<table>
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<th><strong>ITEMS OF INTEREST</strong></th>
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| **Widening the circle**
Leadership teams from the five provinces in North America train together in Ohio. |
| **A prophetic voice**
Ecumenical Advocacy Days inspires Christians to be a prophetic voice for change. |
| **Simply the best**
Good Shepherd Services in Baltimore spend a week celebrating staff. |
| **CORA kids win big**
Fourth graders in CORA’s Northwood Academy enter science fair and win! |

**ADVOCATING TO END EXPLOITATION**

More than 1,000 Christians gathered for the 13th annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, DC, in April to build the movement to shake foundations of systems of human exploitation.

See page 5

LA shelter gets new ED

Mandy Gibson has assumed the role of Executive Director for the Good Shepherd Shelter in Los Angeles. Mandy is no stranger to Good Shepherd or the LA domestic violence shelter. She started as a volunteer in 1999 and was later hired as the Assistant to the Program Director at the shelter from 2001-2003 and

Continued on next page
Chicago House of the Good Shepherd Transfers to Catholic Charities

The Province of Mid-North America is in the midst of transferring House of the Good Shepherd (HGS) in Chicago to Catholic Charities of Chicago. Catholic Charities will continue the mission of serving women and their children who are seeking shelter from domestic violence, and it will maintain the name House of the Good Shepherd. Catholic Charities has a long history with HGS. It owns the property and has been leasing it to HGS. It has helped support the ministry by providing counseling to residents and most recently has funded major capital improvements on campus for safety, security and communications.

Gibson Cont’d from p. 1

Program Director from 2003-2006 while in graduate school for Social Work at the University of Southern California. She and her mother were both Angers Pilgrims and they assisted 5 families in their relocation from the Shelter to Bakersfield and have continued to be a support for those families for these many years.

Mandy moved to Sacramento in 2006, where she worked for the University of California Davis Department of Pediatrics Child Abuse and Neglect Center as a therapist, Manager of Outreach for CARES HIV/AIDS Clinic, Behavioral Health Director CARES HIV/AIDS Clinic, and Psychiatric Response Team Supervisor for Sutter Health System in five emergency rooms.

Mandy returned to Los Angeles as the Director of Clinical and Educational Operations for the Good Shepherd Shelter. She was appointed in April as Executive Director and assumes the title officially on May 1, 2015. Sister Anne Kelley will focus first on lots of rest and healing from a back injury and then explore some options for a sabbatical.

Deadline for June issue of Items

Deadline for the June issue of Items of Interest is Friday, May 22. Please send your copy and photographs by deadline to jmcdermott@gspmna.org

Scripture scholar to offer retreat

Fifty Sisters throughout the North America provinces will participate in an 8-day preached retreat with Dr. Rekha Chennattu, RA, (Religious of the Assumption) at the Province Center June 11-18, 2015. Rekha is a scripture scholar from India who presents the Bible in a new and meaningful way. She is well known to those who attended the ICA in Ecuador last year. Rekha broke new ground in 2005 with the publication of her book Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship, a study of Old Testament covenant theology. She is the head of the department of scriptural studies, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pontifical Institute of Philosophy and Religion in India. She has a Licentiate in Scripture from Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, and holds a PhD in Biblical Studies from the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. The retreat is intended for Sisters to get away from busy daily routines, to be renewed and refreshed spiritually, and to listen deeply and reflect on their own inner life with God.
Leadership teams from the five provinces of North America met in Carrollton, Ohio, from April 9-20 to gather the wisdom of the group and discover a pathway for leadership into the future. There were 37 participants, including Congregational Leader Sr. Brigid Lawlor and some members of her Congregational team, including Sr. Susan Chia who co-facilitated with Sr. Elaine Basinger.

The event had three goals:
* To deepen understanding that leadership is a living and evolving story within a larger story of creation
* To move toward an integrated approach in living spirituality, mission development and justice and peace for mission today
* To enable leaders to bring about co-responsibility, participation and inclusion for the mission.

Sisters reflected on the gathering throughout their time of being together. They left feeling enriched by the experience.

Reflection from PMNA
Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth, Province of Mid North America, said, “When I arrived in Carrollton I was struck by the bulging buds and the green rolling hills; it is a beautiful area. We spent 12 days renewing acquaintances and making new ones. Surprisingly the days went by quickly. We had lots of input, but we were given sufficient time with which to ingest it. We had Mass in the morning, for which I was so grateful; it starts our day off right.

On the tenth day that we were there someone brought in a darling little black and white goat; it reminded me so much of our little puppy at home that I knew it was time for me to return home. When we left Carrollton the buds had all blossomed and the flowers were beginning to come up.”

Reflection from New York
Sr. Rosalyn Menard, Province of New York, said, “It was a deeply graced experience that surpassed all of my prior expectations! I most enjoyed meeting our Sisters from all over North America and was so moved by the rich diversity among us while strongly experiencing the unifying bond of our Good Shepherd spirit and charism. Very special gratitude for the incredible hospitality of our Sisters from Carrollton and equal appreciation for our two wonderful facilitators who were so sensitive to the group throughout the process.”

Reflection from Province of French Canada
Sr. Barbara Beasley, Congregation Leadership Team delegate to Province of French Canada, said, “Saint Mary Euphrasia said that “Our unity is like a gently flowing river that waters the earth with blessings.”

I experienced the truth and wisdom of these words during the leadership session. Amid wide diversity among the participants, I sensed a deep spirit of trust; a spirit of understanding and acceptance of the unique position of each individual, province and region. I felt the spirit of God present in the individual sisters and in the group, evidenced by much convergence in emerging themes; by a sense of the rightness of the paths toward greater collaboration which were expressed and the call to integrate Justice, Peace,

Continued on next page
Leadership Cont’d from p. 3

Development and Spirituality concretely and continually for the sake of the mission of Good Shepherd. I experienced a new found zeal for the mission, expressed so passionately by Saint John Eudes, when he said, "how I long for the universe to be transformed into fiery flames of love ...!"

Reflection from Province of English Canada

Sr. Barbara Wells, English Region of Canada, said, “The training presented an opportunity to allow me to relate in a whole new way to my Sisters in Leadership across North America. These days were mission focused, grace filled, enlightening and surprising as we shared where we all are and our desire for a common vision. The learning for me was about how to better integrate mission development, justice and peace and spirituality into our ministries and the importance of accurate monitoring and evaluation which will help capture outcomes of quality care for the poor. I am most grateful for having attended this leadership session.”

Reflections from Central South U.S. Province

Sr. Yolanda Martinez, Central South US Province, said, “This session was the occasion to reflect as a leadership team to be conscious of our reality we experience in North America. There are challenges ahead of us and we will have to take decisions. This session was very well facilitated and congratulations to our two qualified animators.”

Reflections from PMNA Province Leader

Sr. Madeleine Munday, Mid-North America Province Leader, said, “A highlight for me at the Leadership Session for North America was learning about the integration of spirituality and justice and peace in projects that are supported by the Mission Development Office (MDO).

MDO trains mission partners and Sisters in Good Shepherd ministries on the margins. They offer professional standards with Good Shepherd values to ensure apostolic effectiveness and sustainability. I look forward to incorporating these elements with our lenses of Community, Mission and Stewardship in the transformative visioning processes of our province.”

Visit the Congregation website to see additional photographs and to read more information about the leadership training. http://www.buonpastoreint.org
Developing a prophetic voice for justice
By Jeanette McDermott

Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) brings together faith-based people from across the U.S. each year to affect change through the legislative process. More than 1,000 people came to EAD April 17-20 to deepen awareness about systems of exploitation and to help one another light fires within themselves to take action to change those systems.

Among the participants were priests, pastors and prison chaplains, deacons, youth ministers, Catholic Sisters and parishioners, seminarians and theology students, mothers of imprisoned youth, Peace Corps volunteers, churches and nonprofit organizations, economists, consultants and many individuals who are on the front line of the peace and justice movement.

“The ultimate goal of Ecumenical Advocacy Days is to raise the moral voice of the progressive Christian community,” said Douglas Grace, director of EAD.

“We cannot be afraid to speak out against injustice for fear of backlash. Jesus turned the tables upside down. He wasn’t popular. As people of faith we cannot be afraid to stand against what’s wrong,” Douglas said.

Dr. Bill Medford, Director for Civil and Human Rights, United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society, said, “Churches must develop a prophetic voice for justice. We have been silent too long.”

Stories of injustice underpinned the conference, whose theme was Breaking the Chains: Mass Incarceration and Systems of Exploitation.

Irish missionary priest Father Shay Cullen spoke about an area in the Philippines where street children are rounded up and put into jail cells that are not much larger than dog cages. Incarcerated pedophiles are kept in cells so close to the children that they can easily reach into the cages where the children are locked. Father Shay formed People Recovery Empowerment and Development Assistance (PREDA) Foundation to help incarcerated children and adolescents who are being trafficked for sex.

“We must do everything in our power to challenge structures that victimize the innocents,” Fr. Shay said.

Another priest, Father Valdir Joao Silveira, National Coordinator of the Prison Ministry Pastoral in Brazil, showed shocking photographs of Brazil’s prisons. It is common practice to confine between 40-60 men to prison cells that were built for six people. Women prisoners who are pregnant in Brazil are shackled during childbirth and their newborns removed from them abruptly after birth.

Stories of exploitation on the home
Justice Cont’d from p. 5

front abounded as well, particularly mass incarceration of minor drug offenders and controversial family detention camps for immigrants. Stories were rife with familiar refrains of neglect, abuse and corruption.

Plenary panelist Emira Woods said, “We must dare to invent the future. We’ve got to be courageous and lead the battle to remove the chains of injustice.”

Douglas Grace believes that most people come to Ecumenical Advocacy Days to deepen their faith and commitment to causes while developing stronger advocacy skills.

“People who come to the gathering want to use their voice for change. The church leaders who come want to motivate their churches to be the voice of justice,” he said.

The collective voices from EAD gathered on Capitol Hill the final day of the conference. Participants met with their U.S. Representative and Senators or, more likely, with their respective legislative staff. During the meetings, the conference participants pressed for an end to mandatory minimum sentencing, an end to bed quotas for immigrants, and an end to immigrant family detention.

“We are not looking only for a change in legislation, but a change of heart,” Larry said.

This collective presence is what counts, according to Larry. He said, “We are not just individuals at EAD. We represent a collection of organizations that believe strongly enough in the issues to be a powerful voice with legislators.”

Many of the persons attending the Ecumenical Advocacy Gathering had never participated in a lobby visit. The break out sessions provided an opportunity to review the legislative asks, decide who will be the lead speaker for each issue, and to role play in preparation for the meetings with legislators. Larry facilitated the sessions for Maryland and West Virginia delegates.

When a participant in one of the sessions said he was the sole advocate representing West Virginia and felt a little intimidated meeting with legislators alone, Larry comforted him by saying, “We always bring the Holy Spirit with us when we go into legislative rooms. We don’t go alone; we go with God. As people of faith we never stand alone.”

EAD Mass celebrant Father Michael Bryant said, “We are bridge builders and menders of broken fences; that’s who we are. We came here together as faith-filled people. Having an ecumenical gathering focused on these important justice issues is a blessing. It’s going to take more than one faith to tackle all of the problems facing our nation.”

Ecumenical Advocacy Days will be held next year from April 16-19 in Washington, DC. All are welcome to attend. http://advocacydays.org
Affecting policies
Larry Couch, Director of Good Shepherd National Advocacy Center, serves on the leadership team for Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD). Larry planned the domestic (U.S.) workshops and facilitated the state breakout sessions for congressional districts in Maryland and West Virginia. He also coordinated the office meetings with legislators. This year’s EAD workshops and breakout sessions were designed to build strength and mold the Christian voice speaking out against mass incarceration and family detention of immigrants.

Organizing for effective change
High on the agenda for Ecumenical Advocacy Days were issues related to mass incarceration and family detention of immigrants. Above: Larry Couch leads discussions with peace and justice advocates from Maryland and West Virginia. Their collective voices gathered on Capitol Hill the final day of the conference to push forward the issues emphasized at EAD. Right: The National Advocacy Center set up a table for the first time this year at Ecumenical Advocacy Days. The table provided a focused opportunity for Larry Couch to speak with people about NAC and other Good Shepherd ministries.
Good Shepherd Sisters help with relief efforts in Nepal

Two Good Shepherd Sisters from India and Nepal have begun relief work in Nepal, following the devastating earthquake that struck the country on April 25, topping 5,000 deaths and injuring twice that number. The Sisters, Taskila and Amala, are in Kathmandu. Jesuits and Caritas Nepal have joined them in their relief efforts. A third Sister has joined Caritas Nepal as a nurse.

Good Shepherd congregational leader Sister Brigid Lawlor offered hope and prayer for the Sisters, Good Shepherd partners, program participants and the entire country on behalf of the congregation. Food, water and tents are the most critical needs in the area. Anyone wishing to send contributions on behalf of the Good Shepherd International Congregation, may do so through this link: http://www.fondazionebuonpastore.org/donate

The earthquake in Nepal has affected 8 million people across 39 districts.
PNC backs off MTR

Last month *Items of Interest* reported on Sr. Mary Joy Benson’s experience of joining in a Quaker-led (EQAT) protest against PNC Bank’s financial backing of mountaintop removal (MTR). Lee McClenon, Sr. Mary Carol McClenon’s niece, is a leader in EQAT (Earth Quaker Action Team), the grassroots, nonviolent social action group that led the campaign against PNC Bank.

When Lee saw the article in the province newsletter she notified her aunt that PNC had made a commitment to ending their investments in MTR on March 2, the day after the April issue of *Items of Interest* was published and distributed. Lee sent a statement to Sr. Mary Carol from Matthew Armstead, staff coordinator for EQAT, which read:

“After five years of action by Earth Quaker Action Team, PNC announced on March 2, 2015 a shift in its policy that will effectively cease its financing of mountaintop removal coal mining in Appalachia! This marks a major turnaround for PNC, who for years refused to budge on this issue. After more than 125 spiritually-led actions, PNC’s desire to continue business as usual proved no match for EQAT and its allies. When we initiated our campaign in 2010, PNC attempted to placate us with a hollow policy. It’s good to see that PNC Bank is now taking meaningful steps. “Since this shift happened because of external pressure, it should be a wake-up call for everyone that the power of change lies with regular citizen activists.”

Gathering to tell vocation stories

Sisters at St. Joseph Residence in Baltimore gathered to share their vocation stories as part of St. Mary Euphrasia’s Feast Day on April 24. Local Leader Sr. Mary Carol McClenon facilitated the conversation. Province communications coordinator Jeanette McDermott interjected questions and recorded the discussion. The Sisters said they were surprised to have learned so many new things about each other. “That was a wonderful time spent together. It was very interesting and so enjoyable to hear one another’s stories,” said Sr. Mary Laetitia Hughes. Jeanette will burn the conversation onto DVD for the province archives and post the recorded stories on the province website.

Decking the halls

Sisters in Baltimore make quilted wall hangings, photo collages and wreaths to brighten hallways and rooms at St. Joseph Residence. The Sisters get together daily to socialize and make crafts for the residence.

Sharing stories and creativity
GSS Reunion
The annual reunion of Good Shepherd Services Baltimore (GSS) brought alumni of the program together on April 26 to reconnect with staff, Sisters, teachers and each other. Smiles, hugs and reminiscence were the order of the day. To read stories and see additional photographs about the reunion please visit the province facebook page at www.facebook.com/sistersofthegoodshepherd

Simply the BEST!
Games, activities, raffles, barbecue, awards ceremonies and other events marked Staff Appreciation Week at Good Shepherd Services Baltimore (GSS) April 20-24. The week ended with cake and ice cream to celebrate Saint Mary Euphrasia’s Feast Day. GSS Executive Director Michele Wyman said, “Our staff is simply the best. We dedicate a week to them each year so they know how much we care about and value them.” See more photos at www.facebook.com/sistersofthegoodshepherd
Celebrating jubilees
Four Sisters are reaching milestones and celebrating Jubilees in May.
Hearty congratulations!

Dorothy Doyle
May 1
60 years

Marjorie Hamilton
May 12
70 years

Nora Dennehy
May 31
60 years

Virginia Gordon
May 31
60 years

Spring festivities
Festivity is filling the air at House of the Good Shepherd (HGS) Chicago. Women at HGS celebrated Saint Mary Euphrasia on her Feast Day April 24, and children at the center will be celebrating their moms on Mother’s Day.

Women in the spirituality and journaling classes at House of the Good Shepherd read about the life of Mary Euphrasia as part of the “Rose Project” during the month of April. The goal of the project was to acquaint HGS mothers with Saint Mary Euphrasia and to give them an opportunity to experience the healing love of both Mary Euphrasia and House of the Good Shepherd.

After much reading and reflection, the women identified with Mary Euphrasia, who had suffered many losses as a teen and faced numerous hardships as a woman. Each of the mothers created an art project that symbolized a correlation between their lives and the life of St. Mary Euphrasia. On April 24 -- Saint Mary Euphrasia Feast Day -- the mothers discussed their art projects with staff and Sisters at the Chicago convent, where they also were treated to a brunch.

"Saint Mary Euphrasia's passion, values, determination and love for God created a woman worth celebrating," said Nancy Haws, Director of Development for HGS.

Mothers Day
Mother’s Day is just around the corner on May 8, and members from the Illinois Club for Catholic Women will continue a 25-year tradition at House of the Good Shepherd to help children at HGS prepare for the day. The women will bring body gels, lotions, jewelry and other gifts to the House of the Good Shepherd. Children will choose from among the items to make presents to give their moms on Mother’s Day. Members of the Women’s Board from the club will wrap each gift beautifully. Photographs will also be taken of the children. Volunteers from the Women's Association Board will work with the children to make picture frames to insert their photographs as another present for their moms. The mothers will join their children in the evening on Mother’s Day for pizza and beverages.

Garden party
On May 15, HGS will host its first garden party to initiate vegetable planting with tomatoes, cucumbers, snap beans and other seasonal produce.
CORA kids learn about science and win at science fair

Ask 4th graders at CORA what a gizmo is and they’ll tell you it’s generating an interest in the scientific method via outreach (GISMO). What? Let’s take it from the top.

GISMO is a program that started in September 2014, when Griselle Morales, Director of Licensed Pre-School and After-School Programs, reached out to Bill Wuest, a member of the science department at Temple University. Together they devised a plan for youth from CORA Services Northwood Academy after-school site to visit Temple University once a month. The purpose would be for CORA kids to learn the scientific method and conduct experiments alongside Temple students who were finalizing an experiment of their own to submit to the George Washington Carver Science Fair.

Soda explosions
Katie Bennett, Site Director at Northwood, has gone with four 4th grade students to Temple University each month since September.

In the first four months the youth engaged in an exciting project that caused candy mints and soda to react chemically and explode. In another experiment the children used scientific method to build cushioned vessels to protect raw eggs from splattering when dropped from a balcony.

Entering the new year meant preparing kids for the George Washington Carver Science Fair.

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“This project was a great accomplishment, not only for the students but for our agency as well,” Katie said.

Bill Wuest was awarded a National Science Foundation CAREER Grant in April, in part for the outreach program with CORA Services and through the George Washington Carver Science Fair.

The George Washington Carver Science Fair encourages urban youth to pursue academic achievement and careers in science. Due to the success of the partnership and receipt of the grant, CORA Services will partner with Temple University to continue GISMO into the 2015-2016 school year.
Gracenter prepares for annual garden day

The Good Shepherd Guild has donated lovely plants for the Gracenter gardening day on May 16. Everyone is getting ready for the annual event. It’s a time when residents, board members, volunteers and friends like the Soroptimists help beautify the grounds of Gracenter. Some neighbors from the Portola neighborhood will be joining Gracenter this year. Gracenter has also invited parishioners of St. Ignatius Church to join in the activities. Gracenter is a new social ministry of St. Ignatius.

Sandra Munoz, Gracenter’s Program Manager, organizes Garden Day. This year one of the center’s regular gardening volunteers will help her supervise the day’s activities. The gardening day will help Gracenter get prepared for being a part of the Portola Garden Tour, which will be held on September 26.

“Our board wants Gracenter to become more integrated with our vibrant local community, and this is a great way to do that,” said Sr. Marguerite Bartling, Executive Director of Gracenter.

Garden Day will start at 9:30 a.m. and end with lunch served at 12:30. The goal of the event is to enhance the beautiful setting of Gracenter with drought-resistant native California plants.

Tricycles donated to kids at LA shelter

The LA Shelter has a long relationship with an aviation service group of retired flight attendants called the "Westerlies." One of the members arranged for the donation of six Trek bikes for the shelter. Brandon Van Luven is the son of Ingrid Van Luven, one of the Westerlies. He is the co-owner of Trek Bicycle West Phoenix, Arizona. Brandon drove to Los Angeles from Phoenix to bring the children’s bikes as a gift to the shelter. Brandon and Sr. Anne Kelley had a good time playing around on the tiny trikes before handing them over to the kids.

Announcements

GSV international placement

Good Shepherd Volunteers is accepting applications through May 15 for the international program. Spread the word! Apply http://gsvolunteers.org/apply/international-application/

Congrats to our scholars

Sr. Claudia Palacio will receive her Master's in Social Work from Temple University on May 7.

Sr. Anna Tram Nguyen has completed the graduate program in Organizational Development at the University of San Francisco and will receive her Master’s degree on May 23.
Meet Good Shepherd Volunteer Grace Dietrich

Grace Dietrich is from Conklin, Michigan, where she grew up on an apple farm that her father and uncles own. She comes from a large close-knit Catholic family and is the middle child among six. Grace graduated with a Sociology degree from DePaul University, the largest Catholic university in the nation and largest private institution in Chicago. When speaking with Grace about her year with Good Shepherd Volunteers at the LA Shelter, she spoke freely about her passion, her upbringing and her faith. This is Grace’s story, in her words.

“I consider myself to be strong in the Catholic faith. Service has always been important to me, even as a child. I knew I wanted to work in the social services field while a student at DePaul. I spent most of my free time doing community service and studying spirituality. My coursework in Sociology gave me a greater understanding of poverty, gender, class and race, subjects that fascinate me.

I was very nearly always engaged in campus service work while studying at the university. At first I just did service, and then I got involved in leadership and started organizing projects and programs. I oversaw all of the coordinators of programs and facilitated reflections for leaders of the programs. Programs were throughout all of Chicago. This level of activity reflects how important service was to me, and still is.

Community service is life-giving for me. The seed for service was planted first in my home and then at DePaul. I would trace my own commitment to service back to my parents, who are strong Catholics and give of themselves to those who are less fortunate. Having solidarity with the poor is important to me. It’s why I live simply.

In addition to my parents, DePaul University has a culture of service. At DePaul I learned more of the social justice elements to service and came to understand how important this element is when it comes to helping those in need.

I lived in intentional community at the Vincennes Louise House at DePaul with nine other tenants. We all had to commit to service hours. Also, through weekly community nights the piece of community service often arose. My experience living in community at DePaul was incredible.

I love to travel. It’s probably my greatest passion. I feel most alive when I’m traveling. I like to explore new cultures and immerse myself in nature and diversity experiences.

I served in Korea for two years, teaching the English language to elementary school children. At the end of my second year in Korea I realized that I wanted to be more greatly challenged, and needed to be with my family. I missed them. My two older siblings were having babies and I wanted to be closer to them. So I went home for a while and received my family fix in a comfortable and loving way.

**Spiritual direction**

Growing up on a farm taught me the importance of work and gave me a sense of being free in nature. When I returned home from Korea I shifted my work and began marketing the family farm and promoting it through social media. At the same time I taught low-income, high-risk children near Conklin, Michigan.

At the time I was kind of in a rut. I wasn’t sure where God was leading me. While home I began seeking spiritual direction and had a powerful guide for about a year. She helped me through my discernment process of what to do next with my life. Through the discernment, I came to realize that I wanted to do post-graduate service rather than stay on the farm working or going back to school for my master’s degree. With the help of my spiritual guide I found the spark again that had always

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brought joy to my heart: service to others.

I began looking around for a post-graduate service project. That’s when I found Sisters of the Good Shepherd. There was a link to the GSV website from the Catholic Volunteer Network website. As soon as I opened the GSV website I knew placement with Good Shepherd was right for me.

**Embrace the world**

What resonated so clearly for me were the words on the GSV website banner, “Embrace the world.” The word embrace captures how I feel about taking on situations. That word encompasses how I want to take on the world. I want to embrace cultures, embrace other people, embrace service. Everything that Good Shepherd stands for is what I feel so called towards.

I feel blessed to have been placed at the domestic violence shelter. I’ve been really happy here. I’m embracing this experience fully. That’s all I can do and that’s all I want to do, is to embrace each and every day with these moms and children.

It didn’t start out this way. I had originally applied for international service in Thailand and was devastated when I didn’t get that placement. I really wanted another international experience, and I was disappointed and confused when I didn’t get it through GSV. I struggled with whether to stay with Good Shepherd so much. She invited me to really think about that. Then she said to me, “What matters is what you are doing through service. It’s not about where, but what you are doing through service.”

I recalled the tenets of Good Shepherd that had resonated so deeply with me when I visited the GSV website initially, and in that moment I understood how I was allowing myself to get in the way of my own deepening of spirit.

I work with the toddlers in the shelter. It’s unlike any work I have ever done. I appreciate the work for the challenge it presents for personal growth. I’m learning so much about how to speak with kids who have undergone trauma. I have to be constantly aware of using inclusive language and being intuitive to the

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Grace  Cont’d from p. 15

children and the trauma they’ve experienced. One of the platitudes of Good Shepherd Volunteers is ‘Just Love.’ This is it for me. It’s what brings everything I’m doing into focus. When communication gets hard between me and the kids or teachers or the other volunteers I live with, I have to remember that I’ll get through it with just love.

Inspired by others

I had a beautiful childhood filled with love and play and structure and freedom to be. I can pull from my own memories of childhood to show the children in the shelter that I love them. I can show them how to be children.

Here at the shelter I am able to hug the children and tell them that I love them. I couldn’t do that in other settings. But here with Good Shepherd I can do that. It makes me feel that much more grateful to be here because it’s such a strong part of the mission here and such a strong part of who I am as a loving person.

My challenges as a Good Shepherd Volunteer are also my aha moments. The challenge is often how to reach these children who have been so traumatized by their early life experiences. The epiphany is that I have my own childhood to draw from to find loving ways of reaching these small children. Each day I ask myself, ‘How am I using my gifts to make the world a better place?’

I find inspiration, motivation and training from other teachers. I observe those who are trained in trauma-informed childcare and learn from them. I especially like living in close proximity to the nuns. I like the relationship the GSVs have with the Sisters. They are so kind and give so much to us.

I will tap from the year of service I have had with GSV to find the career niche that I am seeking. I have to keep praying, discerning and asking God what is it He wants of me. I am taking all of the elements in my life this year to really try to embrace this question fully so I can get closer to knowing what God is asking of me. Those elements include living simply, living in community and deepening my spirituality to respond to God’s call for my life.

I have learned to pray well as a result of my strong Catholic faith and upbringing in the Church. For me, praying originally had a socialized form to it. My spiritual director helped me understand that prayer is more about having a conversation with God. My favorite form of prayer is Taize. I find it very calm and peaceful. Taize prayer lights the fire in my heart.

Guided by prayer

When I’m on my own, I do more meditational prayer to settle my mind so that I’m open to God or being in silence with God. For me this type of prayer is a more holistic experience. I also still pray the rosary. I wear the rosary bracelet every day. I don’t feel complete without the rosary.

Spirituality is very important to me. A prayer life needs to be a part of me in order for me to feel alive. I’m hoping my year of discernment while at the LA Shelter will lead me to my path to find the niche with social service that I’m meant to follow. My year at the shelter is helping me reach my goal of getting one step closer to knowing what I am meant to do with my life.”

When Grace isn’t performing service or devoting hours to deepening her spirituality, she can be found practicing yoga or communing with nature. She especially likes to hike and view the world from forests and mountaintops. She also likes to read inspirational books, autobiographies and some fiction. Actually, she says, “I’m diverse in my reading and enjoy everything from reading Harry Potter to reading the life of the Dalai Lama.” Grace completes her year of service with Good Shepherd Volunteers next month. She lives in community with two other GSV’s at the domestic violence shelter in Los Angeles.
### Leadership Schedule

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Sr. Sharon Rose Authorson</td>
<td>May 15-17, May 18-21</td>
<td>New York Province Assembly, Willimantic, CT PLT Meetings, St. Louis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sr. Jean Marie Fernandez</td>
<td>May 18-21, May 26-30</td>
<td>PLT Meetings, St. Louis PLT Meetings, St. Louis Vocation Ministry, Cleveland Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Beverly Hedgecoth</td>
<td>May 14-17, May 18-21</td>
<td>New York Province Assembly, Willimantic, CT PLT Meetings, St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Maureen Johnson</td>
<td>May 1-18, May 31</td>
<td>Spanish immersion, Costa Rica en route to Angers for Congregational Chapter (June 5-July 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Dolores Kalina</td>
<td>May 8-15, May 17-26</td>
<td>Baltimore visit PLT Meetings, St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Maureen Kunz</td>
<td>May 16-23, May 23-27, May 31</td>
<td>PLT Meetings, St. Louis Detroit visit Portland visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Marie Mauer</td>
<td>May 8-11, May 15-17, May 18-21</td>
<td>St. Paul visit New York Province Assembly, Willimantic, CT PLT Meetings, St. Louis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Mary Carolyn McQuaid</td>
<td>May 5-6, May 15-17, May 18-20, May 21-22, May 24-29</td>
<td>St. Paul Generalate Investment Advisory Committee Meeting New York Province Assembly, Willimantic, CT PLT Meetings, St. Louis House of Good Shepherd Chicago Board Meeting Southern California for time with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Madeleine Munday</td>
<td>May 6-8, May 9-13, May 13, May 15-17, May 18-21, May 22-25, May 31</td>
<td>Sr. Claudia’s graduation, Philadelphia Baltimore visit National Advocacy Center Board Meeting New York Province Assembly, Willimantic, CT PLT Meetings, St. Louis Sr. Tram’s graduation, San Francisco Visit Sr. Olga in Albania en route to Angers for Congregational Chapter (June 5-July 4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Like sunflowers that look towards the sun and as a compass needle seeks the pole, so your minds should always turn to the Lord.”

Saint Mary Euphrasia
Conferences, p. 29

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