

St. Angela's Pilgrimage with Her Daughters and Sons

*A program to deepen our understanding of the gift we have received from Angela and which we want to **live, shape, and share**, today and into the future.*

This program was initiated by Ursulines of the Roman Union. It began in May, 2022 via ZOOM. This Angela pilgrimage had occurred many times in the past. However, this one was different because the pilgrims were not all Ursuline Sisters. In fact, there were 45 men, women and Ursuline Sisters from ages 17 through 79 from countries around the world: Central, South and North America, the Caribbean, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Australia, Poland, South Africa, United Kingdom, Taiwan, Chile, Barbados, Senegal, Thailand, Slovakia, Ireland-Wales, and Indonesia.

Margaret Johnson, OSU and Barbara Aston from the Western Province went on this Angela pilgrimage and share their experiences here.

We had a total of eight sessions on ZOOM to prepare for what we were going to experience. The topics included *Angela's background and life; The Company of St. Ursula, St. Marie of Incarnation, Ursuline martyrs, and Education in the Spirit of St. Angela.*

These sessions provided a good opportunity to get to know each other a little bit, even though the time zones began at 4 a.m. through 9 p.m. the same day!



As we gathered at the Generalate in Rome it was lovely to see familiar faces, no longer only present on our computer and iPad screens but as real people. After receiving a warm welcome from our group leaders and from everyone at the Generalate we soon began to engage in conversations and share stories of our journeys and from where we had come.

Each was asked to bring with us some soil from our homelands, from our holy ground. We all had the opportunity to share with the large group a little of our story, our ministry and what was holy ground for us. We added our soil to the pot in our prayer space. As we shared we paused and we sang *Holy Ground*. The song came to be woven amongst our journey and our travels as we sang it in many of the places we visited.



This whole experience was one of walking on holy ground. As we travelled where Angela had lived and worked and prayed and gathered the company of women, we came to know each other better. It was wonderful to see the places that had previously only been known through photographs.



We started by going to the Vatican together. We traveled by bus to the town of Desenzano where we saw the house in which Angela was said to have been born. It was in the shadow of the town's massive castle—Via Castello.

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St. Angela's Pilgrimage, continued

"See how important is this union and concord. So long for it. Pursue it, embrace it, hold on to it with all your strength; for I tell you, living all together thus united in heart, you will be like a mighty fortress." St. Angela, Last Counsel

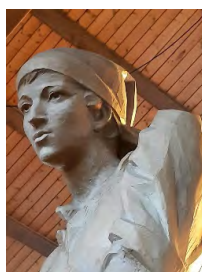
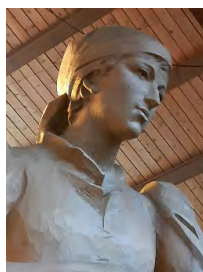
After the Merici family left the house that was near Via Castello, they lived in Le Grezze. After her parents died, she lived with her uncle in Salo and then she moved back to Le Grezze. We took time to visit this wonderful site. There are three Ursuline Sisters who live there, assisting the people in the parish.

In the center of Brescia's town, we saw the statue of St. Angela, patroness of the city.



It was also in Brescia, where we stayed with the Ursulines of St. Charles. It was in this place where it is believed that Angela experienced seeing her dead sister on a ladder between heaven and earth. The property was believed to have been owned by Angela's father.

Also, it was in Le Grezze where we saw the beautiful church of St. Angela. Our three Ursuline Sisters minister in this parish. In the church there is a beautiful wood carving of St. Angela that is very large. It's up in the choir loft. We took many pictures of this beautiful piece of art. Here are two pictures of this statue.



At St. Angela's chapel in Le Grezze there is a huge painting with the words of Angela: *"Always find your refuge at the feet of Jesus, of Jesus crucified."*

The entire pilgrimage was truly one of walking on holy ground. We traveled to the places where Angela lived, worked, prayed, and gathered the Company of women - places that some of us had only known through photographs. The days spent exploring Desenzano, Salo, Lake Garda, Le Grezze, Brescia, and Assisi were truly grace-filled days. A very special place was the time we spent in Brescia with St. Angela's body.

When we returned to Rome, we had time to reflect on our experiences and on what we wanted to take forward into our futures. We were aware that we had the desire to find ways to continue to connect and support each other in our work, in our lives and in our ministries. The majority of the pilgrims work in Ursuline ministries in schools and universities and in other Ursuline ventures, so sharing of resources will be helpful in passing on Angela's charism. Angela's focus was to know each person as an individual, trusting in God's love by living the gospel showing God's presence in our world. We had gathered from many countries and spoke many languages but there was a definite sense of unity in our diversity. Further, there was a real sense that the charism of Angela is alive and well.

Charism is a dynamic reality. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit to and for our world. Ursuline Sisters do not 'own' Angela's charism. Her charism continues along with her spirit and spirituality to be a gift to our world. It is developing and multiplying in wonderful and new ways for our world! How it will continue to play out is a surprise waiting to happen!

A prayer to St. Angela that we shared was the following:

"Angela, your gift to us is a living legacy of love and service. We ask to be blessed with hearts like yours - attuned to the beating of God's own heart, and to the heartbeat and needs of our world:

*Pulsing with compassion,
Beating for justice,
Fostering relationships
Bringing hope, and
Nurturing life wherever we are."*



Ursulines of Cincinnati

Cincinnati's Archivists Prepare Archives for a New Home

Recent editions of *Convergence* have featured articles or stories about the disposition of communities' archives as all congregations continue to downsize. One such article appeared in the fall, 2022 issue. Submitted by the Cleveland Ursulines, it described the establishment of the **Women Religious Archives Collaborative (WRAC)**, which was spearheaded at least in part by Cleveland's Susan Durkin.

Recognizing the importance of preserving their own history and story, and also their responsibility to contribute resources that tell the bigger story of the role women religious have played in the church and in the world in general, the Cincinnati Ursulines have committed to participate in the Collaborative. While Cincinnati's archives are well organized, there's still much work to be done. A team of five St. Ursula Academy alumnae volunteer archivists leads the charge.



Team members (left to right) Elaine Semancik, Nancy Broermann, Jan Hirst, Anne Gutzwiller, and Kit Overbeck contemplate next steps in categorizing the collection and creating appropriate finding aides.

Team member Elaine Semancik reflects, "It's been interesting to be involved in a project with other religious communities, as my only contact otherwise has been as a member of the Tri-State Catholic Archivists. We learn from them and vice versa when we share how we're carrying out our operations and new ways of doing things. We're finding that background helpful as we've begun to prepare our archives to become part of a centrally located collection."

According to team member Anne Gutzwiller, "The volunteers are organizing the collection into categories

to be sent to the planned collaborative in Cleveland. After the collection is sorted, we'll develop a finding aide for each category. The finding aide will be used by researchers to locate individual items available in the collection."

Elaine reflects further, "Although we got off to a bit of an uncertain start, with more definitive direction, we're finding it easier to prepare our archives and the information needed to access them. In fact, I think we've found some aspects of the project, like the finding aides, are easier than we had thought."

The team of volunteers have, over the years, hosted numerous interested visitors from the local area and beyond - students from area universities, family members of the Sisters, Board members and staff members of sponsored schools and more. Teachers at St. Ursula Academy especially appreciate the opportunity for their students to visit and learn about the Sisters and the history of their own school. Opportunity for such lengthy visits will be limited as long as the work of preparing the collection for transfer continues in earnest. Ultimately, a meaningful display of artifacts and information will remain at St. Ursula to be accessed locally.

The Ursulines are deeply indebted to their team of faithful volunteers. It's a good thing they enjoy each other's company and their lunch breaks, which usually include Sisters Mary Jerome Buchert and Margie Efke - and a great deal of story-telling and laughter!



Jan Hirst guides a St. Ursula Academy class through the timeline chronicling the foundation of the Cincinnati Ursulines, beginning with St. Angela in northern Italy.

From the Ursulines of Cleveland

The Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland donated a car to the Wheels to Work program as a sign of new life to the recipient Nawale Zakarai, a Sudanese refugee. She is a college student studying business at Cuyahoga Community College in the Cleveland, Ohio area. Nawale is the eldest daughter of eight in a home with ten people. Her father, the primary earner in the family, is an independently contracted semi-truck driver who is regularly on the road from Sunday through Friday with the family's only form of transportation. The donation of this car means that Nawale can take her mother to work and to the grocery store; she can drop off and pick up her siblings from school, get to and from Tri-C on time and start driving to and from appointments as she builds her Henna business and client base.



During Lent and Eastertide, the Sisters committed themselves to study and discuss Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The initiative was launched by having the Sisters view *The Letter*, the movie that explains the encyclical through the lives of those most affected by climate change. This was an opportunity to renew our call as vowed religious to be prophetic witnesses to the integrity of all creation. The Sisters then gathered every other Wednesday to view short videos by Father Daniel Horan, OFM, in which he described *Laudato Si'* in more detail.



In connection with the gatherings, the Sisters and our Ninety-first Day Outreach program co-sponsored a collection to aid the victims of the recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. All monies collected were forwarded to Catholic Relief Services to aid recovery efforts.

At the end of our Chapter meetings in 2020, we instituted a committee around future membership. Since no

woman has entered our congregation in many years, the committee began to explore what forms of religious life are emerging today. The study led to an invitation to our co-workers, board members, friends, and those who participate in our Mission and Heritage, Angela Circle and Marie of the Incarnation groups to attend a meeting with the Sisters on Saturday, April 1 to hear what the committee had learned. A panel on the founding and activities of the Humility of Mary Covenant Companions presented a description of this new form. Sister Cheryl Rose, HM and three other women explained how this growing community of women is shaped in the charism and spirituality of the HM Sisters, but in a way lived outside traditional religious life. Their companions feel "a deep call within that seeks to express itself in a lifetime commitment to the mission of Jesus, joined in companionship with others on the same journey."



A follow-up to the Membership Committee's April 1st gathering was planned for Thursday, June 1st and Saturday, June 3rd for those women and men who expressed an interest in praying and discussing prayer and scripture with the Sisters.

On Saturday, April 15th, the Conference of Religious Leadership (CORN) in Cleveland invited all the congregations in northeast Ohio to attend a program featuring Sister Mary Jo Nelson, OLVA, a nationally known Process Facilitator and Consultant for Religious Congregations to speak on the future of religious life. More than 130 Sisters attended the conference held at Regina Health Center, the former motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity of Cleveland.

Sister Mary Eileen Boyle has been ministering at Esperanza Threads since her return from the American Indian missions in the West. Esperanza Threads' mission is to improve the lives of individuals with barriers towards employment through industrial sewing, regardless of a person's background or work history. Interpreters are available for those who do not speak English. The sewing classes are free and materials needed are provided. The teachers are all volunteers with a history of sewing

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Ursulines of Cleveland, *continued*



experience and having worked with vulnerable populations. Sister Mary Eileen began as Executive Director of Esperanza Threads in 2000 until 2012, leaving for health reasons. In 2018, she was

again asked to be Executive Director until another could be hired and trained. Although Sister Mary Eileen continued as part of the team of teachers volunteering once or twice a week, she resigned in 2021. "A young woman was hired who has great ideas for building on the Esperanza vision," according to Sister Mary Eileen, who said her retirement was an easy decision to make.

Saturday, May 6th, Derby Day, was also our Ursuline Sisters donor event at Browns Stadium in Cleveland. More than 350 donors celebrated Pat and Jim Oliver receiving the Merici Award while enjoying dinner and refreshments



and the 149th Run for the Roses. This was the thirteenth time this event was held to benefit the ministries and retirement fund of the Cleveland Ursulines.

On Saturday, May 13th, the Sisters on the 2024 Chapter Planning committee began sharing with the rest of the community plans for the upcoming Chapter 2024 meetings. The Planning committee reviewed the past four years and solicited issues for the upcoming Chapter from all the Sisters who were present.

Diocese of Owensboro Council of Religious Gather in Maple Mount



Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Monica Seaton, right, is joined by Glenmary Sisters Aida Badillo, left, and Darlene Presley. The Ursuline Sisters welcomed the Council of Religious in the Diocese of Owensboro to Maple Mount, Ky., on April 22, 2023, for lunch and some fun games of bingo. There are 10 communities of women religious serving in the diocese, and at least half of them were represented.



Sister Karla Kaelin peruses the gift table during the Council of Religious gathering for the Diocese of Owensboro. The event took place in the Ursuline Sisters' Motherhouse dining room.

Photos taken by Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Nancy Liddy, who is a member of the Council of Religious Steering Committee.

News from the Louisville Ursulines

Catholic Sisters Week March 8-14

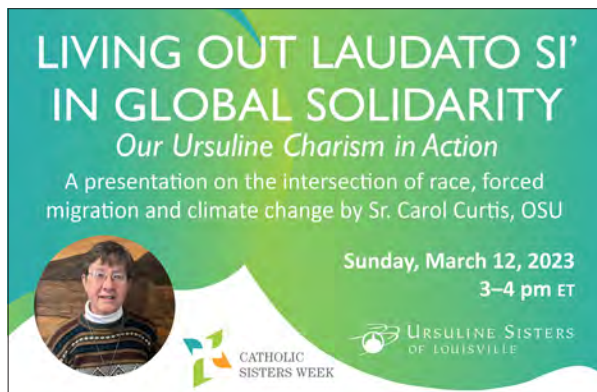
We celebrated CSW with several events, including a presentation by Sister Carol Curtis titled, "Living Out Laudato Si' in Global Solidarity — Our Ursuline Charism in Action," on March 12. You may view the talk and other videos here:

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/catholic-sisters-week-celebrating-traditions-changing-the-world/>

We also held encounters between Sisters and the students, faculty and general community of Sacred Heart Schools, sponsored by the Ursulines, that will bring forward the areas of ministry important to the Sisters within the lens of tradition and change. The topics covered were:

- Building Solidarity through Peruvian Missions
- Traditions of Ursuline Discipleship
- Ministry to the Migrant Community

<https://therecordnewspaper.org/catholic-sisters-week/>



Sr. Carol Curtis' presentation on Laudato Si'

Also...

WE TOOK THE PLEDGE! We refused to use single-use plastic during Catholic Sisters Week, joining other congregations in their resolution to focus on the intersection of racism, migration, and climate change.

Sweet Treats!

The Sisters also visited with the Level 2 students at Sacred Heart Model School for cookies and lemonade! What a "sweet treat" with these bright, inquisitive and fun-loving students! They had a lot of questions for the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville and staff who attended.



Sisters Mary Jo Gramig, Lee Kirchner, Kathy Neely, and Ruth Ann Haunz visited with Sacred Heart Schools students during Catholic Sisters Week.



Sisters Anne Mary Lochner and Agnes Coveney have cookies and lemonade with Level 2 Sacred Heart Model School students.



Nativity Scholarship in honor of Sr. Paula Kleine-Kracht

To celebrate Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14, and the 20th Anniversary of Nativity Academy at St. Boniface, a scholarship fund has been created by Nativity Academy in honor of Ursuline Sisters of Louisville Paula Kleine-Kracht, the first executive director.

The Sister Paula Kleine-Kracht scholarship will help sponsor a student to attend Nativity Academy and provide a scholarship for a Nativity Academy 8th grader to attend a Catholic high school.

<https://nativitylouisville.ejoinme.org/donate>



Sister Paula Kleine-Kracht Scholarship for Nativity Academy

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Ursulines of Louisville, continued

Celebrating Kentucky Derby Week



Sisters, students and staff enjoy the Sacred Heart Preschool Derby parade!

Several of our Sisters and staff enjoyed the annual Derby parade by Sacred Heart Preschool. The “littlest learners” sure know how to celebrate!

Motherhouse Chapel Restoration

In November 2022, restoration began on the interior of the 106-year-old Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the Ursuline Motherhouse. Whitehouse Residential & Commercial Painting, owned by Sacred Heart Academy alum, Amy Bergeron, was contracted to handle the much-needed restoration. The project includes repairs in the main parts of the chapel, including the sanctuary.

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville transferred ownership and stewardship of the Chapel Preservation Fund on January 27, 2022, St. Angela's Feast Day, to ensure that the ongoing maintenance and up-keep of the chapel will continue into perpetuity.

Sacred Heart Schools are now the primary caretaker of the Immaculate Conception Chapel, which remains a vital, sacred center for the schools, Sisters and Associates on the Ursuline campus.



Chapel ceiling



Wall details



Sister Jean Anne Zappa and Dr. Karen McNay

Ursuline Academy Historical Marker Was Lost, Then Found!

In September, 2022, Todd Abell, a volunteer with [Louisville Outreach for the Unsheltered](#) (LOU) discovered our Ursuline Academy historical marker abandoned behind a Goodwill store on East Broadway

Street. Some of the unsheltered folks he serves helped him put the sign in his truck, and he contacted us.

Metro Councilman Bill Hollander was instrumental in putting the wheels in motion to get the sign repaired and reinstalled. The Kentucky Historical Society determined that the sign was beyond repair, so a new sign was ordered, and it was installed in April, 2023, at its proper location at Shelby and Chestnut. We are so thankful to everyone who stepped up to help preserve our history that started in 1858 at this location, and the grace of everyone working together.

Historical Marker at the former Ursuline Academy location



Ursuline Sisters of Louisville co-signed statement against gun violence

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, along with the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team, Dominican Sisters of Peace, and the Loretto Community, issued a joint statement about the April 10 mass shooting in Louisville, Kentucky. Together, they decried the latest mass shooting and called for the passing of new legislation aimed at curbing gun violence. <https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/calling-for-action-in-the-wake-of-the-april-10-shooting-in-louisville/>

A Day of Reflection

Sisters Sue Durkin, OSU, and Pat Kozak, CSJ, spoke to our Sisters on April 29. It was a day of reflection on Transition and Spirituality, which included time for input on changes and challenges of religious life, how we engage and respond to them and how we can grow in accepting them moving us from grief to transformation.

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Ursulines of Louisville, *continued*

Ursuline Communications Team Win Awards

Congratulations to our Communications team for awards won at the Religion Communicators Convention in Chicago April 19–21.

Kathy Williams received three DeRose-Hinkhouse Category Awards, honoring her work in design, logo design and branding, and an award of Merit for writing:

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/2022-heritage-room.../>

https://issuu.com/.../2022_spring_dome_final_1919c1181b5233

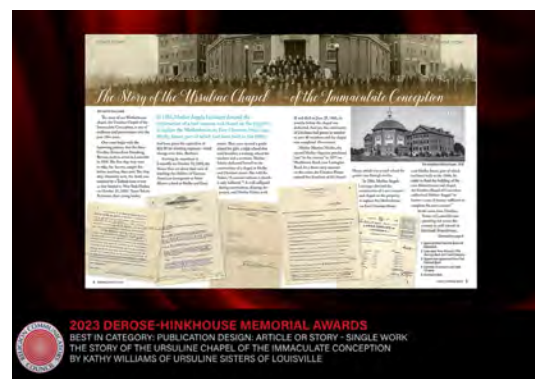
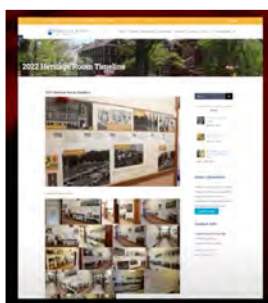
<https://www.facebook.com/amcspirituality>

https://issuu.com/ursulineslou/docs/2022_winter_dome/2

During the Associated Church Press Award ceremony on April 20, Kathy Williams received an award of merit for the Ursuline Sisters' 2021–2022 annual report, which she designed and edited. Bernie Mudd-White received an honorable mention from the press group for a video series, *Journeying with St. Angela Virtual Prayer Series*.

https://issuu.com/ursulineslou/docs/2022_winter_dome/2

<https://youtu.be/DnJWBDauPUw>



AAUW Members Honor Mount Saint Joseph Ursulines

Members of the Owensboro, Ky., chapter of the American Association of University Women came to the Mount Saint Joseph Cemetery on March 15, 2023, to celebrate Women's History Month by placing flags on the tombstones of Ursuline Sisters who broke barriers. The AAUW members joining Sister Suzanne Sims (second from right) in the Mount Cemetery are, from left, Edna Murphey, Aloma Dew, Judy Adams and Merry Miller. Three days earlier, the AAUW honored eight local women who broke barriers and improved lives in the Owensboro community, one of whom was Sister Dianna Ortiz, the founder of the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition. Sister Dianna's grave received a flag on March 15.



Edna Murphey honors Sister Anne Louise Ramold with a flag in the Maple Mount cemetery on March 15. Sister Anne Louise began the sociology department at Brescia College and led it for 24 years. She made concern for the poor a hallmark of her tenure at Brescia, where she began the Ozanam Club to serve those in poverty, honoring its namesake, Frédéric Ozanam, who founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Ursulines of the Eastern Province

May Calendar Raffle

The Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province had another successful May Calendar Bouquet Raffle with record participation with entries from all over the United States. Our May Raffle is one of our most popular fundraising efforts, with proceeds going towards the care of the Ursuline Sisters and support of the Ursuline mission. Participants include not only the Sisters but our many friends and family. Every day in May, a name is pulled from our raffle barrel, and a prize amount is won for that day. It's a fun way to celebrate the Spring, and many people give them as gifts to others. We are incredibly grateful to all who participate each year.



Sister Sheila Campbell



Rose Mary Waldron

RULUSA Meeting

The Leadership Team of the three USA Roman Union Provinces and members of the General Council from Rome met at Mercy Center in St. Louis from May 12 to 14, 2023. Although the USA Leadership Group (RULUSA) has met regularly by Zoom, this was the first in-person meeting since before the pandemic, and it was a delight to be together.

Throughout the meeting, there was time for prayer and shared reflection.

Attendees from the General Council were Srs. Sue Flood (Prioress General), Ann Marie Gardiner (Councilor), and Benigna Kania (Councilor).

Each Leadership Team presented an update from their Province, including statistics, hopes, blessings, and the challenges of life in the Province.

Sisters and colleagues from the Spirituality and Charism Committee and the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Committee (JPIC) presented reports concerning current projects and planning for future initiatives. Both committees are collaborative committees of the three USA provinces.

The members of the General Council shared some statistical information about the Institute as a whole as well as a report from the meeting of the European Provincials.

The members of the General Council facilitated an exploration of how the USA Provinces might further collaborate moving into the future.

RULUSA will continue to meet regularly by Zoom and will also plan for in-person meetings.



Memorial Day Celebration

Eastern Province Ursulines gathered at the Province Center to celebrate Memorial Day. A special supper was prepared. The atmosphere was filled with conversation, good food, and shared memories of loved ones and those who served. The evening was topped off with a spirited sing-along and a contest of "Name That Patriotic Tune," complete with prizes.



Sisters Maureen McCarthy and Maureen Welch



Sisters Mary Virginia Orna, Annie Dumas, and Jackie DaSilva



Sisters Sheila Campbell, Eileen Finnerty, Marion Lynch, and Jane Finnerty

Central Province Gathers in St. Louis

Ursulines of the Central Province gathered in April at Mercy Center in St. Louis for the first province conference since November 2019. With the theme "Continuing the Journey in Unfolding Light," the purpose was twofold: to reconnect with one another face to face and to further the province planning process begun in 2021. Four committees comprised of Ursulines and lay collaborators who have researched and studied various aspects of future province life presented their findings for discussion and feedback. Of this much anticipated gathering, one guest said, "The joy in the room was palpable."

The conference coincided with a month-long visit from three members of the Roman Union General Council: Sister Sue Flood, prioress general; Sister Ann-Marie Gardiner, councilor; and Sister Benigna Kania, councilor. After the three-day conference, Sisters Sue, Ann-Marie and Benigna spread out across the Central Province and visited Ursuline communities in Texas, Louisiana, Illinois, and Maine.

In May the Roman Union Leadership of the United States of America (RULUSA) also met, with



The stairs at Mercy Center were perfect for a province photo.

leaders from the Eastern and Western provinces joining with those of the Central Province at Mercy Center. The sisters from the Ursuline Generalate also attended before heading back to Rome.



The sisters reconvened for evening Mass.



Sisters Karen Schwane, Lois Castillon and Julie Hickey were lured into Sister Regina Marie Frommuller's selfie.



Sisters Sue Flood, Ann-Marie Gardiner and Benigna Kania of the General Council in Rome attended the conference.



← Sisters Louis Marie Carter and Thomas More Daly share a chuckle during a break.

→ The game Mexican Train was a popular evening activity. From left are Sisters Benigna Kania, Theresa Davey, Ginger Cirone, Mary Ann Dooling, Rita Ann Bregenhorn, Lois Castillon and Ann-Marie Gardiner.



Shared by the Central Province

The leaders of our five Ursuline schools - Ursuline Academy of Dallas, Texas; Ursuline Academy of Dedham, Mass.; Ursuline Academy of New Orleans, La.; Ursuline Academy of St. Louis, Mo.; and Mount Merici Academy of Waterville, Maine (below) - gathered at the province offices for their annual conference. "Global Citizenship: Preparing Students for a Global Community" was the theme of this year's conference. Joining in were provincial leadership teams members Sister Elisa Ryan, Sister Jean Hopman and Sister Peggy Moore.



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Provincial leaders of Roman Union provinces around the world met in Rome for two weeks in March. While there, Sister Elisa Ryan (below) had the joy of welcoming two alums of Ursuline Academy of St. Louis, Julia Stahlhuth and Meredith Belrose, to the Ursuline Generalate. Both are studying and playing on soccer teams in Rome.



Two Ursuline Sisters of Toledo spent a morning with Central Province Ursulines at their Kirkwood, Missouri, office enroute to the March 20-22 North American Ursuline Leadership Conference at Mercy Center. Posing outside on a sunny spring day are (far left and right) Central Province Sisters Jean Hopman and Peggy Moore and (center) Toledo Sisters Sandy Sherman and Donna Frey.



The Company on Retreat

A retreat with focus on Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Luke took the Company of St. Ursula in the USA to Northern Kentucky on Pentecost weekend (<https://icont.ac/4QSmn>). The entire Group was together for the first time in two years. A vocational seeker also participated.

"The Spirit was very much at work," said one sister.



From the Brown County Ursulines

During the discernment process for Leadership, the Ursulines of Brown County explored and determined the priorities for the next 2 - 4 years. The following were the results of that Community discussion and discernment.

Identifying a Commissary was unanimously the primary focus of the Community conversation. A meeting was scheduled with Sister Mary Jo Nelson, OLFM, who stewarded her community through the Commissary process.

Sponsorship of our Educational Institution: This process will structure the relationship between the Catholic Church and Ursuline Academy. There are options the community will consider and this decision will involve the UA Board and the Corporation Board, NAULC, UEN and lay collaborators. We know other schools and communities have already forged a path in this area.

Archives: The decision regarding the permanent housing of the documents and artifacts of the Congregation. Sister Phyllis Kemper is working with the materials at Ursuline Academy and has financial support to begin organizing and cataloguing that information. The Brown County Alums are interested in supporting the Community archives as well. Exploration of the options for a permanent location will be a significant part of the Community's conversation.

Distribution of remaining Financial Assets: The determination of what non-profit organizations would be the beneficiaries of remaining financial assets after the care of all members is complete. The other persons or groups to include in the conversation may be the Chief Operating Officer, the Corporation Board, and of course, the members of the Community.

Activities, Spiritual Development and Prayer: This is an on-going desire to be present to each other and gather for fun and personal enrichment. As much as possible we will include the Sisters who are in the Health Care Center at Mt. Notre Dame.

Social Justice Concerns: Sister Christine Pratt has been and would like to continue being our facilitator of this aspect of our lives. She is involved in the Ohio Sisters Justice Network, as well as Archdiocesan Catholic Social Action Office, IJPC and Laudato Si'. She will continue to advocate and communicate with us regarding issues, locally, nationally, and globally. Another topic that surfaced was the option of making public statements as a community and supporting important issues related to our Charism.

Other topics of conversation were Health Care, Assisted Living in place and end of life arrangements, including Green Burials.

Sister Christine Pratt offered to detail for the community her experience as she manages her physical challenges in living a meaningful life while living independently with assistance. Following her presentation, the community suggested that she share her experience with the Convergence audience.

The following is Sister Christine Pratt's experience of living with challenges:

In 2020, soon after the COVID lockdown began, and unrelated to the effects of the pandemic, my already weakening legs developed another symptom which even after therapy left me dependent on a walker and no longer able to drive. My second floor living situation presented many difficulties in daily living. At the same time, I had just been hired as part-time Coordinator for East Region Deanery (where our Motherhouse had been for over 175 years) for the Catholic Social Action Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. With the lockdown, work continued thanks to Zoom and phones, but once things opened up, continuing to work, housing and travel could present a problem.

St. Angela in her 4th Counsel tells us, "God will never fail to provide for your needs as long as nothing is lacking on your part." I learned the wisdom and grace of her words through the months. I also learned to embrace four attitudes that have continued to help me live an active life of ministry and social engagements thanks to the goodness of others.



Sister Christine Pratt

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From the Brown County Ursulines, *continued*

I have learned **ACCEPTANCE** - acceptance of what I cannot do. Once I knew my second-floor apartment was no longer viable Sr. Patricia Homan and I found an independent senior building nearby which accommodates my daily needs - elevators, laundry room next door, a building full of caring people. An aide comes about two hours a week to do grocery shopping and small tasks that need assistance. She is a perfect match - creative, observant, and an extrovert! A local private transportation company provides reliable and professional trips for me and other sisters as well.

The part-time hours with the Social Action Office have increased. With the help of a volunteer driver and others I am able to continue my ministry, participate on committees, give presentations, and engage in church, community, and social activities. Focusing on what I can do has helped me accept the lack of freedom I once had and recognize what I am still able to do.

HUMILITY. The dependence on others for many things I took for granted has been a lesson in humility. It is learning to accept the goodness of others with grace and gratitude, even the strangers who run to open a door or stand by to assist if needed.

PATIENCE. For a person who ran 300 airport concourses during thirty-two years of active ministry and walked 8-mile trails during vacations is a thing of the past. Concentrating on every step, every move and slowly going about everyday life has taught this once fast-moving person patience.

GRATITUDE. Last, but not least is gratitude - for all I am able to do - for all my daily known and stranger "guardian angels". Gratitude for my Ursuline Sisters and our benefactors whose generosity has allowed us to make options for living independently, independent living with assistance, assisted living and skilled health care. Gratitude for our Creator God who has blessed each of us with talents and skills to continue living to fulfillment all the days of our lives.

I end this sharing with a quote I found in a small shop in Minnesota many years ago. It is an attitude I strive to embrace, especially in these later years:

**"Life is not about waiting
for the storm to pass.
It's about learning
to dance in the rain."**



Celebrating with our Jubilarians

75 Years

Sister Lee Kirchner (Louisville)

70 Years

Sister Ruth Podesta (Brown County)

Sister Helen O'Brien (Louisville)

65 Years

Sister Mary Angela Gaietto (Toledo)

Sister Nancy Mathias (Toledo)

Sister Kenwyn Steger (Toledo)

60 Years

Sister Mary Virginia Macke (Brown County)

Sister Martha Jacob (Louisville)

Sister Rita Joseph Jarrell (Louisville)

50 Years

Sister Ellen Doyle (Brown County)



Sister Mary Evalyn House (Central Province)

Sister Mary Frances Dorschell (Chatham)

Sister Doreen Ann Park (Chatham)

Sister Brigetta Waldron (Cleveland)

Sister Mary Jo Lyons (Eastern Province)

Sister Laura Reynolds (Eastern Province)

Sister Rosanne Spalding (Maple Mount)

Sister Mary Agnes VonderHaar (Maple Mount)

Sister Stephanie Helfrich (Toledo)

Around the Mount

After Pope Francis wrote his encyclical [Laudato Si'](#) – on the care of the earth – he invited all sectors of the Church to develop action plans outlining what they would do in response to his challenge. The response of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph in Maple Mount, Ky., was to set up a *Laudato Si' Creation Care* committee to produce an action plan. The members of the committee are Sisters Angela Fitzpatrick, Michele Morek, Suzanne Sims, Amelia Stenger and Sharon Sullivan.

This is a multi-year project for the Sisters, and after reviewing what the Ursulines have already done, the committee decided to focus on Climate Change. Recycling was chosen as the specific project for the year because this is something everyone can do. As Pope Francis said, “There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions.” (LS211)



In all the community's publications and social media, the Sisters are sharing how their various recycling efforts are carrying out their action plan, which they hope will inspire others to recycle as well. The first articles dealt with recycling fabric, and this summer will focus on paper, cardboard and electronics recycling.

Ursuline Companion in Mission returns

Fanny Gonzalez was 23 years old in 1994 and had just graduated from a Jesuit university in her native Mexico when she learned about a program called Ursuline Companions in Mission.

“The Jesuits came to serve the poor people in the mountains of northern Mexico. They requested students serve in the missions,” Fanny said. “We would take food and clothes, and talk about Jesus. When I learned about the Ursuline missions, I wanted to be a part of it.”

The program began in New York and Ohio, but Fanny spent a year serving at Centro Latino, the Hispanic ministry that Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Fran Wilhelm founded in 1993. There she lived in an abandoned elementary school that housed and served migrant farm workers. While it was at times a struggle for Fanny – her degree was in computer systems, hardly a necessity in a ministry that didn't even have a television – she made lifetime friends with Sister Fran and her co-worker, Sister Nancy Liddy.



Ursuline Associate Fanny Gonzalez, center, stands with her sister Gladys and her son Matias, during her visit to Maple Mount, Ky., on March 14, 2023. She previously volunteered at Centro Latino, a Hispanic ministry in Owensboro which was led by the late Sister Fran Wilhelm.

On March 14, 2023, Fanny returned to Maple Mount, Ky., for the first time since 1999 with her sister Gladys and her 11-year-old son Matias to visit Sister Nancy and pay her respects at Sister Fran's grave.

“I will always have her in my heart,” Fanny said at the cemetery. During her time at Centro Latino, Fanny told Sister Fran she didn't always know what she was doing, but Sister Fran put her fears to rest.

“I asked Sister Fran, ‘What am I doing here? Am I helping you?’” Fanny said. “She said, ‘Your presence is what is important.’ She was such a peaceful person. Talking to her made me feel so good. I didn't need to know what I was doing anymore. I knew if I was helping her, I was doing something good.”

Fanny returned to Mexico after a year, completed a master's degree and pursued her career. Today, she lives in Celina, Texas, close to Dallas, where for the past five years she has been a live-in nanny.

“I had a wonderful experience here, I wanted my son to visit,” Fanny said.

Tibetan monk shares a lesson on kindness

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph received a lesson on kindness and compassion on March 23, 2023, from a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

Venerable Tsering Phuntsok came to the Rainbow Room of Saint Joseph Villa in Kentucky to pray with the Sisters, explain some of his religion, and share his message of maintaining a good heart – known as “dharma.” Tsering – it rhymes with “sharing” – is friends with Elaine Wright,

- continued on next page

Around the Mount, continued

an associate professor in the School of Social Work at Brescia University, Owensboro, Ky.

At Maple Mount, after decorating a table with deep red and yellow colors, Tsering practiced Chod, which translates as “cut.”

“We need to cut our own ego,” he said. “It is one of the highest teachings of Buddha, so you are softer with yourself and others.”

“The Buddha says we are born with compassion and kindness,” Tsering said. “But we are blocked by destructive emotions, like hatred, anger, jealousy, pride and ignorance. Ego comes from ignorance and gives birth to many guests.”

The Buddha taught to focus on a good heart, on kindness, wisdom and compassion, Tsering said.

“Don’t focus on the guest of ignorance,” he said. “If you’re not a good host, the guest will move on.”

He chanted Buddhist scripture, then played instruments during his prayers, which included a damaru (drum), dilbu (bell) and kangling (flute). Then he played the dilbu slowly to lead the Sisters in the chant “Om mani padme hum.”

Tsering answered questions from the Sisters and staff, then presented a prayer shawl to Sister Sharon Sullivan on behalf of the community featuring different symbols that mean “good luck.”

Quilt Bingo returns Sept. 10

Sisters looking for an afternoon of fun can join the Ursulines at Maple Mount for Quilt Bingo, from 1-4 p.m. (CDT) on Sept. 10, 2023. Participants can play bingo to win beautiful quilts that are completed at Maple Mount. Admission is \$25, which includes lunch, and the bingo games are \$1 for small quilts, \$2 for large ones. It was a very fun day in 2022, so join us at the Mount! Learn more at www.ursulinesmsj.org/quilt-bingo.



Tsering Phuntsok, a Buddhist monk, and Congregational Leader Sister Sharon Sullivan bow to each other after he placed a prayer shawl around her neck, which was a gift to the Ursuline community. The prayer shawl includes symbols that mean good luck. There was a full house for the presentation.



Venerable Tsering Phuntsok plays the damaru (drum), dilbu (bell) and the kangling (flute) after the chanting of his Buddhist scripture.



UEN "LAUREL LINKS" AVAILABLE

Please find the link to the Spring edition of UEN's Laurel Links attached here. Use it to read about all of the wonderful things that are happening in our schools. It has been a very busy spring, but so very productive! Enjoy reading about the continuation of St. Angela's charism that is alive and well in our schools!

~ Rosann Whiting, Director
Ursuline Education Network

<https://www.ursuline-education.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Laurel-Links-Spring-2023-Newsletter.pdf>

From the Ursulines of Toledo

Healthcare coordinator joins Ursuline staff

The Ursuline Sisters welcomed Laurie Toth as our Health Care Coordinator. In this newly created position, Laurie is responsible for supporting the Sisters with their overall health care needs, including making wellness visits, accompanying them to appointments and being an advocate and liaison with their care facility. Laurie also collaborates with others on the health care team to ensure all of our Sisters' health and wellness needs are being met.

Laurie is a natural fit for this role, as she worked as a nurse at the Ursuline Center prior to the facility closing in 2021. An RN, Laurie also holds a BA in Health and Wellness from Lourdes University, Sylvania, Ohio.



Ursuline Sisters welcome Diocese Delegate

Sister Maria Amata Rossi, RSM, Delegate for Consecrated Life of the Toledo Diocese, was present with the Toledo Ursulines on April 27 for a luncheon and "getting to know you" prayer and meeting.

The Ursuline Sisters meet every other month for an input and update session and this was the perfect opportunity to have Sister Maria Amata come and share some of her time and be present to get to know more about the Ursuline Sisters, our charism and current reality.

Sister Maria Amata was newly appointed as the temporary Delegate for Consecrated Life and was introduced to the sisters of the Diocese on February 1 at the Celebration of Consecrated Life day where sisters of the various communities of the diocese came together for a liturgy and lunch with Bishop Daniel Thomas.

~ Sisters in Ministry ~



Sister Margaret Anne Carstensen (left) offers half-hour spiritual gestures to music classes at Rosary Care Center. Sister Angela Gaietto (below) and a fellow resident enjoy the movement and fellowship the class provides.



Sister Claudia Holtz uses her art skills at Oakleaf Village to design and create attractive centerpieces for the dining room tables.



Sister Carol Reamer steps in to lend a helping hand at Oakleaf Village whenever she sees a need arise. Sister Carol shares her joyful spirit by welcoming new residents, chatting and laughing at the dinner table, listening to one's stories, carrying items for others who can't carry things themselves, and helping residents get settled at the dinner table. Her kindness is often spontaneous and always appreciated.

Ursuline Sisters of Chatham

Brescia University College, London Ontario Restoration of the Crucifixion Tableau

In the midst of the Great Depression and to mark the Jubilee Holy Year of 1933, a tableau of the crucifixion was created and erected at the end of a tree-lined Stations of the Cross at Brescia University College.

Over these many years it has been a sacred spot to stop and reflect for both students and neighbours who walked Brescia's beautiful land. The Stations were removed years ago and recently many messages began to come in about the state of deterioration of the tableau, including the loss of Jesus' feet.

This state of disrepair was not lost on Fr. Michael Prieur, friend of the Ursulines and professor at St. Peter's Seminary. He was walking in the area while conducting a retreat for the Precious Blood Sisters, whose property adjoins Brescia, when he made a decision to take on restoration as a personal project.

But personal it was not! He connected with many craftspeople in London – woodworkers, concrete workers, sculptors and contractors. Over months they restored the tableau, using weather resistant materials and creating a new base for its eventual re-location.

On Tuesday, April 18 the Brescia University College Community celebrated the Restoration of the Crucifixion Tableau with a blessing ceremony. Bishop Fabbro, Bishop of London joined Brescia and community friends for this historic moment.

The event began indoors with a grand lunch at which the skilled workers and donors to the restoration project were present, along with Brescia community members. A slide presentation documented the project from start to finish.



The blessing ceremony took place at the new site of the Tableau - the woods just North of Ursuline Hall. You can see from the photos it was a very cold day!

One of the gifts of the day was to see that a robin was nesting between the left shoulder and head of Jesus. She remained in her nest during much of the blessing service.



Jesus Christ will enlighten you about what you have to do.

St. Angela Merici - Last Legacy

Needs of the times inspiring change for Youngstown Ursulines

New faces are often seen at the Motherhouse. We're meeting with numerous consultants and readying for our transformation to an assisted living facility. The change better ensures the long-term care of our 27 Sisters, most of whom are in their 70s and older.

This requires reconfigurations of offices and meeting spaces, renovations that upgrade our private elevator and increase safety features, and the relocation of our business offices to our center and preschool, the latter of which recently closed its doors for the last time in 59 years.

But while one children's education program is ending, another is growing. Summer Camp for our Immigrant Outreach and HIV/AIDS children's programs has merged, and we're extending outreach to include children in our housing program. About 20 children of various ages are expected for this educational and fun experience that runs three days a week for six weeks, beginning later in June.



Michelle LaPorte, Ursuline Sisters Mission Children's Program Coordinator, is planning hands-on projects that recycle common household items like empty

Youngstown's Michelle LaPorte plans summer activities for 20 children.

laundry detergent bottles into instruments and planters, a lesson on fire safety that teaches the use of extinguishers, and field trips to the nearby library branch, where a makers' space features 3-D printers and more.

Some of our Sisters, employees and community partners have had "hands-on" field trips of their own, all toward planning an exhibit to celebrate our 150 years in the Mahoning Valley. It'll be held at the Tyler History Center museum, operated by the Mahoning Valley Historical Society, in downtown Youngstown from Sept. 2 until Feb. 26, 2024 and possibly beyond.

Sisters Patricia McNicholas and Mary Alyce Koval are leading the group in discerning which objects and photos from the last 150 years best tell our story. Some chosen include the incorporation papers the first Sisters signed in 1874, host cutters our Sisters used to hand-make the host for area parishes, and from more recent times, a quilt crafted to honor clients in our HIV/AIDS ministry.



Pictured above are Sisters Mary Alyce Koval and Patricia McNicholas. The statue of Mary came to Youngstown with the Toledo Ursulines who helped found our community.

These are exciting times as we reflect on the many elements of the pilgrimage that brought us to today and pursue new paths for our journeys.

**Have hope and firm faith
in God,
who will help you
in everything.**

**St. Angela Merici -
Prologue to the Counsels**

Deconstruction completed on original Mount Saint Joseph Academy buildings

Visitors to Maple Mount will find a much different looking campus than they've seen before, as the deconstruction of historic buildings was completed as June arrived.

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph – then members of the Ursulines of Louisville – arrived in western Daviess County in 1874, with a newly built – and almost completed – Mount Saint Joseph Academy awaiting them. Father Paul Joseph Volk burned the bricks himself to build the school, and those at the time say that he had to pray over the bricks to get them hard enough to use. The legend of the “miracle bricks” continues today.



The original building had three additions during the years the Academy was in operation. After the school closed in 1983, the buildings became the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center, with another addition completed in 1997.

While the Retreat Center was closed during Covid, an inspection determined that those original bricks in the foundation were deteriorating, making the building unsafe to occupy. The rest of the additions were compromised as well. The buildings also had other issues, making the possibility of repair unwise. The vote by the Sisters to deconstruct the Retreat Center was held July 9, 2021. The following summer, with most of the Ursuline Sisters at Maple Mount for Community Days, the Sisters gathered for a Gratitude Ritual to say goodbye to the building.

After many delays, deconstruction began on April 18, 2023. While it was a sad time for the Sisters and alumnae of the Academy, many people said watching the deconstruction offered some closure to the process.

Many people shared their memories of the buildings through the Ursuline website and Facebook page.

The future use for the space has not been determined yet.

A former residential building on the rear of campus, Paul Volk Hall, is in the process of being deconstructed, which should be completed in August.

Some of the original “miracle bricks” were saved prior to deconstruction. The Ursuline Sisters are making those bricks available for a donation of \$25. Those interested can learn more at www.ursulinesmsj.org/mount-brick.



Portions of the Mount Saint Joseph Academy/Retreat Center building previously occupied by the Post Office and Gift Shop were still standing at right when this photo was taken at Maple Mount, Ky.



The final debris from the deconstructed former Mount Saint Joseph Academy/Retreat Center was removed at the end of May 2023. The next step - filling and compacting the area with dirt prior to sodding – is underway.

Ursulines of Prelate

After some much-needed rain, the trees have exploded with leaves and blossoms here in Saskatoon. Further north in Saskatchewan, the rain has helped to control some of the raging wildfires, which have displaced hundreds of people.

For us, life has gone on as usual. On March 21st, we celebrated St. Angela's 553rd birthday. We gathered for prayer, games, lunch, and birthday cake. Unfortunately, the Sisters living at St. Angela Merici Residence couldn't join us because of a COVID outbreak.

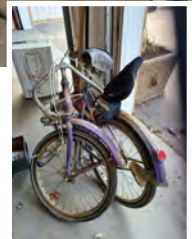
On April 19th, we met, once again, with Joanne Yelle Whetherall, executive director of CRS (Canadian Religious Stewardship). Joanne shared more stories, giving us greater clarity about what's happening with religious communities who are requesting the services of CRS, as well as inviting us to consider different options. This was followed by a discussion about the need to get rid of and let go of "stuff," while we are still able to do it, rather than it having to happen after someone dies.

Our meeting with Joanne will continue and one of the topics that will need to be addressed is governance.



Trying to address the issue of getting rid of "stuff," the Ursulines held a garage sale in May. It was a success - lots of "stuff" was sold, including an old, rusty folding-bike.

Also in May, we had Victoria Day, which gave us a long weekend towards the end of the month. It was a time to relax and have some fun. Sr. Anne Lewans, congregational leader, invited the Sisters for a wiener roast at the generalate. Fifteen people gathered and had good food and lots of fun.



Summer
Blessings

QUILTING FRIENDS



Above, Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Amelia Stenger, left, and her sister, Ursuline Associate Mary Teder look over a quilt top completed by Quilter Friends Elizabeth Fitzgerald and Mary Ruth Clark. It's made of 30s fabric, a reproduction of feed sacks. The Quilting Friends was the brainchild of Sister Amelia back in 2002. She received many donations of fabric and knew many women who loved to quilt. Each year this group came to Maple Mount, Ky., in early spring to sew quilt tops with donated fabric and leave them for the Sisters to quilt. The annual tradition ceased three years ago with Covid, with this year the first time many of the volunteers have returned to the Mount. The participants gathered from March 26-29, 2023.

Mary Ruth Clark, of Newburgh, Ind. (below), works on a border for her next project during the Quilting Friends visit to Maple Mount. The quilt tops will either be hand quilted for the Mount Quilt Club, or machine quilted to use for Quilt Bingo in September, both of which serve to support the mission of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph.





Join us for QUILT BINGO

Sunday, Sept. 10, 2023 1 p.m.-4 p.m. CT

Mount Saint Joseph Maple Hall

8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Ky.
(12 miles west of Owensboro on Hwy. 56)

Play bingo to win quilts!

Enjoy lunch and have fun!

\$25 per person.
\$1 games for small quilt prize and \$2 games for large quilt prize.

Seating is limited. Sign up online:
ursulinesmsj.org/quilt-bingo

or mail a check payable to Ursuline Sisters,
Development Office, 8001 Cummings
Road, Maple Mount KY 42356



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Please send stories and photos
to Michelle Scazzero at
m scazzero@ursulinecenter.org.