



Ursuline Newsletter

Ursuline Sisters of Toledo, Ohio
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Leadership Corner by Sr. Sandy

The powerful ending of the very first episode of *The Chosen* depicts Jesus, pursuing Lilith (Mary Magdalene) in a dark narrow street, calling out to her by her name, “Mary...” saying, “I have called you... You are mine.” For once in her life, she feels truly seen. On July 22, the feast of Mary Magdalene, we heard Jesus again, in John’s gospel, call Mary by name outside the empty tomb. Melody Gee, in her reflection in *Give Us This Day*, suggests that Mary “seems too busy” looking for him, blinded by her grief and desperation. Hearing her name, she feels seen by Jesus and responds, “Rabbouni,” returning his favor of recognition and acknowledgment which opens her to receive his commission to announce his Resurrection to his disciples.

On the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, we heard the gospel story about Jesus’ visit to the home of Martha and Mary of Bethany. In her weekly *NCR* reflection, Sr. Mary McGlone, C.S.J., points out that “Jesus doesn’t criticize Martha, but acknowledges her hospitality. He “sees” someone for whom he cares driving herself crazy by trying to be sure that everything is just so.

He does not put her down, but invites her as though to say, “Give yourself a break. Enjoy the ‘why’ of all you are doing.” As to her sister’s choice of sitting at his feet, the literal translation of Mary’s choice is not the “better” but the “good” part. Martha’s choice is also “good,” but mixed up in the “what” and the “how,” losing focus on the “why,” and the “for whom.”

At the beginning of my monthly retreats this year, I re-read all of my journals from 1975 to the present. On

July 17, 1977 my second day as a novice, I reflected on Luke 10:38-42 and penned what Sr. Mary Alice often did - a short ditty:

*Martha and Mary, they both live in me.
And it’s hard to decide at times, which one to be.
Sometimes I’m Martha and other times Mary.
When they both want their freedom, it gets rather scary.*

Having just completed my undergraduate work with three quarters of student teaching coupled with all the methods courses, I did not know how to simply be “Sandy.” “Do not fear, Sandy,” Jesus replied. “While school brought out the Martha in you, you will see

more of Mary this year. Do not be afraid to let Martha rest now and then. Mary will refresh her for the work that lies ahead.”

At a recent gathering of Rahab’s Heart volunteers, it was noted that we often seem to be doing too much “Martha-ing” and not enough “Mary-ing.” The women with whom we walk have lived most of their lives feeling unseen. In simply sitting

at the table with them we encounter the “Imago Dei” who resides within them. In our own community of Sisters and Associates, living our ministry of prayer and presence among others, who might feel “unseen”? As we live into the “work that lies ahead,” may we embody *Soli Deo Gloria*, “To the Glory of God alone,” manifested in the Imago Dei within us all.





Rest In Peace

Therese Carroll Naumann, SUA '49; mother of Carroll Naumann Nunemaker, SUA '70 and Shannon Naumann Congdon, SUA '72 ~ May 25

Michael Smythe, brother of Jane Smythe Finn, SUA '63 ~ May 25

Raymond Kemer, father of Ann Marie Kemer Dougherty, SUA '97 ~ May 26

Kristine Hood LaValley, SUA '78; mother of Alyssa LaValley Reiter, SUA '06, Kelsie LaValley Moritz, SUA '08 and Ana LaValley Andrews, SUA '12; sister of Elizabeth Hood Bialecki, SUA '84; sister-in-law of Diane LaValley Tankoos, SUA '70, Toni LaValley, SUA '72, Debra LaValley Gross, SUA '74, Laurie LaValley Thornton, SUA '80 and Elaine LaValley Lewandowski, SUA '83 ~ May 27

Elizabeth Burgie Ringger, SUA '69 ~ May 29

Mary Brennan, sister of Christine Mattoni Peat, SUA '78 ~ May 29

Nancy Fabier Miller, MMC '52 ~ June 1

Harry Bodie, brother of Dorothy Bodie Schwanbeck, MMC '66 ~ June 2

Guy Barone, father of Julianne Barone, SUA '93 and Katherine Barone, SUA '99 ~ June 6

Sr. Anne Fleming, RSM ~ June 10

Jerome "Jerry" Bennett, brother of Jane Bennett Berry, SUA '76 ~ June 16

Marsha McFarland Wilcox Loos, SUA '62 ~ June 16

Richard Hardt, father of Donna Hardt, SUA '77 and Mary Hardt Garcia, SUA '88 ~ June 25

Carol Anderson Kraus, SUA '52 ~ June 26

Sr. Donata Kokot, Ursuline Sister of Louisville ~ June 26

Judith Morrison Bernhard, MMC '64 ~ June 28

Carol Cready Hood, SUA '47; mother of Karen Hood Gallo, SUA '71 ~ June 29

Ellen Adams Poca, MMC '48 ~ July 5

Sr. Sheila Anne Smith, Ursuline Sister of Mount St. Joseph ~ July 5

Sue Danicke McLaren, sister of Carolyn Danicke Epperly, MMC '66 ~ July 8

Richard Juers, husband of Sandra Kelley Juers, SUA '60 ~ July 9

Margaret Packer, mother of Amy Packer, SUA '07 ~ July 11

Barbara Marie Palicki-Kent, MMC '65; sister of Associate Walter Palicki ~ July 14

Sr. Romana Pifher, OSF/T ~ July 16

Sr. Ellen Doyle, Ursuline Sister of Brown County ~ July 18

Roselyn Cassaubon, sister of Associate Carol Pruss ~ July 19

Sr. Patricia Dippel, Ursuline Sister of Cleveland ~ July 22

*"Have faith and keep up your courage."
(St. Angela Merici, 5th Counsel)*



Archive Snapshots

Sister Ann Lucille Gerdemann

Sister Ann Lucille was born in Delphos, Ohio and entered the Ursuline Convent in 1940. She was engaged in the food service at all the larger houses - the Motherhouse (both the big kitchen and the infirmiry kitchen), at Nazareth Hall, Tiffin Convent, and at St. Ursula



Academy Convent. When she retired, Sister Ann Lucille took on a "phone ministry" where she contacted people on a weekly basis to make sure they were doing well by themselves and to assure them of her prayers and any support she could give. Many grateful phone friends responded well to her calls. Sister Ann Lucille died on August 15, 1998 at age 82.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the September 2025 newsletter is Thursday, August 21. Please send your stories to Michelle at mscazzero@ursulinecenter.org.



Presenting the 2025 Sisters' Appreciation Dinner and a Movie

Sponsored by the Toledo Serra Club

Tuesday, September 9 at 5:30 p.m.

New location: The Premier
4480 Heatherdowns Blvd., Maumee
Easy parking, handicap accessible (all on one floor!)

RSVP to Val at vmyers@ursulinecenter.org or
419-536-9587 by August 29, 2025



NOTE OF GRATITUDE



Dear Sister Sandy and Sisters,

Please know how deeply grateful I am for your expression of sympathy, your charity and prayerful support on the occasion of the recent unexpected death of my sister-in-law, Karen Noecker Thomas.

With this note of thanks, I acknowledge your kindness, a sign of Christ's presence and a reminder of His abiding love for my nephew Andrew, his wife Karlie and son Grayson, my niece Emily, her husband Tyler and myself.

Kindly continue to pray for the happy repose of Karen's soul, and for our spiritual strength as we mourn her loss and entrust her to the Father's mercy.

Gratefully yours in Christ Jesus,

Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas

Worsening Humanitarian Crisis Demands Continued Commitment

The humanitarian crisis in South Sudan continues to deepen as conflict and climate-related disasters displace families, disrupt education, and limit access to healthcare. More than nine million people, nearly three-quarters of the country's population, require urgent humanitarian assistance. Ongoing violence has forced many into camps for internally displaced people where overcrowding and limited resources strain both physical and emotional well-being.

Following South Sudan's recent Independence Day observance, Friends in Solidarity (FiS) reaffirms its continued support for communities working toward peace and long-term recovery. While the anniversary marks national progress, it also highlights the ongoing need for trauma healing, education, and livelihood development -- particularly in areas welcoming internally displaced people.

At the Solidarity Teacher Training College in Yambio, future educators are preparing to lead classrooms and contribute to national growth. During a recent open day, students showcased teaching innovations, welcomed families and education leaders, and emphasized the essential role of teachers in building a stronger future. Many members of the current diploma cohort are women, signaling progress toward greater gender equity in education.

Across South Sudan, FiS supports locally-driven solutions in healthcare, agriculture, trauma healing, and pastoral care -- lifting up leadership and reinforcing community resilience. Feature stories and a recording of the recent webinar, "Planting Peace: Stories of Hope in South Sudan," highlighting Augustine Ekeno, SJ, are available [here](#).

Friends in Solidarity remains committed to fostering dignity, stability, and hope in South Sudan.

From the Collaborative to End Human Trafficking:

\$9 Million Secured for Statewide Survivor Services in Ohio Budget

What started at Ohio's first Human Trafficking Prevention Advocacy Day at the Statehouse in January, culminated with Governor Mike DeWine's signature on Ohio's FY26-27 budget in June. The Governor and the Ohio General Assembly responded with a significant commitment: \$9 million in state funding to support human trafficking survivor services.

This is a major victory for Ohio - and a testament to the power of collective advocacy. This investment ensures that trauma-informed, coordinated services for survivors remain available across our communities.

In late May, our President & CEO Kirsti Mouncey testified before the Ohio Senate Finance Committee, making the case for sustained, survivor-centered funding. Her message was clear:

"We cannot allow critical survivor support services to disappear in the face of funding cuts. Ohio must lead with compassion and commitment."

- Kirsti Mouncey, President & CEO

**Thank
You**

Thank you, advocates, survivors and supporters - your voices made this possible.



**Pray with the Ursulines:
Communication Tape
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays
Call 419-536-9375.**

Women Religious Archives Collaborative Breaks Ground on New Heritage Center to Preserve and Share the History of Catholic Sisters

The Women Religious Archives Collaborative (WRAC) is pleased to announce that it broke ground on a new heritage center on July 22, 2025. This state-of-the-art facility will preserve the history of Catholic sisters and share the stories of their enormous contributions and impact throughout the United States.

WRAC, incorporated in 2022, is a nonprofit organization bringing together 45 congregations of Catholic sisters from across the United States and Canada to build one of four collaborative repositories in the country to hold the archives of Catholic sisters. Led by Sister Susan Durkin, an Ursuline Sister of Cleveland, WRAC is addressing an urgent need among aging congregations of sisters seeking a permanent home for their archives and ways to share their stories with researchers and future generations. Without a place to preserve these archives, the immense contributions of Catholic sisters over centuries in healthcare, education, social service, and advocating for social justice and civil rights are at risk of being lost.

Catholic Sisters have been vital to the history of our country and the Catholic Church since they first arrived in the United States in 1727. These intrepid women established schools, hospitals, and social service ministries, many of which continue today. They are the educators, nurses, doctors, CEOs, lawyers, advocates, and inventors who helped build the infrastructure of our communities. The heritage center will be located at 2490 E. 22nd Street in Cleveland's Central Neighborhood, an area of the city where sisters have served since 1865.

The 30,000-square-foot facility is slated to open in Spring 2027. It will include a 16,000-square-foot temperature-controlled vault with capacity to hold the archival collections of over 75 congregations of Catholic sisters, as well as space for processing, digitization, research, dynamic public programming, exhibitions, and meetings.

The building was designed by Bostwick Design Partnership and will be constructed by Regency Construction Services, Inc. WRAC looks forward to the center being an asset to the Cleveland community. It will contribute to Cleveland's architectural beauty and the development of E. 22nd Street with its striking and welcoming design. In addition to being a vibrant local presence, its central location and virtual exhibits and programs will facilitate visits from scholars, researchers, and genealogists throughout the country. WRAC plans for the center to be an education destination, welcoming visitors and students to learn about the lives, mission, and work of sisters.

WRAC Archives Team Visits

On July 15-18, the Ursuline Sisters welcomed an incredible team from the Women Religious Archive Collaboration to our Ursuline Archives for a highly anticipated week of intensive archival work, said Brandi Sharlow, Toledo Ursulines' Archive Processor. "Their expertise and dedication to preserving the legacies of women religious will be instrumental in helping us process, organize, and prepare our cherished collection for future generations of researchers and historians."

This visit in July marks a vital step toward our long-term vision: transferring our collection to the collaborative Women Religious Archive in Cleveland, where it will become part of a larger, transformative initiative to honor and uplift the stories of women religious across the United States.



From the LCWR Presidency

NOT Business as Usual

Maureen Geary, OP — LCWR Past President

In a fairly typical crisis-filled day (!) – well, that’s a little dramatic, but a day with challenges that seem to be on spin cycle, always repeating themselves -- the group I was with suddenly said, “The key is we have to stop acting as if it is business as usual. It’s not. Maybe we need to say that out loud so we can give ourselves permission to think differently and come up with new directions and make hard decisions.”



That insight got me thinking. The expression “it’s business as usual” can be used to describe the situation of stasis or equilibrium, as in “nothing new to see here.” It can also be used in a heroic way to mean “we will carry on *as we always do*, even in the face of challenge or crisis” (in other words, we’re tough, we’re strong -- we can do it). Do we experience our daily reality in these extraordinary times as “business as usual”? Do we ever ask ourselves if we have blinders on?

As we face complexity and even crisis in our congregations and complexity and certainly crisis and moral dilemmas in our country and in our world, I suggest we can no longer pretend that “business as usual” is an accurate description of these times. So, then, what happens when we have the courage to say out loud: this time is NOT business as usual?

In these days of Pentecost, we sing many familiar hymns invoking the Holy Spirit. The lyrics include “Come with thy grace, and heavenly aid, to fill the hearts which thou hast made;” “Send us your Spirit and renew the face of the Earth;” and “Breathe on me, oh breath of God.”

When we pray to the Holy Spirit, what are we really asking? Do we want a fixer to pop in, or even come in gently, fix things, and leave? Wouldn’t that lead us to far too many business-as-usual band aids and

short-term fixes? What if we invoked the Holy Spirit to come and renew a weary creation and invite us to truthful naming of the business of today and courageous dreaming of the new to which we are called?

In a new LCWR online program entitled “Religious Life Leadership: A Holy Wellspring,” Pat McDermott, RSM invites leaders to discern the accompaniment of the Holy One in the ministry of congregational leadership

(LCWR members can register on the online calendar). I believe this is an invitation to lay down the illusion of “business as usual” and invite the Holy Spirit to renew and empower us. In the words of one of my favorite Pentecost hymns by CeCe Winans, “[Holy Spirit Come Fill this Place](#),” we pray:

Holy Spirit, come and fill
this place
Bring us healing with Your
warm embrace
Show Your power make
Your presence known
Holy Spirit, come fill this
place
Holy Spirit, come fill this
place

Breath of God we need a
touch from You
Shine down on us with the
light of truth
Stir our hearts and set our spirit free
Holy Spirit, come fill this place
Holy Spirit, come fill this place



In this way, we make our way forward, in these times that are not business as usual.

From the LCWR Presidency

An Invitation to Build Bridges

Vicky Larson, PBVM — LCWR President-Elect

Pope Leo XIV's first speech on May 8, 2025 included these words that inspire me: "Together, we must look for ways to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges and encourages dialogue..."

The concept of building bridges seems important since we are in a time that is fraught with conflicts, complex problems, and polarizations. I wrote to my congress people in June to share my concerns about the budget bill. They responded with rationale for supporting the bill and their perceptions of facts which differed from mine. I experience similar differences of opinion with my family, but the desire to stay in relationship is a bridge more important than our disagreements. I recall conflicts in my congregation when our commitment to stay in relationship helped us find a path forward. I wonder if I had built better bridges with my congress people, might they have been more open to my advice?

Part of building bridges involves understanding perspectives. For example, my opinion about Medicaid cuts in the bill flows from my understanding of Jesus' preferential option for the poor and God's generosity in the parable of the vineyard workers who received the same wage regardless of how long they worked (Matthew 20:1-16). There are different perspectives about whether healthcare is a basic human right or a privilege to be earned through work. Some people believe that God rewards the just with prosperity and health (Deuteronomy 8:18, Psalm 1:1-3, Proverbs 10:22). I can understand how people form varied opinions. The next step is to try to find common ground.

LCWR, I think, learned important skills and attitudes during the Vatican's doctrinal assessment in 2009-2015 that might help us navigate conflicts today. The 2018 book, *However Long the Night: Making Meaning in a Time of Crisis*, edited by Annmarie Sanders, IHM includes



references to contemplative dialogue through the challenges of the doctrinal assessment. Building bridges helped during the difficult journey through those times (pp. 73 and 158).

I wonder what helps us nurture openness toward building bridges. I found wisdom from Nancy Sylvester, IHM who wrote about "exercising contemplative power" and "living synodality in a polarized world" in her recent book *Journey-Faith in an Entangled World* (2024, pp. 129-132).

She points to quantum physics theories

suggesting that our contemplative prayer contributes to a collective energy field that aids healing. A major part of healing polarized conflicts includes building bridges between people. She asserts that synodality "welcomes differences and promote(s) harmony," involves "vulnerability and openness to the other," and that "the synodal process is very similar to the transformative practice of contemplative dialogue" (p. 131). She raises important points about the needs of the times calling for a spiritual dimension to our relationships that can be fostered through contemplative prayer, dialogue, and synodal processes.

I invite us to reflect on building bridges. How can our prayers and actions build bridges? What would it look like if building bridges became part of our work for justice and advocacy for gospel values?



Pegge Boehm, Mary Thomas, and Vicky Larson, members of the PBVM leadership team, ponder relationship-building while on a bridge

CALENDAR

August 2025

- 1 Summer Picnic for Sisters and Associates, 11:30 a.m., Ursuline Center
- 12-16 LCWR Assembly - Atlanta, GA
- 20 Council Meeting

September 2025

- 1 Labor Day - Convent Offices closed
- 9 Serra Club Dinner & Movie, 5:30 p.m at The Premier, Sisters only.
- 23 Council Meeting
- 30-Oct. 3 RCRI - Dallas, TX

October 2025

- 12 Mary Manse Alumni Mass & Luncheon, 11 a.m., St. Ursula Academy
- 18 Feast of St. Ursula, Vows, Commitment & Missioning, 4 p.m. Liturgy followed by supper, St. Ursula Academy. Sisters and Associates are invited.
- 22-23 Region VI Meeting - Cincinnati
- 29 Foundation Board Meeting and Council Meeting

November 2025

- 12 Sub-region Meeting - Lial
- 23 Closing of 170th Celebration, 11 a.m. Liturgy followed by lunch, St. Ursula Academy
- 25 Council Meeting
- 25 Foundation Day of Company of St. Angela - Feast of St. Catherine Alexandria
- 26-27 Thanksgiving - Convent Offices closed

December 2025

- 6 Sisters and Associates Christmas Party, 11 a.m., location to be determined
- 13 Foundation Day, 11:30 a.m. lunch and prayer, St. Ursula Academy. Sisters and Associates are invited.
- 17 Council Meeting
- 23 Staff Christmas Lunch, 11 a.m.
- 24-Jan. 5 Christmas break - Convent Offices closed



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

August

- 7 Bob Manion
Leonard Polcyn
- 8 Sharon Stern
Deb Bercher
- 9 Shirley Eiseman
- 17 Beth Hafner
- 18 Pauline Broadway
- 21 Helia Corral
- 22 Katherine Sarver
- 24 Anne Sandalls
- 29 Coletta Allen

September

- 7 Sr. Janice Ann Brown
- 10 Gail Foreman
- 13 Sr. Beth Hemminger
- 16 Sr. Nelda Chafitelli
- 20 Dan Quinn
- 21 Therese Cooper
- 23 Sr. Rita Mae Johns
- 26 Bonnie Krochmalny
- 30 Sr. Carol Reamer



FEAST DAY



August

- 12 Sister Janice Ann Brown
- 22 Sister Regina Smith

September

- 16 Sister Nelda Chafitelli



Check out the Ursuline Sisters of Toledo Facebook page and website!



Preserving Our History
archivescollaborative.org

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