

Looking to the future

Two Conversation Circles with Mission Partners were held in St. Louis in April, one at the CSJ Motherhouse where Good Shepherd Sisters live in community with Sisters of St. Joseph in Carondelet, and one at Mason Pointe. Lizzie Cody, Director of the Office of Mission Effectiveness and a member of the International Formation Team (IFT), was present for the circles and was assisted by local facilitators.

Six months ago, IFT began listening to Mission Partners across the congregation to learn how they feel about formation as a process towards wholeness and becoming fully human. IFT invites as many Mission Partners as possible to participate in the conversation so we can look to the future and figure out how to grow into the congregation's identity.

Conversation Circles allow people to share their views on being formed in big and small ways, as well as what they liked and disliked about it. It is also a time for participants to reflect on the remarkable changes in the Good Shepherd congregation and how the changes are forcing us to rethink relationships, culture, communications, and structures.

Sr. Renee Scheich is one of many who have expressed the importance of the Conversation Circles.

"The more we share, the greater we grow in formation," she said.



Good Shepherd Sisters gathered for a photo following the Conversation Circle at Mason Pointe.



Province Sisters and Administrative staff held a Conversation Circle at the St. Joseph of Carondelet Motherhouse.



Sister Ernestine Lalao is a Sister of the Good Shepherd from Madagascar who has been missioned to Mid-North America to learn English. Her first language is French. She serves on congregational committees and wishes to improve her English proficiency. Sr. Ernestine lives with our Sisters in the Beechwood community in Cincinnati. *Zeal Connections* conducted an interview with Sr. Ernestine to get to know her.

Q: What made you decide to follow God's call to religious life?

A: My desire for consecrated life began when I was 17 years old and involved in the Eucharistic movement in our parish. Jesus fascinated me and I longed to meet him in prayer. It was my privilege to share the Word of God, perform acts of charity, and take advantage of every opportunity that presented itself. As I entered Good Shepherd, I believed what Jesus told his apostles: "You did not choose me, I chose you." My vocation is a gift from God.

Q: Is there a particular reason why you chose Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd?

A: The specific mission of our Congregation fascinated me—its charism, spirituality, and the same compassionate attitude Jesus had toward those who were most vulnerable. I love the story of the Prodigal Son in the Bible and the parable of Jesus the Good Shepherd, John 10. I knew that I wanted to imitate and embody the character of Jesus with a spirit of giving life through love, forgiveness, and compassion.

Q: What year did you enter religious life as a Good Shepherd Sister?

A: I entered the Congregation in November 1993. I professed my first vows on November 21, 1996, and my final vows on November 23, 2002, in the church of St. Joseph in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

Q: Can you tell us about your leadership roles in Good Shepherd?

A: Over the years, I have worked with children, girls, and women in prevention centers, boarding schools, prisons, and rural development groups on different parts of the islands. I was a member of the Mauritius, Reunion and Madagascar Province Leadership Team from 2014 to 2019. I am a member of the GSIJP office and was appointed NGO Regional Designate for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. I was also a community leader for 7 years.

Q: What is it like living with Good Shepherd Sisters in the United States, specifically in Cincinnati?

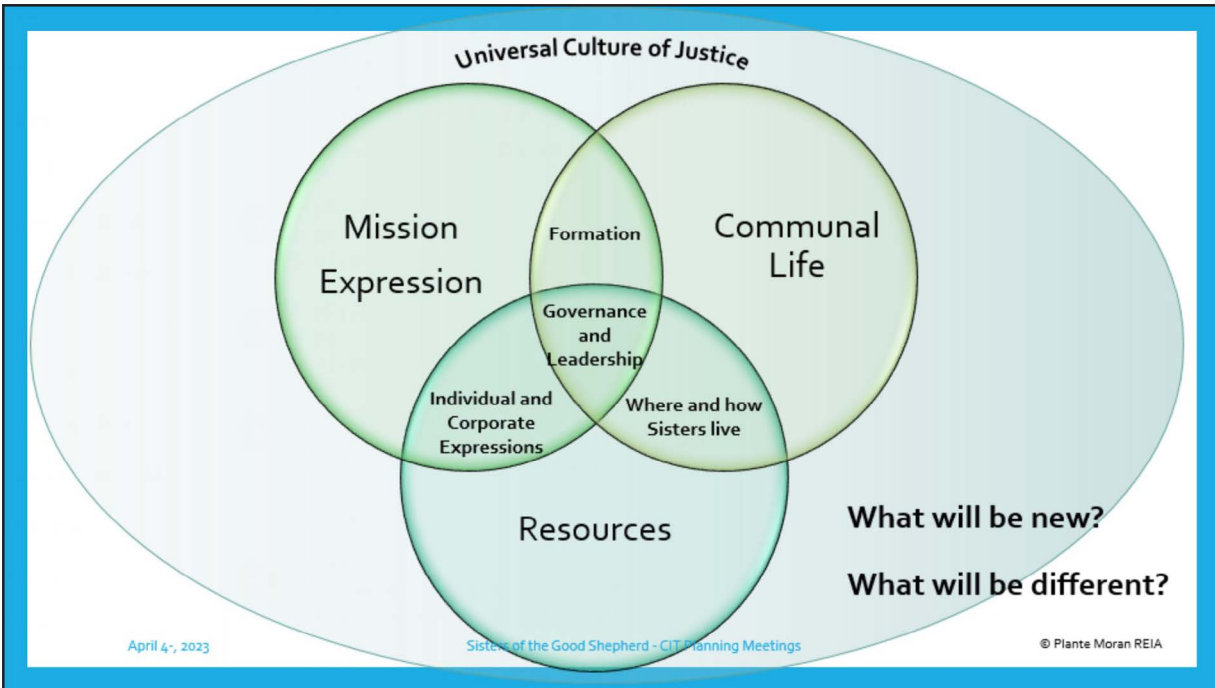
A: I am enjoying the new experience. It is an opportunity for me to learn about a different culture and to witness the Sisters' fidelity to their prayers and the Congregation. I am touched by their actions of love with the two Sisters at the St. Margaret Hall retirement home. It is impressive! At the university, I am taking an English course and gaining international experience. Cincinnati's environment is beautiful and the people are sociable. My life is in God's hands and I remain open to the future.

Q: What would you like to tell us about your personal life?

A: I have four brothers and three sisters. I have a niece in the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Ragusa, Italy, and two nephews who are studying for the priesthood. I enjoy listening to music, watching documentaries and films, and going for walks.

Q: Every Good Shepherd Sister has a favorite Saint Mary Euphrasia quote. Which one is yours?

A: I love the quote, "I am where there are souls to be saved." St. Mary Euphrasia had an ardent zeal that embraced the world. Nothing prevented her from saving souls. She understood well the message of Jesus when he said, "I am sending you into the world..."



News from the Circle Implementation Team

The work of forming one regional governance structure for the three U.S. provinces of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd continues as the steering committee held its second in-person meeting April 4-5 at the office of our facilitators, Plante Moran, in Detroit.

The Steering Committee’s new name will be the Circle Implementation Team (CIT). The word “circle” refers to the circle structure of the region and to the “circle of belonging” that is being formed, a circle that goes beyond geographic boundaries and expands the network of relationships.

The CIT’s purpose is to steer the processes that facilitate the emerging vision for a region of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd in North America.

It flows from the 2021 Congregational Chapter Direction Statement in the holistic context of a *universal culture of justice*, within the region and beyond, with specific focus to the larger themes of mission expression, communal life (both as it relates to Sisters and Partners-in-Mission) and resources.

The Circle of Province Leaders (CPNA) will continue to collaborate with the members of the CIT in decision making and direction setting after consultation with engaged professional consultants and advisors.

Consultants include the facilitators at Plante Moran, Sister Mary Pellegrino, CSJ, Jerry Gumbleton, and Erin George. Plante Moran’s role continues to be to facilitate, advise and recommend best practices and

design a road map toward arriving at a vision for the region.

There will be a variety of ways for Sisters and Partners-in-Mission to participate in the process both individually and communally. There will be times for solely Sisters to be engaged in conversation around this visioning and work, and there will also be opportunities to build relationships with all Partners-in-Mission.

Regular communications will be forthcoming. If you have questions or thoughts, please email the CIT at nacircle@gspmna.org. If you did not receive our email update and would like to be included, please email nacircle@gspmna.org and we will add your name to the distribution list.



Above: Sisters in the Danville community keep a Christmas tree up year 'round and decorate it according to seasonal themes.



Top right: Sisters Beverly Hedgecoth and Ann Joseph Dye celebrate Easter in style.



Bottom: The Danville community visited Sisters Grace Rhoads, Kathleen Moore, and Regina Long in Emmanuel Center Nursing and Rehabilitation on Easter Sunday.



Sisters are with the congregations of Good Shepherd, St. Joseph of Carondelet, and Divine Providence.

Celebrating Mary Euphrasia

Following Easter joy, the Good Shepherd Carondelet community in St. Louis hosted a party for the residents in St. Joseph's motherhouse on April 21 in anticipation of SME's feastday.

Sisters started the party with a meal followed by games of sheep races. Everyone enjoyed one another's company and had a great time while learning a little about Mary Euphrasia.

DeNeuville director featured in Memphis magazine

In its April issue, *StyleBlueprint* featured **Lori Jones, Executive Director of DeNeuville Learning Center for Women (DLC)**, in honor of DeNeuville's 25 years of empowering women in Memphis. Lori discusses DLC's mission and importance, its successes, and her hope for DLC in the future. When asked what she can't live without, aside from faith, family, and friends, Lori replied, "coffee, my dog, and being active." Read the article at <https://bit.ly/3LjLnW9>



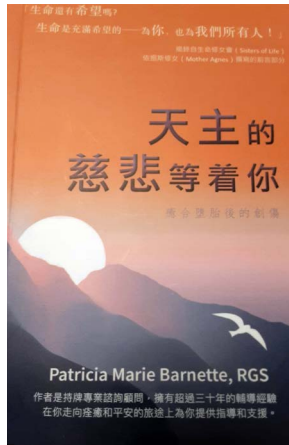
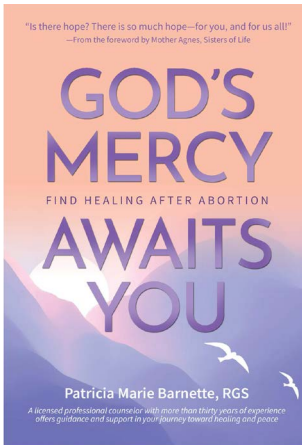
Above: Lori Jones

Below: DeNeuville serves women from Memphis who are local and from around the world. The women go through an official graduation ceremony upon completing their courses of study.



Honoring DeNeuville Center

DeNeuville Learning Center for Women in Memphis celebrated the 25th anniversary of its foundation by Sister Lakshmie Napagoda on April 27, 2023. L-R: Sisters Gayle Lwanga Crumbley, Lakshmie Napagoda, Madeleine Munday, Monique Tarabeh, and Mary Carol McClenon.



Holy Spirit working to heal

By Sr. Patricia Marie Barnette

Are you seeing double??? It looks Chinese to me. That's because it is!!

My book, *God's Mercy Awaits You: Find Healing after Abortion* has been translated and published in Cantonese. Sister Pamela Volland and Bishop Lee of Macao helped facilitate its translation into Cantonese and book printing. The Holy Spirit is at work to get the healing message out to our many friends in Asia who need this healing. Three years ago, the Knights of Columbus in Manchester, New Hampshire, invited me to speak about the

book. Due to Covid restrictions, the annual pro-life luncheon was postponed until March 26, 2023, when I traveled to New Hampshire to give the talk. It was well received. The Daughters of St. Paul in Boston hosted me during my visit. The book is available online from multiple sources.



Mystery photo

Does anyone know what's going on in this photo? We don't know the year, location, or activity.

What's the story? Please contact Jeanette McDermott at jmcdermott@gspmna.org.

ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S MYSTERY PHOTO

Last month's mystery photo was best guessed by Sr. Gayle Lwanga Crumley:

"I think it is a May procession with the girls. The dresses are short and the veils are probably for the Sodality of Mary."

Sister Anita expresses herself through art

Sister Anita Kristofco dreamed of becoming an artist as a child growing up in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where the mountainous landscape inspired her.

Years later, she began painting while serving in Atlanta. One day, while sitting in church, she decided to move beyond thinking about painting to actually doing it. After the service, she asked a parishioner if he knew anyone who could teach her to paint. The man pointed to the woman in front of Sr. Anita and said, “She can teach you.” In that moment a friendship formed between Sr. Anita and Lucille Linder, her 83-year-old teacher.

Every Saturday at 2 p.m. Sr. Anita studied under Lucille and learned the various art mediums: oil, acrylic, watercolor, and pastels. Acrylics became her favorite medium because she could paint over any mistakes.

At age 86, Lucille became ill and stopped teaching. She gave Sr. Anita her canvases, paints, and art papers as a parting gift.

Sister Anita is the daughter of a master bricklayer and stone mason who was trained in the Italian style of masonry. As a child, she watched her father lay bricks and stones layer upon layer, anticipating what his masterpiece would look like. He left a lasting impression on his daughter. Today Sr. Anita enjoys watching how her paintings develop layer by layer.

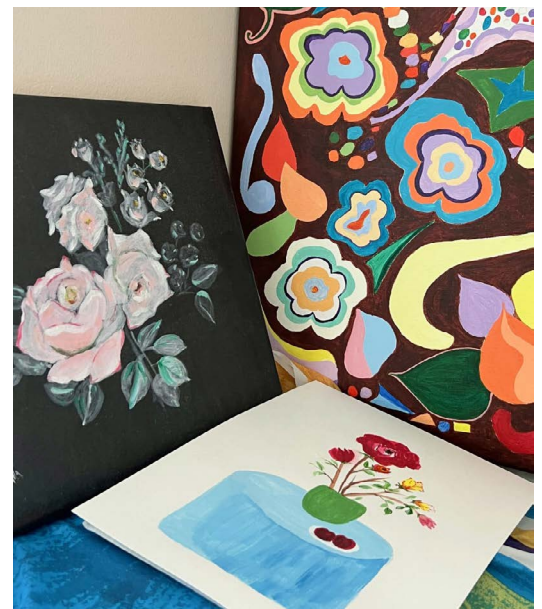
“I never know how a painting will turn out. I don’t anticipate the end result and just go with the flow,” she said.

Sister Anita fell and broke her hip last October. Her six-month recovery from surgery and rehabilitation prevented her from painting. She is just getting back into her art form and finds it challenging.

“When you don’t paint for a while, you lose some ability. You have to play around to get back into it,” she said.

As a way to ease back into her creative flow, Anita is working on a painting that has been calling out to her for a long time. It’s Jesus meeting Mary at the Stations of the Cross. The art piece captures Sister Anita’s attention, but roses are her true passion. She is determined to paint rose petals in full bloom with the perfect depth, highlights, and shadows.

Sister Anita is a member of the Mason Pointe community.



Thank you, GSMP Board

CORA Services hosted a dinner for the former board of the Good Shepherd Mediation Program (GSMP) in March. The evening began at the new GSMP office, followed by dinner at a restaurant in Philadelphia. Guests laughed and enjoyed hearing great stories, toasting one another, and having a meal together. It was also an opportunity for staff to share work tales and get to know GSMP's board members who influenced the program over the years. CORA and the board of GSMP expressed gratitude to the Sisters in Mid-North America for their generosity over the years.



From left to right: Cassandra Georges (former Mediation Program Board member), Sr. Madeleine Munday (Province Leader), Camila Pretel (CORA), Sue Wasserkrug (CORA Mediation Director), Nancy Giacomini (CORA), Stacy Leonard (CORA), Sr. Brigid Lawlor (current CORA Board member and original founder of Mediation Program), Antoinette Irving (CORA), Barbara Foxman (Former Mediation Program Board member), Other side back to front: Megan Watson, (former Mediation Program Board member), Sr. Mary Carol McClenon (Province Leadership Team and former Mediation Program Board member), Robert McClenon (former Mediation Program Board member), Queen-Cheyenne Wade (CORA), Serene Harris (CORA), Jim Ryan (former Mediation Program Board member), and John Buggy (former Mediation Program Board member).

Don't miss this TED Talk

Sister Joan Spiering recommends the Ted Talk *How I Became a Localist*. "It's very interesting for those of us who are working toward a humble green planet. The talk is worth your time," Sr. Joan said.



Deborah Frieze, author, entrepreneur, and activist committed to strengthening local economies, explains in the talk how local economies are the hope of the future, and we all have a vital role to play in strengthening them. Frieze says most of our big systems—education, healthcare, government, business—are failing communities. She poses the question—What if we stop trying to fix them and instead abandon them and start

over? Watch the TED talk at <https://bit.ly/3V3thLa>



JOKE

Why do hummingbirds hum?

Answer: They don't know the words.

Sent in by Sr. Liz Schille

Dear Good Shepherds,



What celebrations we've had this month for Saint Mary Euphrasia! I was fortunate to attend Mass and lunch with the Sisters at Mason

Pointe. The sheep races that Sister Mary Carol put on was "Baaah—valous," although I think there was a fix in for Sr. Pauline's sheep! Province staff also enjoyed lunch the next day with members of the leadership team and a brief visit to the new space to see what work has been done so far. We enjoyed Saint Mary Euphrasia trivia questions.

The Sisters and partners have been invited to a **Groundbreaking at the Normandy campus on May 24 at 11:00 a.m.** Please let me know if you can join in.

Please **save the date** for our new space blessing and **open house on Monday, September 25.** This is the week that RCRI begins in St. Louis. More details to come about September 25.

The partners are looking forward to our time with the CLT on May 11 to talk about the hopes and dreams of Partners-in-Mission in carrying forward the charism of the Sisters of Good Shepherd.

Enjoy the rest of Spring!

Antonia M. Ponder

**Director of Province Administration/
General Counsel**



Sister Mary Carol McClenon heads up the sheep races during the party at Mason Pointe celebrating the Feast Day of Saint Mary Euphrasia.

A Redemptorist Sister returns to the Good Shepherd fold

The Good Shepherd community at Mason Pointe welcomed its first inter-congregational Sister on February 1, when **Sr. Mary Helen Aquino, OSSR,** moved in after her monastery in Liguori, Missouri, closed. Before heeding a call to contemplative life with another order, Sister Mary Helen spent 10 years as a Good Shepherd Apostolic Sister in the Philippine Islands. She is happy to be back in the fold of the Good Shepherd 20 years later.



Wellness Tidbits

Vicky Barshis, Health and Wellness Coordinator



The key to healthy aging is a healthy lifestyle. Interacting with others and remaining social are essential for cognitive and emotional well-being. Physical activity and eating a variety of nutritious foods (with portion control)

promote a healthy aging process. A combination of both aerobic and muscle building activities is best—and both can be done even from a chair!

According to the Mayo clinic, “If an interest in healthy aging leads you to consider anti-aging therapies — such as restrictive diets, supplements or expensive treatments claiming to postpone or even reverse the aging process — be cautious. There’s no quick fix when it comes to healthy aging. Know what you’re buying, and know how to spot suspicious schemes. Often, anti-aging therapies don’t live up to the claims.”

Here’s to healthy aging—at ALL ages!

Generous Hearts

Lizzie Cody, Director of Mission Effectiveness



“Oh! You’re the quote lady!” is often what I hear when I meet a Good Shepherd in person for the first time. On most mornings when I log in to my computer, the first thing I do is send a quote from St. Mary Euphrasia

or St. John Eudes to the almost 900 people on the listserv. In fact, for 21 years (longer than my time with Good Shepherd) these quotes have been going out all over the world. That means there have been roughly 5,500 quotes sent. The words of our founders are still relevant and inspiring to our lives today. Recently I’ve been adding a reflection question to the quotes in hopes that people will slow down, think about the quote, and share with someone else. It makes my day when I get a response from someone saying, “How did Mary Euphrasia know that this is what I needed to hear?”

Balancing Act

Pam Fisher, Province Accounting Clerk



SPRING IS HERE! To me Spring is always a sign of new beginnings, new growth, a fresh start to my days, walks, the smell of cooking on grills, baseball (GO CARDINALS), more color, THE END OF WINTER. No secret, I love Spring!

For the finance department Spring also means the end of some tasks that always bring a sigh of relief.

Of course, new tasks begin. Yolanda will be sending out the Motor Vehicle Report letters via email to those who drive Good Shepherd vehicles or rent autos. If you receive one of these forms and you have any questions, please contact Yolanda at 314-313-0761 or email at ycamp@gspmna.org.

All of us in Finance want to wish you a Happy Spring!

Heritage & Archives

Monte Abbott, Director of Archives



Gardeners seldom have love for grasshoppers, but this morning I opened the curtains in my plant room to six of the tiniest emerald green baby grasshoppers clinging to the window, warming themselves in the first light of sunrise. Perhaps they emerged from one of my overwintering potted plants. Their tiny legs were perfect, waiting to spring into action. Two oversized eyes nearly covered each little pencil-tip head.

I gathered them gently into a jar, wondering about their single-season future. The quick may escape robins, lawn mowers, and human feet. The unlucky will encounter pesticides, cats, and children. But I can only carry them out to the tall grass and watch as they hop onto tender young leaves, already munching. There is enough for all of us. Eat up little babies; God speed!

CORA Services was named a “Top Workplace” in Philadelphia for 2023 for its innovative hybrid work style.

On May 4, 2023, Good Shepherd Volunteers will honor two women and the Good Shepherd Sisters at its **Spring Benefit in New York celebrating GSV’s 30 years of service.** The honorees were selected for their commitment to the GSV tenets of Simplicity, Community, Social Justice, and Spirituality.

You are invited to **Study Days on the Spirituality of St. John Eudes** in the light of the call to synodality in the Church. The dates are May 29-31. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3NemBYL>

The three Province leaders and their leadership teams, along with several invited Sisters, will convene in Carrollton, Ohio, for a 10-day **Leadership Meeting with the Congregational Leadership Team.** The meetings will be May 8-17. The Partners-in-Mission will have a hybrid meeting where some partners will convene in St. Louis to zoom with the CLT for a special meeting on the afternoon of May 11. On the morning of May 11, Christina Duranti, Executive Director of GSIF, will present a session on *GSIF—An Integrated Strategic Vision.*

We expect to be in our new work and gathering space by the end of June. Until then we are working remotely and/or in **temporary offices at Maria Droste in Normandy.** The

province mailing address remains 7654 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO 63121 until further notice.

Zeal Connections wants to feature photos of your pets, plants, favorite books, films, recipes, and other joys in life in upcoming issues of the newsletter. Start looking through your photo galleries and albums and send photos that make you feel happy. Send your photos and captions to [Jeanette](#).

! The **DEADLINE** for **Zeal Connections** is the **21st of each month.**

We will not publish an issue of Zeal Connections in June. The deadline for the July issue is June 21. ←

If the 21st falls on a weekend, then the deadline is the **Friday before.**

Please send your articles and photos to [Jeanette](#) before the deadline.

Questions? Contact [Jeanette](#).

Vocation/Formation News

For several years, **Theresa Nguyen** has been discerning religious life with Good Shepherd. Continuing her discernment journey, she entered the pre-novitiate on April 24, 2023. A Support-Wisdom Formation Team will support Theresa and help her delve into different critical areas of formation. Members of the team and their areas of expertise are:



Sr. Barbara Beasley: Good Shepherd Mission and Spirit in Today’s realities

Sr. Gayle Lwanga Crumbley: Good Shepherd commitment to Justice and Peace

Sr. Jude Ellen Golumbieski: History of the Contemplative Sisters

Sr. Brigid Lawlor: Christogenesis framed in updated theological thinking and the evolution of the Congregational spirituality

Melinda Stricklen: Partner-in-Mission and former Director of the Office of Mission Effectiveness for Mid-North America

Sr. Claudia Palacio accompanies Theresa in her discernment process and coordinates all aspects of formation. Sister Claudia is on the Province Leadership Team for Mid-North America and also serves as the Justice Peace coordinator for the province.

Theresa will celebrate this new step in her discernment at a Mass on May 2nd at the Silver Spring Community, where she will do the pre-novitiate. Please pray for Theresa, the Vocation/Formation Team, the Support-Wisdom Formation Team, and the Silver Spring Community.

Act with NAC: In the river together

By Fran Eskin-Royer, Executive Director National Advocacy Center



To build a better, safer, more just world, especially for women and children, we are traveling together in the footsteps of St. John Eudes and St. Mary Euphrasia.

Sisters and Partners-in-Mission minister directly to families in need, women in danger, and children who are struggling. You work downstream with clients for healing, recovery, and support.

The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd strives to change policies and laws that benefit marginalized people upstream at its source. The changes we make change are like a river—while ministerial and agency work is downstream, NAC’s shared work for justice is upstream.

We advocate and educate on behalf of the Congregation and its US partners. Our connection with you allows us to “embrace the whole world” and make it just together.

Sign up for NAC’s email alerts at bit.ly/nacsignup. Visit NAC at: gsadvocacy.org.



Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Province of Mid-North America

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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