



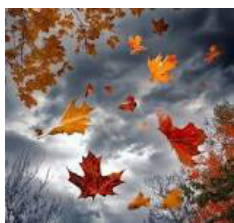
Ursuline Newsletter

Ursuline Sisters of Toledo, Ohio
4045 Indian Road, Toledo, OH • Vol. 50 No. 9 • October 2026

Leadership Corner by Sr. Donna

Autumn – the Season of Longings and Transitions

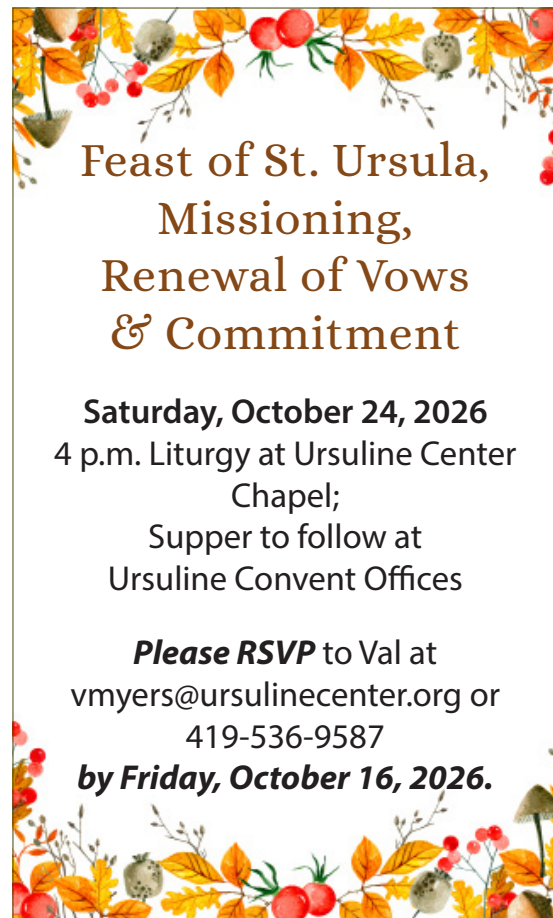
October is my favorite month and autumn is my favorite season of the year. I am always amazed at how much this season offers for reflection: beauty, color, gratitude, surrender, transition, transformation, shadows, shorter days and longer nights.



Autumn also implies a sense of longing. Summer days are gone and winter days loom ahead. We are not yet ready to let go. Yet God has given us this special time to transition ourselves from one season to the next. Life goes on and change is with us in a new way. Autumn speaks of mystery and God's presence in a different way.

Our Community has gone through a major transition in governance since June 12. Adjusting to new leadership, new office hours, a "getting-to-know-you" phase and some adjustments with civil and canonical documents, we find God inviting us to move inward to keep sacred the memories of what used-to-be, to what is. As we approach Thanksgiving in November, we are called to give thanks and express our gratitude to God for all the gifts we have been given. Our blessings become the sustenance and nourishment that carry us through this cycle of life until next spring.

Autumn is constantly reminding us that life goes on and brings changes, encouraging us to look at new ways to ready ourselves for the unexpected. We move on as the flow of God's grace continues to enrich the very core of our beings. Each of us has particular desires and longings that ache for tender care and kindness. Sometimes change hurts and brings sorrow. As each leaf falls to the ground and the trees become bare, we too, might reflect on the leaves that must fall from our lives in order to bring about transformation, new life and somehow brings us closer to God.



**Feast of St. Ursula,
Missioning,
Renewal of Vows
& Commitment**

Saturday, October 24, 2026
4 p.m. Liturgy at Ursuline Center
Chapel;
Supper to follow at
Ursuline Convent Offices

Please RSVP to Val at
vmyers@ursulinecenter.org or
419-536-9587
by Friday, October 16, 2026.

Remembering Nazareth Hall

Nazareth Hall, once owned by the Ursuline Sisters and now being used as an event center, is celebrating the upcoming 100th anniversary of the building. In anticipation for this, Nazareth Hall is preparing a documentary style video bridging the gap between the school days and present day. If you are an alumni of the school and are interested in participating, please email pam@nazarethhall.com!



Archive Snapshots



Sister Rita Marie Hittler

Sister Rita Marie Hittler was born in Sylvania, Ohio, in 1907. She attended St. Agnes School and graduated from Central Catholic High School. Sister Rita Marie entered the Ursuline Convent in 1928 and continued her education at Mary Manse

College and Toledo Teachers' College. She received her master's degree in French from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and pursued further studies at the Institut Pédagogique in Montreal, Canada; Georgetown University; and the University of Geneva in Switzerland.

Before receiving her master's degree, Sister Rita Marie taught in the elementary schools at St. Agnes and St. Francis de Sales. She later taught French at St. Ursula Academy and then at Mary Manse College. Sister Rita Marie was instrumental in establishing a language lab at Mary Manse and was a strong advocate for the use of audiovisual equipment in the teaching of foreign languages. After retiring from Mary Manse, she worked at St. Angela Hall as secretary to the principals and also cared for the Ecumenical Library.

Sister Rita Marie was always very ladylike, and some might have described her as "straight-laced." She also had a keen sense of the absurd and enjoyed talking with people, listening to their stories, and sharing a good time with them.

She died on October 11, 1998, at the age of 90.

*"I assure you that all the graces you ask of God
will be granted to you"*

(St. Angela Merici, Intro to the Counsels)



Rest In Peace

John Pierson, brother of Barbara Pierson
Mertes, SUA '74 ~ August 25

Douglas Breno, husband of Jacqueline Roberts
Breno, MMC '64 ~ August 26

Juanita Mayer Maas, SUA '62 ~ August 28

Julie Wisniewski Scherer, sister of Anne Marie
Wisniewski Swiergosz, SUA '72 and Connie
Wisniewski Gleave, SUA '73 ~ September 2

Tamra Dorr Kristoff, MMC '64 ~ September 5

Sr. M. Magdala Davlin, OSF/S ~ September 9

Carol Karst Walker, sister of Judy Karst Myers,
SUA '57; MMC '61 ~ September 10

Mary Jo Schnapp Antalek, MMC '59 ~
September 13

Sr. M. Clarinda Coffel, OSF/S ~ September 17

Painting Donated to a Good Cause

The Ursuline Sisters donated a painting by Sister Jane Catherine Lauer titled, "Three Kings," to the Sylvania Franciscans to be auctioned off at its Gala on September 19.

The painting was one of the top sellers with 14 bids and selling for \$520! The person who won the painting was said to be so very excited and "tickled" to get it in the end!



Ursuline Education Foundation

The Ursuline Sisters of Toledo have been planning their future for many years now. Most recently, in June of 2026, canonical leadership of the Toledo Community was transitioned to Sister Sharon Derivan, OSF of Sylvania. Sister Sharon is the Congregational Minister for her community and has delegated Sister Shannon Schrein, OSF of Sylvania, as the new canonical appointed leader for the Ursuline Sisters with Sister Sandy Sherman and Sister Donna Frey as leadership advisors. (See the latest URSU-LINE fall edition on the website www.toledoursulines.org under Publications.)

A second transition for the Ursuline Sisters will take place in the beginning months of 2027. The following is an excerpt from a letter that was sent to the parents of St. Ursula Academy regarding the sponsorship of SUA in order to maintain Catholic and Ursuline Identity for years to come.

"Following in the spirit of St. Angela Merici, who guides us, 'If, according to times and circumstances, the need arises to make new rules or do something differently, do it prudently and with good advice,' the Ursuline Sisters asked a hard, faithful question: how do we ensure St. Ursula Academy remains Catholic and Ursuline for generations to come?"

"They found their answer in transferring SUA sponsorship to the Ursuline Education Foundation (UEF), whose purpose is to secure

the continuation of Ursuline education in the United States. UEF is a community of Ursuline schools, all fostering the same Catholic and Ursuline charism we have carried since 1854. Approved by the Vatican in 2022, UEF was formed to sponsor Ursuline schools whose Sisters are aging and are no longer able to continue in leadership. UEF already sponsors seven other Ursuline schools nationwide, including Ursuline Academy in New Orleans, celebrating its 300th anniversary next year. With schools located in the Midwest, East, and South, we will be in great company! You can learn more about UEF at www.uefschools.org."



Our Ursuline Community has worked closely with Mary Werner, President of SUA, in the application process. The traditions, formation, and the rhythm of SUA life remain. No changes in the curriculum, classrooms or students. SUA remains Catholic and Ursuline.

A visit from the UEF took place September 13-15 at SUA. The team met with Mary Werner, Sister Sandy Sherman, Sister Shannon Schrein, and various Focus Groups. This was very successful and filled with great hope! Stay tuned for next steps in 2027.

8 CORE VALUES OF AN URSULINE EDUCATION

Over the next eight months, we will highlight one core value of an Ursuline education.

3 SERVICE

We believe compassionate service and reflection are integral to our faith and to each student's engagement in a global society, preparing her to be an ethical, engaged, and socially-conscious citizen.



Sister Update

Sister Claudia Holtz
Rosary Care Center
6832 Convent Blvd., #223
Sylvania, OH 43560

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the November 2026 newsletter is Thursday, October 22. Please send your stories to Michelle at mscazzero@ursulinecenter.org.



LCWR⁺ Update

OCTOBER 2026

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

2026 LCWR 70th Anniversary

Before the first words were spoken from the stage, the story had already begun.

Women and men religious, along with partners and representatives from different conferences and organizations, were arriving in Orlando, greeting old friends, meeting new ones, finding their tables, and bringing with them the stories of their congregations, communities, ministries, countries, and cultures. Different charisms were present in the room, different experiences of religious life, and different ways of living the same call. Little by little, this large and diverse gathering began to feel like one community.

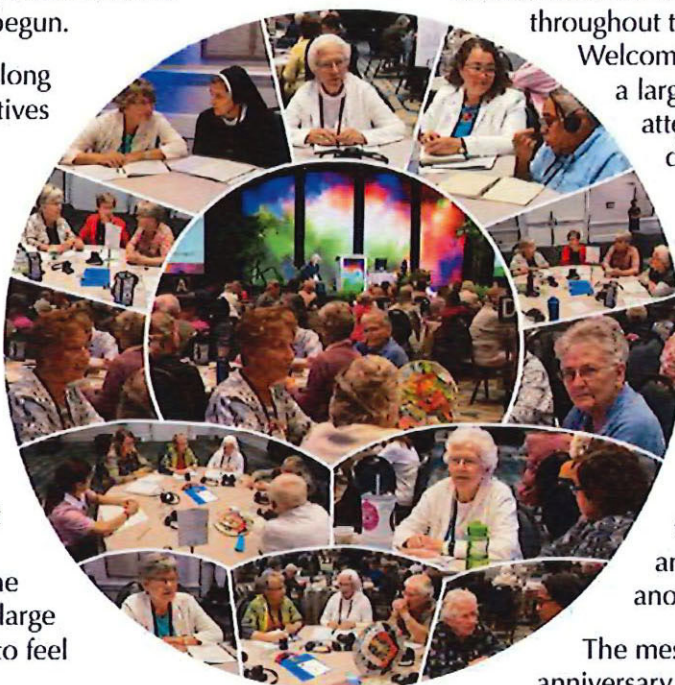
This was the beginning of [LCWR's 70th anniversary celebration](#), August 11-14, gathered around the theme, "Many Charisms, One Spirit, One Call." Women and men religious from Canada, the United States, and Latin America came together for this special gathering across the Americas, creating a space for conversation, listening, prayer, and encounter.

From the opening evening, the diversity of the gathering became visible. Representatives of participating conferences and organizations carried symbols of their communities toward the stage and placed them within the sacred space prepared. One by one, the symbols came together, each holding its own story and identity, yet now sharing the same space.

Behind these four days was an extraordinary amount of preparation. Nix Conference & Meeting Management

offered excellent service and organization throughout the celebration.

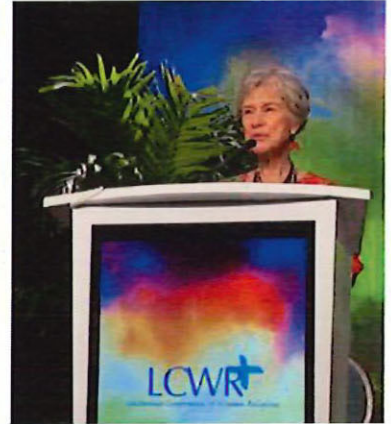
Welcoming and caring for such a large gathering required attention to countless details, from registration and accommodations to meals, meeting spaces, technology, and hospitality. Their work, together with the preparation of LCWR staff and all those involved, helped create an environment where participants could enter fully into the experience and be present to one another.



The messages received for the anniversary carried the celebration beyond the walls of the gathering. Pope Leo XIV sent a special message to LCWR, recognizing the witness of consecrated women and men and reminding them of the richness that their many charisms bring to the life and mission of the church. Sister Simona Brambilla, MC, prefect of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, also addressed those gathered in Orlando.

Archbishop Gabriele Giordano Caccia, apostolic nuncio to the United States, sent his greetings for LCWR's 70th anniversary. His message connected this moment of celebration with the larger journey of religious life and the church, offering encouragement as LCWR continues to live its mission in a changing world.

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Bishop William Wack, CSC, who has accompanied LCWR as its episcopal liaison, also offered a message to the gathering, adding his voice to those celebrating this important moment in LCWR's history. Also, Bishop John Noonan of the Orlando diocese sent greetings.

Undersecretary of the Synod of Bishop Nathalie Becquart, XMCJ, invited participants to reflect on the [synodal journey](#) and what it asks of consecrated religious life today. She spoke of synodality as a journey we make together, learning to listen more deeply to one another and to the Spirit, and recognizing that no one walks this path alone. The journey calls us to remain open to others, especially to voices that may not always be heard, and to discern together where God may be leading.

Among the words that stayed with the assembly was her reminder that the Spirit will never stop moving

and that God will never call us to the impossible. Her message carried a sense of trust and hope, inviting religious life to keep moving forward even when the path is not yet clear, trusting that the Spirit continues to accompany the journey.

LCWR president Vicky Larson, PBVM in [her address](#), "Harmony for a New Era: Listening to Many Charisms, One Spirit, One Call," invited the gathering to imagine religious life as a living harmony, where different charisms and experiences do not need to become the same, but can create something stronger and more beautiful together. She called participants to deep, Spirit-led listening and to remain open to a future still unfolding, trusting that religious life can continue to respond with courage to the cries of the world and the needs of this time.

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Other voices continued to open the conversations. Mila Díaz Solano, OP, reflected on “Many Charisms: Gifts for a Wounded World.” Mary Gabriel Devlin, SV, invited the gathering into “One Spirit: Listening for God in Our Time.” Michael Perras, OFM, reflected on “One Call: Responding Mystically and Prophetically.” Sister Maria Elena Martinez, OSF, who facilitated the gathering, joined Nathalie in dialogue with the assembly. Kathy Fletcher Wray accompanied the gathering as liturgist, helping prayer remain woven throughout the experience.

Throughout the anniversary, participants were invited to join the [Walk for Peace](#), making the simple act of walking a shared witness for peace. On the final morning came the [Jericho Walk](#) of Lament and Hope. Together, participants walked and prayed with some of the painful realities present in our world. The walk held concerns for human dignity, migration, racism, violence, poverty, care for Earth, and voting rights. It was a reminder that celebrating LCWR’s history also means remaining attentive to the realities of the present.

And somewhere within all the listening, conversations, prayer, laughter, meals, and walking together, there was also time to remember.

Seventy years carries many stories.

A special [anniversary tribute](#) brought LCWR’s journey from 1956 to the present into the celebration, remembering some of the women, moments, challenges, decisions, and changes that have shaped the conference.

A very special thank you goes to Annmarie Sanders, IHM, who prepared the 70th anniversary tribute with such care and attention. Through the history, images, and stories she gathered, the tribute allowed those present to see again the journey LCWR has traveled and to remember the women whose courage, faithfulness, and vision helped shape that journey.

The final day carried another kind of movement. There was gratitude for those who had served, recognition of leadership given, and the passing of responsibility forward. Vicky Larson, PBVM, moved into the role of past-president; Debra Sciano, SSND, became president; and Betsy Pawlicki, OP, became president-elect.

Then came the celebration, a fiesta dinner, music, dancing, laughter, photographs, conversations, and the simple joy of being together.

People arrived carrying their own stories. They left carrying pieces of one another’s stories too,

conversations from around the tables, words that challenged them, moments of silence, prayers offered together, miles walked for peace, new relationships, friendships renewed, and memories of the women who helped shape LCWR over the past 70 years.

This is what made the anniversary feel less like looking back and more like continuing a journey.

The story that began before the first words were spoken from the stage did not end when the gathering closed in Orlando. It traveled home with women and men returning to different communities, countries, ministries, conferences, and organizations, carrying with them many charisms, one Spirit, and one call.



2026 Anniversary Resources

The following recordings and materials from the LCWR 70th anniversary celebration are available on the LCWR website.

- Video tribute of LCWR’s 70-year history
- Recording and text in English and Spanish of Pope Leo XIV’s message
- Recording and text in English, Spanish, and Italian of Sister Simona Brambilla, MC’s message
- Recording and text in English and Spanish of the LCWR presidential address by Vicky Larson, PBVM
- Recording and text in English, Spanish, and French of keynote address by Nathalie Becquart, XMCJ

Good to Know about St. Ursula

by Sister Donna Frey

I would like to share an interesting tidbit I found when I was teaching about St. Ursula at St. Ursula Academy years ago. Most of us know that St. Ursula's story is remarkably unbelievable, yet there is some truth to the information we have been given. I found a video called "The Story Behind the Badge" about the finding of a badge with the image of St. Ursula. Through AI, I recently found this information.



Ursula Badge

Saint Ursula is traditionally believed to be buried in the [Basilica of St. Ursula](#) located in Cologne, Germany.
reason2bcatholic.com

The Basilica: The church was built over an ancient Roman cemetery where legend says Ursula and her companions were massacred by the Huns around 383 AD.

reason2bcatholic.com +1

The Golden Chamber: The [Basilica of St. Ursula](#) houses a famous 17th-century chapel known as the *Golden Chamber (Goldene Kammer)*, which displays thousands of human bones recovered from the ancient burial site and attributed to her and her 11,000 virgin followers.

Wikipedia +2

The Tomb: A reclining alabaster statue of Saint Ursula lies over her Baroque black marble tomb inside the north transept of the basilica.

Art & Theology



Ursula Basilica



Ursula Wall

To view the video google "The Story Behind the Badge – St. Ursula"

With Gratitude, We Say Farewell



The Ursuline Sisters bid a fond farewell to Sister Mary Jo Szpila, SND, who served as our Pastoral Care Director for the past 10 years, during a luncheon at Rosary Care Center on September 24. Sister Mary Jo will continue in her expanded role as community coordinator for the Sisters of Notre Dame who reside in the greater Toledo area.

"I have many happy memories of being with all of you - Sisters, Associates and staff - as part of St. Angela's world," Sister Mary Jo said. She reminisced about the times she blessed the hands of the employees at the Center, invited Priests to say Mass, lead spiritual committees, and joined the Director to notify residents of the Center's closing. From the

strains of stories learned, confidences shared and friendships made, Sister Mary Jo said she is grateful for life's journey, its many destinations and the friends she's made along the way.

Sister Mary Jo, we wish you all the best in your new endeavor and look forward to seeing you at upcoming Ursuline events.

CALENDAR

October 2026

- 4 Mary Manse Alumni Prayer Service & Luncheon, noon, at The Pinnacle
- 14 Input/Update Meeting for Sisters only, 1 - 3 p.m., Rosary Care Center
- 24 Sister Study Day, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Rosary Cathedral
- 24 Feast of St. Ursula (Vows, Commitment and Missioning), for Sisters and Associates, 4 p.m. Liturgy followed by supper, Ursuline Center/Ursuline Convent Offices
- 27 Leaders Meeting
- 28-29 LCWR Region VI Meeting - Cincinnati

November 2026

- 2-5 RCRI - St. Louis, MO
- 10 Sub-Region Meeting - Ursuline Convent Offices
- 24 Leaders Meeting
- 25 Foundation Day of Company of St. Angela - Feast of St. Catherine Alexandria
- 25-27 Thanksgiving - Convent Offices closed

December 2026

- 5 Sisters and Associates Christmas Party, 11 a.m. lunch, Ursuline Convent Offices
- 10 Foundation Day, 11:30 a.m. lunch and prayer, Ursuline Convent Offices. For Sisters and Associates.
- 22 Leaders Meeting
- 23 Staff Christmas Lunch - 11:00 a.m.
- 24-Jan. 5 Christmas Break - Convent Offices closed

January 2027

- 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Convent Offices closed
- 24 Feast of St. Angela, 11 a.m. Mass at Ursuline Center followed by dinner at Ursuline Convent Offices. For Sisters and Associates.
- 27 Leaders Meeting

February 2027

- 15 Presidents' Day - Convent Offices closed
- 23 Leaders Meeting

March 2027

- 15-17 NAULC - St. Louis

Ursuline Convent Offices
4045 Indian Road, Toledo, OH 43606
(419) 536-9587
email: ursulines@ursulinecenter.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

October

- 1 Val Myers
- 6 Suzie Stapleton
- 8 Sr. Shannon Schrein
- 10 Becky Tobias
- 11 Milan Mihalek
- 13 Amy Good
- 14 Christina Rode
- 14 Veronica DeLa Cerda
- Laurie Toth
- 17 Marge Johnson
- 19 Janet Klocinski
- 20 Sr. Nancy Mathias
- 25 Sr. Donna Frey
- 31 Sr. Sandy Sherman
- 31 Elaine Heyne



November

- 2 Marcia Kolbeck
- 8 Carol Pruss
- 12 Karen (Kitty) Meyers
- 13 Sr. Regina Smith
- 14 Jerry Folmar
- 16 Joanne McGinnis
- 19 Michelle Scazzero
- 20 Hilaire Daly
- 21 Jess Gamby



FEAST DAY



October

- 7 Sr. Beth Hemminger
- 11 Sr. Shannon Schrein
- 16 Sr. Margaret Anne Carstensen

November

- 4 Sister Carol Kronfield
- 4 Sister Carol Reamer



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



Preserving
Our History
archivescollaborative.org