

March 2023

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural *Zeal Connections* where we share news, celebrations, tidbits, Celebrations of Life, and all things relevant to our Province life as Sisters and Partners-in-Mission. You will receive this by email each month.

In addition to regular emails, prayer requests, and Facebook, the newsletter will support our engagement with each other. We invite each of you to share a monthly tidbit about your community, ministry, or something that would be of interest to our Good Shepherds. We will target larger articles for a magazine type publication a couple of times a year.

As with all communications, the newsletter is subject to evaluation, and we look forward to your additions and feedback. If you know anyone that wishes to receive our newsletter, please have them subscribe to jmcdermott@gspmna.org. Please note that due to space and editorial discretion, items submitted may be edited or not used.

Sincerely,

Antonia M. Ponder

Director of Province Administration/General Counsel

Normandy property update

The Province Center Mission Partners have completed the Herculean task of clearing the four-story Province Center building.

Since the sale of the Normandy property was announced last September, Sisters and Administrative Staff have been identifying, sorting, packing, labeling, and finding new homes for furniture and other items that had accumulated throughout 50-plus years at 7654 Natural Bridge Road.

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A craftsman from the Emil Frei Company removes the stained glass windows from the province center chapel.

While managing the closure of the province center, Sr. Madeleine Munday and Toni Ponder coordinated the temporary relocation to Maria Droste on the Province Center campus and finalized the lease on our new space, which is located at 1133 Olivette Executive Parkway, in Olivette Missouri.

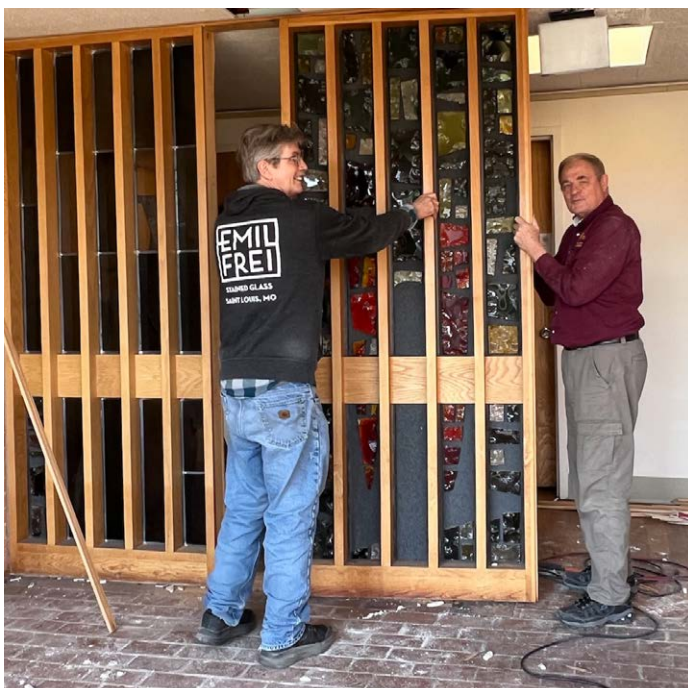
We will plan an Open House to celebrate, bless, and name the new space in the fall of 2023. More details to come.

Hats off to the entire province team! Monte Abbott, Vicky Barshis, Yolanda Camp, Tracy Chartrand, Pam Fisher, Gabe and Lisa Fox, Jeanette McDermott, Alice Monroe, Toni Ponder, and Sisters Madeleine Munday, Mary Carol McClenon, Marta Ceballos, Tram Nguyen, and Dolores Kalina.

[Read more about the Normandy update.](#)



The Mid-North America Province Leadership Team tours the new space during a recent visit to St. Louis.



Craftsmen from Emil Frei remove entryway panels from the province center.



Sister Madeleine Munday and Jeanette McDermott haul boxes for admin files.

By Jeanette McDermott, as told by Sr. Christine Truong

More than 200 South Vietnamese men were imprisoned in Hong Kong for no crime other than being single 40 years ago, when stigmatized sentiments of “boat people” from Vietnam dominated the public conscience.

The British government hoped to prevent social problems in Hong Kong by confining these men, ages 15-84. The men had no chairs or beds, and were confined to a camp inside a small cell behind iron bars on an island accessible only by ferry. Their health was failing, and they were miserable.

Sister Christine Truong took the ferry on her day off every other week to stand compassionately before the men. She convinced a young Salesian priest, Fr. Peter Newberry, to accompany her and celebrate Mass.

Without seeking permission from the government, Sr. Christine and Fr. Newberry visited the men to comfort them. Although not all of the men were Catholic, they craved solace in the presence of the priest and Sister.

After Fr. Newberry celebrated Mass, Sr. Christine would speak in Vietnamese and share news with the men about society. She spoke slowly and listened to them patiently so they understood she cared about them. She would bring candy, simple sweets, to the men when she could, and always showed them kindness. Each time she and Fr. Newberry left, the men would ask, “When are you coming back?”

When Sr. Christine asked the men why they wanted her and Fr. Newberry to return, the men said it was because the visits gave them hope. For the men imprisoned, those visits were the biggest event of their lives.

[Read the rest of the story on the province website.](#)



Humble Green Planet

by Sisters Liz Schille and Joan Spiering

If you love our blue planet home and want to help heal it, the time for action is NOW! Months ago, Sr. Marilyn Atwell felt that way and decided to act.

She contacted several of us with the invitation to join her in greening our planet. These are the steps we agreed on:

1. Educating ourselves about the issues;
2. Incorporating what we learn in our lived spirituality; and
3. Taking action as we are led.

We are now a small cell of six: five Sisters and one Partner-in-Mission. Realizing that as Pope Francis has said, “Everyone has something to contribute,” we discern our way forward, slowly and humbly. We meet through Zoom every fourth Thursday.

If this “revelation” speaks to you, we are ready to share. We hope you’ll want to start a Humble Green Planet “cell group” too within our Good Shepherd family. Contact us: joancspiering@gmail.com or lschille@gspmna.org.



You never know who you’ll meet while walking to church. This is a barred owl sitting in a neighbor’s tree watching the Sunday morning foot traffic.

Memoirs of a CEO



AnnMarie McDowell,
President & CEO of
CORA Services

The CEO of CORA Services, AnnMarie McDowell, has launched a blog/vlog series to share her story on what it has been like being the CEO of CORA through Covid and other challenges. The series, called “Memoirs of a CEO,” is a compilation of her personal struggles and triumphs navigating life as a single mom of four and leader of a \$40 million nonprofit organization in Philadelphia.

Memoirs of a CEO also allows others at CORA to share their experiences and talk about how they are using those experiences to guide CORA into the future.

You can find Memoirs of a CEO at <https://jdarley89.wixsite.com/ceo-memoirs>

Vista Maria appoints new CEO

The Province Leadership Team and the Vista Maria community warmly welcomes **Megan Zambiasi**

as Vista Maria’s new Chief Executive Officer. She comes to Good Shepherd with more than 30 years of experience in clinical and mental health service leadership and administration. Megan



will join the Vista Maria team on March 6. Angela Aufdemberge, current CEO, will assume the role of CEO Advisor to support Megan’s onboarding.

Megan quoted Mary Euphrasia during the board meeting, “Keep alive within you and bring under wise control that courage which makes you long to undertake great works, which others might consider it folly to attempt.”

Wellness Tidbits

Vicky Barshis, Health and Wellness Coordinator



It's time to talk about purple files and advance directives again. Your purple file is a copy of your advance directives and health summary you carry when traveling. In case of an emergency when you're not near your regular providers, medical staff will have enough information available to provide necessary care.

Please update the health summary in your file with any new diagnoses, meds, and physicians, and then email or snail mail me a copy (instead of zip). The copy is kept securely so that if needed your team link can access it in the event of an emergency or your purple file is lost.

Your advance directive specifies who will tell health providers what type of care you want if you are unable to speak for yourself. See if yours needs updating. Keep the original document, and only place a copy in the purple file. Let me know if I can help!

Generous Hearts

Lizzie Cody, Director of Mission Effectiveness



The North America Mission and Values Team (NAMVT) convened in Edwardsville, Illinois, from January 30 to February 1 to begin planning the highly-anticipated 2023 Angers Pilgrimage. Led by a team consisting of Lizzie Cody, Sr. Barbara Beasley, Janet Jones, Celia Ceballos, Nadia Dias, and Nancy Eagan, this year's pilgrimage promises to take pilgrims on an unforgettable exploration of the mission and spirituality of St. Mary Euphrasia.

The pilgrimage will take place at the Motherhouse in Angers, France, from August 28 to September 5. With over 80 Partners-in-Mission attending, representing 22 different locations across North America, as well as Taiwan and Central America, the Angers Pilgrimage promises to leave a lasting impact on all who attend.

Balancing Act

Tracy Chartrand, Director of Finance



The Finance Department will need any mail that you receive where the envelope is marked "Tax Document" or "Important Tax Information Enclosed." Every Sister receiving Social Security benefits will receive a Form SSA-1099 and the Finance Department will also need this. We need the tax forms to calculate whether an individual Sister needs to file a tax return. Please remember to scan or snap a picture of the forms and send them to us. You can mail the documents to 7654 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis Mo 63121. Please note while in our transitional office at Droste, we do not have a fax line and cannot receive faxes.

Other items on our list are to finalize year-end numbers, prepare the National Religious Retirement Office report, and prepare audit work papers.

To our fellow Province staff, Open Enrollment for employee's insurance will be held during March. Employees will receive an email with all the details near mid-month.

Heritage & Archives

Monte Abbott, Director of Archives



Archives work during 2023 has included planning for and executing the temporary move to Maria Droste. In January, I assembled supplies and calculated the amount of space we need for temporary storage. Some of our more fragile heritage items require extra care, so I built special cases and enclosures to prevent damage. In order to maintain intellectual control of the collection, I created an inventory to document the contents and locations of each box at each step of the move. Four weeks ago, I began moving shelving and boxes of files to Maria Droste. Staff and Sisters assisted greatly in the final stages! I continue spot checking boxes to ensure that no damage occurred during transport.

Diamond

On February 11, Sisters Mary Becker and Mary Catherine Massei celebrated their Diamond Jubilees (60 years) and renewed their vows at Maria Hall chapel in Danville, Pennsylvania.



Golden

Sister Olga Cristobal celebrated her Golden Jubilee (50 years) in California on October 9, 2022. When she traveled to the Philippines in January, she celebrated her Jubilee again on January 17, 2023 — this time in her native country with the Papal Nuncio, priests, and Good Shepherd Sisters. The Papal Nuncio, Charles Brown, is the Pope’s ambassador to the Philippines.

During the Mass offered for Sr. Olga’s intention, Fr. Brown addressed the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and Sr. Olga’s ministry of serving Filipinos who had been, or were being trafficked for sex and labor.

Following the Mass, Fr. Brown invited Sr. Olga to breakfast in the Nunciature as a belated Jubilee celebration.

Four priests from Fr. Brown’s staff attended the breakfast for Sr. Olga, along with two Good Shepherd Sisters: Gemma Dinglasan, a Provincial Councilor, and Susan Montano, the Province Leader for the Philippines-Japan region.

Sister Olga’s friendship with Fr. Brown began while he served as the Papal Nuncio in Albania during the time she was missioned there. He was supposed to celebrate the Holy Mass of her Jubilee last October, but Covid restrictions interfered.



Sister Olga Cristobal and Fr. Charles Brown, Papal Nuncio of the Philippines.



Sister Susanne Hughes was reading Raymond Arroyo's new book *The Wise Men Who Found Christmas* when this photograph was taken of her on January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.



On February 2, during the World Day for Consecrated Life, Sr. Monique Tarabeh met with Sisters at Mason Pointe to share vocation stories and discuss what religious life means to them, and what their commitment is to religious life today.



Sisters Mary Carol McClenon and Monique Tarabeh are members of the Bell Choir at Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Parish & School in Ferguson, Missouri.



Sister Barbara Beasley, a member of the PMNA Leadership Team (standing second from far right), recently attended a spiritual retreat with 34 women religious in Tucson, Arizona.



Sister Mary Carol McClenon, a member of the PMNA Leadership Team, took up wall climbing while living at the convent in Normandy. She became an intrepid climber at the University of Missouri Saint Louis. When asked what compelled her to climb, she said, "Visceral attraction! I was simply thrilled when I saw the wall. I can't really articulate it more than that, only "I Want!" Since leaving Normandy, she has begun looking for a new activity near the CSJ Motherhouse, where she now lives.



Maryhurst continually introduces youth to new experiences for their personal expansion and growth. They especially appreciate spending time with therapy dogs and taking field trips.



Residents of Maryhurst recently visited the Kentucky State Capitol and met with Kentucky’s First Lady Britainy Beshear, wife of Governor Andy Beshear. Many of the youth who were nervous at first, walked away with heads held high, proud of the conversations they had with policymakers.



Sisters Monique Tarabeh and Mary Farren will post a short reflection each week on Facebook with two questions to celebrate and journey into this sacred time. Sr. Monique said, “In our journey toward the Resurrection, our idea is to get as close to Jesus’s heart as possible.”

The schedule and themes for this time are:

Second Sunday of Lent March 5: Do not be afraid, listen to the heartbeat of God.

Genesis 12:1-4a - Timothy 1:8b-10 - Matthew 17:1-9

Third Sunday of Lent March 12: Eternal life...

Exodus 17:3-7 - Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 - John 4:5-42

Fourth Sunday of Lent March 19: We see with the heart.

Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a - Ephesians 5:8-14 - John 9:1-41

Fifth Sunday of Lent March 26: Hope and Promise.

Ezekiel 37:12-14 - Romans 8:8-11 - John 11:1-45

We will also send the reflections to you through email. You can also find them on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/Sistersofthegoodshepherd

March 8-14 is Catholic Sisters Week, a time when the nation shines a light on the spirituality, mission, and community building of women religious.

Please note the following email address changes:

Sr. LeeAnn Mackeprang:
LMackeprang@Hotmail.com

Sr. Silvia Romero:
silvia52romero@gmail.com

Sr. Patricia Marie Barnette will serve as guest speaker at the annual Pro-Life Seminar sponsored by the Knights of Columbus in Manchester, New Hampshire, on March 26

The Cincinnati Community at Beechwood is happy to welcome **Sr. Ernestine Lalao** to the Province of Mid-North America as an English language learner. Sr. Ernestine is a Sister of the Good Shepherd from Madagascar and her first language is French. She wishes to become proficient in English as she serves on congregational committees.

Sr. Pauline and the Mason Pointe community welcomed **Sr. Mary Helena Aquino**, OSsR to their “neighborhood” on February 1. Sister Mary Helena is a member of the Order of the Most Holy Redeemer, the Redemptoristines. Her community is dispersing from Ligouri, Missouri, and she requested to be with our Sisters.



The annual report for Good Shepherd Volunteers is available online at <https://www.gsvolunteers.org/annualreport>

We celebrate the life of **Donna Sauer**, Companions of Jesus the Good Shepherd, who died on February 8, on the feast of the Holy Heart of Mary. Sr. Dorothy Doyle offered the eulogy at Donna’s funeral on February 25. Donna was laid to rest in the Good Shepherd section of the Catholic cemetery in Columbus, Ohio.

Sr. Claudia Palacio has created a booklet for initial and ongoing formation for religious life. The *Tool Kit for Formation* is available to everyone.

Work is in progress on the redesigned website for PMNA. **Take a look!** If you see anything on the website that could be updated or needs rewording, please email Jeanette McDermott. We have migrated our data over and are in the process of examining all content.

Christian advocates and activists gather annually for Ecumenical Advocacy Days to worship, discuss pressing issues, and advocate on Capitol Hill for those concerns. **The 2023 virtual conference runs from April 25-27.** Learn more at <https://advocacydays.org/>

The earthquakes in Syria and Turkey touch all of our hearts, especially with the personal connection we have through **Sr. Monique Tarabeh**. Along with your prayers, the province is making financial contributions for earthquake relief to the Province of Lebanon-Syria and Catholic Relief Services.

The lamp in the **Oratory of St. Mary Euphrasia** burns for the intention of the Congregation. In 2023, the lamp burns for Province of Mid-North America in July and for New York/Toronto in May. It burned in January for Central South.



Mary Carmen Flores, RGS

Oct. 16, 1942 – Dec. 3, 2022

Sister Mary Carmen Flores passed over into the arms of our Good Shepherd late in the evening of Saturday, December 3, 2022, after a two-week struggle following a major stroke. She was 80 years old and had lived as a vowed Religious of the Good Shepherd for 54 years.

In many ways, her difficult dying process was characteristic of her life. Her personality was passionate and dramatic. She gave her all to whatever she undertook. Excitement swirled around her, and she was a natural comic.

Carmen's life was not one of ease and calm. Along with her devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, she will be remembered for her tenaciousness, personal warmth, deep desire for connectedness with others, and the gift of making and keeping friends.

Carmen Lee was born in a Hispanic family in Rock Island, Illinois. Her only siblings having died in infancy, she bitterly regretted being an only child, although the presence of many cousins in town partially compensated for this loss. Family relationships remained important to her throughout her life.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/41BUzLM>



Mary Joy Benson, RGS

Mar. 13, 1933 – Dec. 13, 2022

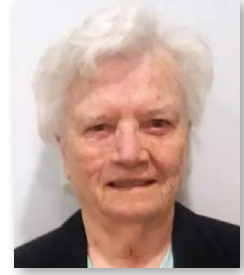
Sister Mary Joy Benson, RGS., 89, of Danville, Pennsylvania, passed away peacefully on Tuesday December 13, 2022, at Nazareth Memory Center in Danville, Pennsylvania.

She was born to Paul D. Benson and Mary Catherine Murphy Benson on March 13, 1933, in Baltimore, Maryland. Her birth name was Frances Louise Benson.

She attended St. Ambrose elementary school and Seaton high school in Baltimore. Upon inquiry, she was received by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd as a candidate for their formation program on July 16, 1953. She pronounced her first vows on February 11, 1956, and final vows on August 22, 1959.

At the time of her first vows, she took the religious name Sr. Mary of our Lady of Joy. In her early years as a Sister of the Good Shepherd, Sr. Mary Joy served in our residential programs for adolescent girls. Her ministries included assistant group leader and teacher in Baltimore, Maryland, and principal in Batesburg, South Carolina.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3SHPLjO>



Thomas More Fahey, RGS

Feb. 14, 1936 – Feb. 10, 2023

Thomas More Fahey, a Sister of the Good Shepherd in the New York/Toronto Province, returned to her Shepherd God early Friday morning, February 10, 2023, at the Ozanam Hall Rehabilitation facility in Bayside, New York.

Sister Thomas experienced failing health since early December, 2022. Despite her efforts to recoup, her body would not respond. In the end, she died of Covid-related issues.

Sister Thomas was born in the Bronx, the youngest daughter of Thomas Fahey and Katherine (Wallace), both from County Galway, Ireland. She is survived by her three nieces and nephews who recently held a wonderful family celebration on her 60-year Jubilee in religious life.

Sister Thomas was proud to be educated by the Ursuline Sisters. She received her degree in English and Education from Fordham University, and a Doctor of Psychology from Pace University. She entered the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in November, 1962.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3mpGPn0>



Say goodbye to an old friend as we welcome Spring. Mid-North America Mission Partners have completed the task of clearing the four-story Province Center. See pages 1 and 2.



Our mission is to be a reconciling presence of Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Province Leadership Team

Madeleine Munday,
Province Leader

Sharon Rose Authorson

Barbara Beasley

Gayle Lwanga Crumbley

Elizabeth Garciano

Mary Carol McClenon

Claudia Palacio

Christine Truong

Zeal Connections is a monthly internal newsletter of the Province of Mid-North America. The newsletter is distributed to Sisters, province administration staff, ministry CEO's, and select Partners-In-Mission. We welcome your submissions and encourage you to share *Zeal Connections* with anyone you desire. If you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter, please contact Jeanette McDermott at jmcdermott@gspmna.org.



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