

NAULC

Convergence

“To Move Toward the Same Purpose Together”

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Summer 2020

Sister Dianna Ortiz returns to Pax Christi

Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Sister Dianna Ortiz began a new ministry in March 2020, returning to Pax Christi USA as deputy director. She oversees the daily management of the Washington, D.C., staff in collaboration with the executive director, facilitates Pax Christi USA representation in Washington policy circles, and serves as the primary coordinator of advocacy work.

Pax Christi is a Catholic peace and justice movement that rejects war, violence and systemic racism. In 2000, Sister Dianna was recognized with the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award. She served on the staff of Pax Christi USA from 2010-12, first as interim director, then deputy director.

Sister Dianna said on the Pax Christi website, “The world is changing all around us. In a sense, we are being forced to be eyewitnesses to the human suffering of those around us and to the destruction of our planet. Any of us could be second guessing whether justice and peace truly prevail in a hurting and unjust world. When hope gets tangled up in despair, I remind myself that working for peace is not a

solitary act but a collective act of solidarity.

“One of my roles as deputy director will be to represent Pax Christi USA in various circles where we seek to have a voice and to build public confidence in the often-forgotten work of our members in the peace movement,” Sister Dianna said.

“In these circles, I promise to bring our members’ concerns to the table and to advocate with, and on behalf of all in our movement on issues that not only impact our communities but our entire world.”

She was most recently project director with the Education for Justice Project at the Center of Concern in Washington, then consulted with the Global Sisters Report.



*Sister Dianna Ortiz
Ursuline of Mount Saint Joseph*

From the Ursulines of the Canadian Union - Quebec



In the last Convergence newsletter, we announced that we were looking forward to our General Chapter to be held this summer. Well, of course, like so many other congregations throughout the world, we have had to postpone this event, thanks to COVID-19! We decided to play it safe and reset the date one year down the line, that is, from August 16th to September 3rd 2021. We had no sooner sent this information to Rome than we began wondering if it was going to happen, then or when, considering all the information that started coming in on the virus: will our delegates from abroad be allowed to travel by then? will such assemblies be permitted by our provincial government by then? etc.

In the meantime, in addition to a different kind of preparation for chapter, it’s “work as usual,” including, quite importantly, the upcoming appointment of two Provincial Superiors, one in Quebec, the other in Japan.

For the rest, all our lay staff is working from home, with the limited effectiveness that can be expected from that situation, of course.

More importantly, however, as far as our affections and emotions are concerned, five (5) of our Sisters have died of the virus, all five of them only eight months or so after moving into their new assisted-living residence in Trois-Rivières. Moreover, all funeral arrangements must wait until the imposed confinement ends. This sadness we share with the rest of the local population experiencing the same circumstances, not to mention so many others throughout the world whose situations are unspeakable compared to ours.

Our thoughts often reach all our Ursuline Sisters from all the different congregations, wondering how everyone is faring in their respective places. We keep you in our hearts and ask Angela to keep a very special watch over each and everyone of her daughters throughout the world.

God bless!

An Update from the Youngstown Ursulines

Youngstown Ursulines Adapting to 'Meet Needs of the Times'

This month we'll install our 2020-2026 Leadership Team. Sister Mary McCormick, general superior, and two of her councilors, Sisters Regina Rogers and Patricia McNicholas were re-elected. Joining them is a former member of leadership, Sister Mary Alyce Koval.

In 2019 we received permission from the Sacred Congregation to change our Constitution to allow the re-election of a superior for a consecutive six-year term.



Sisters Patricia McNicholas, Regina Rogers, Mary McCormick, and Mary Alyce Koval.

Meanwhile, many of our Sisters have successfully adapted their ministries to continue during the COVID-19 quarantine.

Sister Mary was one of three teachers in our community, who all continued to offer instruction. Sister Mary is a Professor of Systematic Theology and Academic Dean for St. Mary's Seminary and Graduate School of Theology in Cleveland.

"I've been having class with the seminarians using Zoom. They can see me and my Power Point presentations, and I can see them, each in his own home. We were blessed to be able to continue the semester using this technology," she comments.

Sister Nancy Dawson also used technology to remotely teach her World Religions classes for about 80 students at Youngstown State University. Sister Carole Suhar, technology instructor for St. Rose Parish School, Girard, not only taught her class but made sure her students were able to navigate their other classes via computer as well.

Our Sisters ministering in parishes also are relying on technology to keep in contact with parishioners.

Sister Mary Alyce, who also is the Parish Leader for St. Luke Church, Boardman, utilized Facebook lives and posts and Zoom meetings to communicate with parishioners.

Sister Martha Reed, right, Pastoral Associate and Director of Religious Education for St. Columba Cathedral Parish, had to adapt her outreach to best reach the different generations she ministers to.

"I've been in contact with parishioners via the phone to reassure them of our prayers and check to see that they are doing well during this difficult time," Sister Martha says. "I post prayers and activities for our youth on St. Columba's Facebook page almost every other day."

She also has been doing live recitations of the rosary on both St. Columba's and our Facebook pages and received great response.

Sister Regina Rogers, who also is the Pastoral Associate for St. Edward Church in Youngstown, is keeping in contact with parishioners by phone.

Other social service ministries, such as Beatitude House, responding to the needs of clients – already a vulnerable population before the pandemic – remains foremost. These ministries have worked diligently to adapt.

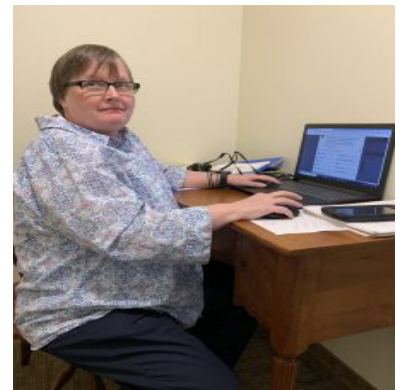
"We applied for many of the grants made available so we can respond to the needs of our clients. I also participate in regular Zoom meeting with the staff of the scholars program," says Sister Patricia, co-director of the ministry. "Our scholars and their mentors continue to meet virtually, and some seem to actually prefer this method."

"Our immigrant families seem especially vulnerable. Many had previously worked in restaurants and are struggling. We are providing extra gift cards for groceries," she states.

Volunteers with Beatitude House's English Language Learning Program continue tutoring children via live web chats, reports Sister Norma Raupple, director of that



Sister Carole Suhar



Sister Martha Reed

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News from Cleveland

Chapter 2020

In early March, just before the arrival of COVID-19 and the ensuing shutdown of life as we knew it, the Cleveland Ursulines completed their Chapter deliberations. The delegates elected Ritamary Welsh as president, and Maureen Doyle, Laura Bregar (returning for a second term), Maureen Grady and Diana Stano as councilors. The team took office June 6 following their installation. Moving on to new ministries are Sue Durkin, Sue Bremer, Kathleen Flanagan and Joanne Gross.

The work of Chapter also included direction-setting for the future. At the conclusion of the sessions delegates affirmed the following:

At this time in salvation history we stand together as an Ursuline community. United in our mission of transformation through contemplation, justice, and compassion, we will:

- *deepen and renew our vowed life as Ursulines in the 21st Century*
- *embrace the work of spiritual transformation, personally and in communion with others*
- *create vibrant community and welcome those who seek to engage with us in continuing the mission of Christ*

- *work with others to witness to justice, and companion the disenfranchised*
- *seek new structures and communal processes to discern the wisdom of the Spirit spoken through many voices that we might understand and respond generously to the signs of the times within our Ursuline community and the global community.*

Thanks to all our Ursuline friends for your prayer support during our Chapter 2020 proceedings.

2020 Jubilarians

Our jubilee celebration scheduled for July 26th has been postponed because of the gathering restrictions still in place due to the coronavirus. The all-diamond group is looking to move the celebration to the fall or to next year. Sisters marking milestone anniversaries are: Anne Cecile Muldoon (75 years); Margaret O'Brien, Ruth Marie Behrend, Helen Marie Davidson, Marie Michelle Gouttiere (70 years); and Rose Mary Hoge, Karen Bohan, Donna Kristoff, Miriam Fidelis Pinchot, Martha Owen, Colette Livingston, Carmen Hocevar, and Rose Elizabeth Terrell (60 years). We rejoice in the blessings of their lives and service!



Sister Ritamary Welsh



Sister Maureen Doyle



Sister Laura Bregar



Sister Maureen Grady



Sister Diana Stano

An Update from the Youngstown Ursulines, continued

program. She and other volunteers have dropped off supplies to the families who have no transportation.

Meanwhile, Sisters who minister with our Ursuline Education & Wellness Center are working to maintain relationships with the people served by its programs. Out of safety concerns, we are not yet reopening any of its classes and activities.

Sisters Jan Gier and Nancy Pawlen have been calling, texting and emailing participants to check on their welfare and let them know we're praying for them and their families.



Update from the Toledo Ursulines

God is Working Through Us

Not one person has been spared of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Masks, frequent hand washing and hand sanitizer use, and social distancing are commonplace. For now, daily Mass has been cancelled; ministries have been put on hold; travel has been restricted; visitors are not permitted at the Ursuline Center. The inconveniences and uncertainty of what tomorrow holds have allowed many of us to take a step back and reflect on what God is teaching us during this difficult time.

Several Sisters and Associates have shared how they've seen God work in their lives during this pandemic.



*Sister Rita Mae
Johns*



Sister Joy Gray

"I have a deeper appreciation and love for the Holy Eucharist. When I received Holy Communion, after waiting 49 days, I could not hold back the tears." - Sister Rita Mae Johns

"I have seen God working in my life during this pandemic by helping me to be more flexible and patient. I can't do the things I normally would do, so God helps me to consider other options. These options are worthwhile and useful and have given me time to reflect on what is really important and to take time just to be." - Sister Joy Gray



*Sister Claudia
Holtz*

"My troubles are few compared to all that is happening in the lives of so many who are more strongly impacted by this pandemic. So for me, this is a time for contemplative prayer, for keeping aware of all those who are ill with the virus (or any other illness) and all those who are unable to be present to their loved ones through their illness and their dying process. I pray for those who continue to care for those most in need by providing meals and for the healthcare workers who continue to care for the ill and dying, as well as for those who are struggling to keep business and services available. I pray especially for those who may experience depression and despair. May the Lord touch their hearts with hope and with assistance." - Sister Claudia Holtz

"Celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord this Easter Season was quite different than any I ever remember. It

was a holy day, a somber day, and yet one filled with happiness. With the isolation and social distancing thrust upon us, I was deeply missing being with my brother and sisters on Easter, especially since it was our first Easter without my mother. So with all the ZOOM meetings I found myself a part of recently, I wanted to learn how to invite my brother and sisters to a ZOOM gathering on Easter Sunday.

With that said all five of us were together and present to one another in a way we never had before. At the end of our time together, someone said, 'When are we going to do this again?'" - Sister Donna Frey



Keeping Residents Safe

In these uncertain times when the news and guidelines of the COVID-19 pandemic changes daily, the Ursuline Center is blessed to have employees who are working tirelessly to guide our staff in keeping our Sisters, Priests and Associates safe and healthy. As an Infection Preventionist and LPN, Melissa Bomia's goals include helping prevent healthcare-associated infections and limiting antibiotic use among our residents. Particularly during this pandemic, Melissa and our team are leading the fight to keep our residents safe and healthy by performing the recommended screenings for all employees and those entering the Center, and by restricting visitation during this time, among many other tasks.

"Our goal for the Ursuline Center is to keep the virus out and if found, minimize the spread," she said. Thankfully the Ursuline Center has had no known cases of COVID-19 among our residents or employees. "At this time, we are preparing the facility the best we can to handle a situation if the need arises."



Associate Program Celebrates 40 Years

In 1980, as the Ursuline Sisters were celebrating 125 years of ministry in Toledo, they also launched the Associate program. On March 30, 1980, 39 candidates made a one-year commitment to be Toledo Ursuline Associates. We now have 135 Associates in many states, including 30

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Update from the Toledo Ursulines, *continued*

Associates in Bakersfield, California. On March 30 of this year, the Ursuline Sisters and Associates were scheduled to celebrate 40 years of the Ursuline Associates Program at a Liturgy and lunch, however that plan was put on hold. While not done in-person at this time, Ursuline Associates share prayer, ministry, celebrations, and friendship in the spirit of St. Angela. "God of time and seasons, you draw us together around the witness and spirituality of St. Angela. Teach us how to support one another as we journey on our way to you, in the name of Jesus, beloved of our hearts, now and forever." *From the Votive Prayer for Associate Gatherings, Ursuline Book of Prayer, Vol. II.*

Sisters Share Inspirational Thoughts

In celebration of Catholic Sisters Week in March, the Ursuline Center hosted a "Sister Storytelling Panel." Sisters gathered together in meaningful conversation to share what they find most rewarding about religious life, what they finding most challenging, and why religious life is need today. The Sisters had done some preparation, but all spoke from the heart about the essence of their lives. It was a truly inspirational afternoon.



The Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province Elect New Leadership Team

The Ursuline Sisters are happy to announce the election of their Leadership Team 2020 - 2025.

Sister Maureen Welch, OSU
Provincial

Sister Brenda Buckley, OSU
Councilor

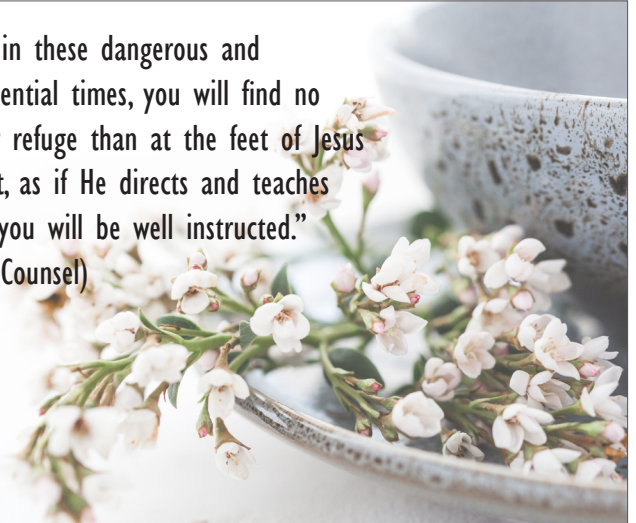
Sister Patricia Schifini, OSU
Councilor

The team will take office July 1, 2020.



Sister Patricia Schifini, OSU, Sister Maureen Welch, OSU, Sister Brenda Buckley, OSU

"For in these dangerous and pestilential times, you will find no other refuge than at the feet of Jesus Christ, as if He directs and teaches you, you will be well instructed."
(7th Counsel)



News from Brown County



How have the Ursulines of Brown County managed the physical distancing initiated to flatten the Coronavirus curve in Ohio? On March 17th the invitation was sent to the Community inviting the members to stay connected electronically and share what is happening in our enclosed worlds. The following are bits and pieces of some of the responses shared:

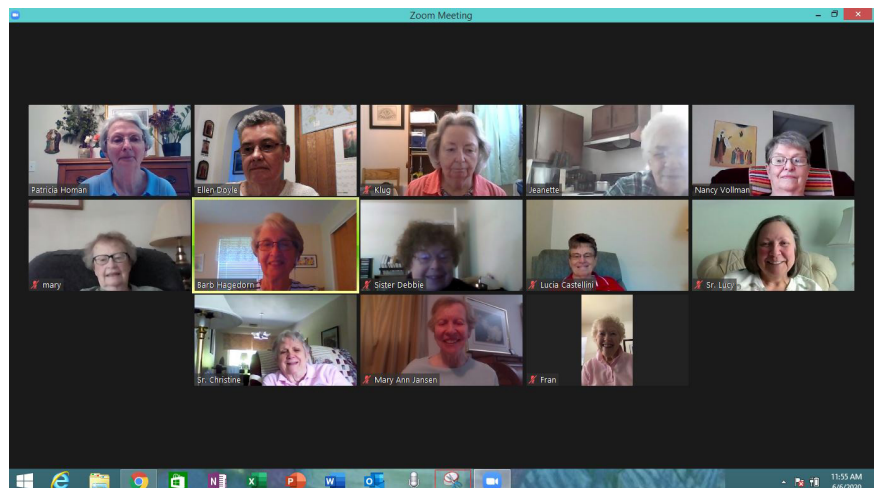
- Reading Maya Angelou's book "Mom & Me & Mom" and John Grisham's "The Reckoning"
- Breathing...Pausing...Praying...Reading...Knitting...Breathing
- Making soup and other goodies
- Sitting two at a table, appropriately spread in the large dining room, at the place that is open on our arrival. Kind of like Russian roulette.
- I bought cat food. I think I was the only one in PetSmart.
- We are doing St. Vincent DePaul visits by phone.
- We have a new normal at Hope. The staff with volunteer help, created the drive-thru food distribution process.
- The saddest thing for me and many during these days is the loss of our Holy Week and Easter gatherings.
- There are drawers to clean out, books to read and people to connect with who are home bound and vulnerable.
- There are so many twists and turns connected with this situation. We'll never catch up with them all!
- I will only do appointments via the phone.
- Let's pray as a Community for healing in our world.
- Thank you very much for the weekly prayer bits that you supply us with - somehow it makes us part of a whole when we are limited by space.
- I'm fine. Fridge is full. Freezer packed. Parks near-by. PBS shows DVR'd. Thanks for checking.

We are staying healthy and praying for each other and all of you!

Looking for something to do? Check out the new Ursulines of Brown County website: www.ursulinesofbc.org.

We have learned to Zoom!

Blessings, The Ursulines of Brown County



Company of St. Ursula of Canada: Pentecost Together by Zoom

Thérèse Bolduc, Vice-Directress



Quelle joie et en même temps quelle surprise lorsque Mary-Cabrini Durkin, Responsable du Groupe des u.s.a. à offert aux Membres du Québec de prier les 1^{res} Vêpres de la Pentecôte samedi le 30 mai, à 4h45 sur la plate-forme de **Vidéo Zoom**.

La demande acceptée, nous avons psalmodier en Français et Anglais comme nous l'avions fait tant de fois avec Jacqueline Morin.

Les membres de la Compagnie qui ne s'étaient pas rencontrées depuis 2 ans furent joyeuses de poursuivre la conversation jusqu'à 18h45. Les bonjours fusionnèrent allègrement, et lentement les voix s'éteignirent emportant les visages dans le lointain.

C'est une expérience à susciter à une autre occasion !

Merci à Mary-Cabrini et aux 4 autres qui ont pu rejoindre le réseau pour être ensemble.



What a pleasant surprise when Mary-Cabrini Durkin, leader of our Group in the USA, invited us in Quebec to pray First Vespers of Pentecost by **Zoom**.

In a true Pentecost experience, we prayed in French and English, as we had done long ago with Jacqueline Morin and our members of Toronto.

Some of us (across the border) had not been together for two years. Between praying and chatting, we spent two hours, with Marie Chantal as our translator. Our "Hellos" blended joyfully; finally the voices faded away, carrying faces off into the distance.

This is an experience to bring back another time!

Thanks to those who could get online to be together.

New Central Province Leadership Team Missioned

A new leadership team has been appointed and missioned for the Ursuline Sisters of the Central Province. Serving for the next five years are Sister Elisa Ryan, provincial; Sister Jean Hopman, councilor; and Sister Peggy Moore, councilor. A prayer service for the team transition was held June 9 at the provincial offices in St. Louis, Missouri.

Sister Elisa Ryan is a graduate of Ursuline Academy, St. Louis. Her Ursuline ministry has included high school education, as a teacher and principal. She previously served in leadership for the Ursulines, first in Central Province USA and then on their international leadership team in Rome. Most recently, she has been vocation director for the Ursulines of the United States provinces.

Sister Jean Hopman grew up in San Francisco and entered the Ursulines of the Western Province in Santa Rosa, California. Fluent in Spanish, she ministered with the Spanish-speaking in various settings for 20 years. She later was missioned to Chicago and eventually found her way to the Central Province. She served as co-director of vocation ministry for the USA Provinces until she was called to full-time Province leadership, where she has served the last three years with Sister Rita Ann Bregenhorn.

Sister Peggy Moore is a graduate of Ursuline Academy, Springfield, Illinois. She has served as a high school science, math and theology teacher as well as in high school campus ministry. In addition to teaching, she has served the Central Province in leadership as a local prioress and on the provincial council. She returns to ministry in the province after 10 years as a theology teacher at Ursuline Academy in St. Louis.



Serving on the 2020-2025 Central Province leadership team are, from left, Sisters Jean Hopman, Peggy Moore and Elisa Ryan.

Ursuline Sisters of Louisville

The Way Love Works

Sister Carol Curtis, OSU, of the Archdiocese of Louisville, a student in the Graduate Theology Program at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology, was awarded a Master's of Arts (Theology) degree at the end of the Spring 2020 semester.

Her thesis was titled: *The Way Love Works: The Charism of Community in St Angela Merici*.



Sister Carol Curtis

Some quotes from her thesis:

"Saint Angela Merici convokes the Company of Saint Ursula by beginning the Rule, *In the name of the blessed and undivided Trinity...* Her own reverence for the human person and the universal call to form community is grounded in this loving relationship of Persons. The creative interplay of person and community is modeled in the connection between Angela's personal spirituality and the foundational charism of the *Company of St. Ursula*."

"Angela images the disposition of ministry: *true love holds the beloved in the bosom...* Her posture of contemplative love mirrors the loving union of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the very ground of Christian communion. This purposeful and diffusive love is also the source of evangelical mission: *because that is the way true love acts...*"

"Charism is a living gift for others, which implies mission. The creative interplay of person and community is foundational for Angela's charism. Within the divine embrace, *in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, the Company is called into being."

In Your Midst Newsletter debuts



We created a photo newsletter, *In Your Midst*, to share the many creative ways Sisters, Associates, staff and others from our Louisville Ursuline family are finding to stay connected, support one another and help their communities during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Featured on the front of the newsletter are photos of our recently renovated Angela Merici grotto, lit green in

response to Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear's call to light a green light for all who have died from the Coronavirus as a sign of grieving as well as a sign of hope and compassion.

Two of the reflections that have been highlighted in the newsletter include:

A God Who Gives Us Hope

Are we able to find hope in this present situation of the Coronavirus? When we experience the God of compassion in our sorrow and brokenness, our defenses break down and we can allow God to enter into our hearts. Suffering, fear and grief is about courage in the midst of pain, compassion in the midst of suffering, healing in the midst of brokenness.

It is about endurance because we believe in a God of compassion, a God who suffers with us, a God who gives us hope.

By Sister Jean Anne Zappa, OSU

A Simple Gift

Stretch one of your hands out in front of you. Ask yourself: What has my hand done for others during this pandemic?

God has given us this simple gift.

I am awed by the ways people have used this simple gift during these traumatic weeks. Mother Teresa told us she was just a pencil in the hand of God. Let us, together, be a bundle of pencils, too, for good. Remember Michelangelo's painting of God the Father's finger stretched out to humankind? Put your hand out and let God touch yours. Just hope and trust and it will happen, I assure you.

Here is my prayer for you—may your hand perform many deeds of love.

By Sister Mary Lee Hansen, OSU

To see all the issues, see link below:

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/in-your-midst-may-2020-e-newsletter/>



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Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, *continued*

Praying Together Via Zoom

Several of our Sisters have been getting together via Zoom for a weekly prayer session. Sister Janet Peterworth remarks that, "We look like the Brady Bunch!" Shown are Sister Agnes Coveney, Sister Janet Peterworth, Sister Rita Dressman, Sister Barbara Bir, Sister Martha Jacob and Sister Mary Jo Gramig



Louisville Ursuline Sisters and Associates participate in June 5th prayerful protests in memory of Breonna Taylor in downtown Louisville

Friday, on what would have been Breonna Taylor's 27th birthday, several Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, SHS teachers and Associates of Ursuline Sisters of Louisville joined Spalding University students and friends in a prayerful protest and later some were downtown attending a protest in a larger group.

Sister Curtis, OSU, reflected, "Friday was Breonna Taylor's birthday and Religious Sisters of the area had just published their letter condemning racism and supporting reform, so I welcomed the opportunity to participate in Spalding's masked, socially-distanced #BlackLivesMatter demonstration. Sister Janet Marie Peterworth and I stood along with college students lining the block on 4th Street – we also met several associates and SHA staff (Lori Hadorn and Sharon Bidwell). When we returned to the square, we saw the Lockharts and Emily Mosby keeping their prayer vigil under the trees with several others, wise elders who experienced the 1960s civil rights movement. When Emily saw the sign Sister Rita Dressman had carefully lettered, Justice for All, she gently said, 'Yes, it's for everyone....'"



Sister Janet Peterworth with Associates Bob and Dottie Lockhart and Emily Mosby



Sisters Rita Dressman and Carol Curtis make signs



Sister Janet Peterworth, Sharon Manco Bidwell and Sister Carol Curtis

Around the Mount

Sisters in Maple Mount finding new ways to connect

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph are listening to the words of Saint Angela and reading the “signs of the times” as they persevere through this Covid-19 crisis.

Like most religious communities, keeping safe distances and wearing masks has become the norm, but so have new ways of connecting. Sisters who live in the long-term care section of Maple Mount – Saint Joseph Villa – have eaten their meals in their rooms rather than communally. But other Sisters on campus take turns delivering their trays and picking them up, enjoying one-on-one time that they might not have otherwise had.

A small group of Sisters say the rosary at 11:30 a.m. daily in the main chapel to pray for vocations. This allows the Sisters in Saint Joseph Villa to participate from their rooms on closed circuit TV.

The Sunday Mass has been live streamed since the shut-down began, which has allowed the public to make connections in new ways. At least 600 Facebook users regularly join the Sisters at Mass.

The sisters are remaining cheerful and adapting to the changes. They play bingo at a distance, and with some help, have requested their absentee ballots for Kentucky’s June primary election, which the state is allowing to occur by mail.



Sister Marcella Schrant smiles in her room in Saint Joseph Villa as Sister Hang Nguyen brings her a supper tray on June 7. Due to coronavirus protocols, the Villa Sisters have been eating in their rooms more often as other sisters volunteer to deliver and pick up their trays. Sister Hang is a Missionary Sister of Mary, Queen of the World. She is one of six Vietnamese women religious currently living at Mount Saint Joseph in Maple Mount, Ky., while studying at Brescia University in Owensboro, Ky. Photo by Sister Ruth Gehres, OSU.

Retreat Center working toward online and in-person programming

The Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center closed March 20 due to the pandemic, but its leadership is working on a combination of online and in-person programming in the coming months.

The “Mount on the Road” program made its debut June 3, with Maryann Joyce, Center director, bringing “12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality” to St. Stephen Cathedral. A diocesan grant helps cover costs of programming to make it more accessible to those who are hindered from attending events in Maple Mount.

The Center is also developing online retreats through the rest of this year, with themes centered on offering the emotional and spiritual support people may need in times of crisis and disruption. Some of these may include coping with grief through Covid-19, getting our footing in a new landscape, and sharing and honoring our stories.

If social distancing rules are relaxed this fall, the Center is bringing in Sister Melannie Svoboda, a School Sister of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, to offer “Holding onto Hope” on Oct. 2-4. Perhaps now more than ever we need to be reminded that as Christians, we are called to be people of hope. This retreat explores Christian hope and its relation to faith, love, wonder and courage.

Learn more and register at ursulinesmsj.org.



↑Participant Gary Trogden, right, responds to a question during the “12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality: Powerful Lessons to Living Agelessly” program.



←Presenter Maryann Joyce discusses being “Ageless in the Lord,” at the first “12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality” class held in Owensboro, Ky. According to class materials, aging is one of the “master teachers” of life (along with sickness and relationships).

News from the Ursulines of Tildonk

Sr. Lisa Bergeron - Feeding the Hungry During the Pandemic

Sr. Lisa Bergeron has been serving on the front lines of the pandemic feeding the hungry as Director of Parish Social Ministry at St. John Nepomucene Church in Bohemia, NY. The pantry has continued to provide no-contact food pickup and food deliveries to families throughout the community, thanks to the extraordinary generosity and support of parishioners, the parish's priests, deacons, and particularly the Pastor, Father Joe Schlafer, and Sr. Lisa's dedicated team of parish volunteers.

The pantry is also providing food to families in other parishes on Long Island whose food pantries were closed due to the virus. Families living in such areas are welcome to come twice a month for supplemental food until the pantries serving their communities are re-opened. St. John Nepomucene food pantry typically serves approximately 110-150 families per month, depending on the time of year. Yet, last week alone, the pantry provided three meals a day to 50 families, and 36 of those families received no-contact delivery of their meals by volunteers.

"We're really blessed to have all of our volunteers," said Sr. Lisa. "Their generosity and their kindness has just been exceptional." She added, "How blessed we all are, that we can participate, each in our own way, in this essential work. I can only do this work, because there are so many people who have responded to God's prompting, and make themselves present, and say, 'I want to be a part of that. What can I do to help?'"



Sr. Lisa noted that the generosity of parishioners has been wonderful throughout the pandemic, with many people bringing in groceries and gift cards, baking, making sandwiches, and making masks for those in need. Sr. Lisa added, "It isn't just the food that we provide them; it's the hope, and the love."

She added, "I think it's very important, because this is a dark time in our country and in our world. And part of the hope that comes, is from seeing people respond with compassion and generosity."

Sr. Lisa and her volunteers adhere to public safety protocol including wearing masks, handwashing, and physical distancing during pickups and deliveries.

"When we feed others, it's one of the most basic human experiences, and yet it can also be the most transcendent human experience, because it allows us to be an instrument of God's grace," said Sr. Lisa.

"To be a channel of God's mercy, is a powerfully transformative experience. And if we allow ourselves to be used by God, then we will be changed, and we will change the world, one person, one meal, one can of soup at a time. Every one of us can make a difference, and build the reign of God's love, which is marked by peace, and justice, and compassion and mercy."

Sr. Edith Menegus - On the Front Lines

Sr. Edith Menegus is working on the front lines of the pandemic as Director of Pastoral Care at St. Charles Hospital and St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center. Here she is pictured in "Blessing of Hands" for nurses.



Ursuline Sisters of Chatham

"A New Chapter"

Earth Mama's powerful song, "A New Chapter" has been an underlying motif in the Community since it



became the theme song for Chapter 2017 during which we made the decision together to sell our Community residence, Villa Angela, and rent back space for our sisters to continue to live there. On May 1, 2020, in the midst of a global pandemic, that decision became a reality when Jarlette Health Services assumed ownership and management of the residence and Villa Angela became Angela's Meadow Retirement Lodge. In these following weeks Sisters and staff members are gradually adjusting to the 'Jarlette' way of doing things.

While there have been some minor furniture rearrangements and some rooms repurposed to meet needs of residents and staff, for the most part the physical space is the same. The majority of staff members have remained and this is certainly a consolation to the sisters as they absorb the changes, small and large, that come from such a transition in the midst of COVID-19.

The sisters await the opportunity to gather for an official farewell to retired Executive Assistant, Sandra Charron, who was employed right after her graduation from Ursuline Business College and has worked faithfully and expertly with us for the past 46 years. Community members have known Sandy longer than her own husband has known her, since she did not marry until after she had been working with us for a number of years. Sandy and her extended family are truly part of the Ursuline family.



We look forward to the lifting of restrictions due to the pandemic when we can once again visit with the sisters now confined to the health care wing, as well as those living in townhouses on the property, and beyond Villa Angela. It will be wonderful to once again gather with others at meal times, for social activities and the

celebration of Eucharist. At the same time, we realize that these protocols which everyone has followed so carefully have helped to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Our next adventure, which could begin any time now, will be to welcome new residents from the community at large since there are several rooms ready for occupancy. We will be sharing this residence with people from the area who choose to rent space here. Our spirit of hospitality will find new and interesting ways to express itself. This is indeed, in the music of Earth Mama, "...the next chapter of our story" and "Our hearts are opened wide; our steps are sanctified for a New Chapter in our life."

The Taylor Fund

Each year we award money from the Taylor Fund to successful applicants seeking support for projects with a focus on women, youth, justice and creativity. Named after Mother Kathleen Taylor, a woman of vision and a supporter of the arts, these funds have assisted with many interesting projects throughout the years.



One group receiving funds this year is *Hope Housing*, a local supportive housing group beginning a new program called *Women Rising Together*. This initiative is aimed at education to increase tenant rights, advocacy, nutrition, household management, self-care, neighborhood networking and relationship building. This formative series will support women and their families to maintain stability and strengthen their community. The women of Hope Housing are generally single women with children, employed in minimum wage jobs or requiring social assistance.

The second applicant receiving funds is [Alyssa Broeders](#), a former Ursuline College student, who will be participating in conservation research through an academic partnership with [Operation Wallacea](#) and [McMaster University](#). Operation Wallacea runs a series of biological and conservation management research programs in remote locations across the world. These expeditions are designed with specific wildlife conservation aims in mind. Alyssa will participate in ongoing research monitoring changes in forest structure and biodiversity. She also hopes to assist in research regarding local carbon emissions to collect data that can be used to reduce carbon emission on a global scale. We look forward to hearing a report from Alyssa when she returns from her experience.



Update from the Cincinnati Ursulines

Cincinnati's Response to COVID-19

We've all heard the repeated warnings. "Assume you have it! Wear a mask! Keep social distance! Avoid group situations!" The Cincinnati Ursulines are doing our best to follow the advice. And we feel very blessed to not have the challenges of congregate living, as we have no sisters in care settings and we each live alone. Of course, that raises challenges to our desire to stay connected with each other. For two of our sisters, loneliness is eased by their shared custody of a dog. The "non-custodial" sister goes daily to walk Leon and to visit the other "parent." Others of us stay connected by phone calls or email. Zoom conferencing has served us well. But those of us who were able to participate appreciated the opportunity for a recent outdoor gathering at one sister's home.

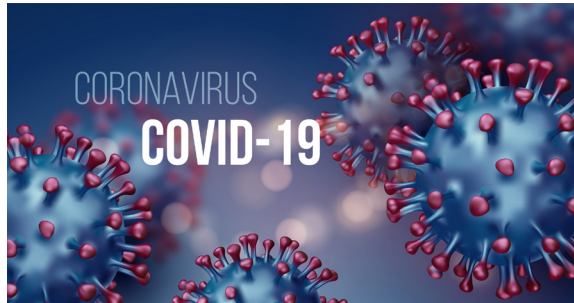
Ministry, of course, is impacted these days. "St. Vincent de Paul visits by phone are just not the same as in-person visits," says one. Another has been trying to adjust to a new ministry while working mostly from home. Those of us involved to varying degrees with our schools and their administration and also with community leadership find that Zoom meetings can tend to occupy many hours each day!

From the leadership and business perspectives, we have, amazingly, accomplished the sale of our one last piece of property – a two-family in which two of us have lived for eighteen years. The one sister resident had found a new home just prior to the shut-down and accomplished her move in late April. That was a feat, given the need for physical distancing! The second resident has finally found a new home and plans an August move. Our divestiture of the property is bittersweet!

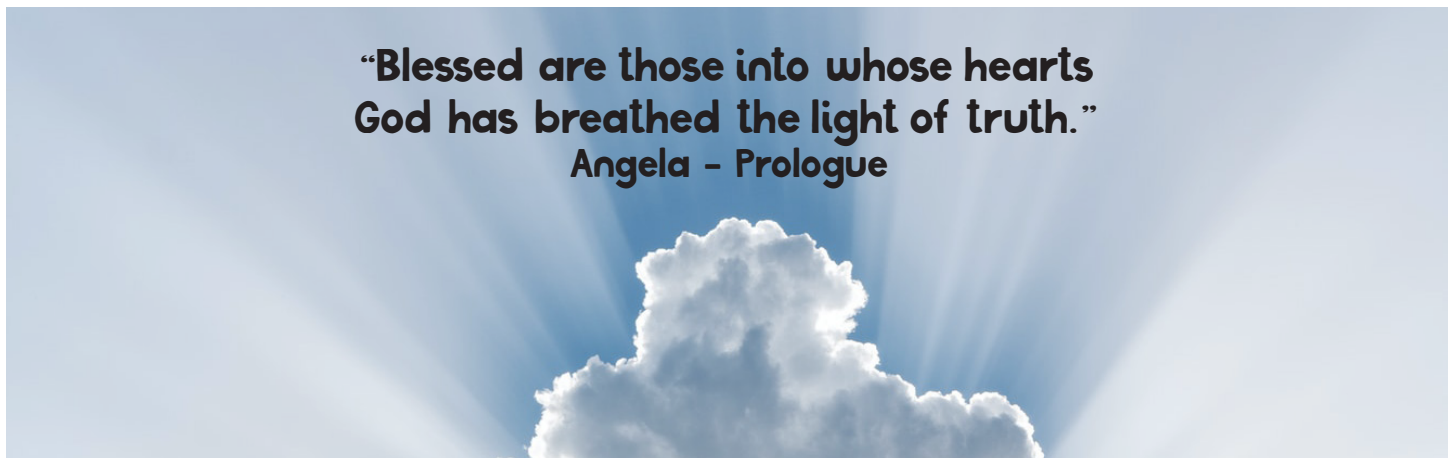
We admire and support the NAULC communities that have re-scheduled chapters and elections and others who found ways to celebrate installation of new leaders in virtual fashion or to celebrate the lives of those who have died while physically distanced. Perhaps our biggest anxiety has been awaiting a response from our Archbishop to a letter requesting a changed sponsorship arrangement for our schools. This is a critical part of our transition of leadership, which we hope will be a story for a future Convergence.

Our small size and our separate living arrangement has reduced our community liturgical celebrations, other than the occasional funeral, to the feast of St. Angela – hosted on alternate years by Brown County and Cincinnati – and Holy Thursday. The invitation list includes the Brown County sisters and their

companions in addition to some of our friends and our former members. For some of us, the Holy Thursday gathering is a big deal, and its cancellation this year hit hard. So when NCR's Global Sisters Report published its May 21 article on relationships between congregations and their former members, Sr. Margie saw the opportunity to share it with our former members. See the article at <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/spirituality/gone-not-forgotten-many-ex-sisters-stay-connected-former-communities?clickSource=email>. The outreach motivated one former member to propose, and several others to pick up on the suggestion, to arrange for a virtual visit with the sisters. An advantage to the virtual, rather than in-person, gathering is that those who don't live locally will be able to attend. Planning is in the works at this writing! We may have a follow-up report for the next Convergence.



**"Blessed are those into whose hearts
God has breathed the light of truth."
Angela - Prologue**





Quilting for a Good Cause

← Jo Anna Pearson of Columbus, Ga., holds up a “quillow” – a quilt that folds into a pillow – at the Quilting Friends retreat the week of Feb. 22-26 at the Mount Saint Joseph Conference and Retreat Center. The Quilting Friends come to Maple Mount, Ky., each February and use donated fabric to make beautiful quilt tops and other items that they leave for the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph. The tops are machine quilted and then sold to benefit the Sisters’ ministries, including in fundraising events like the Quilt Raffle that is coming up Sept. 13.



↑ Merline Long, of Louisville, Ky., works on quilt blocks with her Singer sewing machine on Feb. 25 at the Quilting Friends retreat at Mount Saint Joseph in Maple Mount, Ky.



↑ Mount Saint Joseph employees Dianna Robbins, a nurse, and Edward Wilson, archivist, look over finished quilt tops made by the Quilting Friends. They were on display in the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph small dining room on Feb. 25.

MORE PHOTOS FROM DOWNTOWN LOUISVILLE PRAYERFUL PROTESTS

Spalding University President
Tori Murden-McClare with
students.



Spalding University students, and Muhammad Ali's bike hanging over the Spalding University sign.

Central Province Sisters Adapt According to the Times

During this pandemic, Ursulines throughout the Central Province have been finding new ways to pray together and with others while apart, help the most vulnerable among us, and spread messages of hope and faith.

Here are a few of their stories:

Since February, Sister Mary Jacqueline Pratt has been facilitating Sunday scripture sharing for a small group at Mother of Perpetual Help in St. Louis. When all group activities were canceled on March 16, the activity director asked if she would facilitate scripture sharing each day. Since lockdown began, she has been meeting in the chapel with a group of about 10 residents—spaced six feet apart—for prayer and sharing on the daily scripture.

Meeting Monday through Friday for about 45 minutes, Sister Mary Jacqueline says, “Initially, it seemed like ‘work,’ but now that we are in a rhythm, it has become a fruitful way to begin the day.”



Sister Mary Jacqueline Pratt in chapel

Just before the coronavirus lockdown, the Ursuline community of five on Fairdale in St. Louis made and distributed cards to their neighbors in the 24 houses on their street. The card read:

“Dear Neighbor, We, Catholic Sisters who live at the beginning of Fairdale Avenue, want you to know that we care about you and pray for you, your family and loved ones. This is a very challenging time for our whole world, but we trust that God is with us always. If, at any time, you have a special need or intention that you would like us to include in your prayers just email or phone us (email and phone number included,) and we will put it on our prayer table. United with you all, Sisters Elisa, Mary Ellen, Pauline, Rita Ann and Susan.”



Prayer requests that they received in response were put in the “prayer bowl” on the table where they gather each day for community prayer.

Sister Mary Lapping, who has been teaching immigrants in St. Louis in recent years, has found new ways to help them while social distancing.

“Recently, with the onset of the coronavirus, I’ve had to stop classes with two of my students,” she says. “Neither speaks English well enough to communicate by electronic means, but the husband of one does. So, we have been in communication about the CDC guidelines. I want to make sure they understand what to do to keep safe during this outbreak.

I have also been in touch with a couple of past students to help them understand what hand sanitizers are and how to disinfect surfaces.

“Also, they are finding the communications about the census difficult to understand, so we’ve been talking about that and how to proceed.”

Ursuline mask makers have been at work across the province, including Sister Karen Schwane in San Antonio and Sister Susan Kienzler in St. Louis. Sister Karen wears one of her own creations while joining the Sisters of Divine Providence in their sewing room. They are making masks for the staff in the Sisters of Divine Providence’s skilled care facility. Sister Susan is making masks for her community as well as her nephew, a nurse assigned to a COVID-19 unit in Denver, and his co-workers.



Sister Karen Schwane (left) and Sister Susan Kienzler making masks

- continued on next page

Central Province Sisters Adapt According to the Times - continued



Because of COVID-19, our sisters in New Orleans and their SBP (St. Bernard Parish) partners working on Ursuline-sponsored houses have been unable to go out and rebuild. Instead, they are keeping in touch by phone with those they have helped, offering hope, encouragement and, when needed, food.

As a sign of hope in their Valence Street neighborhood, Sisters Regina Marie Fronmuller, Ginger Cirone, Mary Anne Holmes (and Magdalita Roussel) painted a rainbow on their driveway!

Adaptability can be key to success in helping others these days, and the sisters in our Sutherland community in St. Louis adapted quickly.

Notes Sister Madonna O'Hara, "Our Sutherland community (St. Louis) had offered to prepare a meal for the 20 persons presently in the Room at the Inn program for homeless families. A week before, we received word that their policy needed to change, and they no longer could accept prepared food from the outside. However, we were able to direct our energies to the lunch program at St. Vincent de Paul Parish by getting prepackaged items for the huge numbers of lunches they give out daily.



*Sister Madonna O'Hara
in the kitchen*

"As with so much of our lives these days, I have come to realize that efforts to help others need to be flexible and easily changed."

When quarantine began, Sisters Theresa Davey, Brendan Jacoby and Nancy Vandevier in Springfield, Illinois, added a time each morning to pray together for those affected by the virus. They posted a sign of hope in their front yard and spent much of their days in quarantine calling, texting and writing friends of their Springfield community, Ursulines in assisted-living and skilled-care facilities—and elsewhere around the province—and their families and friends.

During this pandemic, self-care is important, too. After doing what they can to support and comfort others, Sisters Nancy Vandevier, Brendan Jacoby and Theresa Davey in

Springfield, Illinois, look after their own health by working out in their basement gym.

Meanwhile, Sister Rosemary Skelley in nearby Decatur spends time each day at her parish church, where parishioners often come to speak with her - from a safe distance. The conversations are mutually beneficial, she says.



*Sister Nancy Vandevier (left) and Sister Brendan Jacoby
exercise in their basement gym*



The Central Province distantly celebrated the birthday of their oldest member, Sister Mary Ann Luth, who turned 100 on May 28. The sisters sent cake, flowers and balloons into the care facility where she lives in Eureka, Missouri, and gathered outside with a sign, offering birthday greetings to this remarkable woman on this momentous occasion



Celebrating with our Jubilarians

75 Years

Sister Anne Cecile Muldoon (Cleveland)

70 Years

Sister Margaret O'Brien (Cleveland)

Sister Ruth Marie Behrend (Cleveland)

Sister Helen Marie Davidson (Cleveland)

Sister Marie Michelle Gouttiere (Cleveland)

60 Years

Sister Rose Mary Hoge (Cleveland)

Sister Karen Bohan (Cleveland)

Sister Donna Kristoff (Cleveland)

Sister Miriam Fidelis Pinchot (Cleveland)

Sister Martha Owen (Cleveland)

Sister Colette Livingston (Cleveland)

Sister Carmen Hocevar (Cleveland)

Sister Rose Elizabeth Terrell (Cleveland)



Sister Barbara Eppich (Cleveland)

Sister Mary Angela Matthews (Maple Mount)

Sister Delores "Dee" Long (Maple Mount)

Sister Lorraine (Juanita) Maginot (Louisville)

Sister Isabel Lehmenkuler (Louisville)

Sister Jane (Hilary) Stuckenberg (Louisville)

Sister Bernadine (Emmet) Nash (Louisville)

Sister Ursula Leibold (Tildonk)

Sister Mary Peter Bachand (Central Province)

Sister Mary Patrice Clifford (Central Province)

Sister Celeste Cour (Central Province)

*Pray for our Sisters
who have entered into
Eternal Life*



NAULC Convergence

Vol. 17, No. 2

Deadline for the Fall 2020 issue of
NAULC Convergence is September 28, 2020.

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



Toledo Ursulines, Associates and friends socially distanced to honor and celebrate Sister Antoinette Cosentino on her 103rd birthday by holding signs and balloons and singing "Happy Birthday" to her from outside her window of the Ursuline Center.

