

NAULC

Convergence

“To Move Toward the Same Purpose Together”

Vol. 23, No. 2
Summer 2026

Ursuline legacy continues in Kansas by those inspired by the Sisters

By Dan Heckel

Sister Angela Fitzpatrick’s move from Mission, Kan., to Maple Mount, Ky., on Jan. 12, 2026, was nothing out of the ordinary, except for what it signified – for the first time in 131 years, there were no Ursuline Sisters serving in Kansas.

The Ursuline Sisters of Paola, Kan., merged with Mount Saint Joseph in 2008. While some of the Sisters moved to Maple Mount the following year, several have continued to serve in the Sunflower state, where Ursulines first arrived in 1895.

While a physical Ursuline presence is no longer in Kansas, the five remaining Paola Sisters and some prominent Kansans all agree that the Ursuline legacy will live on for many years.

“Our legacy is certainly education,” Sister Pat Lynch said. “That was the main ministry. We taught in a lot of Catholic schools, but also in some public schools in Scipio and Wea. You can’t go anywhere in a Catholic parish without being

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The former Ursulines of Paola, Kansas, who now live at Maple Mount, Ky., are, seated from left, Sister Grace Swift and Sister Kathleen Dueber; standing from left, Sister Pat Lynch, Sister Angela Fitzpatrick, and Sister Jane Falke.

New online tool will help teach about and locate any Ursuline Sister in the Mount cemetery



The Motherhouse Cemetery for the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph (8001 Cummings Road, Maple Mount, Ky.) is the final home to more than 500 Ursuline Sisters – each of whom has her own story.

When a Sister goes to heaven, a summation of her life and ministries – known as a necrology – is written and contained in the Motherhouse Archives. Until recently, these necrologies were only available for public viewing in a binder found in the vestibule of the Motherhouse Chapel.

Each of those necrologies is now available on the Ursuline website, along with a photo of the Sister (if one exists) and her location in the cemetery. The searchable database can be found under the Visit the Mount tab on the Ursuline website (ursulinesmsj.org), or use this direct link: <https://ursulinesmsj.org/necrologies/>. There is also a downloadable map to the cemetery on this page.

News from the Toledo Ursulines

Transfer of Leadership

At the last General Chapter meeting of the Ursuline Sisters, March 11, 2026, the Sisters approved of a new form of government for their Community.

A simple ceremony took place on June 12, 2026 in the Ursuline Center Chapel with Ursuline Sisters and Associates and a large number of Sylvania Franciscan Sisters present. Sister Sandy Sherman, Superior at that time, invited Sister Sharon Derivan, Congregational Minister of the Sylvania Franciscans, and Sister Shannon Schrein, her delegate to the Ursulines, to come forward to assume this Canonical responsibility of governance and receive a blessing in words taken from the writings of St. Angela.



Sister Shannon Schrein, OSF, Sister Donna Frey, Sister Sandy Sherman, Sister Sharon Derivan, OSF



Sister Shannon Schrein, OSF and Sister Sharon Derivan, OSF, receive a blessing during the Transfer of Leadership ceremony.

Sister Shannon entered the Sylvania Franciscan Community in 1965. She spent 45 years as a teacher and Professor of Theology. She is an author and is the former President of the College Theology Society.

A gifted musician, Sister Shannon's voice and guitar are always welcome additions to community and family gatherings, including the Toledo Mud Hens where she's sung the National Anthem more than a dozen times. She served on the Leadership Council from 2016-2021.

Sister is deeply grateful to her fellow Sylvania Franciscan Sisters for calling forth her gifts and walking with her in all the ministries God has called her to do. Sister Shannon is delighted to walk a new journey with the Toledo Ursulines of the Sacred Heart.



Sister Sandy and Sister Donna Frey officially completed their term of leadership in June of 2026, and have been asked by Sister Shannon to remain as advisors to her during this term of transition in governance. Both will remain in the Convent Offices and assist in maintaining the traditions and events of Ursuline Celebrations in the spirit of St. Angela. Continuing relationships with St. Ursula Academy and other partners in ministry is fundamental to Ursuline Identity.

Working beside Sister Shannon, Sister Donna and Sister Sandy will walk together toward a new future, meeting monthly to oversee business and other related Community events. Gathering the Ursuline Sisters together often will keep the flames and embers burning with Ursuline life and the spirit of St. Angela.

The priorities for the leadership and community: Ministry of Prayer and Presence, Relationship with St. Ursula Academy, Governance of the Community beyond 2026, Ursuline Convent Foundation Board Succession and Evolving Role, and the Archives, will be the guiding force for new hope and new life carrying on the legacy of the Ursulines in education and ministry in the Toledo area.

The process and years of work leading up to this moment of new governance is truly the work of the hand of God. The fact that the decree from Rome was promulgated on January 27, the feast of St. Angela, and that the Community was able to host the transfer ceremony on the feast of the Sacred Heart, June 12, a special feast of the Toledo Ursulines of the Sacred Heart, and the fact that St. Angela was a Third Order Franciscan

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News from the Toledo Ursulines - continued

before she formally founded the Ursuline Order, and this year being the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi, plus long-term relationships with the Sylvania Franciscans that have deepened over the years, make this a perfect blend of charisms moving forward. Walking this journey with God has truly been a gift and blessing.

Ten Ursuline Sisters Celebrate Milestone Jubilees

Congratulations to our Ursuline Jubilarians, who celebrated milestone years of religious life on Sunday, June 14, 2026 with a beautiful liturgy at Christ the King Church followed by a festive luncheon. Nearly 300 guests joined the Ursuline Sisters to celebrate these jubilarians, who are inspirations as follower of St. Angela Merici and of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Jubilarian Sister Maria VanAusdale greets a guest following the Eucharistic Liturgy.



Jubilarian Sister Donna Frey with Celebrant and long-time friend Fr. Tim Kummerer.

Company and Cleveland – Cross-pollination

The Company of St. Ursula of Canada - USA and Sister Lisa Marie Belz, OSU, of Cleveland spent Memorial Day weekend together in Cincinnati.

Sister Lisa Marie led the Company in a retreat on the theme of how St. Angela Merici's spirituality leads to "Transformation into the Heart of Christ." Angela's "holy obedience" means being "all ears" for the Holy Spirit. Her "sacred virginity" keeps "a burning love" in the heart. Her poverty is the wealth of having "Jesus Christ as [our] only Treasure."

The retreat especially helped Heather and Rachael as they prepare to make their lifelong consecration in the fall.

The joy of being together spilled over (after the retreat had closed) into a pizza party, climaxed by a talent show. Hilarity ensued!



← *Elena (in gray) seeks to teach us a dance. Herding cats....?*



→ *Sister Lisa Marie listens to Elizabeth.*

From the Brown County Ursulines

Julia Chatfield's Wheelchair returned

A Wheelchair was presented to Mother Julia Chatfield in 1874 when she was no longer able to manage walking the distance from her bedroom to the Chapel and dining



The Wheelchair purchased for and used by Mother Julia Chatfield, 1874

room. The daughters of Andrew and Veronica Gross were the graduates who provided her means of transportation for her final years. Based on the school's records, the Gross girls would have graduated from the school in 1859, well before Mother Julia would have had need for such transport. We can only guess at what inspired the young women to provide such a practical gift, a gift

that was certainly appreciated. Following Mother Julia's death in 1878, other members of the community used the wheelchair as need arose, and when more modern chairs were available, Mother Julia's chair was stored in the attic.

In 1984, prior to the raising of the original and library buildings, the wheelchair was taken from the attic and sold at auction. Mr. Ian Cunningham, a local Brown County resident purchased the wheelchair. His daughter was in the last graduating class from the School of the Brown County Ursulines. His familiarity with the Ursulines included work he and his brother had done on the Rosevelt organ in the early 60's. At some point, Mr. Cunningham donated the wheelchair to the Brown County Historic Society, believing it was a work of art and a piece of history.

Last November the Archives presented a program open to the public which highlighted the Rosevelt Organ. Mr. Cunningham came to that presentation and took the opportunity to explore the archive displays. As he was getting ready to leave, he informed me that Julia Chatfield's wheelchair belonged in St. Martin, not with the Brown County historic society in Georgetown. The arrangements were agreed to and in May the wheelchair left the Historic Society in southern Brown County

for its homecoming in St. Martin with the Ursulines.

Currently the chair is being treated and cleaned by an Art conservationist from the Cincinnati Art Museum. It will be returned by the end of June to take its place in the Archives with other belongings connected to Mother Julia Chatfield, foundress and leader of the Brown County Ursulines for 30 years.

Fifty Years Serving the Brown County Ursulines!

Since 1976, Joyce Snider has worked for the Ursulines of Brown County. She began her career as part of the cleaning staff. At that time in our history the Boarding School was in full swing, the buildings were massive with a population of students close to 100. From cleaning, Joyce graduated to Mother House receptionist. When the Mother House was raised, she took on the job of administrative assistant and supported the requests of the leadership teams. In that position she served 4 General Superiors and 3 Congregational Ministers. In more recent years Joyce took



Joyce Snider, 50 years with the Ursulines of Brown County

some accounting courses and teamed up with Norma Green, the COO of the Community, to form the Finance Department.

She was not only a staff member, Joyce and her husband were next-door neighbors, literally. When our sisters were still living on the Mother House property, they did not hesitate to ask Joyce or Joe to replace a light bulb, pick up medicine from the pharmacy, drive to Doctor appointments and various other requests. Both Joyce and Joe were always willing to take on any task or need the sisters had. During her time with us, she became

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From the Brown County Ursulines - continued

a part of the 'Ursuline Family' celebrating with us not only the Jubilees and birthdays, but walking to the cemetery with us as our sisters transitioned into their Eternal rest.

On her last day, Joyce sent her last email to the community members, which read in part: *"It has been an honor to be a part of the Ursulines of Brown County for 50 years. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities I've had to grow professionally, contribute to meaningful projects and work alongside such talented and supportive and caring people."*

"As I take my last step out the door of the Administration office, I will remember all of you as well as those who have gone on...and I will feel that if I ever need someone to talk with, I can count on my Ursulines."

As part of our gift to Joyce each member of the community wrote a note expressing her gratitude and love. We attached them to a miniature weeping willow tree that she can plant in her yard. She will lovingly be reminded of her 50 years with the Brown County Ursulines.



Our gift to Joyce, a miniature weeping willow.

Central Province Ursulines' Staff retreat

Ursulines and co-workers at the Central Province offices in St. Louis spent a day in early May in prayer, reflection, sharing of memories - and gratitude for the beauty of God's creation - at the province's former novitiate in Crystal City, Missouri. Sisters Mary Jacqueline Pratt and Regina Marie Fronmüller led the discussion. The property's new owners graciously welcomed the sisters for this year's staff retreat, as they have done for other occasions.



← From left are Sisters Mary Jacqueline Pratt, Regina Marie Fronmüller, Adele Brennan, Diane Fulgenzi, Ann Barrett and Susan Kienzler

→ Karen Mortillaro, director of mission and identity, enjoys the beautiful surroundings during reflection time.



The Latest from the Eastern Province Ursulines

Eastern Province Sisters Leadership Attend the Installation of Archbishop Ronald Hicks

On February 6, 2026, Srs. Maureen Welch, OSU, Jane Finnerty, OSU, and Jeannie Humphries, OSU were honored to participate in the Mass of Installation for Archbishop Ronald Hicks at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Joined by clergy, religious women and men, and members of the faithful from across the Archdiocese, the Sisters gathered in prayer to celebrate this important moment in the life of the Church. The liturgy beautifully marked the beginning of Archbishop Hicks' pastoral leadership in the Archdiocese of New York.



Follow Up to A Paschal Journey and Valentine's Day Celebration

On February 13, 2026, the Sisters gathered at the Province Center for a follow-up session to an earlier "A Paschal Journey to Transformation" workshop. Patterned after Christ's death and resurrection, the Paschal Journey to Transformation invites participants into the lifelong process of moving through suffering, surrender, and trust toward



renewed life, deeper love, and spiritual maturity. Facilitated by Clare Horn, LCSW, the morning was spent in small groups engaged in attentive listening, thoughtful sharing, and prayerful reflection.

Following the session, the Sisters gathered together in the dining room of the province center for a festive Valentine's Day luncheon. As always, the Province housekeeping staff created a warm and welcoming atmosphere with beautifully decorated tables that reflected the joy and spirit of the day.

Congratulations To Our Award Winners Srs. Brenda Buckley, OSU and Mary Virginia Orna, OSU

Sr. Brenda Buckley, OSU Honored by The Academy of Mount St. Ursula

On March 24, the Academy of Mount St. Ursula (AMSU) celebrated its 170th Anniversary Gala at Mulino's at Lake Isle in Eastchester, NY. Among the evening's honorees was Sr. Brenda Buckley, OSU, whose lifelong dedication to Catholic education, faith formation, and the Ursuline mission has impacted generations of students.



Throughout her ministry, Sr. Brenda served in parish and school leadership across the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Ogdensburg. She also served on the Provincial Council of the Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province and currently sits on the Boards of Trustees of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula, The Ursuline School, and Ursuline Academy in Wilmington, Delaware.

We also congratulate fellow honorees Deirdre Breen Doheny '87 and Michael Doheny; Anne Marie Hynes, Esq. '67; Dr. Diane Ramos-Kelly '69; JoAnn Stonier, Esq. '80; and Claudia Toni Smith '92, whose lives and

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The Latest from the Eastern Province Ursulines - *continued*

accomplishments reflect the enduring values of an AMSU education.

Proceeds from the gala benefit the Leading the Future Fund, which provides scholarships, addresses financial need, and supports programs that sustain AMSU's tradition of academic excellence and Ursuline values.

Sr. Mary Virginia Orna, OSU Honored by the College of New Rochelle

On April 30, 2026, Sr. Mary Virginia Orna, OSU received the College of New Rochelle Legacy Award at the 45th Annual Mercy University Trustees' Scholarship Gala, held at the Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle, NY. She is an exemplary scientist, professor, mentor, and member of the Ursuline Sisters. We are very proud of Sr. Mary Virginia's many accomplishments and the way she carries on the legacy and charism of our founder, St. Angela Merici. Well done, Sr. Mary Virginia!



Sr. Jeannie Humphries, OSU Participates in The First Systemwide Meeting with Archbishop Ronald Hicks

On May 4th, educational leaders from across the Archdiocese of New York gathered for their first systemwide meeting with Archbishop Ronald Hicks, centered on unity, mission, and the future of Catholic education. Archbishop Hicks encouraged educators to continue forming students through faith, service, and compassion. In attendance was Sr. Jeannie



Humphries, OSU, PhD who read at the celebration of Mass at the St. Joseph Seminary Chapel. Also in attendance was Dr. Colleen Melnyk, President of The Ursuline School, Robyn Summa, Principal of The Ursuline School, Geraldine Lavery, President of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula and Sr. Meghan McArdle, OSU, Principal of the Academy of Mount St. Ursula.

Sr. Maureen Welch, OSU Attends the Enlarged General Council (EGC)

During several weeks in April and May 2026, Sr. Maureen Welch, OSU, Provincial of the Ursuline Sisters of the Eastern Province, attended the Enlarged General Council (EGC) at Colégio Santa Úrsula in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil. The gathering brought together Provincials and Group Superiors from Ursuline communities around the world to engage in prayer, dialogue, and planning for the future of the Institute.



On April 27, the school community warmly welcomed participants with a vibrant presentation that celebrated the rich culture and hospitality of Brazil. Students and staff showcased music, dance, and reflections that highlighted the Ursuline spirit and the school's commitment to the values of St. Angela Merici.

Throughout the Council, participants reflected on the theme of "Confident Innovation," exploring new ways to respond to the needs of today's world while remaining rooted in the Ursuline mission. The gathering provided an opportunity to strengthen international relationships, share experiences from different provinces, and prepare for future initiatives that will shape the life and ministry of Ursulines worldwide.

Past Prominent in Youngstown Ursulines' Immediate Future

Back in the 1970s, General Superior Sister Mary McCormick was a student at Ursuline High, and just like the other teens, envisioning where life would convey her.

Fast forward to July 1 when it's taking her back – but now as Interim President of the school.

She was appointed in May to serve a one-year term by Youngstown Bishop David J. Bonnar. Sister Mary is also a professor of systematic theology at St. Mary's Seminary and Graduate School of Theology, Cleveland, and has been since 1997. She recently resigned her additional post there as academic dean.

"I am honored to continue the legacy of Ursuline Sisters, priests, and laity who have been integral to the strong heritage of the school," Sister Mary says, "and to work with the current administration, faculty, and staff to further the mission of the school."

Our Sisters opened Ursuline Academy in 1905, at that time an all-girls school. By the 1930s, the school's success motivated Church officials to request it become co-ed. The diocese assumed full control of the school in the early 1950s, but our Sisters continued serving on staff until 2018, when Sister Regina Rogers retired as vice principal and religion teacher.

"Many Ursuline Sisters - past and present - are graduates of Ursuline, including myself. My first ministry

assignment after graduating from Youngstown State University was to teach religion at Ursuline, which I did for seven years before I accepted the next assignment," Sister Mary says. "I also served on the Alumni Advisory Committee of Ursuline until 2011 and served as a member of the Board of Ursuline High School from its inception until 2025."

The connection between the school and our community continues in other ways, too. About a dozen instructors are Ursuline Associates, a group of students visits the Motherhouse twice a month as part of the "Support Our Sisters" program, and Sisters often are invited to participate in Mass and speak to classes. In fact, if you visit our Facebook page, you'll see a video of Sister Nancy Pawlen singing with the senior class a few days prior to graduation.

Meanwhile, you'll recall that in December we finished the \$6 million transformation of our 63-year-old



Refurbished dining room

Motherhouse into a resident care facility that offers assisted living. Because of our successful initiative to protect historic elements, we're receiving a 2026 Historic Preservation Award from the Mahoning Valley Historical Society June 23.

Buildings 50 years and older, recently renovated or rehabilitated with historic elements carefully maintained, were eligible for nomination. If you'd like to read the narrative we submitted, along with before and after photos, they're on our website.

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Sisters Nancy Pawlen, Norma Raupple, Eileen Kernan, Mary McCormick, Helen Nordick, Martha Reed and Marlene LoGrasso.

Past Prominent in Youngstown Ursulines' Immediate Future - *continued*

It's been 35 years since our late Sister Margaret Scheetz watched the movie "God Bless the Child" and was so moved that she founded Beatitude House.

The Hollywood production, coincidentally written by a Youngstown native, tells of a mother and daughter drowning in the cycles of poverty and homelessness. The mother makes the wrenching decision to surrender custody so her daughter can lead a better life.



Sister Peggy Scheetz preparing a donated building to become Beatitude House in 1991.

With a firm belief that education is the best foundation for emerging from poverty, and a desire to help families stay together, Sister Margaret established Beatitude House. It offered emergency shelter, transitional and permanent supportive housing, educational and career guidance, and a food pantry.

Sister Margaret only lived another decade, but in that time she saw hundreds of women and children achieve better lives through the ministry's assistance. All these years later, it's now thousands of clients – including men - who've not only survived but thrived through its help.



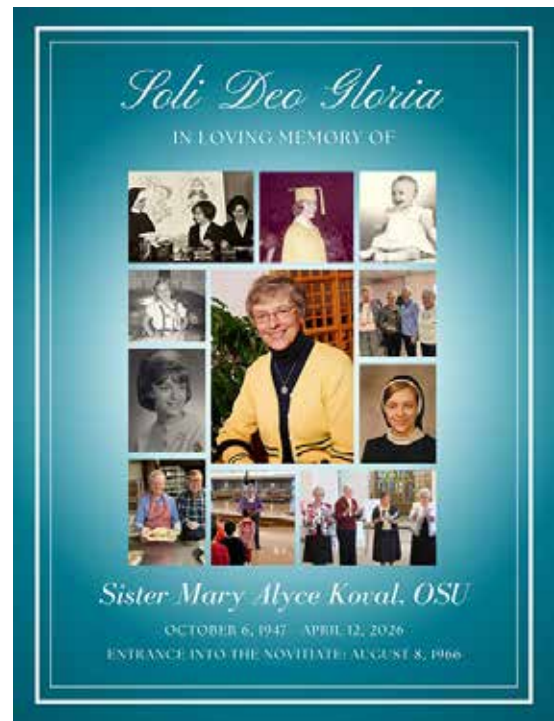
Beginning in July, we'll start a year-long celebration of those folks and the many Sisters, employees, and community members who've contributed to the ministry's success.

And finally, it is with great sadness that we announce the April death of Sister Mary Alyce Koval. In addition to ministering many years as an elementary-school teacher and principal, Sister Mary Alyce worked as education director at Beatitude House for several years.

She also served multiple terms as a councilor on our community Leadership Team and on many boards in the greater Mahoning Valley community.

In recent years Sister Mary Alyce also worked as a Pastoral Minister for several parishes.

With so many family and friends unable to attend her funeral but desiring to be part, we carried the service live on Facebook and posted it to our YouTube channel.



"...and by your holy Name, be it blessed above the sands of the seas, above the drops of the waters, above the multitude of the stars."

St. Angela – Rule

News from the Louisville Ursulines

Chapter

We held our last Chapter on March 16-20, 2026. Our theme was “On the Journey with Love and Wisdom/ En El Viaje Con Amor,” and led by the Holy Spirit, we voted to extend our Leadership team’s term to 2028 as we discern our path forward in the reality of a smaller community.

We issued a public statement following Chapter, which may be read here:

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/2026-chapter-on-the-journey-with-love-and-wisdom-en-el-viaje-con-amor/>



The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, March 18, 2026

Earth Day Service Celebration

This year’s Laudato Si’ prayer service took place on April 22 in the peaceful porch area behind the Motherhouse, where Sister Carol Curtis led a meaningful celebration honoring our planet. The gathering featured special blessings dedicated to Mother Earth. The service gathered community members to consider our



Sister Carol Curtis leads prayer during the service.

relationship with the environment and our responsibility to care for the Earth we all share.

The Way of the Cross



Sisters Mary Jo Gramig and Martha Jacob, left, praying

Every Friday during Lent, the Catholic Cemeteries Office hosts “The Way of the Cross for Young Christians” at various Catholic Cemeteries throughout the Archdiocese of Louisville. Services begin at 1 p.m. and are open to all.

On March 6, the gathering took place at St. Michael Cemetery, 1300 Ellison Avenue — the resting place of our Ursuline Sisters of Louisville. Three students from one of our sponsored schools, Sacred Heart Academy, led us in prayer, joined by several of our Sisters. To walk the Way of the Cross among the graves of strangers, loved ones, and relatives was a deeply sacred and moving experience.



The Louisville Ursuline section of St. Michael Cemetery



Sacred Heart students leading the stations.

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News from the Louisville Ursulines - *continued*

Invasion of the Pink Snail!



Sisters Rita Ann Wigginton and Jean Anne Zappa pose with Sacred Heart Academy students in front of the pink snail!

The Ursuline Campus had a special visitor on April 24, just in time for the annual Sacred Heart Academy – Assumption High School Pink and White Game, that raises money for breast cancer research at the Norton Cancer Institute. Sisters Jean Anne Zappa and Rita Ann Wigginton stopped by and took some photos with some of our students! The pink snails were part of the larger Kentucky Derby celebration in Louisville.

Inaugural Sr. Paula Kleine-Kracht Scholarship



De'Shayla O'Bannon with Sisters Rita Ann Wigginton and Ruth Ann Haunz

At the 8th grade awards ceremony held on Wednesday, May 20, Nativity Academy at St. Boniface awarded De'Shayla O'Bannon with the inaugural Sr. Paula Kleine-Kracht scholarship in memory of Sr. Paula, who died in 2025. De'Shayla will be entering Holy Cross High in the fall of 2026.

In 2003, Sr. Paula co-founded Nativity Academy at St. Boniface

as an independent, Catholic middle school in Louisville for children living in the Clarksdale housing project. She served as executive director of Nativity until 2011.

Transforming Grace

On May 4–7, Ursuline Sisters of Louisville President Sister Jean Anne Zappa, Social Concerns Coordinator Sister Carol Curtis, and Communications Director Kathy Rice joined 260 leaders, justice promoters, and communicators from 107 institutes of U.S. women religious in St. Louis for Transforming Grace: Next Steps on the Journey, hosted by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR).



Sr. Jean Anne Zappa, Kathy Rice and Sr. Carol Curtis

We were grateful for this opportunity — listening, learning, and discerning together on intentional dialogue, and finding hope. Throughout the conference, we engaged with inspiring voices, including Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, E.J. Dionne Jr., Irshad Manji, Michelle Sardone, and David Spicer. Their insights will guide us as we reflect on our mission and consider how we are called to respond with justice, compassion, and hope.

Sr. Lorna Weiler Recognition

At this year's Sacred Heart Academy's (SHA) reunion weekend on Friday, May 29, Sr. Lorna Weiler was



Sr. Lorna with Sacred Heart Academy alumni and staff

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News from the Louisville Ursulines - continued

recognized for her 59 years of service to the Academy, most of them as a beloved Chemistry teacher. Sr. Lorna was showered with love and presented with a collection of thank you cards, cake, flowers, and more from all those in attendance. We thank SHA for honoring Sr. Lorna in such a special way!

Ursulines in Ministry Video Series

Our video series continues as we explore the ministries of the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville through video storytelling. You may now view videos on our website featuring Sr. Agnes Coveney in her food pantry ministry, Sr. Mary Theresa Burns in her chaplain ministry, Sr. Rita Ann Wigginton in her deaf ministry, and Sr. Barbara Bir in her ESL ministry.

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/sisters-in-ministry/>

Communications staff wins awards

The Ursuline Sisters of Louisville's Communications team won several awards, including a Best of Class award for [A Pilgrimage of Hope with Saint Angela Merici](#) at the Religion Communicators Council's DeRose-Hinkhouse Awards, held during their annual meeting in Cincinnati on April 16, 2026. Additionally, Kathy Rice won an award for the [On The Journey with Love/En El Viaje Con Amor](#) Annual report from the Associated Church Press in May at their annual conference in Toronto. You may read more details, including links to



Kathy Rice receiving Best in Class award from Brian Fesler at the DeRose-Hinkhouse awards

the work, here:

<https://ursulinesisterslouisville.org/usae-communications-team-wins-2026-awards/>



Sister Agnes Murray (Central Province)
Sister Jane Wiessing (Central Province)
Sister Kathleen Ogrin [Sister St. Maxim] (Cleveland)
Sister Mary Beth Read (Eastern Province)
Sister Catherine Therese Barber (Maple Mount)
Sister Amelia Stenger (Maple Mount)
Sister Margaret Marie Greenwell (Maple Mount)
Sister Joy Gray (Toledo)
Sister Mary Alyce Koval (Youngstown)



NAULC Convergence

Vol. 23, No. 2

The deadline for the Fall 2026 issue of NAULC Convergence is October 15, 2026.

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

From the Central Province Ursulines

Ursulines of the Roman Union meeting in Brazil

Central Province Provincial Sister Peggy Moore joined Roman Union Ursuline provincials and group superiors from around the world at the Enlarged General Council meeting in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil, April 23-May 13. The three-week meeting was in preparation for the 2027 General Chapter in Rome, which will set the priorities and direction for the Ursulines' spiritual mission, ministries and governance for the next eight years.



Prayer Vigil

Sisters Jean Hopman and Mary Ann Dooling were among the many Catholic Sisters and other concerned citizens who participated in a prayer vigil for ICE detainees near the Ste. Genevieve County Detention Center in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, in March. The vigil was held in solidarity with the people detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and held at the facility.



Serviam Day

Foiled by the weather in January, the International Serviam Day planning group in St. Louis set a new service date of April 18, which turned out to be picture perfect! More than 50 Ursuline Academy of St. Louis students, alumnae, faculty, family members, friends--and Sisters Diane Fulgenzi, Mary Ann Dooling, Rita Ann Bregenhorn, Lois Castillon and Regina Marie Fronmüller--gathered in the school's auditorium for a morning of service. Projects included making sandwiches for St. Vincent de Paul, packaging and writing notes to go with blankets for St. Louis Children's Hospital, making "period packs" for St. Louis Area Diaper Bank, and making cards for veterans and nursing home residents.



← Pro sandwich-makers Sister Mary Ann Dooling and Sister Diane Fulgenzi get down to business.



→ Sister Lois Castillon joins in card making with a group of students.



← Sister Rita Ann Bregenhorn, right, works with alumna Sally Maguire at the sandwich-making table.



Serviam in Action!

Students from Ursuline Academy of Cincinnati, OH and Beaumont School in Cleveland Heights, OH participated in the St. Vincent dePaul Ozanam Center for Service-Learning social justice immersion in Cincinnati June 14-19. Coordinated by SVdP staff, and partnering with six different social service agencies, students were challenged to recognize how their Ursuline core values align with Catholic Social Teaching models. One of the days, they served at Hope Emergency Program, the outreach founded by the Ursuline Sisters of Brown County, which provides support to those in rural communities. The staff at Hope was amazing,

and allowed the students to work in all facets of their organization which created a very hands-on experience. After their service, students were treated to a personal tour of Chatfield chapel and archives by Sr. Lucia Castellini, OSU.

Welcome, Jane Cruthirds

UEN is excited to welcome Jane Cruthirds as Associate Director! Most recently, Jane served as Director of Mission Formation for Sacred Heart Schools, Louisville, KY where she led adult faith formation and spirituality initiatives and supported Ursuline curriculum integration efforts. A passionate



advocate for the Ursuline Education Network, Jane has been involved since her first UEN student trip. She is the author of the Network's current student retreat program and played a key role in preparing Ursuline educators for the 2025 St. Angela Pilgrimage to Italy. Jane will begin her position in July.

Bravo! Sr. Joanne Callahan from Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk

Congratulations to our US Province Leader, Sr. Joanne Callahan, who was awarded an honorary degree from St. John's University in New York during their 156th undergraduate spring commencement exercises!

Sr. Joanne is a proud two-time graduate of St. John's, earning her Education Degree in 1972 and Master's Degree in Education in 1989.

Congratulations to Sr. Joanne, fellow honorees, and the graduates who were awarded more than 2,100 degrees at the ceremony! (Photo courtesy of G. Shemitz, OSV News)



From the Ursuline Sisters of Chatham, Ontario in Canada

Sisters Moving Forward!



This past year has been both exciting and challenging for us as we journeyed together with a new governance structure. After several years of study and discernment, we

reached the decision to apply to Rome for a commissary and after our request was granted, we celebrated our mutual commitment with the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada, a community which has been our neighbour since the arrival of our two groups in southwestern Ontario. In that ceremony on July 5, 2025, we welcomed Sister Margo Ritchie, CSJ, as our commissary and Sisters Theresa Campeau, Kathleen O'Mara and Sheila McKinley as the Community Leadership. At this same ceremony we announced the Board of Directors which included

Sr. Margo, Ursuline Sisters Theresa Mahoney, Karen Gleeson, Noreen Allossery-Walsh, Sheila McKinley and a laywoman, Michelle O'Rourke, a longtime friend of the Community.

In the year that followed, the Advisors dealt with daily matters and Sr. Margo was regularly available for support, suggestions, accompaniment and assistance. We are able to share resources, insights and personnel with the Sisters of St. Joseph to our mutual benefit.

On June 1st Sr. Margo joined our Community for a day of reflection during which we reviewed our journey of the past year, allowing time for discussion and questions. The response from the Sisters was affirming and together we renewed our commitment to move forward together. On July 6th of this year we will have a joint celebration with the Sisters of St. Joseph to celebrate our renewed commitment.

Living Gently on the Earth

We have just celebrated our 20th anniversary of living in our present location in a building which we constructed according to the highest ecological standards. With ground source heating and cooling, solar panels, grey water, earth friendly building materials and cleaning supplies, natural light and native plants, we have created a home with a responsible ecological footprint. Six years ago, we sold our building to Jarlette Health Services and we rent back space for carrying on



our Community Ministry and for living arrangements. Our lives have been enriched as we make way for our new neighbours. Our guiding voice in all our decisions is Angela as she instructs us:

*If, with change of times and circumstances, it becomes necessary
to make fresh rules or to alter anything,
then do it with prudence, after taking good advice.
(Last Legacy)*



Marking 20 years since the Ursuline Sisters built Chatham's Villa Angela retirement home, now St. Angela's Meadow Retirement Lodge, are Michele Turato, left, St. Angela Meadow's general manager, Madeline Houweling, who has cared for the Ursuline Sisters for 42 years, and Sister Theresa Campeau

(Ellwood Shreve/Chatham Daily News)

Ursulines of Prelate

The first half of the year seems to have rushed by, and summer plans are being made. With the gas prices as high as they are, this may look different than initially envisioned. But life does go on, regardless.

On March 17th, the Sisters gathered for St. Patrick's Day. The afternoon began with a presentation on forgiveness by Sr. Teresita Kambeitz. She offered five steps that can help in the process of forgiving. The afternoon ended with refreshments and visiting.

On April 30th, Sisters gathered at Trinity Manor (where five of the Sisters live) to celebrate the Feast of Marie of the Incarnation. All joined in Mass and then shared lunch together.

On May 23rd, several Prelate Ursulines traveled to Swift Current (3 hrs. south of Saskatoon) for a special



event. The Archdiocese of Regina hosted a luncheon to thank the Sisters for their ministry over many years. Archbishop Don Bolen also expressed his gratitude for two legacies recently gifted to the Archdiocese. One

legacy is for the education of women for ministry and one for pastoral ministry for rural initiatives.

Sr. Teresita Kambeitz presented a short PowerPoint on the history of the Ursulines of Prelate and Sr. Anne Lewans (Congregational Leader) explained the reasoning for the legacies. Both legacies are already bearing fruit—ten people who have never worked in catechetics signed up for training. And the first recipient of the legacy for women is studying canon law.

Deacon David Andres led those attending in a couple of songs. All present sang the blessing song over the Sisters as the program ended.

On June 6th, about 40 Sisters and Associates gathered for the 2026 Ursuline Associate Assembly, entitled "Living in Harmony." The day started with prayer and then Sr. Anne reported on the happenings of the last two years since the last assembly. The Executive Director for Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Saskatoon joined her at the end to speak about the Ursuline Heritage of Faith Fund, which will accept grant applications from all of Saskatchewan and become operational in September.

After lunch, the Faith Café opened. A maître de explained the process and then "servers" joined the table groups to facilitate questions about harmony, compassion and integrity. They later shared these with the whole group.



Three new Associates were welcomed during Mass.

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Ursulines of Prelate - continued

After a break, Sr. Felicitas Drobig presented two PowerPoints—one about the early writings of St. Angela and one a reflection on Angela as shepherdess. Both were translations from the newsletter of the Federation of German-speaking Ursulines. A discussion about the two presentations and the day followed.

The group then proceeded to Mass where three new associates were welcomed. The day ended with supper.

On June 8th, the Ursulines held an art launch. Over the last four years, a committee, comprised of Srs. Teresita Kambeitz, Ludvina Scheck, Joan Weber +, and Mary Zerr sorted through all the artwork created by the Sisters and accumulated over decades. Monique Blom, an artist who works at the Glengarda Hospice and also teaches at the University of Saskatchewan, stepped in later to take pictures of the art. She digitized over 450 pieces, and these will be put in conjunction with the Ursuline website in the near future. (www.ursulines.ca)



Monique Blom

Hope in the Word of God

Many of the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph gathered in Saint Joseph Villa the week of March 22-27, 2026, for their annual spring retreat. Titled “Hoping in the Word of God,” it was led by Brother Zachary Wilberding, a Benedictine monk who serves at St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana.



← Brother Zachary Wilberding, OSB, smiles as he talks about a cat who visited him at Maple Mount, Ky., that morning. Brother Zachary served 20 years as a nurse before entering monastic life 30 years ago with the Benedictines. He serves at St. Meinrad in vocation ministry, retreats, transportation and barbering.

→ Sister Barbara Jean Head, left, Sister Mary Gerald Payne, center, and Sister Cecelia Joseph Olinger enjoy one of Brother Zachary's comments. Catholics have just concluded a Jubilee Year of Hope established by the late Pope Francis. A retreat question asked, “How do we hope and trust in the midst of a world seemingly broken by division and violence?”



↑ From left, Sister Claudia Hayden, Sister Vivian Bowles, and Sister Michele Morek listen to Brother Zachary lead the opening prayer.

An Update from the Cleveland Ursulines

“LET’S PRAY TOGETHER”

Ursuline College and Gannon University blessed their continued collaborative efforts at a Liturgy on the Ursuline College campus on Monday, April 13th. Bishop Lawrence T. Persico of Erie, PA, Chair of the Gannon University Board of Trustees, was the celebrant accompanied by Father John Blazec CSC from Gilmore Academy and Fathers Michael Kesicki and Shane Matthew, from Gannon University. Also, the Gannon Director of Campus Ministry, Brent Heckman, his assistants, Statia Brown and Emily Muntean, music director, Pam Verity, and student vocalists added the musical accompaniment. UC Alumnae, with faculty, staff and students from both institutions participated, including Sister Laura Bregar, President of the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, Teri Corletzi, Chair of the Ursuline College Board of Trustees, and former Board Chair, Jack Newman, Dr. Walter Iwanenko, Gannon University’s President and his wife and Dr. David King, Ursuline College President participated.

After the Mass, the participants joined the Bishop outside the Sister Diana Athletic Center to bless the pavers that had been inserted in honor of the Ursuline College Presidents who had administered since 1968



on the Pepper Pike, OH campus: Sisters Rose Angela Johnson, Kenan Dulzer, Anne Marie Diederich, Diana Stano and Christine DeVinne, OSU. A reception was held in the Pilla Center for those who attended.

RE-MEMBER DAY

On Saturday, April 18th, more than forty former Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland, some from as far away as Texas, Florida and Michigan joined with Sisters from Merici Crossings and Light of Hearts to share memories, pray and learn about each other today.

The gathering began at 2:00 PM followed by an half hour prayer service in which Sister Laura Bregar, our President, welcomed everyone before a reflection on St. Angela’s writings written by Sister Anna Margaret Gilbride (James Francis) was read by Luci Pietrzyk. Then Sister Nancy



Beckenhauer introduced intentions and sharing of memories of our Ursuline Sisters. Sister Ritamary Welsh then introduced Sisters who spoke briefly about present ministries in which the Sisters are involved.

Sister Mary Kay Conkey told the history of House of Champions up to the present day. Joanne Buckman reviewed Mission and Heritage today, begun 25 years ago by Sister Joan Petersen. A request for support of the repeal of the death penalty in Ohio was given by Sister Diane Pinchot. An overview of the Women Religious Archives Collaborative (WRAC) was presented by Sister Susan Durkin. Sister Susan Bremer spoke about our Ninety-First Day efforts for the immigrants

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An Update from the Cleveland Ursulines - continued

in the Cleveland area followed by Sister Noel Marra's explanation of the St. Philomena Project/Bishop Pilla Center for East Cleveland. Pope Leo's prayer for his installation was read for the closing by Sister Susan Mary Rathbun; then all joined in singing "Veni Angela" accompanied by Regina Shelly Waterhouse. Refreshments were provided after the prayer service.

Throughout the afternoon, pictures of Sisters past and present were shown on television screens throughout Merici Crossings. Sister Adelaide Landoll and Noreen Hastings used photos given by the present and former Sisters and to share with everyone. Tours of suites were given by the Sisters who live at Merici Crossings and pictures of "sets" were taken. Valet parking was available for all who enjoyed sharing with each other until 5:30 PM.

VASJ CELEBRATION OF 175 YEARS

Villa Angela St. Joseph High School President, Thomas M. Carone and Principal, Greory Sedmak invited the Cleveland Ursulines to a brunch on Tuesday, April 21st to thank us for the many years we ministered at the school since Villa Angela Academy merged with St. Joseph High School in 1990 and the many years before since 1878 at the all girls academy. The President showed slides depicting the updates on the 1950 building and additions to the academics.



JUBILEE MASSES AND CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations for our 18 Jubilarians began at Merici Crossing on Sunday, April 26th with a Mass and dinner for all the Cleveland Ursuline Sisters. Mass was celebrated by Reverend James Bretzke, S.J., professor at John Carroll University. Sisters from Merici Crossings,

Light of Hearts Villa, Jennings Hall and Regina Health Care Center attended. Following the Liturgy was a banquet prepared by Merici Crossings Chef Art and his staff.



On Wednesday, May 1th, Jubilarians at Merici Crossings celebrated with a special supper.

2026 URSULINE GALA BIRTHDAY PARTY

Over 300 relatives, donors and friends joined Ursulines of Cleveland at St. Noel Parish Banquet Center for our 175th Birthday dinner on Friday, May 8th from 6:00-10:00 PM. After a dinner of Randy's family style favorites with an open bar followed by dessert from the donated dessert table, live auctions and raffle basket drawings were held, including a 50-50 ticket drawing. A spirit of camaraderie and celebration was evident for all.



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An Update from the Cleveland Ursulines - *continued*

More Photos from 2026 URSULINE GALA BIRTHDAY PARTY



175TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER AT REGINA FOR ALL CLEVELAND URSULINES

On Sunday, May 17th at 12:30 dinner, the twelve Ursulines at Regina Health Care Center joined 70 other Cleveland Ursulines to celebrate with a meal catered by Creekside Restaurant Caterers. Jubilarians from Regina joined their set for pictures after enjoying the meal, desserts and conversation.



Left to right: Sisters Juliana Beck, Veronica Smrekar, Marie Ellen, and Jennifer Corlett

GATHERING OF CSA, IW AND OSU

Charity Sisters of St. Augustine, Incarnate Word Sisters joined the Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland to share reflections on the Samaritan Woman at the Well at Regina Health Care Center on Sunday, May 31st. Conversations in the Spirit, a water blessing and remarks about where we go from here were included.

BISHOP'S VISIT

The Most Reverend Edard C. Malesic, Bishop of Cleveland, joined the Sisters at Merici Crossings for an informal, family supper on Wednesday, June 3rd. He greeted each Sister, and in his address after supper, he said the Cleveland diocese is grateful to the Cleveland Ursulines, the first religious congregation to come to the area and one that has had a direct connection with many Catholic parishes, schools and other institutions.



BEAUMONT BIRTHDAY BASH - Friday, June 5, 2026

Twelve Ursulines joined a sold-out crowd of hundreds of alumnae, their husbands, parents of former and present students for a fabulous evening of conversation, fun and food. Wendy Hoke, Beaumont President and

An Update from the Cleveland Ursulines - *continued*

Dorothy Molthope, Beaumont's Board President gave talks and Sister Laura Bregar, Ursuline Sisters President gave the blessing before the meal. Beaumont students who

helped with the evening wore shirts with Happy 175th Birthday since their school holds the charter for our first Academy in Cleveland. The event culminated with desserts in the school courtyard since it was a beautiful evening.



MERGER COMPLETION

On June 30, 2026, Ursuline College will officially become a campus for Gannon University, pending final approval of the Ohio Department of Education. As stated in an email sent to the faculty and staff by Gannon University President Walter Iwanenko and Ursuline College President David King on April 29, 2026: "Since signing the letter of intent in September 2024, this journey has required focus, collaboration and trust. We are already seeing the emergence of a unified institution—one grounded in respect, compassion and shared purpose. Most importantly, our students continue to remain engaged, thoughtful and resilient." The final Ursuline College Commencement was held on May 3rd and the final Board of Trustee meeting on May 14th.



“Deepening Our Prayer Life: Advice from the Four Teresas”

Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Cheryl Clemons welcomed nearly 70 people to Maple Mount, Ky., for her reflection day on March 28, 2026, titled “Deepening Our Prayer Life: Advice from the Four Teresas.”

The day focused on learning about Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Therese of Lisieux, Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross – better known as Edith Stein – and Saint Teresa of Calcutta, and what each can teach us about prayer.



Participants in the Four Saint Teresas reflection day make use of the rocking chairs in Maple Hall.



Maple Hall was filled with people following along with Sister Cheryl. The large turnout told Sister Cheryl that people want help in deepening their prayer life.

The day featured opportunities for small group sharing, journaling, and individual spiritual direction. There was time set aside for how to deal with distractions that keep us from praying.

Ursuline Sisters of Maple Mount Elect Leadership Council

The Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph (Maple Mount, Kentucky) have elected their Leadership Council that will serve from 2026-2030.

During meetings from March 12-14, 2026, delegates chose Sister Sharon Sullivan to return as congregational leader. Three new members of the Council will join her. Sister Alicia Coomes was chosen as assistant congregational leader, while Sister Judith Nell Riney and Sister Lorraine Lauter were each elected as councilors. The new Council will be installed during a ceremony on July 19, 2026.

Sister Sharon Sullivan served as congregational leader from 2010-16. She was re-elected to the same position in 2022, after the community changed the term to four years, with the possibility of serving an additional four-year term. The native Texan is in her 44th year as an Ursuline Sister, with most of her time spent in ministry at Brescia University, where she was a professor and coordinator of special education, and Academic Dean. When she completes her upcoming term, she will have led the community longer than any Sister in history – 14 years – which surpasses the 12 years that Mother Teresita Thompson served as superior.

Sister Alicia Coomes is in her 47th year of religious life. All of the Henderson, Ky., native's ministry has been in Kentucky. Since 2022 she has served as pastoral care associate at both St. Peter of Alcantara Church in Stanley, and St. Augustine in Reed. From 2010-18, she was pastoral associate for St. William Parish, Marion; St. Francis Borgia Parish, Sturgis; and St. Ambrose Parish, Henshaw. She also served elsewhere in parish ministry

in Bowling Green, LaCenter and Owensboro. She has used her nursing training to serve the Sisters at Maple Mount many times through the years and also served the community as director of Vocation Ministry (2007-10), director of the Temporary Professed (2009-12), director of Local Community Life and coordinator of pastoral care (2021-22). This is her first elected office.



Sister Judith Nell Riney is serving in her 59th year as an Ursuline. The Daviess County native previously served as an elected councilor from 2016-22. She retired in 2025 as director of Library Services at Brescia University after 45 years in the role. On April 26, 2025, she was honored with the Outstanding Alumna award from the Brescia Alumni

Association for "Outstanding service to the Alumni Association and/or Brescia University." She has been serving where needed in Owensboro while discerning her next ministry.

Sister Lorraine Lauter is serving in her 47th year as an Ursuline. She is a native of St. Petersburg, Fla., but grew up in Louisville, Ky., where Ursuline Sisters were her teachers. She served as executive director of Water By Women (previously Water With Blessings) in Louisville from 2012-25 and continues as its co-executive director. Water By Women works to provide filters and training to women across the globe so they can bring clean drinking water to their areas. Sister Lorraine has also served as a teacher, a parish minister, and was executive director of Migrant Immigrant Shelter and Support in Owensboro from 2002-2006. This is her first elected office.

*Be bound to one another by the bond of charity,
esteeming each other, helping each other, bearing with each other in Jesus Christ.*

St. Angela – Rule

Sister Carol Shively named one of Brescia University's Distinguished Alumni

Ursuline Sister of Mount Saint Joseph Carol Shively, who has served as superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Shreveport, La., for 27 years, was named one of three Distinguished Alumni of Brescia University in Owensboro, Ky., during the annual Laurel Awards on April 18, 2026.

Sister Carol graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in early elementary education from Brescia, which was founded by the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph in 1950. She earned a Master of Arts degree in Catholic school administration and curriculum from the University of Saint Thomas in 1991.

Sister Carol is active in numerous professional organizations, including the National Catholic Education Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. She also serves on the Brescia University Board of Trustees.

"Sister Carol remains at the forefront of educational innovation while staying deeply rooted in the mission of Catholic education," according to a news release from Brescia. "She is widely recognized for her ability to integrate rigorous academic standards and classroom strategies that foster both student achievement and character formation."

Sister Carol grew up in Marion County, Ky., where she met the Ursuline Sisters as her teachers when she began

the second grade. She joined the community in 1978 and has served in solely education ministry since 1982. She served as a teacher in Kentucky at Hardinsburg, Leitchfield, and Owensboro; as a principal in Missouri at Glennonville, New Madrid and Poplar Bluff; and as a superintendent of Catholic schools in Beaumont, Texas, for three years before moving to Shreveport in 1999.



The Shreveport Diocese has two elementary schools and one high school in Shreveport and the same structure 90 minutes away in Monroe. Many cultures are represented in the schools.

The Distinguished Alumni award was created to honor graduates who exemplify the elements that encompass "The Brescia Difference: Respect for the Sacred, Devotion to Learning, Commitment to Growth in Virtue, and Promotion of Servant Leadership." Also receiving the honor with Sister Carol were Dr. M. Edward Jones, class of 1966, and Dr. Gayle Rhodes, class of 1983.

Sister Carol is the 12th Ursuline Sister to receive the honor. She joins current Sisters Cheryl Clemons, Sharon Sullivan, Mary Matthias Ward, Larraine Lauter, Vivian Bowles, Ruth Gehres and Michele Morek. Four Ursulines who are now deceased also received the award – Sisters Joseph Angela Boone, Rose Marita O'Bryan, Dianna Ortiz, and Amelia Stenger.



AND GOD IS ABLE
TO **GIVE** YOU ABUNDANTLY,
SO THAT IN ALL THINGS
AT ALL TIMES,
HAVING ALL THAT YOU NEED,
YOU WILL ABUND IN
EVERY **GOOD** WORK.
2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

LCWR Subregion 6 meets at Mount Saint Joseph

One June 3, 2026, the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph hosted four other women religious communities for a “fun day” at Maple Mount, Ky. The five communities represent Subregion 6 of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, serving in Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio. The other communities are the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, the Sisters of Loretto, and the Benedictine Sisters of Ferdinand, Ind. The members took a tour of the Maple Mount campus, shared in a prayer service, and played games before having lunch in Owensboro, Ky.



Sister Jackulin Jesu, president of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, looks over a trunk in the Heritage Room. When the Sisters of Charity first sent Sisters to serve in India in 1947, they used similar trunks, she said. They still have those trunks in India.



Sister Martha Keller, right, assistant congregational leader for the Ursuline Sisters of Mount Saint Joseph, leads a prayer service in the Lourdes Community Room at Maple Mount.

“...I am continually among them with my
Lover, or rather ours, the Lover of us all,
provided they believe and do not lose heart
and hope.”

St. Angela Merici, Fifth Counsel

Celebrating with our Jubilarians

75 Years

Sister Lucia Vasko (Cleveland)
Sister Therese Martin Turocy (Cleveland)
Sister Theresa Kruml (Louisville)
Sister Margaret Anne Carstensen (Toledo)

70 Years

Sister Fran Hogan (Brown County)
Sister Maureen McCarthy (Cleveland)
Sister Therese Horan (Cleveland)
Sister Adelaide Landoll (Cleveland)
Sister Rosemary Hovevar (Cleveland)
Sister Ann Whitely (Cleveland)
Sister Mary McNulty (Cleveland)
Sister Mary Martha Staarman (Louisville)
Sister Claudia Holtz (Toledo)
Sister Ann Marie McManus (Toledo)

65 Years

Sister Rita Mae Johns (Toledo)
Sister Maria VanAusdale (Toledo)

60 Years

Sister Ellen Themes (Cleveland)
Sister Joan Marie Russ (Cleveland)
Sister Carol Pelegrin (Cleveland)
Sister Gretchen Rodenfels (Cleveland)
Sister Noel Marra (Cleveland)
Sister Donna Mikula (Cleveland)
Sister Rosemarie Carfagna (Cleveland)
Sister Beverly Ann LoGrasso (Cleveland)
Sister Kathleen Flanagan (Cleveland)
Sister Nelda Chafitelli (Toledo)
Sister Donna Frey (Toledo)
Sister Carol Reamer (Toledo)

50 Years

Sister Erin O’Brien (Cleveland)
Sister Loretta Krajewski (Louisville)
Sister Carol Kronfield (Toledo)
Sister Sandy Sherman (Toledo)



Ursuline legacy continues in Kansas by those inspired by the Sisters - *continued*

told, 'My aunt had Ursuline Sisters in school.'"

"The pioneer spirit is what comes to mind about our legacy," Sister Kathleen Dueber said. "We started Lakemary Center. We started the cultural center in Paola. We were always looking ahead to see what could be done."

"I feel that the most important part of the legacy of the Paola Ursulines is 120 years of providing faith formation for Catholic school children and vacation bible classes," Sister Jane Falke said. "We taught them the Catholic faith and prepared them for the sacraments. Along with that we taught them the regular school classes so that they could become productive members of society."

For Sister Grace Swift, the longest serving former Paola Sister who will turn 99 this August, the legacy is the education the Sisters provided in both small-town and urban elementary schools, and in high school.

"We certainly had a lot of grade schools in little rural Kansas towns," she said. "I taught a lot of kids in Paola and Garnett over several years."

Sister Angela believes the people of Kansas – especially the Ursuline Associates there who she stays connected with – will help to keep the Ursuline legacy alive. "I'm sure the Ursuline Sisters won't be forgotten."

Bishop Miege keeps Ursuline focus

The Ursuline Sisters arrived in Kansas in 1895 at the invitation of Bishop Louis Mary Fink, of the Diocese of Leavenworth, and opened Ursuline Academy the following year. In 1902, Holy Trinity Church in Paola completed a school named St. Patrick, and the following year, Ursuline Sisters of Paola began teaching there, which they continued to do until 1999. The name was changed to Holy Trinity School in the 1950s.

Throughout the 20th century, Paola Sisters served in rural schools and those in the suburbs of Kansas City, and several of those schools are still in operation. In 1929, they began serving at St. Agnes School in the suburb of Roeland Park and taught there for 63 years. The Sisters began St. Agnes High School in 1947, which remained open until the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kan., opened Bishop Miege High School in 1958. As an homage to

St. Agnes – which was next door – the nickname for the Bishop Miege sports teams is Stags, an acronym of "St. Ag."

There is no school in Kansas doing more to keep the Ursuline legacy alive than Bishop Miege. Joe Passantino served 29 years as principal and then president at Bishop Miege before retiring in 2016.

"The Ursulines who I had the privilege to work with had such grace, such a spirituality that you wanted to follow," Passantino said. "The biggest challenge we face with our lay people is, 'How do you keep that going?' Probably half of our staff never worked with an Ursuline. But for those who did, the lay people have the witness of the Ursulines and want to carry that on."

When Passantino arrived at the school in 1987, he worked with three Ursuline Sisters – Sister Martina Rockers, Sister Mildred "Millie" Berdelle, and Sister Johanna Huettenmueller.

"When we renovated the school in 2004-05, we named the chapel Saint Angela Merici Chapel," Passantino said. "There is a beautiful statue of Saint Angela outside the chapel. The Ursuline Award is the highest award students can get after four years."



This statue of Saint Angela Merici, founder of the Ursuline Sisters, welcomes visitors to the Saint Angela Merici Chapel at Bishop Miege High School in Roeland Park, Kansas. A photo of the late Sister Martina Rockers hangs at left.

Bill Creach is one of the people whose job is to keep that Ursuline legacy going. A 1983 graduate of the school, Creach returned in 1988 as a theology teacher, and

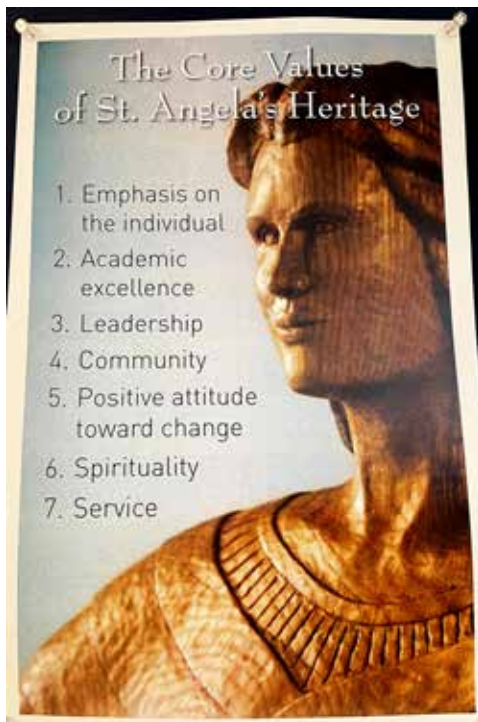
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Ursuline legacy continues in Kansas by those inspired by the Sisters - *continued*

now serves as director of Campus Ministry. "Four to five years ago, the administration team created the Angela Merici Core Values Awards," Creach said. "The faculty and staff select from their colleagues who should receive it. It's a great day to celebrate with the faculty and staff."

"We selected eight legends, and Sister Millie and Sister Martina are two of the legends," Creach said. He wrote short biographies of each legend, and the students are broken down into "herds" – like the houses in Harry Potter books. The students for each herd were responsible for developing the crests for each legend based on the bios.

"These plaques are 6-feet high, it's a great visual reminder," Creach said. "Students compete for the Ursuline Cup. We have sporting events, video games, and charity drives."



Faculty and staff members at Bishop Miega High School are voted on by their peers to receive a Saint Angela Core Value Award in one of these categories each year.

Sister Millie served at Bishop Miega for 40 years (1965-2005), teaching all levels of Spanish, and served as chairwoman of the World Language Department. She created the Kansas City chapter of the Amigos de las Americas program in 1973, preparing high school students to travel to Latin America to help improve those communities. She was the moderator of the Service Committee decades before there was an official Campus Ministry program.

"We give the Sister Millie Award to an exchange student," Creach said.

The best leader in the school is given the "Sister Martina Above and Beyond Award," Creach said.

Sister Martina served at Bishop Miega for 60 years, from the day the doors opened in 1958 until her death in 2018. She was chairwoman of the Science Department, Student Council moderator, Dean of Girl Students, the Stag Shop manager and an assistant in the Development office.

"Sister Martina was still working in the school when we created the legends," Creach said. "She was the living legend in the building. In 2008 we celebrated our 50th year. We took the time capsule that was buried then and had Sister Martina pull out the items. Seeing her face was wonderful."

The courtyard at the school was dedicated in Sister Martina's honor in 2006, and her picture is on the wall outside the Saint Angela Merici Chapel.

Although she died eight years ago, Creach said Sister Martina is still helping at Miega.

"She donated her yearbook collection to the school," Creach said. "She would cut out clippings of weddings, graduations, etc. We are still using this to find alums."

Lakemary Center continues the legacy

In 1969, Mother Charles McGrath, superior of the Ursulines of Paola, was looking for a new ministry that supported the Ursuline mission. She found it in response to the parents who wanted education and training for their children with developmental disabilities –



This is the center of a plaque that hangs outside the chapel at Bishop Miega High School. It is surrounded by engraved names of founders, leaders, benefactors, patrons (including the Ursuline Sisters), protectors and ambassadors.

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Ursuline legacy continues in Kansas by those inspired by the Sisters - *continued*

programs that were practically nonexistent anywhere in the country.

That year the Ursulines opened the Lakemary Center on 35 acres of property the Sisters owned in Paola. In those early days, to find the money for monthly bond payments, the half dozen Sisters working at Lakemary endorsed their paychecks and then deposited them in the Lakemary account.



A drawing of phase one of the Ursuline Legacy Park shows a fountain in a courtyard surrounded by garden beds and landscaping. According to the brochure, "the beauty of nature will meet the quiet sound of water, creating a sanctuary that honors the Sisters' unwavering dedication to education, care and community."

"In the early days, many of the kids were placed in our care due to abuse and neglect," said Kirk Davis, the former president and chief executive officer of Lakemary. "If you accept a child at 5, it means that child is living there until 18. When they were adults, there was no place for them to go. That's why the Ursulines wanted to start the adult services program, so it could be the students' forever home. It was for many of them."

In 1983, when Davis was barely 25 years old, he was hired to develop the adult services program at Lakemary. He stayed at Lakemary for 42 years, until retiring at the end of December 2024. He credits the Ursuline Sisters with the success of Lakemary, which is still going strong today.

"They applied for the first community-based group homes anywhere," Davis said. "The Sisters were so progressive. They found a way to build community-based group housing that people could afford. It was Section 8 housing, which meant your rent was one-third of your income, and HUD (the Department of Housing and Urban Development) picked up the

rest. The only income these residents had was Social Security, so they were living here for \$100 a month. The Ursulines covered the rest of the costs of operations and overhead. It became a mission right away. The Sisters cared so much about people with disabilities."

Davis was moved by the personal connections he was able to build with the Ursulines he worked with. They invited him over for dinner on Friday nights or stopped by his office with encouraging words and a hug.

"They had an educational background," he said. "They were so intelligent and forward thinking, I knew I could learn a lot from each of them. And I did."

Davis worked with Ursuline Sisters for 10 to 15 years, but when the last Sister left Lakemary, he vowed not to let their legacy die.

"When we were making decisions, we would ask how the Ursulines would feel about it," Davis said. "Their legacy gave us the opportunity to continue fundraising. The people who worked alongside the Ursulines never quit talking about them. They would ask, 'What would Sister Pat think?' I'd tell them, 'I know what she would think – do the right thing.'"

Sister Pat Lynch worked at Lakemary as a speech pathologist for seven years, then education coordinator for another five years. She later served on the board of directors.

"Lakemary was on the cutting edge of special education," Sister Pat said. Initially, the Paola city manager and a local physician met with Mother Charles about enlisting the Ursulines to start a mental health facility, but Mother Charles had other ideas.

"Mother Charles followed Saint Angela's adaptability, and switched gears to come up with a dream," Sister Pat said. "I'm so proud of that, it's grown into such a special place."

As he neared retirement, Davis wanted to replace the dormitories that were built in 1969 with a 40-bed residence hall and treatment facility for residents age 6 to 21.

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Ursuline legacy continues in Kansas by those inspired by the Sisters - *continued*

"We began a campaign to raise \$14 million to \$16 million over five years," Davis said. "We raised the money in less than a year. The Ursulines taught me, 'Tell your story and people will step up.'" The Lakemary board named the facility the Kirk Davis Center. There was one more project Davis had in mind before he left.

From his office, Davis could look out on Lake Mary, the three-acre pond where the Ursulines once watered their cattle. One day during the bitter cold winter in 2022, Davis received a report that a child was in the lake. Two employees jumped in to rescue the child, and they all survived, but they ended up in the emergency room. "I called in my staff and said I can't bear the thought of that happening again. I decided to drain that pond," Davis said. "It was hard to do. I consider it on sacred ground. Something didn't sit right with me. By then, I knew I would be retiring in a few years. I said, 'The Ursulines are gone, I want to build a park in their legacy.' I knew it would help a lot of people heal."

The Ursuline Legacy Park has faced numerous delays, but there is hope that it will be dedicated later this year. It will feature walking paths, a water feature, an iron gate, benches, a bronze plaque that explains the Ursuline history, and lots of trees.



The future Ursuline Legacy Park is still under construction near the Lakemary Center in Olathe, Kansas. Its dedication will take place on Sept. 24, 2026. (Lakemary, which provides education and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, was founded by the Ursuline Sisters of Paola in 1969.)

"I want people to know and feel the incredible love and passion the Ursulines had for the children with developmental disabilities," Davis said. "They accepted everyone. Without their sacrifices early on, I'm not convinced we would have made it. I could feel God's presence in the building."

"The community of Paola loves the Ursulines," Davis said. "When the (former motherhouse) sold, we all had

a heavy heart. I wanted to bring the good feeling back. This park will be open to the public. A lot of people will find comfort in that," he said. "The Ursuline Sisters' legacy will continue to give love and hope to the Paola community forever."

Physical legacies

When the Paola Ursuline community started growing smaller and their buildings were aging, the Sisters followed Jesus' command to "let nothing be wasted" by repurposing their property to benefit the community. In 1986, the Sisters donated a building to the city that included their auditorium, which became the Paola Community Center. It housed the Senior Citizens Center – begun by Mother Charles – and the Paola Cultural Center, where concerts, movies and theater shows were available, as well as space for artists.

Both Sister Pat and Sister Kathleen were involved in the Paola Civic Theatre, which was started with townspeople.

"We did variety shows as a fundraiser for Lakemary," Sister Pat said. "We decided to do *The Sound of Music*. I was Maria. Several Sisters were in the nun choir. It was a big hit."

"We did ecumenical work by joining with the Paola churches to provide for the needy," Sister Jane said. PACA – Paola Association for Church Action – operated a food pantry in the Paola Motherhouse. It was organized for many years by the late Sister Rita Lavigne.

The former Paola Motherhouse is now owned and operated by Arista Recovery, an in-patient addiction treatment center. The Ursuline cemetery remains on the property and will be maintained in perpetuity. Ursuline Associates still visit the cemetery on Memorial Day weekend to decorate the graves and have a service. The current owners vowed to honor the history of the Sisters.

"Arista Recovery still treasures us, they haven't forgotten us," Sister Angela said. "The cemetery is still there, with all the Sisters who gave their lives as Ursulines. When people pass by there, they'll still think of the Ursuline Sisters."