



DAUGHTERS  
of CHARITY  
PROVINCE of ST. LOUISE

Winter 2020

# Faith Afire



Given to God, in Community, for the Service of Those who are Poor

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Dear Friends,

*"May Jesus, born into this world...  
be good to you...and be your strength  
and consolation at the beginning of the  
New Year."*

St. Louise de Marillac (L. 336 & L. 650)

New Year's blessings to you and yours!

The past few months have been busy for the Province of St. Louise. In June, the Daughters of Charity from the two United States Provinces and the Sisters of Charity from 12 United States and Canadian Provinces gathered in Chicago, Ill., to participate in the first ever Assembly of the Whole. All rooted in the Vincentian Charism, the congregations focused on "Weaving Together Unstoppable Charity." The Sisters agreed that this was a blessed opportunity to reconnect and focus on the future of serving those who live in poverty.

In September, Sister Marie Raw, General Councillor, visited the Province and attended three fall regional meetings with our Sisters. In advance of our Provincial Assembly set for July 2020 in St. Louis and the General Assembly set for summer 2021 at the Motherhouse in Paris, Sister Marie introduced the theme for the Assemblies, "Ephata." Our focus will be to "Break through the gate and toward Encounter."

In November, the Province's Sponsored Ministries' Board Chairs, Executive Directors, and Mission Coordinators, gathered in St. Louis to meet with our Provincial Council and Department Directors, to increase understanding of sponsorship, glean insights from one another, learn about Province resources, discuss long-range planning and stewardship accountability, and to strengthen peer relationships across ministries. It was truly a time of growth and sharing.

As we look forward to 2020, our Sisters continue to serve those who are most in need. You will read many examples of their ministries in this issue of *Faith Afire*.

I continue to ask for your prayers of gratitude for the many ways God has drawn us to Himself through our service of our brothers and sisters.

Blessings!

Sister Catherine Mary Norris, D.C.  
Provincial

Dear Friends,

Think back a few weeks with me. Think about Christmas lights. I have always loved Christmas lights! Driving around neighborhoods and looking at the lights on people's houses with friends is a special tradition. Unlike our harsh, blinding security lights, Christmas lights are soft and warm, they invite us to linger and gaze and wonder. They remind us that Jesus entered our world in a similar fashion, not as a remote King in a lofty castle but as an innocent child in a humble stable surrounded by shepherds and animals. We are invited to linger at the manger and gaze in wonder at how approachable our God is to us—at all times of the year. As we linger and listen, I invite you to ponder the words of Howard Thurman, author, philosopher, theologian, and civil rights leader:

*When the song of the angles is stilled,*

*When the star in the sky is gone,*

*When the kings and the princes are home,*

*When the shepherds are back with their flocks,*

*The work of Christmas begins:*

*To find the lost,*

*To heal the broken,*

*To feed the hungry,*

*To release the prisoner,*

*To rebuild the nations,*

*To bring peace among the people,*

*To make music in the heart.*

For the Daughters of Charity, and for all of us, the work of Christmas is never done. As you read this edition of *Faith Afire*, you will see how the Daughters continue the work of Christmas in many areas. All of us are called to continue the work of Christmas whenever and wherever we live by bringing the gentle light of Christ to any and all who are in need. I pray that we may continue the work of Christmas throughout the year!

In Vincent and Louise,

Father John Kettelberger, C.M.  
Provincial Director



## On the Cover:

August 26, at the Archdiocese of Washington D.C.'s opening Mass of the school year, Sister Dorothy Lyons, Elizabeth Seton High School, Bladensburg, Maryland, was recognized by Archbishop Wilton Gregory, and William Ryan, Secretary of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., as she marked her 65th year in Catholic education. Currently serving in the Bookstore at Elizabeth Seton High School, Sister shared, "It has been such an inspiration (to work in Catholic schools) because of what it gives to students, faculty, and parents."

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# General Councillor Sister Marie Raw Visits from Paris



1) Sisters Kieran Kneaves and Phylis Peters at the Evansville Fall Regional Meeting; 2) Sisters Marie Raw and Mary Walz with Dr. Elias Abboud at the Lexington Medical Clinic in Mississippi where Sister Mary serves; 3) Sisters Marie Raw, Catherine Mary Norris, and Jocelyne Joly visit volunteers at Bazar Saint-Germain in Montreal where Sister Jocelyne volunteers; 4) Sisters Janet Keim, Marie Raw, and Anne Marie Graham visit Niagara University during Vincentian Heritage Week 2019; 5) Sisters Doris Moore and Kathleen Murray visit at the Evansville Regional Meeting; 6) At The Sarah Community in Bridgeton, Mo., Sister Genevieve Keusenkoth and Sister Cecile Matushek and other resident Daughters listen to Sister Marie Raw; 7) Sisters Marie Raw and Christine Mura visit with a family at a farm in Fultonville, N.Y., where Sister Chris serves with rural farm workers; 8) Sisters Catherine Mary Norris, and Mary Ellen Lacy, and Marie Raw at the legal offices in Chicago where Sister Mary Ellen serves; and 9) Sisters Marie Raw, Mary Gerald McCloskey, Mary Francis Bassick, and Gloria Esposito in from the Daughters of Charity Residence in Hardeeville, S.C.

This autumn, the Daughters of the Province received a visit from the English-speaking General Councillor, Sister Marie Raw. Serving in Paris, Sister Marie hails from the Province of Great Britain. She is one of eight General Councillors who serve with Sister Kathleen Appler, Superioress General. As the Daughters gathered for their Fall Regional Meetings in Emmitsburg, Albany, and Evansville, Sister Marie greeted them and shared about the upcoming Domestic Provincial and General Assemblies.

“Ephata! Break through the gate...Go towards...Encounter” has been established as the theme for the upcoming Assemblies. Taken from Mark’s Gospel (7:34-35), Sister Marie revisited the healing of the deaf man with the speech impediment and Jesus’ instructions, after looking toward heaven and groaning, “Ephata,” (be opened). The man immediately could hear and speak clearly and the witnesses proclaimed in astonishment about Jesus, “He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak!” In advance of the Assemblies, Sister Marie challenged the Daughters to reflect on ways they may not always hear or speak clearly.

Sister Marie then shared a bit about the history of Assemblies within the Company of the Daughters. Assemblies were first mentioned in 1711 when there were only 14 Provinces in France and Poland. The term “General Assembly” first appeared in the Company’s Constitutions in 1954, and the first General Assembly really took place in 1962 when Sister Suzanne Guilleman was elected as Superioress General and then set about, under the call of the Church and Vatican II, the renewal of the Company. It was

then, for the first time, when every Daughter of Charity around the world (then 45,000) were consulted about the significance of vocation, formation, and customs within the Company. By the General Assembly that was held from 1968 and into 1969, the Sacred Congregation of Religious and Secular Institutes granted the General Assembly power to legislate; power to arrange for Domestic and Provincial assemblies; the power to elect Delegates from each Province who would accompany the Visitatrices to the General Assemblies; and the power to present postulates to bring about change to the Constitutions. An Assembly for the Daughters is truly significant!



In addition to her visits to the Sisters and some of their ministries in Albany, Emmitsburg, and Evansville before and after the Regional Meetings, Sister Marie also made time to visit the Daughters in their homes and ministries: Chicago, Ill., Durant, Miss., Hardeeville, S.C., Montreal, Niagara Falls, N.Y., St. Louis, Mo., and Utica, N.Y. In each location, Sister witnessed the Daughters serving those most in need in a myriad of ways.



# weaving together unstoppable charity



Assembly of the Whole • Sisters of Charity Federation • June 13-16, 2019

This past June, more than 500 Daughters of Charity and Sisters of Charity, Associates, congregation archivists and communicators gathered together in Chicago for the first Assembly of the Whole conference of the Sisters of Charity Federation. Sisters from 14 congregations that comprise the Sisters of Charity Federation joined together to explore future ways of “Weaving Together Unstoppable Charity.” Sisters from 29 states and seven countries participated.

Sister Joan Elizabeth Cook, S.C. Cincinnati, then President of the Sisters of Charity Federation, challenged those gathered to remember, from the Federation’s *Futuring 2017 and Beyond* document, “our call as a Federation is rooted in our commitment that we never do alone what we can do better together. Our desire is to deepen our relationships and inter-connectedness among Federation congregations and within the Vincentian family and beyond. We, in our individual congregations, embrace this call as a frame of reference as we engage in our direction-setting. Acting as a whole, we celebrate our call to live into our shared future in a spirit of contemplation and prophetic action.”

The 2017 document illustrates two main goals: deepening and widening relationships among the Federation and beyond, and effecting system change by addressing issues of social and ecological justice, especially for those living in poverty and on the margins.

Opportunities for dialogue, presentations, celebrations of the Liturgy, prayer, and reflections filled the days. Archivists and communicators from the various congregations, along with Sisters who served in Leadership and various diverse ministries from the eastern shores of Canada to Texas, to Alaska, listened intently as Sister Peggy O’Neill, Sister of Charity of St. Elizabeth, delivered her keynote address, “Love is the Answer.” A longtime missionary in El Salvador, Sister Peggy drew parallels from her mission world to the mission worlds of the U.S. and Canada.

Vignettes of “Unstoppable Charity” were well received by all. Through short videos, Daughters and Sisters shared videos and stories of their ministries—from service on a Canadian natural farm, to Paramedic, to Librarian, to missionary, to work with immigrants.

Homelessness, and a special look at homelessness among college students, provided an opportunity for those gathered to listen to Daughter of Charity Sister Judith Warmbold, who ministers at DePaul USA in Chicago. Sister Judith shared concentrated efforts at Chicago’s DePaul University to stem couch surfing, living out of cars, and experiencing food insecurity. A recent study by Temple University and the Wisconsin HOPE Lab estimates that 36 percent of college students are food insecure; 36 percent are housing insecure; and nine percent are homeless.

1) The opening ritual for the Assembly of the Whole included the presentation of each congregation’s logo banners and colors—here, Sister Adella Armentrout (Province of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton) and Sister Julie Cutter carry their Province’s logo banners with Sisters Truc Nguyen and Kara Davis following with the blue colored fabric representing the Daughters; 2) Sister Renée Rose selects the blue banner for the Daughters of Charity; 3) Sister Monica Gundler, SC of Cincinnati, and Germaine Price catch up at the Assembly; 4) Daughters joined with Sisters of Charity in song and celebration; 5) Vignettes of Unstoppable Charity included one featuring Sister Kara Davis; 6) Daughters of Charity from the Province of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and the Province of St. Louise who attended the Assembly; 7) Sister Mary Catherine Warehime makes sure all is a “go” with Sister Mary Beth Kubera who was running a PowerPoint presentation.



A Litany of Remembrance for all the Sisters of the Federation congregations who have gone to their Eternal Rest in recent years allowed participants to remember and pray for those who have gone before them.

If you would like to learn more about the Sisters of Charity Federation, please visit: [www.sistersofcharityfederation.org](http://www.sistersofcharityfederation.org). If you would like to see the vignettes of Unstoppable Charity, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwOh4Kce-cs&feature=youtu.be>. Several Daughters of Charity are included in the short features.

# Sponsored Ministries Leaders Gather in St. Louis



As the Province begins an assessment of its sponsored ministries, a Sponsored Works Task Force of eight Daughters has been established. Early in November, the Province hosted a Sponsored Works Leadership Meeting in St. Louis, Mo. Members of the works' leadership teams were encouraged to join in the two-day meeting. The goals of the meeting included:

- Increased understanding of sponsorship
- Insights shared by sponsored works' leaders on the advantages of sponsored ministries
- Sharing about resources the Province can provide
- Long-range planning and stewardship accountability
- Relationship-building across ministries



Left, assembled in St. Louis, attendees from Sponsored Works and staff members listen to an address; right, Guadalupe Preston, Executive Director of St. Joseph Services in Chicago, talks with Sister Mary Frances Hildenberger, who serves at Elizabeth Seton High School, Bladensburg, Md., and is a member of the Province's Sponsored Works Task Force.

With more than 20 leaders in attendance, members of the Provincial Council, department directors and the Sisters currently serving on the Province's Sponsored Works Task Force prayed, shared meals, learned, and dialogued. The meeting was



*"It is an obligation for us to inconvenience ourselves for the service of the poor."*  
- St. Vincent de Paul



Photos, top left to bottom right: Francine Soliuna, Mission Director at Marillac St. Vincent Family Services, Chicago, talks with Sister Catherine Mary Norris, Visitatrix; Sister Mary Beth Kubera, Councillor, talks with Laura Tarnosky, Coordinator of Campus Ministry, and Sister Ellen Marie Hagar, President, Elizabeth Seton High School; Sister Phylis Peters, Executive Director, Proyecto Juan Diego, Brownsville, Texas, talks with Augusta Duarte, Provincial Finance Office; Sister Joanne Dress, Province's Sponsored Works Coordinator, talks with Sister Nancy Cassidy, a member of the Province's Sponsored Works Task Force.

the first of its kind since the establishment of the Province of St. Louise in 2011.

Sister Catherine Mary Norris, Visitatrix, and Sister Teresa George, Councillor and Treasurer, presented an overview of the Province. Father Charles Brouchard, O.P., Senior Director, Theology and Sponsorship at the Catholic Health Association, spoke to those gathered about the differing types of sponsorship within the Catholic Church.

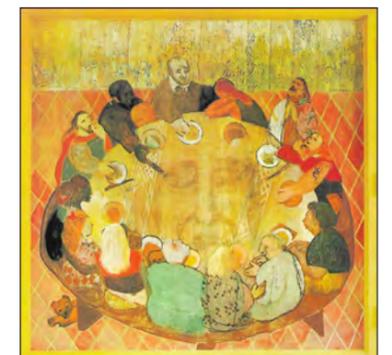
The image of St. Vincent gathered at a round dining table with people of all walks of life, all ages, and all ethnicities, prompted reflection (see

image to right). Small group dialogues then ensued and were instrumental in encouraging participants to think about the role of the sponsor, benefits of being a sponsored ministry, and formation in Catholic Social Teaching and the Vincentian Charism for leadership and staff. Thoughts were then shared with the group. Many comments were similar, "The Province...someone to reach back to," "We have a direction," "Others without a sponsor often feel isolated," and "We now know one another/will be able to share with one another."

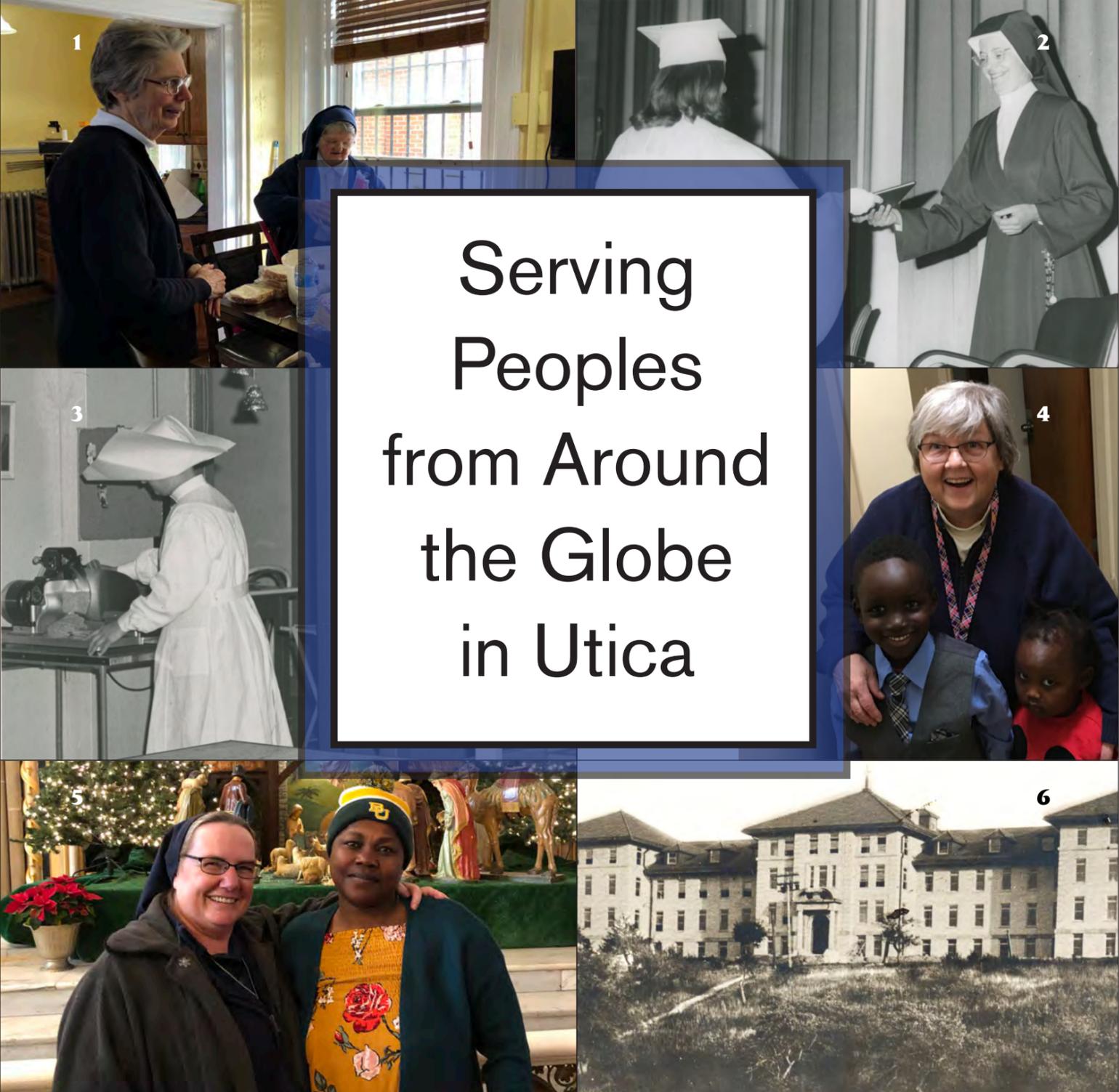
More about the Sponsored Works: [https://daughtersofcharity.org/spotlight-on-our-sponsored-works\\_3/](https://daughtersofcharity.org/spotlight-on-our-sponsored-works_3/)

## Sponsored Works of the Province

- Elizabeth Seton High School, Bladensburg, Md.
- Marillac St. Vincent Family Services, Chicago, Ill.
- Mother Seton School, Emmitsburg, Md.
- Proyecto Juan Diego, Brownsville, Texas
- Seton Center, Emmitsburg, Md.
- Seton Harvest, Evansville, Ind.
- St. Joseph Services, Chicago, Ill.
- St. Vincent Early Learning Center, Evansville, Ind.



1. Sisters Paula Mayer and Paula Gallant pack sandwiches, snacks, and bottled water for the St. John's Outreach pantry; 2. Sister Anne Regis Scheve presents diplomas at Utica Catholic Academy in 1952; 3. Sister Justine Posey in the kitchen of St. John's Home & School in 1948 (on the back of the photo is an inventory list of equipment, with a toaster capable of "toasting 540 slices per hour"); 4. Sister Patricia Collins greets her young neighbors with a hug; 5. Sister Elizabeth Greim with a friend in front of St. John's Parish Church at Christmastime; 6. Groundbreaking for the new St. John's Orphan Asylum on Genesee Street began in 1909, due to low population and change in child care policy towards foster home placement, the building was closed in 1959 and the property used for the diocesan high school, Utica Catholic Academy.



# Serving Peoples from Around the Globe in Utica

Although nearly 200 years have passed since the first three Sisters were sent from Emmitsburg, Md., to serve in Utica, N.Y., there appears little has changed in this upstate New York river city, tucked at the foot of the Adirondack Mountains: poverty remains widespread; homelessness continues to rise; and production and employment in the job market shift and change as swiftly as the currents of Utica's mighty Mohawk River. But, for the five Sisters serving in Utica today, the charism of St. Vincent de Paul remains as unchanged, as joy-filled, and as vital today as it did nearly two centuries ago: "To minister with compassion and strength in the everyday worlds of the poor and the marginalized."

When Sisters Etienne Hall, Lucina Simms, and Theophilia Williams (then known as the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's) arrived by canal boat along the Erie Canal in Utica in the autumn of 1834, little would they imagine they were laying the foundation for a mission that would continue into the 21st century. Epidemics such as cholera and typhus brought to the city by an ongoing influx of European immigrants had left hundreds of families decimated and in need of help in the 1830s. The Sisters had been missioned to help the city's orphaned and abandoned children, and they arrived in Utica with three goals in mind: open an orphanage, set up a free school for poor children, and set up a pay school to support the first two.

St. John's Church on John Street at Bleecker served as the cornerstone for the Sisters' mission in Utica. The church donated the Sisters' first home, which would become known as St. John's Orphan Asylum and



Sister Michelle Nguyen teaches sewing classes to the African refugee community in the church basement. Sister Michelle recently passed her citizenship test, and her naturalization ceremony will be held February 6 in Utica, N.Y.

School (the first Catholic school in Utica). Through the years, despite relocations, rebuilds, mergers, and closures, St. John's Church and the Daughters of Charity community have remained entwined and enduring.

Today, the Daughters live in the Cornhill neighborhood ... the poorest area of the city of Utica. For Sister Paula Mayer, New York is home; she was born and raised in nearby Albany, fewer than 100 miles away. An elementary school teacher for 45 years, Sister Paula now serves as both Director of Outreach at Historic Old St. John's Parish and as Spiritual Moderator of the Ladies of Charity Association in Utica. For the Outreach ministry, Sister Paula says that "a big part of her work is with the Food Pantry," where she "ensures that food supplies are ordered, applies for grants to receive the food, and keeps the volunteers

actively involved in serving our needy families with respect and kindness." One of Sister Paula's most rewarding projects is the annual Parish Christmas Project, where she helps organize food for 250 food boxes and, at the Outreach Toy Store, "gives out new toys, hats, and gloves to as many as 500 children." Another important Outreach ministry is the three-week summer Vacation Bible School, where Sister Paula prepares the daily Scripture classes, fun activities, and outings, and interacts with the counselors and the 5 to 12-year-olds. She describes her ministry in Utica as "very fulfilling and greatly inspired by the generosity of the St. John's parishioners and the small group of Ladies of Charity that I work with. Finding God in the many people I meet each day is both a joy and a challenge."

Sisters Pat Collins and Elizabeth Greim are both very much involved



Historic Old St. John's Church on Bleeker Street celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2019 ... and the Daughters' ties with this vibrant parish remain alive and as strong today as when the first Sisters arrived in 1834.

ministry quickly goes into responding on an as-needed basis." The Sisters assist with providing support and transportation to families for getting to appointments; and one of Sister Pat's primary focuses in her ministry continues to be "accompaniment by mentoring families with young children especially with language acquisition and ongoing supportive services."

As a relative newcomer herself to Utica, having arrived in April of 2017, Sister Elizabeth initially found serving the refugees, well, perhaps a bit daunting. "When I first arrived," she says, "I was struck by the city's cultural diversity, the number of languages I heard, just trying to figure out how best I could serve." The refugees at the time of her arrival were primarily from Ukraine, Burma, South Sudan, Darfur, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. "They knew very little about surviving or thriving in an American city," Sister Elizabeth says.

Now, serving as a volunteer at the Mohawk River Valley Resource Center (recently renamed The Center), Sister Elizabeth has become a tireless champion of the refugee population. "The depth of what is needed to learn to orientate when they come here is astounding – many have suffered the ravages of war and poverty and have lived in refugee camps for years. Providing classes in Cultural Orientation, as well as a place where one feels safe, is so important. Cooking, sewing, gardening, English language conversation, parenting issues help bridge the cultures." And, she finds that her current ministry reflects best what it means to be a Daughter: "To serve with joy in the absolute belief that we are each day serving the needs

of the most vulnerable," adding, "I have found it especially exciting because of the welcome the city gives refugee community. It is so different from what many other cities are experiencing today. We try to be good neighbors and reach out as needed to assist when the services are not provided."

Sister Paula Gallant is the fourth member of the Daughters' Utica mission. An educator, Sister Paula previously served as a math and science teacher at Utica Catholic Academy in the 1960s and early 1970s; then, after an absence of 35 years, returned in 2007 to serve in Utica. She again teaches at Utica Catholic Academy, which is now called Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School (grades 7-12) after merging with two other Catholic schools. Notre Dame is now Utica's only Catholic secondary school. Currently, Sister Paula helps tutor students in math and language arts and other subjects, and substitutes for teachers when needed. "Strangely enough," Sister Paula says, "I've found that the more things change here, the more they remain the same!"

"When I was in Utica fifty years ago, it was a very ethnic city," says Sister Paula. "But today, these groups have moved outward, and the city has become much less 'nationalized' in terms of location, and there are now 47 different languages spoken by students in the district!" Despite the pervasive poverty, however, Sister Paula agrees with her community that Utica offers so many opportunities to serve and make a difference.

Sister Michelle Nguyen returned to Utica in November of last year after living in Holbrook for seven years, and is currently involved in several



Sister Kathleen Appler, Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity, celebrates the 75th anniversary of Our Lady of Lourdes School with students in 1994. Sister Kathleen is a native Utican and served at Our Lady of Lourdes as teacher and administrator for several years during the '70s, '80s, and '90s.

ministries: serving as a translator for the Vietnamese community at St. Francis de Sales Church; teaching sewing classes to the African refugee community; and, her most interesting ministry, she has found, is "going to the Refugee Center to study United States history in order to take my own citizenship test, and getting to meet so many people and learn about their cultures!"

As Utica looks toward 2020, it may appear to the outside world as a 21st century Rust Belt city in need of an economic boom and financial boost. But for this city of 62,000, the tenth most populated city in New York, its image has quietly undergone a transformation in recent years with a novel approach to revitalization: it has opened wide its arms and welcomed the world. With the nickname, "The Handshake City," and motto, "The Town That Loves

Refugees," Utica's town square has since laid out a welcome mat big enough to hold the world. And for the five Daughters who serve in Utica today, the consensus among them is just as enthusiastic as the city's welcome to its newest arrivals and future Americans: "It's a wonderful time for the Daughters to live and serve in Utica," they agree.

Learn more about The Center through the "In the Company of Charity" podcast featuring Sister Elizabeth and refugee Trinh Truong at: <https://subsplash.com/daughtersofcharity/lb/mi/+m2fxzhv>



# Planting Seeds of Hope

The Seeds of Hope program at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton National Shrine, began with a challenge to dream outside the box. For Sister Anne Marie Lamoureux, who currently serves at the Shrine in Emmitsburg, Md., her dream was to offer a day of pilgrimage for those in poverty and living on the margins of society. She recognized the need for each person to have a day free from the daily stresses of life; an opportunity to renew and rejuvenate one's spirit, and in the grace of interior peace, discover God's love.

In the early 1990s, Sister Anne Marie was missioned to Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, N.Y., one of the most densely populated stretches of public housing in the United States. Bed-Stuy, as it is called, was a babel of cultures and voices, teeming with more than 100,000 souls united by one common thread: an endless cycle of poverty. Some lucky souls have managed to escape the Bed-Stuy confines – boxer Mike Tyson and director Spike Lee, to name two, – but there are few such success stories to inspire those living in the projects.

It's difficult to dream in Bed-Stuy. For residents, their poverty is so powerful and so pervasive, that one doesn't have time to think about, let alone dream about, a better life. Sister Anne Marie recollects having witnessed the daily harshness of life in Bed-Stuy: "As much as I loved serving there with all its diversity, it's a place where everything is a struggle. Everything you do, no matter how simple it may seem, requires work. It is the goodness of the people that helps one survive and thrive."



Each heart is touched during the day – whether one is looking inward or outward.

Sister Anne Marie recalls today what sustained her during those many years of service in Bed-Stuy: "Our annual eight-day silent retreats are one of the benefits or perks, so to speak, of being a Daughter of Charity," she says. The retreats were her sanctuary; a place where she was free to shut out the noise, the chaos, the worries. And the thought occurred to her during one such period of silence: What could it be like for those in Bed-Stuy, even if just for one day, to experience such freedom?

Like many a dream, the Seeds of Hope program lay dormant for quite a few years; it wasn't in God's plan yet. But in 2011, after nearly 20 years of ministry in New York, Sister Anne Marie was missioned to Emmitsburg, Md., to serve as docent at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Shortly after her arrival in

Emmitsburg, Sister Anne Marie was diagnosed with cancer. Three years of treatment followed. "In hindsight," Sister Anne Marie says today, "a part of my healing was in being on these hallowed grounds." Being at the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton allowed Sister Anne Marie to heal from within and without. "It was the guiding spirit of Mother Seton that sent me here – and enabled me to let go of obstacles and follow my dream. God uses this place," she says quietly.

In 2017, Pope Francis wrote a letter, exhorting shrines to be places where "the doors are wide open to the sick, the disabled, and above all the poor, the marginalized, refugees and migrants." The Shrine's board and Executive Director Rob Judge had begun to discern how the Shrine could respond to this challenge and be true to Mother Seton and the



Sister Anne Marie Lamoureux and guest share a laugh and a hug during the retreat's "What Touched Your Heart Today" session. "God uses this place," says facilitator Sister Anne Marie.

charism by serving the poor directly. When Sister Anne Marie saw that letter and Rob learned of her dream, the two realized that the Holy Spirit was working anew.

The program quickly took off. Sister Anne Marie's youngest sister, Mary Ellen, sent "seed money." "And suddenly," Sister says with an accompanying grin, "I had a name and a bank account!" An application for a ministry grant followed to cover costs such as motor coaches; donations of food were locally provided. The meals and table settings speak of respect for all, special touches provided by the Shrine's good friend and faithful supporter, Katie Harmke.

The program for the day at the Shrine was loosely designed, allowing guests to make their own decisions about what they wanted the day

to bring. The program and details were spread through word of mouth to other Daughters of Charity and Ladies of Charity, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Seton Center, and the Frederick Rescue Mission with an offer for groups to come as guests for a day at the Shrine. Previous retreats have included a viewing of the short film at the Shrine Center, exposure to the life of Mother Seton through tours of the houses and grounds, a meal, guided meditation and, depending on the group, a Mass.

"The devil is in the details" to borrow a phrase, and the first Seeds of Hope program in April 2018, nearly ended before even getting off the ground. Sister Judith Rojas, D.C., who was then ministering in a primarily Latino parish in Landover Hills, Md., had arranged for a group of 100 people to come. A phone call from Sister

Judith to Sister Anne Marie relayed the message that the chartered buses had never arrived. Shortly after, another call came through – several people had volunteered to drive their own cars, and 65 parishioners were able to come. One miracle down ... and many more to come.

After that near disaster, Sister Anne Marie was presented with someone she considers her greatest miracle from Mother Seton in the form of a retired gentleman named Daniel Rindfuss. From initially attending mass at the Shrine, to becoming a docent, to gradually taking charge of the program from logistics to organization to housekeeping, Daniel has been a lifesaver for Sister Anne Marie. "I could not do this without him," she states simply. "There were a thousand details that I was trying to handle, and I just couldn't do every-

thing." Now Sister Anne Marie can attend to the guests, while Daniel attends to the details.

One of the most moving parts of the Seeds of Hope program comes at the end of the day, when guests and volunteers share their reflections about, "What Touched My Heart the Most Today." The speeches are voluntary – and powerful. While some stories elicit applause: "I was moved to go to confession after 20 years"; others move many to tears: "I felt safe today," and "I don't ever remember drinking Ilem-onadel out of a glass." One story that has etched itself in the minds of many came from a woman from Uganda; her son, a seminarian, served as translator. She said: "We go into our future with our history, and so much of our history has been destroyed by war. My heart was touched today by being able to see all the things that belonged to Mother Seton, to touch things she once held, to see where she lived and where she died. To know she was here, and now find she is alive in our hearts."

These honest voices share with others a deepened faith, an opened mind, a mended and grateful heart. All present – hosts and guests – are touched again and again by the power of what they hear ... and bear witness to lives transformed through a seed called hope.



Top: The Stone House and the White House on the Shrine grounds serve as visible testaments to the life and community of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. As one guest said: "My heart was touched by being able to see all the things that belonged to Mother Seton, to touch things she once held...to know she was here, and to find she is alive in our hearts." Bottom: The day offers guests and volunteers the chance to share, to connect, to open their hearts to one another and to God ... because it is in the smallest of seeds that hope, faith, and love can grow.

For more information about Seeds of Hope retreats, please contact Sister Anne Marie Lamoureux, Seeds of Hope Facilitator, at 301-447-7083 or by email at [AnneMarie.Lamoureux@doc.org](mailto:AnneMarie.Lamoureux@doc.org). and for more information about sponsorships, please contact Rob Judge, Executive Director, at 301-447-6037 or by email at [Rob.Judge@setonshrine.org](mailto:Rob.Judge@setonshrine.org).



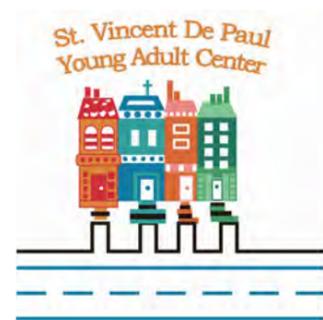
The Mercy Career and Technical Institute recently served at the Young Adult Center and reflected on compassion during their service.

## Young Volunteers Serve in the Vincentian Spirit

Whether in the Germantown area of Philadelphia, Ethiopia, Kenya, or St. Louis, Mo., the Province's Vincentian volunteers share many things in common, the greatest being their Vincentian spirit. The three volunteer programs—St. Vincent de Paul Young Adult Center, Vincentian Lay Missionaries, and Vincentian Mission Corps—comprise the Province's lay service efforts, and each program is unique.

### St. Vincent De Paul Young Adult Center

The St. Vincent de Paul Young Adult Center, located in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, provides unique educational service trips following the examples of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. The Center allows students to have an experience that will help them realize their calling to serve both their own communities as well as needy communities around the world. And most importantly, to help them recognize that compassion is at the heart of all life! Programs are targeted to high school and college-aged students. Program options include "Slavery Then and Now," "Environmental Justice," "It Could Be Me," "Mass Incarceration," and "Understanding Ourselves in the Context of Our Histories." Darcy O'Hara, Director, shares, "At the Center, one of our objectives is to serve and listen to our neighbors. Much of our work in the evenings is to help students break down the walls of stereotypes that they have built up so that they can be ready to hear and receive the message from those they serve." Learn more at: <https://svdpcenter.org/>



### Vincentian Lay Missionaries

The mission of VLM is to share the Vincentian spirit with young adult men and women and to foster systemic change in communities in Ethiopia and Kenya. Jessica Werner, Director, explains, "VLM work for four to six weeks with the Daughters of Charity in both countries." Volunteers come from many backgrounds—accountants, teachers, graduate students, artists, and more. Together and along with the Daughters of Charity in the local areas, they build schools and libraries, and provide additional educational opportunities for children, teachers, and community members." In Bahir Dar and Jimma, Ethiopia; and in Chepnyal, Kiiro, Kitale, Nairobi, and Thigio, Kenya, volunteers live in community, pray together, and serve those in need—children and adults. "This past summer, five volunteers served in Jimma, Ethiopia and five volunteers served in Thigio, Kenya", adds Jessica. "We are hoping for both returning and new volunteers to join us in the summer of 2020. You see, in 2006 I took a leap of faith and joined Sister Mary Beth Kubera (Spiritual Advisor to VLM, VMC, and the Young Adult Center) on her second trip to Bahir Dar. I had no idea how much that experience would change the trajectory of my life. I said yes in 2006 and continue saying it to this day!" Learn more at: <https://vlmusa.org/>



2019 VLM group takes a moment to pose for a photo with those they served in Jimma, Ethiopia.

### Vincentian Mission Corps

The Vincentian Mission Corps is a faith-based, yearlong volunteer program for young adults, ages 22 to 30. Volunteers live in community and serve the poor in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. The volunteers serve in a variety of different settings, including healthcare, education, human services, and more in St. Louis, Mo. This year, 2019 to 2020, there are five VMC volunteers. Mary Pimmel-Freeman, Director, shares, "Sister Sharon Richardt spent time with this year's volunteers on retreat. She said something that has stayed with me, 'the spiritual journey is inches long and miles deep.' I feel this holds true for the experience of doing a year of service. VMC Volunteers serve in small communities while learning about poverty and justice issues. They may not feel that they change the world during their year, but they build relationships and undertake small actions that change them—and the people they serve—for the rest of their lives. It is our goal that these young adults, as they respond to the call of the Gospel by working, praying, and living in the Vincentian spirit, will develop a consuming commitment to improving the lives of those living in poverty and the marginalized in our society." Learn more at: <https://vincentianmissioncorps.net/>



2019-2020 VMC Volunteers Gabi Simoneit, Emma Horwath, Patrick Forrestel, Ian Madden, and Karla Herrera Gutierrez.

"Say Little. Do Much."  
—St. Vincent de Paul

# Province News

## Ribbon Cut on Proyecto Juan Diego's New Center

July 30, Proyecto Juan Diego (PJD) in Brownsville, Texas, was a busy place. Dignitaries, including the Most Reverend Mario Alberto Aviles, Auxiliary Bishop of Brownsville; several government officials; members of the Center's Board of Trustees; staff members; donors; and Daughters of Charity gathered to officially cut the ribbon, dedicate, and bless the new Center. Pictured left to right at the Ribbon-Cutting are Rene Capistrano, President and CEO of Noble Texas Builders; Roberto Ruiz, Architect; Sister Phylis Peters, Executive Director; Humphry Thomas, Chair, Board of Trustees; Sister Katie Norris; Visitatrix; Auxiliary Bishop Alberto Aviles; and Joel Munguia, Commissioner of Brownsville District 3. PJD is a sponsored ministry of the Province. <https://www.proyecto-jd.org/>



## St. Vincent Early Learning Center Celebrates Twice

In early July, sponsored ministry St. Vincent Early Learning Center in Evansville, Ind., celebrated the opening of its outdoor classroom—the culmination of more than a year's efforts to redesign two of the Center's 35-year-old playgrounds to incorporate more natural elements. This project aligns with the Center's focus on whole-child development and learning by inspiring children's creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills, which will help to prepare them for academic and lifetime success. The classroom was designed in collaboration

with Nature Explore, a national nonprofit program that supports efforts to connect children with nature as an integral part of their daily learning. Many kind supporters helped to fund the outdoor classroom and play area. In August, the Center learned its outdoor classroom has earned national recognition as a Certified Nature Explore Classroom—the only certified classroom in Evansville. [www.stvincentearlylearningcenter.org/](http://www.stvincentearlylearningcenter.org/)

## Province Office of Migration and Modern Slavery Launches Website

The Office of Migration and Modern Slavery launched its new website that allows visitors interested in learning more about sex trafficking, labor trafficking, pornography, internet safety, fair trade, and migration—many avenues to explore. User-friendly, the site may be translated into a multitude of languages. Visitors may subscribe to the Office's newsletter, follow them on Pinterest or Facebook, and read recent blog posts through the site. Those wishing to contact the Office may reach out through a "contact" form, and anyone with immediate need is offered the toll-free National Human Trafficking Resource Center telephone and text information. [www.justfreedom.org](http://www.justfreedom.org)



## Elizabeth Seton High School Celebrates 60 Years

With more than 10,000 graduates, Elizabeth Seton High School, Bladensburg, Md., a sponsored ministry of the Province, marked its 60th birthday on September 14. From the very beginning, all who entered the school—students, parents, teachers, administrators, and alumnae—have held close to the guidance of St. Elizabeth Ann, "Light to know; grace to do." Pictured, Sister Ellen Marie Hagar, President of ESHS and 1974 graduate, talks with the Archbishop of Washington, D.C., Wilton Gregory, at the Anniversary Gala. [www.setonhs.org/](http://www.setonhs.org/)

## Sister and Director Recognitions



**Sister Kathleen Appler** was named to the previously all-male Vatican committee. Pope Francis appointed 23 new members to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, among them six women religious superior generals and a laywoman who oversees a women's secular institute. Sister Kathleen Appler, Superior General of the Daughters of Charity originally from the Province of St. Louise, was among those named. Previously, the members had all been men: cardinals, bishops, and several priests who were superiors of large religious orders of men.

**Sister Mary Agnes O'Neil** recently was recognized for her many, many years of dedicated service at St. Mary's Hospital in Troy, NY. With the installation of an honorary plaque at St. Mary's Hospital, the Mayor of Troy proclaimed August 31, "Sister Mary Agnes Day." Arriving at St. Mary's in 1963, Sister Mary Agnes served as both Administrator and Chair of the hospital's board of directors. Missed away for a while, Sister Mary Agnes returned in 1976 and went about, with the help of local businessman Morris Massry, to create a foundation to help raise needed funds for the hospital.



**Sister Margaret Ann Wooden** received the Friends of Catholic Education Award from Mount St. Mary's University for her work with Mount interns. Pictured: Mother Seton School second grade teacher Sister Margaret Ann Wooden, D.C. (center) received the Friend of Education Award from the Division of Education at Mount St. Mary's University. Surrounding Sister Margaret Ann are representatives from MSMU (from L-R): Dr. Carolyn Cook; Dr. Barbara Marinack, Dean of the Division of Education MSMU; Liz Monahan, Executive Director Center for Catholic School Excellence; Sister Brenda Monahan, D.C., principal of Mother Seton School; Dr. Barbara Palmer; Dr. Laura Frazier; Dr. Stacey Brown-Hobbs.

**Sister Carol Keehan** was honored as she retired as President and CEO of CHA. Following more than 14 years at President and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, Sister Carol Keehan was honored by many as she retired on June 30. In a *Global Sisters Report* article of June 6, Sister Carol shared, "being able to play a small role in health care policy" stands out during a career that includes working as a nurse, managing the revitalization of a D.C. hospital, and leading one of the Church's most important entities.



**Sister Margaret O'Dwyer** was formally recognized by the Cook Islands National Council of Women (CINCW) for her service to those in need, especially those in prison, while she was a missionary in the Cook Islands. The honor was bestowed in conjunction with International Women's Day.

**Sister Betty Ann McNeil** was honored by Niagara University in September. As part of its celebration of Vincentian Heritage Week, Niagara University recognized the extraordinary contributions of six individuals who have lived the mission of St. Vincent de Paul. Sister Betty Ann McNeil (second from right) was among the honorees. Sister Betty Ann, the Vincentian Scholar in Residence at DePaul University, received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters for her service and scholarship in the Vincentian tradition.



**Sister Theresa Peck** (first row, 3rd from left) and **Sister Catherine Kelly** (first row, fourth from left), in October, were once again recognized by the St. Vincent Evansville Foundation at its annual Cornette Ball. Both Sisters were recipients of the Steward of St. Vincent de Paul Award. They are seated among other past award winners at the ball which marked the Foundation's 50th anniversary.

**Sister Bernice Coreil**, on November 4, was honored by Ascension as it shared a video highlighting Sister Bernice's life of service. Joe Impicicche, President and Chief Executive Officer (left), and Anthony Tersigni, President and CEO Emeritus, presented St. Louis Cardinals' fan Sister Bernice a personalized Cardinals jersey. They also announced a \$10,000 donation to Hospital de la Concepcion in Puerto Rico, which is affiliated with Ascension and has long been supported by Sister Bernice.



**Sister Gertrude Levy**, Volunteer at Ascension St. Vincent Evansville Foundation, celebrated her 100th birthday on November 15. Staff members from the Foundation marked the day by showering Sister with some of her favorite snacks. The Foundation posted this kind message on its Facebook page, "Thank you, Sister Gertrude for being a blessing to Ascension St. Vincent Foundation and Hospital with your cheerful attitude, empathy, and wisdom. Congratulations on 83 years of service as a Daughter of Charity."

**Sister Janet Keim**, Provincial Councillor, and **Father John Kettelberger**, Provincial Director, recently were honored by Niagara University. Father John received the Lifetime Achievement Award; Sister Janet received the Community Health and Service Award for exemplifying the College of Nursing's "tradition of caring."



*"Remain faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life." Revelation 2:10*

## In Memory

We remember the 11 Daughters of Charity who, in recent months, have gone to their Eternal Home.



**Sister Jo Ann Cuscurida**  
December 15, 1932  
July 18, 2019  
62 years vocation  
Nursing Director, Vice President, Board Chair, Local Community Superior



**Sister Ursula Cazalé**  
June 18, 1926  
August 5, 2019  
72 years vocation  
Staff Nurse, Nursing Director, Volunteer



**Sister Mavis Jewell**  
July 24, 1934  
August 13, 2019  
60 years vocation  
Nurse, Special Projects Coordinator



**Sister Almeda Golson**  
July 12, 1932  
August 17, 2019  
54 years vocation  
Nursing Director, Administrator, Board Chair, Local Community Superior



**Sister Mary Patrick Costello**  
June 11, 1938  
October 29, 2019  
61 years vocation  
Teacher, Principal, Pastoral Care Minister



**Sister Mary Paule Vardigan**  
April 1, 1918  
November 13, 2019  
83 years vocation  
Nursing Supervisor and Instructor, Pastoral Care Associate, Clinical Chaplain



**Sister Mary Ruth Rault**  
July 17, 1931  
November 15, 2019  
70 years vocation  
Teacher, Business Office Manager, Pastoral Care Associate, Jail Chaplain, Local Community Superior



**Sister Mary Philip Agnew**  
March 12, 1935  
December 5, 2019  
66 years vocation  
Teacher, Principal, Mission Services Minister, Board Member, and Local Community Superior



**Sister Mary Louise Happich**  
June 16, 1928  
December 11, 2019  
70 years vocation  
Teacher, Principal, Administrative Assistant, Docent, Local Community Superior



**Sister Annalee Faherty**  
March 16, 1936  
December 19, 2019  
65 years vocation  
Teacher, Social Worker, Associate Professor, Local Community Superior



**Sister Ann Charles Martin**  
December 19, 1929  
January 3, 2020  
71 years vocation  
Elementary and Secondary Teacher



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314.561.4625

## The Community Welcomes Sister Josephine Lomasney



On August 10, the Daughters welcomed Sister Josephine Lomasney to the Seminary as she was incorporated as a member of the Daughters of Charity. Sister Josephine's parents and sisters attended along with about 40 Daughters from the St. Louis area. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful ceremony! Sister Josephine is one of four Seminary Sisters from both U.S. Provinces.