Given to God, in Community, for the Service of Those who are Poor.
Inside This Issue:

4 Provincial Assembly 2014
6 Saying Farewell to Indianapolis Following 133 Years of Dedicated Service
8 Daughters Will Keep Nashville Close in Prayer
10 Passing the Flame: A Homecoming and a Leave-taking in Bridgeport
12 The Daughters Bid Martinsburg Farewell
14 Daughters Depart from Buffalo but Remain in Diocese
16 Daughters Continue to Serve in Diocese of Austin, but Bid City of Austin Farewell
18 Province of St. Louise: Celebrating 655 Years of Serving Christ in Those in Need
20 Province News
21 Daughters in New York Open Their Home to Daughters from Indonesia and Vietnam
22 Daughters Care for Health of Many in Many Locations - Part 4
24 Daughters Celebrate 200 Years of Ministry in Philadelphia
26 In Memory
28 Seminary Welcomes Three New Daughters of Charity

On the Cover:
As the Bridgeport, CT, Daughters of Charity prepared to depart, many Bridgeport residents gathered at Masses and celebrations to bid them well. Pictured, Sister Andrea Miller accepts a cup of soup from Tim Gura and Lance Johnson, members of the dietary staff of St. Vincent’s Medical Center. The sharing of soup and bread follows the tradition of St. Vincent and St. Louise who encouraged the early Daughters to share these basic foods with those in need. The three were some of the many who gathered during a celebration held at St. Patrick’s Parish where the Daughters paid tribute to the parishioners in fellowship and conversation following Mass—in the Vincentian tradition.

Faith Afire • Vol. 3, Issue 2

Faith Afire is published by the Province of St. Louise. Comments, suggestions or address corrections may be directed to Nancy Katich, nancy.katich@doc.org; 314.561.4625; 4330 Olive Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63108. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without prior written permission.
On June 22, 2014, Sister Louise Gallahue, Provincial, officially opened the Provincial Assembly. She welcomed the 274 attending Daughters of Charity to St. Louis, MO. The intentions of the Assembly included:

• Honoring the Province’s three-year journey as the Province of St. Louise.
• Deepening the Province’s evolving identity as the Province of St. Louise.
• Articulating priorities for the Province that incarnate The Boldness of Charity for a New Missionary Momentum.
• Contributing wisdom to the international assembly process in advance of the General Assembly that will be held in Paris, France, in May of 2015.

The theme, The Boldness of Charity for a New Missionary Momentum, was the shared theme of all of the Daughters of Charity Provincial Assemblies held throughout the world in 2014. Sisters in the Province of St. Louise traveled from as far away as the Cook Islands and Montreal, Quebec, Canada to attend the once-every-six year legislative Assembly.

The Provincial Assembly was a six-day gathering. In addition to discussions and voting, attending Sisters heard presentations about the identity of Daughters of Charity as a Society of Apostolic Life in the Church and about Human Trafficking. In May of 2015, Sister Louise and the elected Province Delegate, Sister Mary Jo Stein, will travel to Paris to attend the Daughters of Charity General Assembly. There, they will represent the Province of St. Louise Sisters. Upon their return, they will share worldwide news and decisions with the Sisters of the Province.

There are 475 total Daughters of Charity in the Province and nearly 17,000 Daughters worldwide.
Saying Farewell to Indianapolis Following 133 Years of Dedicated Service

On April 28, 2014, the Daughters of Charity were honored for their 133 years of continuous service in the greater Indianapolis area. At a Farewell Mass celebrated at the Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Lafayette, Indiana, Bishop Timothy Doherty, shared a message of thanksgiving for all the ministries of the more than 295 Daughters who served in that region since 1881. "Today, Sisters, we thank God for you," shared Archbishop Tobin. It was to care for the patients at St. Vincent's Infirmary that the Daughters of Charity first arrived in Indianapolis. Four Daughters of Charity were sent in 1881 at the request of Bishop Francis Silas Chatard of Indianapolis by the Daughters' Province of the United States based in Emmitsburg, MD, to establish a hospital and then care for patients. Bishop Chatard's own sister was a Daughter of Charity and he felt compelled to request Daughters of Charity. The Sisters, Mary Teresa O'Connor, Mary Oswald Spalding, Albertine Ott, and Magdalen Kelleher, converted an unused seminary building next to St. Joseph's Church on East Vermont Street into a hospital. From that date forward, Daughters of Charity have served at St. Vincent's and throughout the greater Indianapolis-Lafayette area.

Over the next 133 years, the Daughters ministered to the residents of Indianapolis and Lafayette in health care and in many more ways. They began to serve at St. Vincent New Hope, at the Urban Parish Cooperative, and at Holy Family Shelter in 1987; at St. Rita School in 1988; at B.A.B.E and at Cardinal Ritter High School in 1993; and at the Clinic of Hope in 2000.

Sisters Louise Busby, Rita Joyce DiNardo, Mary Powers, Mary Satalla, Mary Kay Tyrell, and Cecilia Ann West recognized their departure would lead them to service in new areas of even greater need.

Indianapolis and Lafayette have not seen the last of the Daughters of Charity, though. Sister Renée Rose continues to serve as a member of the St. Vincent Health board.

At the farewell celebration, Daughters of Charity pose with Archbishop Joseph Tobin and NFL great and long-time friend of the Sisters, Peyton Manning.
Daughters Will Keep Nashville Close in Prayer

It was to care for patients at Saint Thomas Hospital that the Daughters of Charity first arrived in Nashville 116 year ago. Now, they entrust their mission of caring to others in the Catholic Community.

In 1898, the Daughters’ Province of the USA sent five Daughters of Charity, at the request of Bishop Thomas Byrne, to establish and then care for patients at Saint Thomas Hospital. The Sisters, Philomena Coupe, Ann de Sales Graham, Winifred Ryan, Agatha Walsh, and Frances Denahy, began the Daughters’ first ministry in the city. The original 26-bed Saint Thomas Hospital opened on April 11, 1898 in the former home of Judge J. M. Dickinson. From that date forward, Daughters of Charity have served at Saint Thomas and throughout the city of Nashville.


On May 5, 2014, a Mass of Gratitude was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville. It was attended by the Daughters of Charity and their many friends who wished them farewell and expressed their gratitude.

“All of us here want to say thank you for those years of service, not only to the hospital patients, but to those who came to you hungry or needed financial assistance,” Bishop David Choby said in his homily at the Mass.

Sisters Sherry Barrett, Doris Clippard, Naomi Libiak, Jean Maher, Dorothy Olinger, and Bertha O’Neill, were the final Sisters to serve in Nashville. Each has been missioned to other areas of the Province of St. Louise. Nashville has not seen the last of the Daughters of Charity. Sister Dinah White currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors at Saint Thomas Health. Sister Helen Brewer will continue the tradition of Vincentian charism and oversight beginning in July of 2015.
The Daughters of Charity first came to Bridgeport, CT, in 1905. During the next 109 years, more than 300 Daughters of Charity lived and served in Bridgeport. The Sisters came to serve in Bridgeport because, during the late 1890s, local Catholic physicians identified the need for a Catholic hospital to meet the health-care needs of the European immigrants who were flocking to Bridgeport. The doctors contacted Father Nihill, then Pastor of St. Patrick’s Church on North Avenue, and asked for his assistance in contacting the Daughters.

Several Daughters visited Bridgeport, conducted a needs assessment, and determined that a second hospital was indeed needed in Bridgeport. It was decided that the hospital would be built in the north end of the city on a tract of land known as Hawley Farm.

In 1905, seven Sisters were sent to Bridgeport to accept the responsibility of running the new St. Vincent’s Hospital all under the direction of Administrator Sister Laura Eckenrode.

Since those early years, the Daughters have served in many capacities at St. Vincent’s Medical Center, St. Vincent’s Family Health Center, St. Vincent’s College and their preceding organizations. In addition, Sisters also served at St. Ann’s School in Bridgeport. “They came to heal and help people,” shared Father Tom McKenna, Provincial Director of the Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise who was the main celebrant of the Farewell Mass May 17 at St. Vincent’s. “They brought another world to this one, the conviction that they were bringing the kingdom of God into the here and now.”

The five Daughters of Charity, who most recently served in Bridgeport, Sisters Andrea Miller, Catherine Kelly, Julie Lawrence, Louise Macchia, and Ann Molesevich, have been missioned and the day-to-day presence of the Daughters in Bridgeport is finished. “However,” explains Sister Louise Gallahue, Provincial, who served many years in Bridgeport, “let the cross on the side of the building be a beacon for all as you look at it. May it be a reminder of our presence and spirit.”

The gathered Daughters and Medical Center representatives pose for a photo at St. Patrick’s Church.
The Daughters Bid Martinsburg

Farewell

It was to teach children that the Daughters of Charity (then known as the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph’s) first arrived in Martinsburg, WV, in 1838. The first school of St. Joseph Parish was opened in 1838 only to close three years later. Eleven Sisters served at the school during those three early years. Then, in 1883, Father McKeefry, pastor of St. Joseph Parish, purchased the old Hyde Academy, a two-story wooden structure containing four classrooms and spacious grounds. The Daughters returned to the parish and the school re-opened on September 4, 1883. Since their first arrival in 1838, more than 200 Daughters have served in Martinsburg.

Three of the four Daughters most recently in ministry in Martinsburg have been missioned to new ministries. Sister Margaret Ann Wooden will remain in Martinsburg and continue to teach first-grade at St. Joseph School for a short-time. Sisters Mary Ann Azar, Patricia Endres, and Elizabeth Ann Tonroe have been missioned to other areas of the Province of St. Louise. They will miss the devoted and caring community in which they have served. “Their departure marks the beginning of a new chapter for Catholics in Martinsburg,” shared Sister Louise Gallahue, Provincial, at the closing celebration festivities on May 30. Sister shared that the Daughters’ presence will remain in all the residents of Martinsburg to continue the legacy the Sisters began so many years ago. Sister reminded those who came to bid the Sisters farewell, “St. Joseph School and Parish in Martinsburg are namesakes of the valley, in Emmitsburg, that St. Elizabeth Ann Seton named St. Joseph’s Valley more than 200 years ago. This connection, under the protection of St. Joseph himself, will continue to serve all in Martinsburg as a reminder that the Daughters will always hold you close in prayer.”
June 6, 2014, at St. Louis Church in Buffalo, well-wishers gathered at a Celebration Mass Honoring the Legacy of the Sisters in Buffalo and to bid the Daughters of Charity farewell. From 1848 to 2014, more than 850 Sisters served in Buffalo.

In 1848, eight Daughters of Charity were sent at the request of Bishop John Timon to Buffalo to serve at St. Patrick School, at Labouré Hall at Buffalo Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, and at German Hospital. As the Sisters, Ann deSales Farren, Ursula Mattingly, Hieronimo O’Brien, Anacaria Hoey, Clare McDurdy, Mary Aloysia Lilly, Mary Eliza Dougherty, and Agatha O’Keefe, arrived, three were sent to establish Sisters of Charity Hospital on Pearl Place where the first patients, six sailors, were admitted on October 1, 1848. From that date forward, Daughters of Charity have served at Sisters of Charity Hospital. In 1850, the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg community affiliated with the Daughters of Charity but no change in the name of the hospital was deemed necessary.

Over the next 166 years, the Daughters ministered to the residents of Buffalo in health care and in many more ways. They began to serve at St. Vincent’s Female Orphan Asylum in the City of Buffalo in 1849, at St. Mary’s Infant and Widow Asylum in 1854; at Providence Retreat (Insane Asylum) in 1861; at Emergency Hospital in 1902; at Louise de Marillac Maternity Hospital in 1943; and at Buffalo Diocese Catholic Charities in 1970.

The final seven Daughters to live in Buffalo, Sisters Mary Anne Brawley, Ann Paul Chenard, Claire Edwards, Jeraldine Fritz, Mary Grace Higgins, Susan O’Neill, and Eleanor Marie Shea, ministered at Sisters of Charity Hospital, at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital and at Our Lady of Peace Nursing Care Residence in Lewiston. The Sisters have departed the city but Daughters remain in the Diocese of Buffalo as they serve in Niagara Falls, NY. Will Sisters Hospital of Buffalo change without the daily presence of Daughters of Charity? “We will still be led as a Catholic institution, as a Daughter of Charity Hospital,” explained Peter U. Bergmann, President and CEO of Sisters Hospital.
Daughters Continue to Serve in Diocese of Austin, but Bid the City of Austin Farewell

On July 11, 2014, at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Austin, Bishop Joe Vásquez celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Daughters of Charity and their ministry in Austin since 1902. It was to care for the patients at, as it was known until 1940, Seton Infirmary that the Daughters of Charity first arrived in Austin. The first five Daughters missioned to Austin to serve at Seton were Sister Victorine Fitzgerald, Sister Veronica Goulding, Sister Maria Harran, Sister Bridget Kelly, and Sister Collette Zelette. These Sisters were primarily trained as either nurses or were sent there due to their experience in overseeing and operating health care ministries.


Sisters Helen Brewer, Catherine Brown, Jean Thomas Dwyer, Sharon Groetsch, Gertrude Levy, and Jean Ann Wesselman, the final six Daughters of Charity who served in Austin at Seton Healthcare Family, Seton Medical Center, Seton Southwest, and Seton Community Health Centers as well as at St. Austin Parish, have departed the city. Daughters continue to serve in the city of Waco in the Diocese of Austin and they will continue to serve in governance roles at Seton Healthcare Family.

At the reception following Mass, Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of late President Lyndon B. Johnson, announced a pledge of $1 million to the Seton Foundation. All in attendance expressed their gratitude and reflected on the impact that the Daughters have had on the health of the citizens of the entire Austin region.
Province of St. Louise  
Celebrating 655 Years of Serving Christ in Those in Need

During the last four months of 2014, September through December, 11 Daughters of Charity from the Province of St. Louise celebrated Jubilees.

80 Years Vocation
Sister Josephine Cusimano, D.C.  
November 6, 1934
Sister Josephine has served in health care ministries and administration in Texas, California, Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Missouri. She also has served in hospital governance in St. Louis. Today, Sister Josephine serves in the Ministry of Prayer in New Orleans, LA.

75 Years Vocation
Sister Muriel Levy, D.C.  
December 4, 1939
Sister Muriel has served in social ministry in Missouri, California, Alabama, and Louisiana. She has also served in education in California. Today, Sister Muriel lives in Evansville, IN, where she ministers at Seton Residence.

Sister Regina Russell, D.C.  
December 22, 1939
A Child Care Worker, Educator, and Hostess at the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Sister Regina ministered in Delaware, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. She currently lives at Villa St. Michael in Emmitsburg, MD, where she serves in the Ministry of Prayer.

70 Years Vocation
Sister Eileen Davis, D.C.  
December 5, 1944
Nurse, Seminary Directress, Pastoral Care Associate, and Vice President for Mission Services, Sister Eileen has served in New York, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Connecticut, Florida, and Virginia. She currently ministers at St. Elizabeth Rehabilitation Nursing Center in Baltimore, MD.

60 Years Vocation
Sister Annalee Faherty, D.C.  
September 24, 1954
A Social Worker, Professor, Chair of the Social Work Department at Marillac College in St. Louis, Sister Annalee has served in Missouri, Alabama, and Texas. Today, Sister Annalee lives in St. Louis, MO, where she ministers at the Guardian Angel Settlement Association.

Sister Joan McDermott, D.C.  
September 24, 1954
Teacher, Medical Records Clerk, Special Education Instructor, Driver, Pastoral Care Minister, and Librarian, Sister Joan has served in Missouri, Texas, Illinois, Alabama, and Louisiana. Sister Joan currently serves in the Ministry of Prayer at Veronica House in Bridgeton, MO.

Sister Nancy Sullivan, D.C.  
September 24, 1954
Elementary Teacher, Project Director, Foreign Missionary, and Advocate, Sister Nancy has served in Missouri, Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, France, Turkey and Bolivia. Today, Sister Nancy lives in El Paso, TX, where she serves in Parish Ministry.

50 Years Vocation
Sister Dorothea Moll, D.C.  
September 5, 1964
Assistant Controller and Social Worker, Sister Dorothea has ministered in Missouri, Texas, and Arkansas. Currently, Sister Dorothea lives in Gould, AK, and serves at Daughters of Charity Services of Arkansas there.

Sister Marie Thérèse Sedgwick, D.C.  
September 5, 1964
Physical Therapist, Councillor, and Provincial, Sister Marie Thérèse has ministered in Missouri, Louisiana and Texas. Sister currently serves in Healthcare Governance and as a Wellness Educator at Providence Healthcare Network where she lives in Waco, TX.

Sister Mary Ann Woodward, D.C.  
September 5, 1964
Nurse, Director of Nursing Services, Patient Educator, Therapist, and Outreach Worker, Sister Mary Ann has ministered in Michigan, Alabama, Illinois, and Indiana. Sister Mary Ann lives in New Salem, PA, and serves at Rendu Services.

25 Years Vocation
Sister Sylvia Maria Guerra, D.C.  
September 27, 1989
Sister Sylvia, a Nurse Aide, Child Care Worker, Director of Family Services, Family Health Advocate, and Counselor, has served in Missouri and Texas. Today, Sister lives in Richardson, Texas and serves at North Dallas Shared Ministries.

Top Row: Sister Joan McDermott, Sister Marie Thérèse Sedgwick, Sister Mary Ann Woodward
Middle Row: Sister Nancy Sullivan, Sister Regina Russell, Sister Josephine Cusimano, Sister Annalee Faherty, Sister Sylvia Maria Guerra
Bottom Row: Sister Dorothea Moll, Sister Muriel Levy, Sister Eileen Davis
Province News

Marillac-St. Vincent Family Services Celebrates 100 Years in Chicago

Marillac House celebrated 100 years of providing social services to Chicago Families with Founders Day on October 15. Those who recently visited to mark the anniversary included former staff, clients and volunteers, Marillac Alum and NBA legend Isiah Thomas as well as community leaders, including Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and Chicago Alderman Walter Burnett.

Daughters Receive the St. Christine Building Hope and Community Award

July 25, the Daughters in Detroit, MI, were honored with the 2014 St. Christine Building Hope and Community Award in recognition for their positive impact and rich partnership with the Brightmoor Community.

Sister Christine Mura’s Work with Immigrants Featured in Catholic Health World

Sister Christine Mura’s work with immigrants and their need for accessible health care recently was featured in an article in the Catholic Heath Association’s publication, Catholic Health World. Sister Christine is a Hispanic Outreach and Pastoral Care Worker at St. Mary’s Hospital in Amsterdam, NY. You may read the article online at the Province of St. Louise website: http://daughtersofcharity.org/in-the-news/healthcare-for-immigrants-focus-for-sister-christine-mura/

Daughters of Charity International Project Services (DCIPS) Empowers Girls in Masanga

In Tanzania, DCIPS is funding a New Solar Energy System to be Installed at the Lindalva Training Center in Masanga. The center offers programs that empower young girls and women with skills and resources to embark on income-generating opportunities. Courses in computers, tailoring, baking, hairdressing build self-esteem and create independence and brighter futures for these girls. Learn more about DCIPS at: http://www.daughtersips.org/

Our Lady of the Holy Cross Church in Baden, North St. Louis, Celebrates 150 Years

Founded in 1864 to serve parishioners of primarily German and French ancestry, Our Lady of the Holy Cross celebrated its 150th year on May 11. Sister Carlene Welker (left), serves at Our Lady of the Holy Cross. Two of the strong programs in the parish, which is located in an area of great need, include outreach to area senior citizens and a food pantry.

Daughters in New York Open Their Home to Daughters from Indonesia and Vietnam

Both Sisters arrived with a prior background in English which made adjustment to the local community and their classes a bit easier. The cultural adjustment to New York City, however, brought many challenges—finding their way around St. John’s, navigating the NYC bus system, and most importantly, experiencing the cold snowy weather in the Northeast! Coming from tropical climates the snow of winter brought beauty they had never seen before and some welcome snow days from school!

“The Daughters of Charity at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Bayside, NY, have been blessed for many years by the presence of international students from all over the world who have come to study English at St. John’s University. In August of 2013, Sister Teresa Kim Vu (middle in above photo) arrived from the Province of Vietnam to begin her studies, followed by Sister Lusiana Istanto (left in below photo) from the Province of Indonesia.

Both Sisters have been working with the poorest of the poor in their respective home countries. Sister Kim, a midwife, worked previously in a city hospital in the now Ho Chi Min City and also brought her nursing skill to the elderly Sisters at the Provincial House. Sister Lusiana was most recently the Provincial Treasurer in her Province. She describes previously working in Borneo where there was no running water and getting to the western part of the island took five hours by speedboat!

“Both Sisters arrived with a prior background in English which made adjustment to the local community and their classes a bit easier. The cultural adjustment to New York City, however, brought many challenges—finding their way around St. John’s, navigating the NYC bus system, and most importantly, experiencing the cold snowy weather in the Northeast! Coming from tropical climates the snow of winter brought beauty they had never seen before and some welcome snow days from school!”

Maura Hobart. “Their willingness to share their many gifts gives witness to their commitment to the Company and the poor. Both Sisters have a connection with their respective Vietnamese and Indonesian communities within the diocese of Brooklyn and share the Eucharist, prayer, and culture with those from their home countries.

International students bring a very special blessing to our local community as we experience firsthand that the Company throughout the world is ever the same, and together we strive to be totally given to God in community for the service of those living in poverty.”

To learn more about St. John’s University, visit: www.stjohns.edu.
Casa de Salud, or “House of Health,” opened in St. Louis five years ago to fill the need for primary health care and referral services that resulted after the closure of two St. Louis area clinics. Today, Casa staff members see about 5,000 clinical patients a year. These are physicians, nurses, physical therapists, and other medical volunteers that care for people who would otherwise not have access to crucial services. Casa’s mission is at the heart of all they do: “to facilitate and deliver basic high quality clinical and mental health services for the uninsured and underinsured patients, focusing on new immigrants and refugees who encounter barriers to accessing other sources of care.”

Sister Rosemary DeDentro (front row, third from left) serves as Casa’s Mission Coordinator. In this role, she not only ministers to patients, but also to their family members, to staff members, and to volunteers. A Social Worker who directed many ministry programs, Sister Rosemary has a knack for knowing just what is needed. “We set up this area in Casa for the children who often accompany their parents to appointments,” explains Sister Rosemary as she enters a large meeting area where a child’s play area, complete with play kitchen and washer and dryer, is ready for little visitors.

This multipurpose room also serves as the host location for many education classes—from cooking, to smoking cessation, to Zumba. These activities are an extension of one of the most important services provided by Casa – its referral service for patients who require specialty care or for those who seek counseling.

Bright and cheery, Casa welcomes mostly Spanish-speaking patients but, occasionally, sees patients from India, Bosnia, and Vietnam. In fact, this year Casa received patients hailing from 30 different countries. Staff members and volunteers are almost all bi-lingual. And, when needed, volunteers, including Elisabet Barrios (front row, fourth from left) who is part of the Vincentian Mission Corps volunteer program for 2014-2015, accompany patients to appointments in an effort to help them navigate the system and provide translation.

The Family Care Health Centers in St. Louis have two locations and are Federally Qualified Health Centers. It is at the Forest Park Southeast location where Sister Leah Holzum serves as a Community Health Nurse (CHN). The Center provides services regardless of one’s health insurance status. To bridge communication gaps with non-English speaking patients, staff members provide translation for Hispanic, Bosnian, Vietnamese, and Somali patients with outside translators available to those who speak other languages.

Center health care providers refer patients to Sister Leah. In her role as a CHN, she visits clients in their homes to assess their needs for services. “We use a wholistic approach. I am able to meet with patients and determine if they need assistance with their rent, utilities, food, or other needs,” explains Sister Leah. “I also review their medicines and make sure all are current and up to date as listed in the health records at the Center. I visit several clients weekly to help set up their medicines. While visiting, I check their vital signs. Because of a grant from MMI, we are able to assist families when there is an urgent need. I have learned so much from those I serve. They are friendly, hospitable, and caring. I’ve also enhanced my global health perspective.”

Many of the Center’s clients are refugees. Sister Leah ministers to Antonia and Francois—refugees from Burundi, Africa. They are now US citizens but they cannot read or speak English.

“I also work with children who have elevated levels of lead in their blood,” adds Sister. “We employ a management chart set up by the Centers for Disease Control. St. Louis is known for having many sources of lead that poison our children. These include paint in older homes, diesel trucks, and lead in the soil and air. I work with parents to teach them how to clean their homes safely. I also share proper diet guidelines with them.” Mitigation of lead in older homes is a service St. Louis City’s Lead Prevention Program provides.

“Christmas is a special time for us,” Sister Leah continues, “each Christmas we take part in the United Way Christmas Program. We present cases of needy families and the families, in turn, benefit. Many are ‘adopted’ by individuals or organizations and are the recipients of gifts, money for rent, assistance with utilities, toys, and clothing. For us, it is a blessed and wonderful time of the year.”

Many of the Center’s clients are refugees. Sister Leah ministers to Antonia and Francois—refugees from Burundi, Africa. They are now US citizens but they cannot read or speak English.

“I also work with children who have elevated levels of lead in their blood,” adds Sister. “We employ a management chart set up by the Centers for Disease Control. St. Louis is known for having many sources of lead that poison our children. These include paint in older homes, diesel trucks, and lead in the soil and air. I work with parents to teach them how to clean their homes safely. I also share proper diet guidelines with them.” Mitigation of lead in older homes is a service St. Louis City’s Lead Prevention Program provides.

“Christmas is a special time for us,” Sister Leah continues, “each Christmas we take part in the United Way Christmas Program. We present cases of needy families and the families, in turn, benefit. Many are ‘adopted’ by individuals or organizations and are the recipients of gifts, money for rent, assistance with utilities, toys, and clothing. For us, it is a blessed and wonderful time of the year.”

Many of the Center’s clients are refugees. Sister Leah ministers to Antonia and Francois—refugees from Burundi, Africa. They are now US citizens but they cannot read or speak English.

“I also work with children who have elevated levels of lead in their blood,” adds Sister. “We employ a management chart set up by the Centers for Disease Control. St. Louis is known for having many sources of lead that poison our children. These include paint in older homes, diesel trucks, and lead in the soil and air. I work with parents to teach them how to clean their homes safely. I also share proper diet guidelines with them.” Mitigation of lead in older homes is a service St. Louis City’s Lead Prevention Program provides.

“Christmas is a special time for us,” Sister Leah continues, “each Christmas we take part in the United Way Christmas Program. We present cases of needy families and the families, in turn, benefit. Many are ‘adopted’ by individuals or organizations and are the recipients of gifts, money for rent, assistance with utilities, toys, and clothing. For us, it is a blessed and wonderful time of the year.”
Daughters Celebrate 200 Years of Ministry in Philadelphia

October 4, 2014, at the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal in Germantown in Philadelphia, PA, a Mass of Celebration was held to mark the Daughters’ 200 years of service there. The Daughters (canonically a Society of Apostolic Life in the Church) were the first group of women religious to serve in Philadelphia. Archbishop Charles Chaput, celebrant and homilist, shared, “In all of the land no women are as beautiful as the daughters of St. Louise and St. Vincent,” as he referred to the Community’s co-founders in Paris, France. The Archbishop explained further that their beauty comes from their fidelity to their founding charism: service to those who are poor.

It was to care for orphans that the first three Sisters arrived in Philadelphia in October of 1814. Since that time, the Sisters have served cholera victims, Civil War soldiers, students, patients, the trafficked, and many, many more. In total, more than 1,000 Daughters of Charity (originally known as Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph’s in 1814) have been missioned to Philadelphia. Before the Sisters’ arrival, the trustees of the Orphan Asylum of St. Joseph’s in Philadelphia made an application to Mother Seton (St. Elizabeth Ann Seton) leader of the Sisters of St. Joseph’s in Emmitsburg, MD, for her to send Sisters to manage the Asylum. Sisters Rose White, Teresa Conroy and Susan Clossey set out from Emmitsburg to Philadelphia by land (because the water routes were unsafe to travel during the War of 1812). These three Sisters were the first ever sent on mission from Emmitsburg. When they arrived, they found orphans—both boys and girls—who needed care; many of their parents had been victims of yellow fever.

In 1818, the Sisters opened the Free School for German Catholics; in 1830, the Sisters began the oversight and staffing of the former Sacred Heart School soon to be named St. John’s School and Asylum. And, in subsequent years, more and more Sisters arrived to teach and care for the ill and orphaned. They served at St. Joseph’s Church School, St. Mary’s School, St. Joseph Male School, St. Vincent’s Infant Home, St. Joseph Hospital, and, then, during the Civil War, at Satterlee Military Hospital. The Sisters, by then known as Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul because the Community officially joined with the French Daughters in 1850, are included in an account from the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center, which records “that the 2,500-bed facility in West Philadelphia was not quite finished when 22 Daughters arrived on June 9, 1862.” First missioned to Philadelphia in 1829, Sister Mary Gonzaga Grace, served in Philadelphia almost continuously until the time of her death in 1897—nearly 70 years. During the Civil War, Sister Mary Gonzaga served as both administrator of the Orphan Asylum and Sister Superior of Satterlee Military Hospital.

In the years that followed the Civil War, the Daughters opened new ministries—Mount St. Vincent’s School in 1865, St. Vincent’s Hospital for Women and Children in 1885, and St. Joseph’s Hall for Girls in 1899. In 1917, the Daughters opened the Cathedral Day Nursery. Since those early years, the Daughters have served in more than 22 other ministries. These include Immaculate Conception Parish, Philadelphia Catholic Charities, St. Catherine’s Infirmary, and at St. Martin de Porres Interparochial School to name a few. Sisters have served in parish ministry, in education, in health care, and in catechesis. Often, Daughters have worked alongside their Vincentian brothers and other members of the Vincentian Family.

Today, there are nine Daughters of Charity living and serving in Philadelphia. They serve at DePaul Catholic School, St. Vincent de Paul Center for Youth and Young Adults, St. Vincent’s Seminary, St. Augustine Parish, St. Martin de Porres Interparochial School, and the Vincentian Family Wise Asset Management Program. One Sister also serves in the Diocese of Trenton, NJ.

Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
In Memory

We remember the 17 Daughters of Charity who, in recent months, have gone to their Eternal Home.

“Remain faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life.” Revelation 2:10
Faith Afire is printed with the environment in mind. In addition to domestic made recycled paper, the energy used to produce this magazine has been offset 100 percent with Missouri wind energy credits procured from the Ameren Missouri Pure Power program. The print facility is one of fewer than 50 SGP certified printers in the US and uses only printing inks that are solvent-free, low V.O.C. and soy based.

Please send changes of address to:
Nancy.Katich@doc.org
314.561.4625

Seminary Welcomes Three New Daughters of Charity

In September, the Daughters of Charity United States Interprovincial Seminary based in St. Louis, MO, welcomed three new Seminary Sisters. Vocations remain strong for the Daughters of Charity in the United States. For Daughters, Seminary is a time of formation, learning, and prayer. Please visit the Vocations website at: www.daughters-of-charity.com.