared her experiences of helping individuals who try to obtain U-visas. U-visas give victims of certain crimes against persons, temporary legal status and work eligibility in the United States for up to four years. Family members may also be part of the petition including spouses, children, unmarried sisters and brothers under 18, mothers, fathers, as well as step-parents and adoptive parents.

Similar stories and experiences are being shared across the spring regional meetings of the Community.



Testing their knowledge about immigration at the March 5 regional at the Mother House were (seated, left to right) Sisters Marianna Bauder, Mary Clarice Lousberg, Marie Madeleine Shonka, and (standing) Rose Dolores Hoffelmeyer.

Busy season at St. Vincent de Paul Pastoral Center, Peru



Hermana Laura Rumiche Morales

As reported by Hermana Laura Rumiche Morales, director, the first two months of 2011 were busy with diverse activities at the St. Vincent de Paul Pastoral Center, Piura, Peru.

January and February summer courses included a class in karate and self-defense taught by Alejandro Cordova. Twelve children participated, and along with karate, they learned self-control skills. Hermana Julia Huiman Ipanaque taught a course on personalized basic computer skills.

The center began a Biodanza workshop with 21 participants to learn this therapy that helps improve a person's outlook on life. Hermana Laura said that participants feel more optimistic, happy, more vital, free of tensions and more relaxed. The workshop is directed by psychologist Jannet Davila.

Abrahán Jesus Juárez Amaya, who is preparing to begin classes at the university, shares two hours in the afternoon daily with 18 children to reinforce mathematical skills. Hermana Laura said that staff members observe him praying with his students as he begins each class.

Seven women completed the second level course in how to apply injections, taught by Violet Yalta, a nurse who works in the Air Force. Learning this skill will help provide an income for families of the women.

The center has three new interns of physiotherapy and rehabilitation. Hermana Laura said, "Our family has grown to 17 persons counting volunteers and interns. We have weekly prayer each Monday for everyone who offers service so that we can share our experiences of God with each other."

The number of people that come to St. Vincent Pastoral Center increases in the afternoons especially for reflexology and rehabilitation. In February, 546 persons received physical therapy, and 78, reflex therapy.

Sponsored Ministries

USM establishes Sister Joanna Bruner Nursing Scholarship

Thanks to the generosity of a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous, the University of Saint Mary (USM) will offer a deserving nursing student a potential full-ride scholarship this fall.

USM has established the Sister Joanna Bruner Scholarship to provide financial educational support for a candidate accepted to the university's bachelor of science in nursing program offered at the Leavenworth campus. This scholarship will pay all educational expenses—including tuition, fees, room and board—that are not covered by federal or state grants or federal work study.

"We are thrilled to offer such a wonderful scholarship opportunity for a future nurse, and we are truly grateful to our magnanimous donor," said Sister Diane Steele, USM president.

The Bruner Scholarship is named for Sister Joanna Bruner, one of the original pioneer SCLs. Born Clotilde Bruner, Sister Joanna was instrumental in the opening of Saint John Hospital, Leavenworth, and was the first trained nurse in Kansas. Besides being the first woman in the Western territory to serve as administrator of a hospital, Sister Joanna had a significant role in the development of the health ministry of the Sisters of Charity by creating a system to train younger Sisters as nurses.



Sister Joanna Bruner

“The love
of my life was
care of the sick.”

— Sister Joanna Bruner

SISTER MAUREEN COMMISSIONS SCLHS LEADERSHIP TEAM



Sister Maureen Hall, SCL Community Director, commissioned Mike Slubowski, new president and CEO of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System (SCLHS), and SCLHS co-leaders during a ceremony on Feb. 21. The commissioning occurred during the quarterly meeting of SCLHS staff held at the Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kan.

Sister Vickie celebrates Cristo Rey; transitions to new ministries



‘Vincent, Louise
and Xavier would
love this place’

College acceptance letters are posted in a main hallway for all students to see at Cristo Rey Kansas City. At the bulletin board of letters are (left to right) Sister Vickie Perkins, Zachariah Taylor, Yasmin Rios and José Muñiz.

The stories explain what Sister Vickie Perkins loves most about Cristo Rey and why she knows it's working as she hands over leadership of the SCL-sponsored high school to a new president.

There was the alum from last year's first graduating class who returned between holidays with his first semester college grades tucked in his pocket. He wanted to share that he was doing okay as a college freshman.

There's the current student who aspires to become a doctor, but who has realized that when she does, her children won't qualify to attend Cristo Rey. She will have broken the cycle of poverty.

There was the mom who called and wondered, "Who is this Vincent guy?" after her son kept coming home talking about Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac and Mother Xavier Ross. These were unfamiliar names in a home that was not of the Catholic faith, but they had deeply impressed the student.

There was the senior who wrote an essay describing how his four-year work experience had changed his life. Or another student who got off academic

probation and happily said that he had four A's on his report card—"Do you want to see them?" he asked Sister Vickie, with pride at having overcome his challenges.

The model is working

"Vincent, Louise and Xavier would love this place," Sister Vickie said. And so has she—the kids, the staff, the donors, the corporate work partners and the SCLs who have become the Cristo Rey Kansas City family since its founding in 2005.

Sister Vickie was on board a few months before the SCLs finalized the decision to sponsor the high school targeted to low-income students. The school offers a work-study program and is part of the Cristo Rey national network. In September 2005, she was joined by five other SCLs, three "NANs" (not a nun) and one layman.

When the first class of freshmen arrived for classes a year later, Sister Vickie recalled that the faculty and staff thought they had everything in place. They did—as far as the big things were concerned. It was the small things—the band-aids, aspirin and other items—that had slipped past them in the start-up of the new school. Every year since, faculty and staff have learned and adapted—all part of the culture of an institution committed to the wholistic education of youth.

"For four years, we said, 'This is going to work,'" Sister Vickie recalled. "When we graduated our first class

in June 2010 with our entire student body in attendance, we knew we could say, 'It is working.' And the fact that 100 percent of our first graduates went on to college is additional proof of this."

To the future

But Sister Vickie said the real proof that the Cristo Rey model is working will come when the alums graduate from college, enter the workforce and break the cycle of poverty. Continuing to enhance this model will be the responsibility of the new president, Kathleen Hanlon, who joins the team in June. Sister Vickie feels certain that Kathleen will provide excellent leadership to take the high school to its next level of development.

Sister Vickie will stay connected to Cristo Rey working part-time with the national network to go into schools across the country and help them address issues. She will spend the remainder of her time working in fund development and on projects for the Urban Ranger program in the Kansas City metropolitan area. This program trains male teens from the urban core, hires them to rehab houses during summer vacation, and helps keep them off the streets and on course to productive lives.

The two jobs combined meet Sister Vickie's criteria for her next ministry as an SCL: not rising at pre-dawn to greet each day; not being required to dress in professional attire every day; and not being in charge!



Dr. Kathleen
Hanlon

New president named for Cristo Rey

Dr. Kathleen Hanlon will assume responsibilities for her new role as president of Cristo Rey Kansas City this summer. Kathleen has over 35 years of experience as a professional educator. These years have been marked by commitment to teaching excellence; success in institutional advancement; administrative and managerial leadership; dynamic curriculum creation and implementation; effective supervision; and teacher education for social justice and excellence.

Kathleen is from Berwyn, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, and most recently has worked as an educational consultant with the administration, board and faculty at Dominica High School in Whitefish Bay, Wis.



Following a luncheon at the Mother House on March 15, SCL friends gathered to express appreciation to Bill and Doreen Murray. Left, to right, Sisters Charlotte White, Ann Marita Loosen, Sue Miller, Linda Roth, Maureen Hall; Vincent de Paul; Bill and Doreen Murray; and Sisters Rosalie Curtin and Judith Jackson.

SCLHS contribution establishes Murray Scholarship Fund

In recognition of Bill Murray's years of service to the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System (SCLHS), the SCLHS Board of Directors has established the Murray Scholarship Fund with a contribution to Cristo Rey Kansas City High School. Named in honor of Bill and his wife Doreen, the fund will benefit culturally diverse students with economic need who attend this innovative high school sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (SCL). Bill has retired from SCLHS after a combined 27 years of service as System President and CEO, Board member and Hospital CEO.

"This scholarship fund is a very fitting way to recognize Bill and Doreen," said Sister Maureen Hall, SCL Community Director. "Much as Bill and Doreen generously supported our SCL ministries for several years, this gift in their name will perpetuate the spirit of our SCL charism for years to come. The SCL Community has added our contribution to the scholarship fund in acknowledgment of Bill and Doreen."

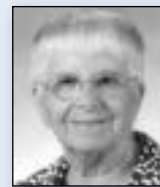
The Murrays were among Cristo Rey's founders in voicing their support for the school when it opened in 2006. Cristo Rey, an SCL-sponsored ministry, provides a Catholic college prep education enhanced by a corporate work-study program. Students enjoy the opportunity of a faith-centered education and literally "work to learn" and "learn to work" in order to make their dreams of a college education a reality.

To make a contribution in Bill and Doreen's honor, checks can be sent to Cristo Rey Kansas City, Attention: Murray Scholarship Fund, 211 W. Linwood Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64111, or go to www.cristoreykc.org, click on "Support Cristo Rey KC" and note Murray Scholarship Fund when making the contribution.

Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!

SCL peace pole: *symbol of hope and peace*

by Sister Frances Russell



The first peace pole was visualized and designed by a Japanese man, Masahisa Goi, after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II. It was a hand-crafted symbol with the words, “May peace prevail upon earth,” inscribed on it. Earth, in the Japanese language, includes the solar system, the cosmos, the universe. This prayer, “May peace prevail upon earth,” was forged from the fires of war and wrung from a soul in an experience of deep anguish. Over the years, this prayer of the heart, remained inscribed on the first peace pole. Praying these words, one shares in the immense field of LIFE, which we may call SPIRIT or the SPIRIT OF GOD. The prayer is very powerful.

Masahisa’s vision and symbol have been shared throughout the world with thousands of peace poles in many different countries. When Sister Marianna Bauder visited the campus of the Sisters of Charity in Halifax, Nova Scotia, she was introduced to their peace pole and noticed its significance to that community. It represented a time in their history when the call to prayer had deepened with these sisters and hope in the future had been rekindled. Sister Marianna returned to Kansas and spoke of this vision of hope and peace to our Community Council. The Council, in turn, commissioned Sister Pamela Hinkle, one of our Community artists, to design this beautiful symbol that stands on our Mother House grounds.

As a member of the Social Justice Committee’s Peace Sub-committee, I was able to view this beautiful pole in its early phases of life. Our committee visited the pottery studio on the west side of our property. We saw the raw materials of the pole upon our first visit and spoke with Pam as she began her work. On our second visit, we saw her “vision” beginning to take shape.

Sister Pam has shared the eye of an artist’s heart with us. She has used the materials of our Mother Earth and completed this symbol with the work of her hands. May this peace pole invite each of us, SCLs and SCLAs, to hold in reverence our own history as followers of Vincent, Louise and Xavier. May it lead us to moments of contemplation as we stop before it and pray. It stands as a silent sentinel urging us to envision a just and sustainable world where justice and peace prevail. It invites us to join the network of thousands of people across the globe who are living this prayer as we are invited to do.

From the artist’s conception to a sketch on paper, the symbols represented in the peace pole began to take shape.



In the early stages of the peace pole’s development, Sister Pam Hinkle at work in the pottery barn on the Mother House campus.

Poem that appears at the base of the peace pole

Creation

Pure mystery the lotus
from muddy waters
rises pristine
our sister tranquility
the rainbow is a covenant
signature of Christ
our brother promise
still holy spirits
gentle as doves
bear the olive branch
river of peace
waters of hope
pure mystery of faith

Creation: Pam Hinkle, SCL
Installation: Hans Lamprecht





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