

V O I C E S

A publication of the
SISTERS OF CHARITY
OF HEAVENWORTH

of Charity

SUMMER 2010



Celebration of Charity:
**2010 Golden
Jubilarians**
COVER STORY . . . PAGE 3

Sponsored Ministries FIRST GRADUATION AT CRISTO REY PAGE 28

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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COVER PHOTO: Left to right, Sisters Sue Retherford, Jane Jackson and Frances Juiliano are among the 13 SCLs marking Golden Jubilees this year.

from the Community Director



Sister Joan Sue Miller

As I read the stories of this year's 13 Golden Jubilarians and of our other Sisters making life transitions in this "Celebration of Charity" edition, I am struck by their repeated expressions of gratitude and how they focus on the many blessings of their ministries and the people they have served.

And now, as I complete 24 years of Community leadership, I share these same heartfelt sentiments. I want to thank all of you for your support, kind remembrances and continued interest in the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. So many of you have been blessings in my life.

The past six years since our 2004 Chapter have seemed like a whirlwind with our 150th Jubilee observance, expanded international and global involvement, developments with our sponsored ministries, preparations for the 2010 Chapter, and the hectic pace of life in general. We have lost many dear friends with the passing of our Sisters, Associates, family members and colleagues. We have faced and experienced many challenges, and we have rejoiced in many celebrations.

One of the special gifts of religious life is the learned discipline of carving out quiet time with God. While we find God in the hurriedness and the busyness and the many things we do and in the people we serve, it's in the softness of the whisper that the Prophet Elijah experienced that we can hear God speak most profoundly to our inner beings. This is the pause that refreshes, that renews and that re-energizes. These quiet moments of reflection, openness and conversation with God are life-giving and sustaining.

My wish for you in my final *Voices of Charity* letter as Community Director is a simple one. I hope that in the midst of the many exclamation points of your lives, you will seek and find quiet time. I pray that in that quiet time you will connect with God and that God's wisdom and love will give you peace.

Thank you. God bless you.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sister Joan Sue Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joan" being particularly prominent.

Sister Joan Sue Miller
SCL Community Director

*Thirteen SCLs mark their Golden Jubilees this year.
They are celebrating lives and ministries that have spanned the United States
and Peru. They have served in health care and education;
for the cause of social justice; in parishes, diocesan offices and senior housing.
To a person, they consider their lives abundantly blessed.
To each of them, we extend heartfelt congratulations and blessings in return
for those they've shared with others over the past 50 years.*

Celebration of Charity

Sister Bonnie Bachle

It must have been a very warm summer in 1940 in Oklahoma. My Mother told me that she ate lots of watermelon before I was born on July 29th of that year in Oklahoma City. She also told me that my Dad, Carl, came into her hospital room and swooped me up and seemed very at ease with his first child. Jean, my Mom, recalled she was a little more nervous about the prospect of caring for her new baby. I would say, looking back, that they both loved and cared for me very well.



My Dad chose the name "Bonnie" because he liked a singer on the radio by that name. My Grandmother suggested "Ann" for my middle name. I imagine the priest emphasized "Ann" when I was baptized.

My brothers, John and Bill, were born three and four years later, so we all grew up in those simpler and slower times of the late 1940s and 1950s. We attended our close-by parochial school, John Carroll, and were taught by the Sisters of Mercy.

My dancing days began when I was 7 with ballet and tap at the local dance studio and continued through high school. My dance teacher was a great inspiration, and annual dance recitals were always a joyful experience. My brothers might choose a different word to describe their experience of innumerable recitals!

I first met the Sisters of Charity at Catholic High; they were among a number of religious communities teaching there at that time. I remember Sister Mary Beth Kelly for religion and Sister Margaret Dolores Green for home economics. Two of my classmates became interested in Saint Mary College after a visit there, and their enthusiasm was contagious. My parents reluctantly sent me off to college in Leavenworth, Kan., of all places.

During my two years at Saint Mary, I became more and more aware of and impressed by the Sisters—their spirit of joy and genuine concern for us was apparent. Sisters Mary Janet McGilley, Mary Vincentia Maronick, Frances Therese Shea and Mary Madeleva Ditmars stand out in my memory.

In my sophomore year, Sister Mary Jude Redle brought to my room at least 20 library books on various religious communities since I'd spoken with her about the possibility of a religious

vocation but wasn't sure about the right community. In the end, of course, it was clear that the Sisters of Charity was the one for me. I probably didn't even look at any of those 20 books.

In August 1960, I entered the Community with 51 others, and so began my 50-year journey as an SCL. From my first mission at Pius X in Billings, Mont., teaching second graders, I returned to Saint Mary and finished with a degree in English. Next came a few years teaching at Hogan High School in Kansas City, Mo., and Annunciation High School in Denver, Colo. Again I returned to Saint Mary, this time to teach modern dance and ballet. In between, I received a degree in dance at UCLA. Never would I have dreamed back in 1960 that I'd actually be able to keep on with my dancing days as a Sister of Charity.

In 1980, I joined Sisters Eileen Sheehy and Susan Newland in pastoral ministry at the Lake of the Ozarks—Gravois Mills, Laurie and Versailles, Mo. After almost 20 years there, we were invited to continue pastoral ministry in Craig, Colo. One of our challenges was encountering the wildlife on the roads of our tri-parish towns of Meeker, Rangely and Craig. After three years in Colorado, we set our sights on the south and joined Sacred Heart Southern Missions in pastoral services. For the past nine years, we have served in various ways and in various parishes throughout northern Mississippi with our home base in Olive Branch.

My years in pastoral ministry have been filled with many blessings: people in the parishes continue to inspire me by their faith and love; new and challenging opportunities abound; and my dancing days are ongoing. Our ministry in Mississippi has included working with the Sacred Heart school children in liturgy and music. What a joyful experience!

When I joined the Sisters of Charity, I had hope of giving continual thanks to God for all the blessings of my life. So, as I celebrate with all my SCL companions on the journey, I dance and sing out with joy, "Deo Gratias, Alleluia!"

Sister Nancy Bauman

The Aborigines of Australia believe that the holy task of each person is to hold sacred and revisit, if possible, the significant places of one's life. This belief holds that as a person does this, the songline of life becomes a deep reality. I am grateful that this Jubilee retelling of my story is offering me that opportunity to revisit perhaps, not by way of travel, but by way of memory, the important places of my life.



A comfortable ranch style home at 909 MacVicar in Topeka, Kan., was my place of birth and the first verse of my song. My Mother and Father, Margaret (Martin) and Richard Bauman, were married in October 1940. On Sept. 22, 1941, I was their first of seven children. Barbara, Judy, Mary Lou, Richard, Marcella and Kathy came along, and with each birth I realized that I was not the only verse of my Mother and Father's songline. Together we found many ways to make our lives together special. Immediate and extended family times were important to us and gave our song lots of harmony. We enjoyed Sunday afternoon rides, visiting family and friends, seeing the sights of Kansas, and going to more family reunions than most families.

In May 1957, some sad notes came into this verse of my song. My Father was diagnosed with cancer. Because of the loving care of our Mother, he was able to stay with us at our 909 home. He died there on Aug. 10, 1957. Our songline changed that day. Yet, once again, because of our Mother's faithfulness, trust in God and courage, and the loving support of our extended family, we found ways to renew and recreate our lives together. Our Mother was a source of strength until her death in 1989.

Another verse of my song included Holy Name Grade School and Hayden High School. I went one year to Saint Mary College in Leavenworth, Kan. The SCLs staffed all of these

schools. With this influence, it didn't seem to surprise anyone that after my freshman year in college, I would "go south" and enter the convent.

My elementary teaching missions enhanced my song with many treasured memories of students, parents, fellow teachers and staff members. My first mission was teaching third grade at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Kansas City, Mo. This was followed by teaching in a variety of places: third grade at Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Rock Springs, Wyo.; junior high at St. Laurence O'Toole in Laramie, Wyo.; fourth grade at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Grand Junction, Colo.; sixth and eighth grades at St. Peter's in Kansas City, Kan.; and eighth grade at Xavier School in Leavenworth. Following this teaching mission, I was asked to be part of the administrative team at Xavier School. This helped prepare me to be principal on my own at Blessed Sacrament in Kansas City, Kan.

Serving our Community as initial formation director and Councilor brought much joy and challenge to the next verse of my song. The privilege of journeying with women who entered our Community connected me with our Sisters and Associates more personally. Inviting others to be a part of our newest members' first three years of SCL life and having so many support them and me has enriched and deepened my life's song.

As a member of our SCL Council, I have continued to realize the blessing of deepening many Community connections. The ministry of leadership has provided many opportunities for me to reflect and act upon how we together further the mission of Jesus on earth in the footsteps of Vincent, Louise and Xavier. Both of these ministries have taken me to many sacred places within our own SCL Community, the Charity Federation and regions within the Religious Formation Conference.

One verse that continues to bring harmony to my song is the Bethany Bible Study group. This group goes into the Lansing Correctional Facility every Wednesday evening. We are 16 in number at this time and are made up of folks with a

variety of professions and backgrounds. Often after meeting with those inside the walls, we remark on how they have evangelized us.

My songline continues.

My revisiting sacred places continues. My relationships with family, friends and Community members continue. I am able to rejoice with St. Paul: "Sing to the Lord with all your heart and give thanks always for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God our loving and ever renewing Creator." (Ephesians 5:19-20 adapted)

Sister Ann Victoria Garcia

On May 24, 1934, I entered the world as the only one of seven children of Guadalupe and Primitivo Garcia to be born in the United States. My parents had fled the revolution in Mexico where my father was a government worker.



In this country, he operated a successful jewelry business.

As a much loved and happy child, I started my musical career early. In fact, with a Kansas City fiesta group, at age four, I travelled to Washington, D.C., and performed the "Mexican Hat Dance" with my teen-age brother. *The Kansas City Star* reported that I did not miss a step! Early on, I started playing the guitar, and as the years wore on, I entertained in all the Kansas City fiestas.

As a youth, I composed several musical pieces and made recordings. My brother, sister and I performed as a trio in the Kansas City area on television and for various social and civic events. My Mother, sister and I directed the Kansas City Mexican Fiesta variety shows.

Before entering the Community, I attended private classes in French and went to Rockhurst

*My songline continues.
My revisiting sacred places continues.
My relationships with family, friends
and Community members continue.*

— Sister Nancy Bauman

College. As a teenager and a young woman, I worked in our family restaurant, "Las Palmas."

The loving, religious atmosphere of my home and family helped foster my desire to be a religious. At first, I wanted to join a contemplative community in New York. Attending Bishop Hogan High School in Kansas City, Mo., keeping in contact with Sister Mary Ernest Marsh, and reading *We Came North* all led to my eventual decision to become an SCL. How Divine Providence guides!

As an SCL, I shared my God-given musical talents by performing at our Community functions and with the Remnants band that was such a joy with our beautiful trumpet leader, Sister Mary Madeleva Ditmars. In 1984, I was able to help raise funds for our South American missions by making a recording and introducing it to parishes in the Kansas City area.

In between the "light fantastic," there were the daily classes, teaching elementary grades in Rock Springs, Wyo., Kansas City, Mo., and Kansas City, Kan. Then it was on to high schools in Kansas City, Mo., and Leavenworth, Kan., teaching Spanish and French, where the students were so happy to receive awards for their fine work.

I received my bachelor's degree in education through Saint Mary College. Later, I pursued studies in Spanish and French at Laval University, Quebec, Canada; the University of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.; Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vt.; and the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan. The love of all ethnic music continued to weave through my life, and I composed and recorded music and lyrics in Spanish and French for educational and entertainment purposes.

During these years, I was most fortunate to be able to do some traveling: a trip to Spain with my mother; to Puerto Rico (thanks to the suggestion of Sister Mary Sarah Fasenmyer) to help with accreditation of a school there; and two trips to Guatemala with a Kansas City, Mo., church group to show our love and concern for those suffering people.

After I left teaching, I worked as an interpreter, taught English as a second language and assisted with a migrant program. I continued to be able to put my Spanish to good use in these different settings.

I am very grateful for the multi-ethnic experiences that I have had over the years. I have deep gratitude for being an SCL, and I especially thank God that he called me to this beautiful Community and to this particular group celebrating 50 years of religious life with me. They are the best!

Sister Ruth Ann Hehn

I was born in Fort Collins, Colo. My parents, Harry and Nora Hehn, raised seven children on a dairy farm in Wellington, Colo.—Charles, Mary Frances, Pat, Bob, Tom, me and John. Being the next to the youngest of seven meant I was spoiled from the very beginning. The next to the oldest was the only other girl in the family. We truly were the apples of our Father's eye.

With my Aunt Ruth, Sister Mary Coletta Michaud, a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth, and my sister "Sis," Sister Rosella Mary Hehn, also an SCL, it was natural for me to follow especially when I asked our pastor, Msgr. Duffy, what order he would recommend. He insisted the SCLs that he had worked with at Saint Joseph Hospital were the only ones to consider and that I should allow them to educate me so that it would be a good fit for me and the Community.

When the day came to enter, I was taken to a room and given a postulant's habit by my novice, Sister Linda Dean, and I quickly told her I couldn't wear this because my Mother didn't make it. She was not sure I was going to make it—even for entrance day!

When it came near the time of receiving my religious name, Mother Leo Frances Ryan called me into her office and told me she thought



Honora—in honor of my parents Harry and Nora—or Peter was a good name for me. I had asked for Robert Therese, Ann Robert or Robert for my name. I did not care for either Honora or Peter, so I suggested I could leave. Was I ever pleased when I opened the card to see Sister Robert as my name.

My first mission followed the ordination of my brother, Bob, in 1963. It was to teach summer school at St. Joseph's Parish in Leadville, Colo. Being from Colorado I thought this was great. I then was assigned to teach second grade at Annunciation Grade School, also in Leadville. I taught there for two years. From there, I went to Visitation in Los Angeles, Calif., to teach first grade. Sister Jean Casey was the other first grade teacher who daily planned lessons and guided me the whole year. The next year, I went to Helena, Mont., where I taught first grade along with Sisters Linda Dean and Mary Clare Gappa. I remember how shocked I was to find out the main street of the capital city was Last Chance Gulch. Next, I went to St. Charles School in Kansas City, Mo., for one of three classes of first graders, then to St. Augustine's, Kansas City, Mo., for two years. My next two missions took me to Grand Junction, Colo., for five years and to St. Martin De Porres for three years in Kansas City, Mo. My final 12 years of teaching, I taught first grade in Oklahoma City, Okla., at St. James School.

I wanted to get closer to my parents. After much prayer and research, I decided to accept a position as administrator with AHCI, a company founded by our Sister Mary Lucy Downey, at Holy Trinity Manor, a 30-unit, low-income senior housing facility in Cheyenne, Wyo., where I could be just 42 miles from my family. I made the move in June 1990 and went from 30 little ones to 30 seniors. My Father died in October 1991, and Mother died in May 2009. I am still at the Manor but as site manager where I am responsible for everything regarding the move-ins, recertifications and move-outs, and all the other things involved in being a landlord. The property is owned by the Diocese of Cheyenne and

managed by Housing Management Services, a division of Catholic Charities out of Denver.

One of my favorite things to do is to make cards with the pictures I have taken and give them as gifts.

I have the privilege of being the parish coordinator for our Cheyenne Interfaith Hospitality Network, a group of seven churches that host homeless families for a week providing them a safe place to sleep, hot evening meals, breakfast and food to pack lunches. A host or hostess is with the family at our facility so that we can listen and be there for the family.

As I stated before, from my family relationships, I am truly spoiled, and from all of my experiences as an SCL, I am truly blessed.

Sister Eileen Hurley

On a cold December morning in 1941, just three days after Christmas, Janet Eileen Hurley was born. My sister Diane instructed her other older sisters that their Christmas "doll" (Eileen) would be a late gift! I was the fourth of



what would become seven children born to Mary and Steve Hurley. We grew up in a faith-filled and loving home in Butte, Mont.

From kindergarten through eighth grade, I attended St. Patrick's School and then went to Girls Central High School. I experienced the presence and guidance of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth throughout all those years and found their witness and caring such a gift. What delightful years these were as I recall building friendships among classmates, learning music and drama as well as studying the usual classroom topics.

Beginning in fourth grade, I took piano lessons and soon began playing the organ in the parish. Throughout my life, I have enjoyed the gift of music and of sharing what I learned as

well as what came naturally. Dance lessons were another value my mother gifted to us which added at least a bit of “grace” to my demeanor! Drama also continued to be an area I enjoyed.

*Now, after 50 amazing years
as a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth,
I can only look back at the awesomeness
of God’s call and the abundance
of love that have made me who I am today!*

— Sister Eileen Hurley

At various times during my grade and high school years, I felt the call to religious life. Diane had entered our Community in 1955. During our trips to visit her,

I sensed the SCL Community was a place I belonged. In August 1960, along with seven other Butte and Anaconda girls, I boarded the train for Leavenworth.

I would never have imagined teaching young people in the classroom would be my life’s calling for only eight years, or that I would wear the habit for just six years. Each of my missions opened me to new and exciting adventures from the people with whom I lived to those to whom I ministered. I have fond memories of the students that I taught (and a few of them have reminded me of their experiences) and continue to re-connect with families and individuals whose lives I touched. And along the way, many wonderful friendships have been cultivated.

Though I entered the Community prior to Vatican II, so much has happened in the intervening years. From the classroom, I soon experienced the pull toward broader ministry in the parish to work not only with children and youth but also with families and parents. Over the years I have ministered as director of religious education, youth minister, liturgy coordinator, music minister, pastoral associate and pastoral administrator. My early years also prepared me for working on task forces in dioceses and as an adjunct faculty member at the Center for Pastoral Life in Kansas City and currently at the University of Great Falls. And surely, all of these ministry experiences have led me to my current position as director of lay

ministry for the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. My passion is to share my faith and knowledge of Jesus and the mission of bringing about the Kingdom of God.

Now, after 50 amazing years as a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth, I can only look back at the awesomeness of God’s call and the abundance of love that have made me who I am today! I am grateful to my parents who instilled faith and love and commitment in me. I am grateful to my blood sisters and brother and their families who continually affirm me in my life’s calling. I am especially grateful to my “sister Sister” who continues to walk my SCL journey with me. I am grateful for the SCLs who taught me and witnessed joy in their dedication. I am grateful to the Sisters with whom I have lived who have nurtured my commitment to live the call to religious life and the charism of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. I am grateful to my friends who have taught me to enjoy life and live it to the fullest. I am grateful to God for continually reminding me that my life only has meaning because I choose to live my vocational call as a Sister of Charity!

Sister Jane Jackson

While reflecting on my life so far, I am filled with a sense of gratitude. I am so thankful for life itself, my family, the SCL Community, my career as a teacher, and God’s unconditional love for all people.

I was born in Kansas City, Mo., on April 8, 1943, the first daughter of Bill and Mary Virginia Jackson. What a lucky baby! I am convinced that my belief and trust in a loving God and the innate goodness of people developed early because I could always count on the love and support of my Mother and Dad. I have an older brother, Roger, and a younger sister, Judy. Judy and Roger are two of my best friends. One of the greatest blessings of my life



is that Judy is also a Sister of Charity. Roger and his wonderful wife, Nadyne, have four beautiful daughters, four great sons-in-law and 15 fantastic grandchildren. We have always been a close family—including grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. My family continues to be a source of great joy to me.

The Sisters of Charity were my teachers at St. Louis Grade School, Hogan High School and Saint Mary College. I think the Sisters at St. Louis School first planted the seeds of my vocation. These Sisters taught me to love learning and modeled the beauty of community life. It was also at St. Louis where I was fortunate to form lifelong friendships.

I entered the Community after high school. My novitiate classmates have been my companions on this spiritual journey for 50 years. We continue to be good friends who meet regularly for prayer, support and fun. We've also shared some exciting adventures and vacations. The deep friendships of my novitiate classmates and other Sisters with whom I've worked, studied, prayed and played have enriched my life.

After two years of novitiate and one year of juniorate, my first mission assignment was teaching at St. Bernadette School in Lakewood, Colo. I love teaching! To me, it is the best job in the world. I really enjoy the students and coworkers. It is exciting to see the "aha" in students' eyes when they realize a new concept or acquire a new skill. Also, teaching has allowed me to continue my own reading and learning. I have taught in Colorado, Montana, Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Because I have spent most of my life in education, I've attended a number of colleges and universities including Regis and Boston College. My master's degree is from the University of Dayton.

Besides teaching and school administration, the only other full-time job I've had in the Community was from 1996 to 1999 when I was Mother House coordinator. The Sisters were wonderful. I so enjoyed my years with them on our "holy ground." I especially miss the great

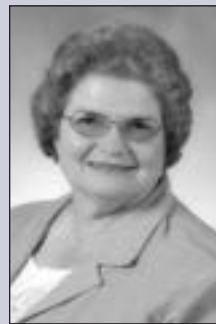
conversations in the kitchenette and our regular card games.

Our Sisters of Charity Constitution states, "The beginning and end of our coming together as Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth is our Lord Jesus Christ..." Responding to God's loving call to follow Jesus as an SCL through prayer, community life and service has been my spiritual quest for 50 years. As I continue this lifelong adventure, I "look forward to the good that is yet to be."

For life, family, Community, teaching and especially God's love for each of us—
I give THANKS!

Sister Virginia Jakobe

I was born in Kansas City, Mo., to James and Norine Jakobe. I am the oldest of four children. My siblings are James, Deborah and Michael. I attended St. Peter's Grade School and Bishop Hogan High School in Kansas City, Mo.



From a very early age, I always knew I wanted to be a Sister. After working in the school office at Hogan and seeing the camaraderie and joyfulness of the Sisters of Charity, I knew this was the Community for me!

Although I expressed an interest in nursing when I entered the Community, it was not meant to be. I became a teacher and taught primary grades in Leadville, Colo., Chicago, Ill., Kansas City, Kan., and then back to Leadville.

In 1992, I was assigned to Montana. I had heard a lot about Montana through the years. It was a little like going to "the end of the world." Very soon, however, I fell in love with the beauty of the country and the people. It became my home.

I taught at Holy Rosary in Billings, St. Mary's in Livingston, as well as did some parish visiting,

I am thankful for my parents, family, friends and Community for their support through the years. I am grateful that God calls me each day to minister to his people and to help me make a difference in their lives.

— Sister Virginia Jakobe

and then returned to Billings to teach at St. Pius X School. After teaching 20 years, I again expressed an interest in nursing. At this time, I returned to school and graduated as a licensed practical nurse in 1983. After working for a short time at St. Vincent Healthcare in Billings, I returned to Livingston and began working at Livingston Memorial Hospital.

For more than 25 years, I have been working in various aspects of nursing care for the Livingston Health Care System. As a nurse, I've been involved with hospice programs as a volunteer and as a board member. I was a volunteer for the Montana Eye Bank. I was a member, officer and on the board of directors of the Montana Licensed Practical Nurses' Association. I have done some home health nursing and private home care. I have been on several hospital committees and continue to be an ostomy educator.

Some of my special interests include photography, bird watching, fishing, travel and just being in the great outdoors.

I am thankful for my parents, family, friends and Community for their support through the years. I am grateful that God calls me each day to minister to his people and to help me make a difference in their lives.

Sister Frances Juiliano

My paternal and maternal grandparents were Italian immigrants from Sicily, Italy. I was born in Kansas City, Kan., and grew up as the middle child of Frank and Angeline Juiliano

Ruth Ann was my older sister, and Sandra, my younger sibling.



and then returned to Billings to teach at St. Pius X School.

After teaching 20 years, I again expressed an interest in nursing. At this time, I returned to school and grad-

Family has always been very important to me. As a child, I spent all major holidays with grandparents and extended family. Most social activities were shared with extended family. Vacations usually consisted of family reunions or visits to Chicago to see cousins.

My elementary and secondary education was in parochial schools in Kansas City, Kan.—St. Benedict's from grades one through eight and Ward High School where I first met the Sisters of Charity. I always enjoyed school and learning. I preferred studying to sports or other activities.

I had thought about being a Sister at different times during my grade school years. I liked the Benedictine Sisters who taught in our school, and I helped them before or after school when I could. I had not thought of a vocation consistently through high school. I knew I wanted to go to college and be a teacher.

When I met with the high school counselor, Sister Mary Cecilia Carig, and told her my career goals, she asked me what was preventing me from being a Sister. I told her nothing was preventing me, and I had thought about it before. When she started talking about religious communities, she didn't have to say much because I quickly said that I wanted to be a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth. While talking with her, I realized that I really had been thinking about this more than I was aware. Since I had not discussed the idea of a religious vocation with my parents, they were very surprised when I announced that I wanted to join the Sisters of Charity. Initially, they didn't know what to say, but they gradually accepted the idea and supported me throughout the process of entering the Community.

When I set my career goals in high school, I knew that I wanted to be a high school teacher and teach math or Latin. However, when I entered college, the Community guided me through the program for elementary teachers—a decision I have never regretted. Through the years, I realized what a blessing serving in the elementary school setting was.

My first mission was Laramie, Wyo. The only thing I knew about Laramie was what I had seen on the popular TV series about the early western town. Although it had a western flavor, Laramie wasn't a lot different from life in Kansas. I taught three years there and then four in Rock Springs. Wyoming became a second home to me, so it was difficult to leave the state and the caring people.

I returned to the Midwest to teach at St. Charles in Kansas City, Mo. This brought me closer to home and my family again. After several years at St. Charles, I went to Most Pure Heart of Mary School in Topeka, Kan. I had the opportunity to teach children in grades three to six, self-contained or departmental, throughout my career, but most years were with fourth graders.

During my years in elementary schools, I found that there were students who needed special assistance to learn some of the necessary skills. I pursued a master's degree in learning disabilities in order to meet the special needs of students I was teaching. With this degree, I was invited to teach special education courses in the education department at Saint Mary College, now the University of Saint Mary, Leavenworth, Kan.

The change from elementary to college level was different, but I enjoyed teaching at that level as well. After teaching at the college part-time for two years, I was pleased to accept the opportunity to join the faculty full-time. To improve my background for college teaching, I began a doctoral program in special education: emotional disturbance. This was an area that interested me since many students exhibited behavioral or emotional problems and needed extra support and understanding to benefit from educational settings.

Following excellent leadership in the education department by persons who were my mentors, I became education department chair—the position I currently hold with the university.

I loved each mission where I taught and lived. The people were always welcoming and supportive. I am grateful that I could stay in each

of my missions for a number of years. This allowed me to see my students grow and change into more independent learners and remarkable individuals. The extended time in a school also permitted me to teach students' siblings and get to know the families better.

My special hobbies have mostly been sewing and photography, although I can't say that I have spent much time on these in recent years.

My blessings have been the people in my life: my family, my Community, my colleagues, the students I have taught and the people in the parishes. I cannot think of another word to describe my life except "blessed."

Sister Mary Jo McDonald

Josephine Bechtrold McDonald, my Mother, had been staying with her parents at Orifino Gulch, when she presented at the Murray Hospital in Butte, Mont., March 12, 1941 for my birth. I joined George, a 2-year-old sibling.



Leo, my Father, was working on the highline bringing the telephone line to that area. Because he was unable to come to Butte until May, I was baptized May 16, 1941. This event culminated my sojourn in Orifino Gulch, and the family returned to our trailer on the highline of Montana.

When George was ready to begin school, after much discussion our family decided to locate where there would be good schools. An opening in Anaconda for an installation lineman took us out of the construction camps. Thus began our life in Anaconda where another sibling, James, joined us in 1949.

There were wonderful schools in Anaconda, and we found ourselves enrolled in St. Paul's School with the Ursuline Sisters. Mom knew many of the Ursulines as she had attended high school at the academy in Great Falls. When we were in third grade, the Benedictine Sisters from St. Cloud, Minn., joined the Ursulines at St. Paul's.

*I have had many opportunities
to work on environmental issues
that affect the entire area
and the poor in so many ways.*

— Sister Mary Jo McDonald

Baseball was the love of my life at an early age. Find the closest ballgame, and I'd be there. I spent most weekends fishing the North Fork of the Big Hole River. Mother always dutifully went on the trips but later "fessed up" that it was not her most favorite event.

High school found me off to Anaconda Central High School where I met the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa. High school was a wonderful four years with many great friends and a fine education. We were indeed blessed with wonderful

teachers. I still find myself diagramming sentences in my head.

Following high school, I planned to attend Montana State with many of my softball acquaintances. Father McCoy, our principal, heard that I was off to Bozeman, and he called me into his office. I was informed that no one from Central would attend that university. I explained that my parents were fine with that choice.

Two days later I was called into his office again, and Father McCoy said that I should attend Saint Mary College in Kansas. I didn't want to, so I left the office again. Summoned back, I found that the principal had completed the application that awaited my signature. I talked with my parents who said just sign it and go where you want for college. I signed, and the rest is history. Saint Mary's was my introduction to the SCLs.

I met Sisters Mary Vincentia Maronick and Mary Josepha Talle at Saint Mary's. Very impressed with their concern for students and their dedication, I decided that my life would take another direction. While home at Christmas, I talked with my Mother, and she assured me that it would really be okay to finish college first. I told her that I felt that I would prefer to enter the Sisters of Charity if they would have me. My parents gave their permission, and so I met

with Mother Mary Ancilla Spoor when I returned from Christmas break.

Sister Mary Josepha introduced me to Mother Mary Ancilla, and I applied to enter the Community. This all occurred under the cover of darkness as one did not want this process to be made public at the college. Acceptance received, I returned home for the final summer and gathered all the items needed on the LIST. What a treat!! Introduced to Jamison's of Chicago-shorewoods, black blouses, black everything.

Another train ride took me to Kansas to enter the Sisters of Charity in August 1960. Two years later, it was off to Sheridan, Wyo., where I began my SCL teaching career in the sixth grade under the tutelage of Sister Margaret Mary Driscoll. A better mentor one could not have chosen.

My career then took me to Grand Junction, Colo., Lakewood, Colo., Los Angeles, Calif., Chicago, Ill., Kansas City, Mo., Topeka, Kan., and Butte. I earned my bachelor's degree at Saint Mary's; a master's in education-counseling-administration at the University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio; and a master's in pastoral ministry at Seattle University, Seattle, Wash.

Over the past 27 years, I have done pastoral/administrative work at St. Ann's Parish, Butte. I was very fortunate to return to Montana at a time when my parents needed more attention, and I was able to walk with them in their elder status until their deaths. I will be forever grateful to the Community for the opportunity to do this.

Life in Butte has allowed me to be involved in many ways. There was the class action suit challenging the water company to provide safe water to the people of Butte. The resulting settlement garnered the water company for the city of Butte, ownership of Silver Lake located outside Anaconda and several million dollars to replace and repair the pipes in Butte. The steering committee of this suit was awarded the 1997 Citizen's Award by the trial lawyers association of Montana "for unflinching commitment to community and justice."

I have had many opportunities to work on environmental issues that affect the entire area and the poor in so many ways. I've been on the board of the Food Bank for 25 years and served on the boards of directors for St. James Healthcare, Butte, and Holy Rosary Healthcare in Miles City, Mont., and the Foundation of St. James Healthcare. Having my mother living across from St. Ann's Church was a bonus and a challenge. Mom found many needy individuals and would frankly tell her daughter what was needed—like the elderly woman and her son who needed a stove for cooking and to heat their home, three days before Christmas. Mission accomplished! Like mother, like daughter—another time, we took in a Russian-speaking mother and young son for six weeks until the woman could get her green card. With the help of many at St. Ann's, this family secured permanent housing. They relocated to Denver and are both U.S. citizens.

I feel richly blessed to be a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth and to have the opportunity to simply be available and to be active in serving the most vulnerable individuals.

Sister Suzanne Retherford

I was born on Nov. 19, 1940, to Martin and Eva Retherford in Boonville, Mo. I am the third of five children. A brother, Dennis, died when he was 2 weeks old. In those days, he was considered a blue baby.

We moved to Kansas City, Mo., when I was 6 months old. In fact, we moved to an apartment at 208 W. 34th, Kansas City, Mo., that is right behind Cristo Rey Kansas City High School, where I work today. We lived there until Dad could find a house for us. We moved at the end of my second grade at Redemptorist Grade School. We lived in a lovely home in which I spent 12 years before entering the Community. While attending St. Peter's



Grade School, I became very actively involved in sports, especially softball and volleyball, and that activity continued through high school (Hogan) and two years of college at Saint Mary's. One of my favorite pastimes is watching football. Sometimes it's not important to me who wins, I just like watching the different plays.

My parents were people of faith. Mom loved her rosary, and Dad liked to attend Mass, especially during Lent, at which time I would accompany him to the 6:00 a.m. Mass. It was hard getting up early, but I liked going with Dad. We also attended the Miraculous Medal Novena when I was in grade school. I later attended it by myself, when I learned how to drive. Once in a while, we prayed the family rosary. We attended Mass every Sunday together.

All of these religious practices certainly played a part in my spiritual formation. So did attending Hogan High School and observing the Sisters and their way of life, although I wasn't even thinking about being a nun then. I was dating a young man with whom I thought I would be spending the rest of my life. God's ways aren't ours.

After high school graduation I attended Saint Mary's for two years. I was still going with the same individual. He had joined the Marines and was in California. For about a year and a half, I again observed the Sisters and their way of life. There was a peace and calm about them that I found very appealing as well as a holiness and commitment to doing the Lord's work.

I started looking into how you might become a Sister. The Christmas before the August I entered, my friend had asked me to marry him. I felt terrible but knew that I couldn't say yes. He was very disappointed, and when I told him I was going to be a Sister, he couldn't believe it. In fact, most of my friends couldn't believe it. I was a little on the wild side. I looked into a couple of other communities, but the SCLs were the ones for me.

Education wasn't the ministry I wanted at the time as school was not particularly that exciting for me. Because I had babysat all my life, I

*Glorify the Lord with me,
let us together extol His name.
(Psalm 34:4)*

— Favorite Scripture
Sister Sue Retherford

thought that I wanted to work in an orphanage and that this would be a good place for me. Over time, I have grown to love education.

After making vows, I was one of the first Sisters sent out, as I had two years of college, which was more than most had at the time.

I went out in October, and I had 55 second graders. I had no idea what to do with them, but I learned quickly. I learned right along with them. I truly enjoyed my years of teaching. My favorite areas were math, religion and music and

sometimes art (crafts). I personally had had a minimum of music lessons but learning to play the guitar and listening to music and being part of a group were and still are great fun. Planning liturgies, playing and teaching guitar, and producing programs were a lot of work, but the students seemed to enjoy them, and so did I. My missions were in Montana, Kansas and Missouri.

Education has been my whole life. Different aspects of it have appealed at different times. I spent a few years in administration, which I thought might be my calling, but found out later it really wasn't.

Twelve years in the school office coordinating staff development for schools in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Mo., were exciting for me. Along with the teaching and the staff development, there were ways in which you could be creative in presenting material and making school and learning fun for everyone. At the present time, I work at Cristo Rey Kansas City, coordinating fine arts electives for students.

My 50 years as an SCL have been ones of faith, loving, hoping, stretching, growing, feeling, caring, thanking...

I am truly blessed to be called by God. I have had my eyes opened when they needed to be. God has given me strength and courage at my weakest moments in life. Like the folk song, I can

say, "The Lord's been good to me. And so I thank the Lord, for giving me the things I need: the sun, the rain and the apple seed. Oh, the Lord's been good to me."

Sister Mary Lex Smith

*"If Love is Lord of heaven
and earth, how can I keep
from singing?"*

With a song in my heart, I move into this my Jubilee year as an SCL. Music has always been a deep part of my life.

Born Dec. 12, 1942, in Helena, Mont., to Ralph I. and Alexandria Blain Smith, I began my song. I grew up in Butte, Mont., with my siblings Jim, Jonathan and Celinda. My Dad taught at the, then, School of Mines; my Mom stayed at home with us while we were younger. I took piano lessons for years, and I learned to play the alto saxophone in seventh grade so that I could be ready to play in the band at Central.

The Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary from Dubuque were the teachers in my grade school, and the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth taught at Girls Central High School.

During my senior year in high school I heard "the call" to religious life, applied and was accepted. In 1960, three months after I graduated from high school, I got on the train with five other young women from Butte and one from Anaconda and came to Kansas to enter the novitiate. It was a long trip from Butte to Kansas City, both in miles and in psychological distance. Mrs. Teasdale, Sister Bernadette Marie's mother, picked us up at the train station, fed us and took us to Leavenworth, took our pictures and sent them to our families.

The women with whom I entered are a very musical group. We sang our way through the two years of novitiate and one of juniorate, and we continue to this day.



In 1968, we prepared for our perpetual profession at Hogan convent in Kansas City, Mo. The popular songs of that summer were "I Gotta Be Me," "Impossible Dream" and "Feeling Groovy." We sang our way through the summer. I learned to play the baritone ukulele (which I later traded for a guitar). We entertained for anyone who would listen! We were pretty groovy for those days when habits were changing as were so many attitudes and practices. We have moved forward through the years in a "gotta be US" mode and have continued our closeness for the past 42 years.

As I reach what seemed then an "unreachable star" of 50 years, I look back at all the "career" opportunities I've had as an SCL: I have taught grade and high school, worked at the university, admitted patients in a hospital, gained two master's degrees and worked for 15 years with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), walking the journey into the Church with many people. For seven years, I played guitar for weekly Mass for REACH handicapped folks. When I left parish ministry, I went to work for a battered women's shelter. Now as I come to the 50-year mark, I am working in the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office as a victim advocate with families as they go through the court process. My case load is made up mainly of families who have had a murder affect them.

During the 15 years in parish ministry, I had the opportunity to use my skills as a teacher and a liturgist. I was the first person hired in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas specifically to work with the RCIA. During those years, I started a networking group with other RCIA directors in the archdiocese and initiated and organized the Rite of Election.

It has been my privilege throughout my life to be part of many groups/committees of people who do work similar to mine. This afforded me many leadership roles in which to develop and use the gifts I have been so generously given. Playing the guitar for Mass and singing in the church choir have given me a chance to share the song in my heart with others.

Opportunities for spiritual and psychological growth have also been abundant in these years. Retreats, times of renewal, formal and ongoing education have helped me forge myself into being able to sing "Just a Closer Walk With Thee" as I continue to reach for other seemingly "unreachable stars."

These many and varied experiences have helped me to grow into a woman religious whose heart bursts with the joy of the Lord for all these blessings. My heart also overflows with gratitude for the song of my life and all the harmonies and dissonances which I have lived through, that lead me to "for all that will be 'yes.'" How can I keep from singing?

Sister Charlotte Marie White

Because of my Dad's being in the Navy during wartime, I entered the world, July 10, 1941, in Long Beach, Calif., welcomed by Charles and Rita Langner White. Being the first of my generation on both sides of the family guaranteed plenty of doting in the years ahead.



In November, we followed my Navy Dad to Pearl Harbor. A month later, Mom, Dad and I left Mass to look down into the Pearl Harbor bowl and destruction. Dad took us to our small cabin and left for the harbor. We were right on Diamond Head with the harbor 14 miles away, but shrapnel landed around us from a stray bomb. Blackouts and shortages marked the days following. We weren't able to leave until Easter Monday when we returned to San Francisco. There my brother, Ed, was born in 1943.

At war's end my family returned to Missouri, settling on a farm at the edge of Plattsburg. Here Dick was born in 1948. The three of us explored the woods and creeks, got ourselves into numerous adventures, and enjoyed farm life. My maternal grandparents took the adjacent farm and managed both, as Dad was a plumber.

There wasn't much money, but we learned to make, grow or fix about everything we needed. That handy gift has stayed with us.

In 1957, we moved to nearby Gower. I began working as a nurse aide in Smithville and taking on odd jobs so I could go to college. I received an offer of all school expenses paid if I would go into nursing, but I had decided years earlier that I wanted to teach high school science and math. So I kept working.

A weekend spent at Saint Mary College had lured me there and was eventually to lure me further! I intended to marry and never had any desire to be a Sister, but there was something about the Sisters at Saint Mary. I couldn't name it, but, whatever it was, I wanted it, too. Fifty years later, I know that I made the right choice!

The grade school in Helena, Mont., was my first mission. Next was Bishop Hogan High School in Kansas City, Mo., where I began teaching high school science and math. I was wholly at home and loved the high school students. A chemistry degree from Saint Mary's was followed by a master's in physics from the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley.

During that year at Hogan, my parents adopted 6-year-old Tracy and, a couple years later, her sister, Mary. I could no longer sign my letters home "your favorite daughter"!

After some 20 years of teaching, which I loved, I was ready for a change. At the same time, the Community was looking for someone to begin the role of mission integration for our health system. So, I studied health administration at St. Louis University and began 10 challenging and exciting years with our hospitals.

Next was Notre Dame for a master's in systematic theology, a most wonderful experience, followed by parish work at Church of the Nativity in Leawood, Kan. However, in less than a year the Community asked me to go to Denver, Colo., to assist with the integration of newly-forming Exempla Healthcare. That was a crazy time that I wouldn't have missed—and wouldn't try again!

Four years later, I returned to Kansas City, glad to be closer again to my family. After a few

months working for the Catholic Education Foundation, I joined the Archdiocesan School Office, working with mission in the Catholic schools. Two years later I returned to our health system in Lenexa, Kan., working part-time to allow for teaching adjunct classes at Saint Mary and the Benedictine Religious Institute, school workshops, parish and diocesan retreats, and other commitments. When the Daughters of Charity left the Kansas City area, I also became Sister moderator for the Ladies of Charity. I get to be creative in many fields and love it.

Here I remain today, wondering how 50 years passed so quickly and marveling at the bountiful grace of each moment. This farm girl is reminded of the parable in Mark: "This is what the kingdom of God is like. We scatter seed on the ground. Night and day, whether we sleep or get up, the seed sprouts and grows, though we don't know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk unfolds, then the head and its grains." (Mark 4:26-28) God continues to unfold my life, and I wait for the surprises!

Sister Irene Skeehan

One of the events that determined the direction of my life journey happened when my Dad, a Pennsylvanian transplanted to New York as a young adult, and my Mom, a native New Yorker raised in Queens, began their married life by following the oil boom to Oklahoma.



I was born in Tulsa, previously Osage and Cherokee Indian land, on May 15, 1931. I grew up walking in the Native American footprint, in a Catholic ghetto, beleaguered on all sides by Southern Baptists, within a Catholic diocese that was labeled "mission territory." It was an area largely overlooked by the institutional Church, and innovation and creativity flourished. I was educated for 12 years by the Oklahoma Benedictine Sisters in a one-building, all-grades Catholic school appropriately named Marquette.

The only pastor I knew and loved in my youth was a transplanted Prince Edward Island Irishman, Msgr. Dan Fletcher, himself a “missionary.” Like my younger siblings, Alice and Leonard, I received all my sacraments in his parish, Christ the King.

When I was 17, my parents bundled me off to Saint Mary College, where I was enraptured by the hospitality, simplicity and fun-loving spirit of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. During Christmas vacation of my freshman year, I told my parents that I wanted to become an SCL, and they reluctantly sent me off to my postulancy in February 1949.

I made first vows in February 1951 and began a 12-year nomadic career as an elementary/junior high teacher: St. Mary’s, Topeka and Prairie Village, Kan.; Butte, Billings, Deer Lodge and Livingston, Mont.; Rock Springs and Sheridan, Wyo.; and Kansas City, Mo.

A radical change of itinerary came with my assignment as one of the first five SCLs to go to Peru in 1963. It was my first extended encounter with truly poor and marginalized persons. My three years there had a great and permanent impact on my life.

I returned stateside in the heady days of post-Vatican II renewal and studied theology at Catholic University and at the University of San Francisco. Upon graduation, Sister Cele Breen and I roamed the SCL Community for one year, charged with upgrading the theological education of our Sisters. We took “Cele and Irene’s Traveling Salvation Show” to every corner of the USA where there were SCLs.

I took an 11-year hiatus from the SCL Community during the days of my “mid-life crisis” and am happy to have been received back home when a persistent inner call ended my detour.

I continued to work in SCL ministries, and I was barely back to Community life when I became the founding chairperson of the SCL Social Justice Committee. My list of ministerial experiences is long and varied: high school theology teacher, Billings, Mont.; college

theology instructor and administration, Saint Mary College; campus minister, UMKC; GED teacher/coordinator, Kansas City, Kan.; parish pastoral associate, Kansas City and Denver; Spanish curriculum instructor, New Wine Program, Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Mo.

Approaching retirement brought a new rhythm, and after a sabbatical I spent three happy years working as a bilingual aide at Bishop Ward High School, Kansas City, Kan. Then came the challenge of my old age: to voyage in new territory as one of the founding SCLs of Cristo Rey Kansas City High School, where I was director of mission for three years and where I continue to work regularly as a volunteer.

As I glance back at my life journey, I see three landmarks: movement, pioneering and helping. I spent my childhood in a frontier state, still young in its statehood, reared at the lap of a strong woman for whom helping was a way of life. Peru, post-Vatican II theology, Cristo Rey: from young adulthood to old age those milestones predominate.

Not surprisingly, I favor books by newer spiritual writers and love to play computer games. I’m a big-time Googler and feel that there is no end to the interesting stuff you can learn on the Web. I enjoy singing, which I do regularly with Holy Family Parish Choir in Gladstone, Mo., (a 40-mile round trip twice weekly) and with the Charity Notes who sing far and wide. How grateful I am to belong to my SCL Community, which allows and even fosters my winged feet.

Recently, I’m learning to love the slower life which leaves me the time and leisure to develop my inner being and my more contemplative side. In motion or at rest, I’m always trying to “look forward to the good that is yet to be.”

A radical change of itinerary came with my assignment as one of the first five SCLs to go to Peru in 1963. It was my first extended encounter with truly poor and marginalized persons. My three years there had a great and permanent impact on my life.

— Sister Irene Skeehan

Re-Markings

Remembering, celebrating Sister Mary Kathleen Stefani



Sister Mary Kathleen Stefani

When Sister Mary Kathleen Stefani died on May 1, her Sisters in Community lost a beloved leader and friend; her family, a caring and thoughtful sister and aunt; the world, a kind and special person. Sister Mary Kathleen was an SCL for 65 years. For 30 of those years, she was a teacher and principal. Sister Mary Kathleen served the SCL Community in a leadership role for 18 years, 12 of those as Community Director.

SCLs remembered her with the following thoughts and expressions of gratitude.

Sister Mary Kathleen was balanced and wholesome: she worked hard, played hard, prayed hard, and, as such, gifted all those with whom she lived and worked with business integrity and efficiency, moments of fun and laughter, and a prayerful, discerning spirit. Her life modeled our characteristic virtues of humility, simplicity and charity.

— Sister Bernadette Helfert

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I think that she had a strong faith in her God. This faith enabled her to do what she said that she would do, to press forward even when she was tired, hurt or afraid, to keep going when the challenge seemed almost overwhelming and maybe the course (I am thinking of religious life in the 1980s) appeared uncertain. I think this faith freed her for a life of love, compassion and service which, in the end, allowed or maybe even caused her to give great glory to her God.

— Sister Rita Smith

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During her time in office, she did many things that affected the Community at large as well as individual Sisters. Changes were made regarding Chapter participation. Sisters were more involved in regional meetings, serving on committees, being able to volunteer for tasks that utilized their talents. Efforts were made for more integration of Peruvian Sisters and North American Sisters. We joined the Charity Federation. Changes



Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, Sister Mary Kathleen and Sister Sue Miller.

Sister Mary Kathleen (left) with Sisters Annie Loendorf (center) and Mary Vincentia Maronick, watched the procession to Mount Olivet Cemetery prior to the 150th Jubilee Grand Celebration in July 2008.



were made in Formation Programs and the Associate Program. The Social Justice Committee was formed with a full-time director. Sisters were encouraged to become more aware of issues impacting the poor, especially women and children, and to participate in efforts for systemic change. Building the Ryan Center, installing air conditioning in the Mother House and converting the large community room to Ross Chapel have added to the comfort, as well as the physical and spiritual well-being, of the Sisters.

— Sister Mary Geraldine Yelich

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First of all, Kathleen was a woman of integrity. Even though she didn't particularly relish change, she led major change when I served with her from 1992-1998 simply because she knew it was the right thing to do. We separately incorporated the College and Mount St. Vincent Home with the addition of lay people to the governance boards. Even though SCLHS was separately incorporated in 1972, the Council still served as the governance board in 1992. By 1994, we incorporated the first laypersons on the board, one of whom was Bill Murray. For years, the Community had talked about whether the CEO of SCLHS, the Community Treasurer and the Community Secretary should remain elected positions. Under Kathleen's leadership we had an all-Community, facilitated gathering to gain input into these decisions. The Community was able to come to a consensus that these positions would no longer be elected at Chapter as part of the Community Officers. Going through the process two years before Chapter led the way to making the actual vote at Chapter manageable.

— Sister Barbara Aldrich

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Sister Mary Kathleen was a leader, a woman of integrity, intelligent—a real thinker who would ponder various problems, think them through and then make a decision. Decisive is a good word for her. She was not afraid to make decisions, and some were difficult, but she made them and carried out what she thought best for the Community and individuals. I should say that Sister was a collaborative decision maker—not dictatorial. Her Council worked well with her, and she with them.

— Sister Mary Corita Conlan

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Sister Mary Kathleen had a great love for the Community and a deep spiritual life. I think she encouraged these traits in the Sisters. She was a wonderful teacher and the characteristics of her teaching style would be evident in her leadership. She was very intelligent and very organized in her preparations for class. She always worked hard, and yet she had time for Community gatherings. When she was Community Director, she was interested in the affairs of the times, and I think she wanted the Sisters to use their talents in promoting the work of the Catholic Church and the Sisters of Charity mission in whatever way possible.

— Sister Madonna Fink

SCL Officers reflect on the past six years

SCL 2004-2010 Officers
outside the entrance to
Cantwell Hall (left to right):
Sisters Linda Roth,
Peg Johnson, Maureen Hall,
Nancy Bauman, Marianna
Bauder, Katherine Franchett
and Sue Miller.



With the recent Chapter elections and pending transition to new SCL Officers, current members of the leadership group reflected on their ministry of the past six years and their love of the Community.

Interactions with SCLs and serving their needs have been highlights of their terms of office. Sister Nancy Bauman appreciated “hearing the life stories of our Sisters and connecting with them on a deeper level.” Sister Linda Roth enjoyed the opportunity of “being with a Sister in her environment and experiencing how she uniquely fleshes out our mission.”

In her role as Community Secretary, Sister Peg Johnson had daily interaction with SCL/As through email. “At least weekly,” she said, “someone would write a ‘just because’ note, giving information, or thanking me for something I sent, or affirming my effort to keep us connected.”

A general sense of celebration resonated with the Officers. Sister Linda said she loved “who we are when we celebrate, be it jubilee or death, birthday or something ordinary.” For Sister Nancy, joy came from “observing how our Sisters continue to live into the

mission of Jesus no matter what age, what challenge or where they are.”

The 150th Jubilee resonated with Sister Maureen Hall, First Councilor, and Sister Katherine Franchett, Treasurer. “It called us to a year of celebration and renewal as we pondered our many stories, woven into our founding story,” Sister Maureen said. “It involved all the Sisters, and the energy was contagious. We do ‘look forward to the good that is yet to be!’”

**Watch for articles
about Sister Maureen Hall,
the new Community Director,
and the new SCL Officers
in the Fall 2010 *Voices*.**

Sister Katherine added that she thoroughly enjoyed the 150th Jubilee and cited the “Monster Piano Concert” as a special high point of the celebration.

Sister Marianna Bauder found the greatest joy in “that we care about one another and work to have good community.” This care extends beyond the Community, as acknowledged by

Sister Katherine who expressed gratitude for the solidarity of the SCLs in support of the Sisters and people of Haiti.

“My greatest joy in being an SCL,” Sister Maureen observed, “is the realization that I am connected with people—Sisters, Associates and beyond—who hold the charism of charity in their very being. We do together what we cannot do alone. We gather around the tables of Eucharist, of community, of faith and friendship, and are indeed fed by the bread of life.”

“It’s energizing to be a part of this group of dedicated women who identify needs and respond to them,” added Sister Peg.

Sister Sue Miller, Community Director, summed up her leadership experience saying, “The highlight of my ministry in SCL leadership has been the gift of accompanying our Sisters who are such dedicated SCLs and faithful friends. Their great spirit, wonderful ministries, dedication and faith have been a daily inspiration for me. And they convince me daily that the charism of Charity, as it has been expressed among us in the past and present, will continue to unfold into the future.”

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.

Scholarship named to honor SCL

The Butte Central Education Foundation has established the **Sister Paula Marie Tweet** Endowed Scholarship to honor the legacy of Sister's 52 years of service to Catholic education. Sister Paula Marie attended St. Joseph's Grade School at the site of the current Central Elementary School, Butte, Mont. She graduated from Girls Central in 1955 and entered the SCLs that same year.



Before returning to the teaching staff at Central Elementary in 1991, Sister Paula Marie taught in Laramie, Wyo., Denver, Colo., Chicago, Ill., Kansas City, Mo., and Billings, Mont. In 2006, she transitioned to her current position as the student spiritual development coordinator at Central Elementary.

The scholarship also acknowledges all of the SCLs who served the Butte Catholic schools. Annually, this fund will provide scholarship assistance to students attending Central Catholic Elementary School.

Teacher celebrates with former student



On hand to recognize Ed Dwight as he was inducted into the Bishop Ward Hall of Fame were (right) Levita Ross, a schoolmate and lifelong friend, and Sister Virginia Flanick, who taught both as students at Our Lady's School, Kansas City, Kan.

(Photo by John Caulfield, Caulfield Photography)

Sister Virginia Flanick was among guests cheering when her former student Ed Dwight was inducted into the Bishop Ward Hall of Fame on March 27 in Kansas City, Kan.

Ed received the Fine Arts Distinguished Achievement Award. He is a nationally renowned sculptor, the first African American astronaut and author of *Soaring on the Wings of a Dream*, his autobiography. "Being Catholic," he said, "you grow up more aware of the world around you. That's what I took away from my time at Ward."

Husband/wife SCLAs earn recognition

Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas named **Ruth Schukman-Dakotas** and **Dan Dakotas** United Way Volunteers for 2010. Ruth and Dan have been volunteering at Shalom House, a shelter in Kansas City, Kan., for homeless men for 30 years. The shelter operates under the auspices of Catholic Charities.

The Dakotas began their volunteer ministry with their church group preparing and serving a meal once a month at

the shelter. They expanded their involvement by preparing and serving a meal monthly as a family. For the last three and a half years, the couple has volunteered at Shalom House weekly to assist staff.

The Dakotas hope their presence offers the men a point of stability. They also hope to provide the men with a sense that someone cares about them and wants to give them a hand up on life's journey.

(Source: Wyandotte Daily News, April 29, 2010)

Annunciation Hall of Fame for Sister J. Vianney

Recognized as a native vocation from Annunciation Parish, Denver, Colo., **Sister J. Vianney Martinez** was inducted into the Annunciation Alumni Hall of Fame on April 10. Her friend and co-minister, Sister Mary Clarita Sternitzke, paid tribute to Sister J. Vianney for her witness as a faithful servant of God in answering the call to be a Sister of Charity. Sister J. Vianney has touched many minds and hearts during her many years as an educator and parish minister. Annunciation School's alumni association has sponsored this event for several years.



Sister Vickie recognized

The Women's Foundation of Greater Kansas City recently recognized **Sister Vickie Perkins**, president of Cristo Rey High School, for her many ministries. The mission of the Women's Foundation is to promote equity and opportunity for women and girls.

Sister Marie Michael featured

The *Montana Catholic* featured the volunteer ministry of **Sister Marie Michael Mollis** in its April 16, 2010 edition. The newspaper article acknowledged how Sister Marie Michael shares her talents and time through her work at St. James Healthcare, Butte, Mont. Sister relocated to Butte in August 2009.

Sister Marie Michael is a Eucharistic minister, visits new parents on the maternity unit, greets guests at the information desk and performs other duties.



A 'heart of gratitude'



Sister Jean pictured with the dance troupe made up of parents and friends, some of whom are Annunciation alumni.

As she leaves Annunciation Grade School, Denver, Colo., after 29 years as principal, **Sister Jean Anne Panisko** recalled the words of Sister Serena Sheehy, former SCL Councilor and Treasurer, who encouraged her to "always stretch yourself."

She said that advice stayed with her throughout her educational and administrative ministry. "It was never same old, same old," Sister Jean added. "It was always fresh and dreaming. It's been a blessing."

Since 1981, Sister Jean has seen, experienced and led many changes and developments at the school. For her, it was always a matter of looking at needs, developing programs that would fit them and seeking funding sources.

In her early years in education, she recalled that she said she would never do fund development. At Annunciation, she found that if you "believe in something enough, you can be passionate about telling the story and connect donors/funders with our families and students who have needs."

Among many results, the connections Sister Jean has made with funding sources have led to tuition assistance; an affordable after school child care program; the availability of a social worker and counselor; and computers at this urban core school.

Sister Jean said that over the past 29 years her trust in God has grown deeply. In her 49th year as an SCL and as she approached this major life transition to a new ministry with the Community, she prayed daily for the gift of peace.

Her prayers have worked. A new principal, who was educated by SCLs in Grand Junction, has been chosen. In another answer to prayers, the school also has a new secretary, replacing the secretary who died earlier this year. "We have great students, faculty, parents and donors," Sister Jean said. "I feel good. I know it's time to move on to what's next."

"I have a heart full of gratitude," she concluded.



Sister Jean spoke from the heart to acknowledge what her nearly 30 years at Annunciation have meant to her. Behind her at left is Rev. Jeff Ernst; to the right (hidden by flowers), Rev. Bill Kraus.

Spiritual companioning heart of ministry

As **Sister Annie Loendorf** begins a new leg of her life's journey and ministry, she feels called to continue to work with women in spirituality. Much as she was able to foster a nurturing place for women to explore their inner resources at House of Menuha, which she founded, Sister Annie recognizes that there's a hunger for spiritual companioning. She believes that you are never alone on your journey which she is now experiencing a hundredfold as she makes her own life transition.

Sister Annie founded Menuha in Kansas City, Mo., in June 1992. She had worked previously in pastoral ministry and listened as women articulated their need for quiet places and sacred spaces. Menuha (a Hebrew word that means to rest in purposeful contemplation) met those needs. The large home was a gathering place for women in transition



Friends gathered to celebrate and recognize Sister Annie Loendorf (with corsage) earlier this year.

to share one another's stories. Menuha's mission blended those of a Catholic Worker House, a retreat center, and a bed and breakfast.

Sister Annie has deep appreciation of the support the SCL Community provided to Menuha over the past 18 years—both financial and personal. She expressed special gratitude for the SCL grants that benefited the "Pioneer Retreat Program" that made spiritual opportunities available for women who lived in shelters, had experienced abuse or had HIV/AIDS. "We guided these women through meditation to help them name their own internal gifts and their personal power," she said.

Assessing her own journey, Sister Annie summed it up saying, "I feel like I'm more catholic than I've ever been. I've been challenged by many experiences and situations that have broadened me and made me a better listener. Diversity feeds my soul, and I'm open to the richness of life."

Students make Marian pilgrimage at SCL Mother House

Again this year, Sister Mary Jane Schmitz coordinated a Marian pilgrimage at the Mother House for fourth grade students of Xavier Elementary School, Leavenworth, Kan. Helping her along the pilgrimage route were Sister Barbara Sellers (right) in the Mead Chapel sharing the story of the appearance of Mary to St. Catherine Laboure, and Sister Sheila Taylor (far right) with Sister Mary Jane and students in the Fatima Parlor.



Planning energizing in Helena Diocese

In her role as director of Chancery services and pastoral planning, **Sister Rita McGinnis** has coordinated a dynamic planning process for the Diocese of Helena, Mont., that has been highly collaborative and focused. The process began in 2005 and culminated in the *Come to the Light* pastoral plan published and promulgated by the Bishop in 2007.



Bishop George Leo Thomas delegated implementation of the plan to the Presbyteral Council and College of Consultors who, in turn, have appointed a number of ad hoc groups that include Chancery staff to focus on specific initiatives. Developments in the first three years have encompassed youth ministry, formation and education, communications, and a capital campaign for the diocese.

Among major themes that emerged in the pastoral plan was the need for a process to examine future equitable distribution of priests based on their availability and to form realistic strategies for configuration of parishes. The diocese is now focused on this priority through another important planning process, titled *Living Stones*.

Sister Rita explained that this recent planning process began with a comprehensive parish inventory that engaged pastoral and financial councils and



Sister Rita McGinnis facilitated one of many sessions during the pastoral planning process in the Helena Diocese.

other local consultative groups. Next came two mandated meetings for every parish and mission in which the discussion centered on findings from the inventory; what was unique, important and challenging for the parish; and the realities of priest demographics.

Feedback from those meetings is being shared with deanery planning groups that are being asked to vision operating the parishes within the deanery with one, two or three fewer priests and to formulate plans to ensure quality pastoral care for parishes and missions throughout the diocese. These deanery planning groups have access to all the data collected from the parishes, demographic and statistical information and resources to help them find solutions that are feasible and canonically acceptable. Each deanery will develop a

plan that will be shared with parishes for feedback and input prior to inclusion in the diocesan plan. By winter 2010-2011, Sister Rita anticipates that these deanery plans will be placed into a coordinated diocesan plan and presented to the Presbyteral Council and College of Consultors who will review the work and make a recommendation to the Bishop for approval.

Sister Rita is deeply impressed by Bishop Thomas' leadership in this process and his commitment that it be broad-based and consultative. "We've had high expectations, and I've learned that whatever expectations you have for people, they will meet them," she said. "Everyone has a piece of wisdom, and this process honors that and allows us to develop better solutions. The process has been highly energizing."

Mother House Jubilarians enthroned and enthralled

It was a grand day at the Mother House Saturday, April 24, when local Jubilarians joined in a liturgy and luncheon celebration to mark their respective anniversaries as SCLs.



Jubilarians enjoyed a served luncheon in the Mother House dining room.
Left to right, Sisters Anne Marie Burke, Ann Marita Loosen, Perpetua McGrath, Anne Joseph Swiderski and Ann Victoria Garcia.



Sister Nancy Bauman received her Jubilee tiara from Sister Jean Marian Riling.



Seated at the throne of honor, Sister Ellen Dore.



Among the six 60-year Jubilarians, Sister Carmen Echevarria.

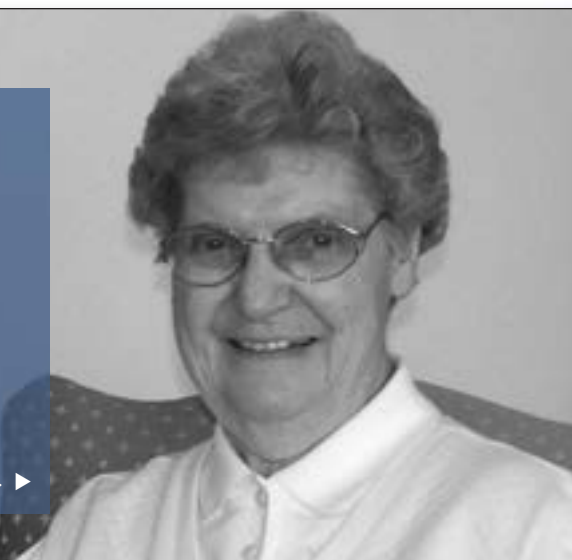


Sister Mary Elizabeth Strecker enjoyed the celebration.

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.

Would do it all again!

Sister Irene is marking her 60th anniversary as an SCL this year. ►



If she had her life to do over again, Sister Irene Hanley would be what she has been for 60 years: a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth.

She thinks of herself as having had a “cradle vocation.” From the time she was in first grade in Butte, Mont., she knew she wanted to be an SCL. She entered the Community right out of high school and hasn’t regretted a moment of her 60 years in education, pastoral ministry and, more recently, service at the Mother House.

“I love the Lord,” she noted. “He’s been with me on my journey throughout my life.”

It’s been a good journey, Sister Irene reflected. She was born in Greeley, Neb., and was one of 13 children. When her Dad lost the farm during the depression, the family relocated to Butte, Mont., where he went from the fields to the mines, and Sister Irene attended grade school and high school. One of her brothers tried to coax Sister Irene to attend college by offering to pay her expenses for tuition, room and board, and clothing. Determined to respond to God’s call, Sister Irene chose religious life instead.

For 28 years, she taught in SCL elementary schools, predominantly in the West—Billings and Helena, Mont.,

and Rock Springs, Sheridan and Laramie, Wyo.—and in the Kansas City area. Sister Irene earned her college degree over the summers.

During later summers, Sister Irene was introduced to pastoral care and enjoyed ministering to patients. She became certified in pastoral care through a program hosted by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati at St. Joseph Hospital, Albuquerque, N.M. From there, Sister Irene went to DePaul Hospital, Cheyenne, Wyo., and then to Providence Medical Center, Kansas City, Kan.

In 2000, Sister Irene came to the Mother House as an assistant to Sister Lucy Walter, Mother House coordinator.



Pans of pasties prepared by Sister Irene awaited the St. Patrick’s Day celebration at Ross Hall.

She said that she and Sister Lucy worked closely together. Sister Irene’s approachability is a gift that allows her to “go with the flow.” She provided pastoral care, helped Sisters move during the major Mother House and Ross Hall renovations, and generally “tried to keep everybody happy!” She was assistant coordinator for seven years and continues to coordinate the Mead and Mother House guest rooms.

One of Sister Irene’s claims to fame has been the “pasties” that she bakes periodically for the Mother House or Ross Hall SCLs. “The better the ingredients, the better the outcomes,” she said of these meat and vegetable pies for which she has a “no fail dough.” This year, Sister Irene made 42 pasties for the Ross Hall St. Patrick’s Day meal with the help of Sisters Jean Marian Rilinger and Barbara Wieseler, whom she taught the art of pasty-making.

Making the Sisters happy makes Sister Irene happy. She values their companionship and friendship and the generally joyful spirit that pervades the SCL Community. In her semi-retirement, Sister Irene also deeply values that she has more time to reflect, pray and do spiritual reading. It’s all part of what’s been her journey as an SCL for the past 60 years.

Sponsored Ministries

USM recognizes three SCL faculty members

Sisters Rosemary Kolich, Susan Rieke and Kathleen Wood received special recognition during the University of Saint Mary (USM) annual spring convocation honors and hooding ceremony on Tuesday, April 27, in Annunciation Chapel, Leavenworth, Kan.



Sister Rosemary, assistant professor of English, won the Sullivan Award for Teaching Excellence. The award, plus \$1,000, is presented to a full-time faculty member who has made a distinct difference in the teaching climate at USM. The Sullivan Award was created in 1990 and named for the late Sister Mary Louise Sullivan, former academic dean. The winner is nominated by students, faculty and staff. Sister Rosemary is a 1980 USM alumna.



Sister Susan, chair of the department of languages and literature, was named as the Sister Mary Janet McGilley faculty chair in liberal studies. This is the first official fully endowed faculty chair for the university. Sister Susan will be installed as the McGilley chair at the fall convocation. Sister Susan is a 1969 USM alumna.



Sister Kathleen, retiring chair of USM's theology and pastoral ministry department, earned distinction as a USM professor emerita of theology. Sister Kathleen is a past winner of the Sullivan Award and a 1970 USM graduate. She's taught at the school for much of the past 28 years.

(Photos compliments of the University of Saint Mary.)

AT A SPONSORSHIP FORMATION PROGRAM

earlier this year, representatives of the Community and the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System paused for a group photo. Bottom to top, Sisters Sue Miller, Katherine Franchett and Maureen Hall; Mary Jo Gregory; Sisters Marianna Bauder and Linda Roth; and Bill Murray.



Cause for celebration at Cristo Rey



Enjoying a visit at Cristo Rey, left to right, Eyra Betancourt, Mary Kallman, Vicente Ojeda, Sister Vickie Perkins and Josalind Rogers.

Looking back on the start of a new high school and four years of learning, and anticipating what's ahead, three graduating seniors, the school's president and principal shared their thoughts about the Cristo Rey Kansas City experience. Cristo Rey High School is sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and provides college prep education enhanced by an innovative corporate work study program to culturally diverse students with economic need.

Four years ago

Vicente: I thought it was going to be a challenge; I'd come from a public school where we never had homework. I knew I would have to work harder. But I had always been an independent worker, so I knew I could get through the challenge. Plus, Cristo Rey had after school study sessions.

Josalind: My parents were excited, but I wasn't sure. My best friends weren't going to Cristo Rey, and they were the ones who kept me motivated. I was going to be by myself. I've gained friends at Cristo Rey, and academic success has helped me feel good about what I've done.

Mary: I thought that Josalind made friends fast and never really saw Vicente struggle! It's impressive to look back and think about the growth in the students.

Eyra: I was a little scared, but I thought it was going to be fun. I knew it was going to be work!

Sister Vickie: We thought we had everything and knew everything about what we were supposed to do. Then August 2006 came around, and we had to make a lot of changes. I agree with Mary that the growth in these young people has been incredible. The colleges are going to be happy to have them.

The most difficult thing

Josalind: Toning it down was hard for me. I like to be loud and be heard. School was also challenging, but everybody kept telling us, "You can do it."

Eyra: Losing Joe Hughes, my theology professor and advisor, was the hardest thing for me. (Joe died unexpectedly at the young age of 40 from a heart attack in January 2010.)

Sister Vickie: We found ourselves constantly adjusting to make sure the students would be successful in college. We started with 100 students; we're graduating 59. All but one of the 41 who left Cristo Rey went on to school. That individual eventually got his GED and is trying to get into college.

Vicente: Algebra and calculus just wouldn't stick in my head.

Mary: There's no book on starting a school from scratch. Everything we did was a first. Joe's death was a great loss, and we had two former students who died violent deaths. It was also difficult to see kids who didn't understand what we were trying to do at Cristo Rey choose to leave the school.

Most enjoyable memories, times

Sister Vickie: At the end of each year we presented the Mother Xavier Ross and Vincent de Paul Awards to the top male and female students selected by their peers, faculty and staff. This made me appreciative of who the students are as individuals and about all that they've accomplished.

Eyra: Receiving the Mother Xavier Ross Award was a good experience. My Mom almost cried!

Mary: The first time Eyra made the honor roll, her parents visited with every one of her instructors, proud of their daughter as a shining example. Vicente was a leader and a rock-solid presence on the basketball court and also sunk some long shots. Josalind provided us with more laughs and funny stories than anyone else in school.

Vicente: Playing basketball all four years was good, especially as we got better every year.

Josalind: I was always happy to participate in "Dancing with the Stars."

The work experience

Josalind: Working made me feel like an adult. I realized that this is what you have to do when you grow up. The experience got me ready for the real world.

Vicente: I learned a lot from my different work experiences and even have my resume ready.

Sister Vickie: If we ever heard students say that working their entry level jobs was boring, we told them if they want to do more, they need to get college degrees. We are preparing them to be successful.

Eyra: These were great experiences that helped get you ready for corporate jobs. I learned a lot.

Mary: These jobs help the students

grow in confidence. Our kids now have a sense they can go walk in the world!

Looking ahead

Josalind: I can't believe it [her Cristo Rey experience] is over.

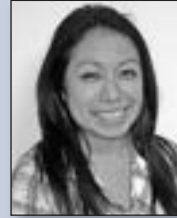
Eyra: I can't wait to go to college!

Vicente: I'm going to miss Cristo Rey, my friends and teachers. I got through the challenge, and I'm headed to college.

Sister Vickie: I know that with graduation, it's a time for these students to move on. Other days, I think, what's it going to be like without them? They were our inaugural group.

Mary: I can hardly wait for the first alum to graduate from college and come back to Cristo Rey and apply for a job!

SHARING THEIR REFLECTIONS



Eyra Betancourt,
Kansas City, Mo.,
planning to major
in nursing at the
University of
Saint Mary,
Leavenworth,
Kan.



Vicente Ojeda,
Kansas City, Mo.,
planning to
attend Penn
Valley Community
College, Kansas
City, Mo., with
a concentration
in business.



Josalind Rogers,
Kansas City, Kan.,
planning to
pursue a
psychology
degree at the
University of
Saint Mary,
Leavenworth,
Kan.



Mary Kallman,
SCLA, principal,
Cristo Rey
Kansas City.



**Sister Vickie
Perkins,**
president,
Cristo Rey
Kansas City.

Friendship transcends time and space

When she was in pastoral ministry in Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Rock Springs, Wyo., Sister Dorothy Henscheid sponsored three parishioners who became SCLAs and among her best friends. She stays in contact with Mary Holbert and Sally Haverly; Victoria Bartus died in 2003 at 103 years old.

"All three were strong supports to me," said Sister Dorothy, noting that there was a period of five years when she was the only Sister in one-third of the state of Wyoming and that having the Associates provided a sense of community.

Sister Dorothy has a special bond with Mary and her family in that she is godmother and confirmation sponsor for two of Mary's grandsons. She's also intrigued and fascinated that, at 85, Mary is taking violin lessons, has recently completed a successful round of treatments for lymphoma and is planning to participate in field and track competition for the Wyoming Senior Olympics and possibly add to the 16 gold medals she's already merited!

• • •

Originally from West Virginia, Mary and family moved to Rock Springs somewhat by accident in 1963. After leaving employment in the mines and managing a farm and needing to make a living for his growing family, Paul Holbert, Mary's husband, set out for California in search of a good job. On the way, he stopped in Rock Springs where he found employment.

Mary and five kids—ages 4 to 16—followed Paul to Wyoming in a 1953 Chevy driven by her 16-year-old son, who had just received his driver's license. On arrival in

Rock Springs, she recalled, "There was nothing but rock and maybe 12 trees! I thought I was being punished for something!"

But she adjusted to the location and the altitude, and she and Paul raised their family in Rock Springs where their children attended Sts. Cyril and Methodius School. Over time, Mary managed the bakery in a grocery store. She volunteered in the parish for seven years helping with funeral dinners, and eventually Sister Dorothy invited her to be a Eucharistic minister. "We were a good team," Mary recalled of their taking Communion to homebound parishioners.

Mary said that Sister Dorothy was "good for me. I don't know what it is about that lady, but I can pour out my soul to her. She's a good, honest friend."

Mary became an SCLA in 1990. She had retired from the bakery in 1988. Following her husband's retirement, they traveled and had good years together including trips to Thermopolis, Wyo., where Mary took up walking in a wellness center—a path that led her to the Senior Olympics and many gold medals.

Always adventuresome, Mary told Paul that she was going to buy a violin and take lessons. He responded that she would have to play in the garage! Mary lost the love of her life when Paul died in January 2007. After his funeral, a nephew bought a violin for Mary, and she located an instructor.

She had to stop the lessons temporarily following her diagnosis with lymphoma in January 2008. She's had a few other concerns develop with her health. But



Mary Holbert prepared for her recent violin concert.



In her element, Sister Dorothy Henscheid in the cloister garden at the Mother House.

recently, Mary received all clears from her oncologist and her cardiologist. She celebrated her 85th birthday on March 26, and at her May violin concert, Mary performed, "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?"

"I have had an interesting life," she said. "I think I'm going to write a book."

Most likely, Mary will!

• • •

When they saw SCLs in Rock Springs, little did the Henscheids realize that one day their daughter would join the Community and minister in that city. The family owned a nursery and floral business in Rupert, Idaho, and would travel through Rock Springs on trips to transport flowers and plants.

Sister Dorothy and her six siblings, including Sister Kathleen Marie, SCL, attended public school in Rupert, and she grew up working in the greenhouse growing mums, carnations and other flowers. A cousin who graduated from Saint Mary College (now the University of Saint Mary) encouraged Sister Dorothy to attend a four-year college. [Since that time, 13 of Sister Dorothy's relatives have attended the university!]

Sister Dorothy came to Leavenworth planning to major in chemistry and math. She had never seen an SCL until she met Sister Thomas Aquinas O'Connor.

In 1951, Sister Dorothy entered the Community. She earned her degree in

Beyond All Borders

Immigration reform remains critical focus

Pointing out that Sisters and Associates minister to and with persons who are immigrants both in SCL-sponsored works and other settings, Sister Therese Bangert, SCL social justice coordinator, encouraged continued vigilance about immigration reform. She said, “In the past, we have joined the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Justice for Immigrants campaign that asks Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform.”



Sister Therese Bangert

She called special attention to the recent statement by the presidency of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) opposing the new immigration law in Arizona. “How well the LCWR describes the life of many immigrants in their ‘suffering, frustration, and fear of being detained, separated from their children, and deported,’” Sister Therese said.

LCWR expressed opposition to the enactment and implementation of Arizona SB 1070, which criminalizes undocumented immigrants. “It is unthinkable to us that in this country a state legislature and governor would give law enforcement officers power to detain and arrest individuals based on the color of their skin or manner of dress or of speaking,” wrote Sisters Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, LCWR president; Mary Hughes, OP, president-elect; and J. Lora Dambroski, OSF, past president.

The LCWR statement expressed “hope that it [the Arizona legislation] will serve as a wake-up call to Congress and the Administration about the urgency of enacting comprehensive immigration reform that is both just and humane. In the absence of comprehensive reform, other states may follow the misdirected lead of Arizona.”

Information about the campaign for immigration reform and recent statements about Arizona Immigration Law SB 1070 can be found at www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

elementary education and eventually a master’s in biology. She taught both elementary and high school students and taught one year at the University of Saint Mary. She briefly did a ministry with the elderly in Oklahoma City, Okla.

It was in Rock Springs that Sister Dorothy felt that she was really able to use her gifts. She spent 15 years at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish and mission. She visited parishioners, did readings for the Mass taped for the homebound, organized the Catholic Golden Age Club that grew to 150 members, helped with Communion services, and worked with both RCIA and religious education programs. If parishioners needed transportation to Salt Lake City, Utah, for doctor’s appointments, Sister Dorothy made the trip with them. She was active with the local hospice and for five years served as its chaplain. She was also involved with the ministerial association and enjoyed and appreciated the ecumenical spirit in Rock Springs.

Sister Dorothy laughed at the recollection that Mary helped her transform the bright yellow walls inside the convent into a more peaceful and subdued color. She credits Mary with having a lot of energy then and now!

Following a parish ministry assignment in Worland, Wyo., Sister Dorothy came to the Mother House in 1998 where she was in charge of the campus for three years. In her retirement, she’s returned to her roots and is overseeing the cloister garden (formerly called Japanese garden) between the Mother House and Mead Hall. She has a nature study group of Mother House Sisters that goes on field trips and that Sister Dorothy encourages to “notice the little things” among the flowers and landscapes that they enjoy.

• • •

Mary and Sister Dorothy keep in touch through monthly phone calls, emails and correspondences. Their friendship bridges the distance in time and miles between the SCL and the SCLA.

VITAL WITNESS, WISE SAINT

Archbishop Romero

In conjunction with the 30th anniversary of Archbishop Oscar Romero's death, Brian W. Hughes, Ph.D., examined the life and spirituality of the assassinated Salvadoran martyr during a presentation at the University of Saint Mary (USM), Leavenworth, Kan., this spring. Dr. Hughes, USM associate professor of theology, gave the lecture hosted by the Lawrence D. Starr Global Studies Institute.



Brian Hughes, Ph.D.

Of Archbishop Romero's witness, Dr. Hughes said, "In the course of his episcopacy, Archbishop Romero relentlessly stood up for the poor, the tortured, the kidnapped, the murdered, and repeatedly denounced selfishness, greed, and materialism as contrary to the gospel of Jesus."

As oppression by Salvadoran leaders became more intense and focused on the people and the Church, the Archbishop became more concrete and vocal in his denunciation of lies by the government and the violence of armed leftist groups, and in his criticism of the National Guard and right wing military groups. Archbishop Romero was shot by an assassin near the end of his homily during Mass on March 24, 1980.

Dr. Hughes said that Archbishop Romero's spirituality drew strength from the experience of the poor who surrounded him. From the 20th century martyr, Dr. Hughes gleaned the perspective that the poor provide vital knowledge about the world. Quoting the Archbishop, Dr. Hughes noted, "The poor tell us what the world is and what service the Church can offer the world." From this view, the USM professor deduced that, "The poor represent the consequences of choices made by others that are profoundly unjust... Authentic conversion requires that one first grasp this situation of the poor, the choices made which have caused it."



The lecturer went on to say, "For Archbishop Romero, the reality of the poor not only tells us what the world is, but the poor reveal the suffering face of Jesus who is being crucified repeatedly. The poor challenge the Church to live up to its mission of service and of defense."

In Dr. Hughes' estimation, Archbishop Romero's life reflected a "spirituality of poverty." This spirituality involved "a commitment to being open to God, of trusting in God rather than putting one's hope and trust in material possessions." Dr. Hughes said that Archbishop Romero also demonstrated a "practical

fearlessness" that he applied to his role as Church leader. This included an openness to other points of view in the Church and to pastoral collaboration.

Dr. Hughes believes that Archbishop Romero embodied what scholars have called "incarnational spirituality." He explained, "We can detect in [Archbishop] Romero's journey to God that he found God deeply involved in the world and in history, moving people and the Church to a greater awareness of God's dynamic activity in the struggle for human freedom and dignity."

Blessings! ¡Bendiciones!



A thank you from the Ukraine

Dating to Sister Marianna Bauder's tenure as an administrator at Saint Joseph Hospital, Denver, Colo., the SCL Community has provided charitable funds and secured grants to help support the work of the Sisters of St. Basil in the Ukraine. The Sisters operate Mercy Kolyba, a Holistic Wellness Center. The following is a recent thank you note to Sister Sue Miller, SCL Community Director.

Lviv, May 6, 2010

Dear Sister Joan Sue:

We received your Spring 2010 publication "Voices of Charity." I had a chance to read it through today and am deeply touched by the vibrancy of your charism. Indeed the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth are present where there is a need. Thank you for the informative article on Haiti and Father Joseph. We have been praying for the people of Haiti and shall continue to do so. I am writing to add our small voice of gratitude for your ongoing support of our Wholeness Center in the Carpathian Mountains.

What I write next, Sister Sue, please read as an update on what is happening here. The number of Sisters from various communities make good use of the Center. The "season" begins in mid-April and continues to mid-November. This year a couple of brave souls spent almost 10 days in February in prayer, solitude and fasting. In spite of its simplicity and lack of direct water supply, the Center continues to draw more and more women religious.

Some necessary improvements have been made thanks to your contributions and that of women religious in [the] Ukraine. A wood-burning hearth was built, by-passing the old kitchen stove. The stove will be rebuilt when we have ample means to do so since it needs to be rebuilt in the traditional style and by master craftsmen. Last fall, another portion of a dirt road was completed, and we were able to link on to it. The road runs the length of our property about 100 yards uphill. The kolyba is now more easily accessible from the village below and carrying or transporting supplies or building materials is much, much easier.

As predicted some years ago, the Dzembronia area is being "discovered," but there is no available land for sale. Our blessing is that about eight miles of the main road leading to the village are in terrible condition, and only the brave and foolish dare travel it. This does not encourage too many developers.

We are still recovering from the storm damage of two years ago. Much needs to be done; all in God's good time. We are grateful for what is.

Thank you, Sister Joan Sue, for the support that the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and you have been and are to us. Please be assured of our prayers and affection. Blessings.

Yours in Christ,
Sister Dia Stasiuk, OSBM



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